

# DUNCHURCH PARISH COUNCIL & COMMUNITY LIBRARY

## HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURES

### SECTION A: GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

#### 1. GENERAL POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

##### 1.1. Statement of Policy

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library is legally responsible for provision of healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all users of the library premises. Under no circumstances should any employees or volunteers be working alone in the Community Library building.

##### 1.2. Statement of Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library to ensure that:

- health and safety legislation is complied with
- any practices and materials which are detrimental to health are eliminated or contained.
- this policy is put into practice, and that any steps which need to be taken, as reported to the Proper Officer as being beyond his/her powers, are investigated and dealt with without delay.
- this Policy document is updated as and when necessary, for example, as a result of new legislation.

It is the responsibility of the Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library to ensure that:

- all employees and volunteers receive sufficient information, training and supervision on health and safety matters
- a risk assessment and a fire safety risk assessment are performed in the library and appropriate action taken, making the findings available to all employees.
- accidents and hazards are investigated and reported to the Proper Officer

- there are arrangements in place to monitor the maintenance of all premises and equipment

It is the duty of every employee and volunteer to:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions
- co-operate with the organisation to ensure that Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library is a healthy and safe organisation
- report any suspected hazard, accident or near miss noticed.

## **SECTION B: GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS**

### **2. ACCIDENTS**

#### **2.1. Accident Book**

An accident book will be maintained in which any accident reported is entered and its location will be publicised accordingly. This will be monitored. Anyone who experiences an accident or near miss (no matter how trivial) either on Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library premises or in the course of performing his/her duties, even if that occurs elsewhere, must report it and ensure that it is entered into the Accident Book.

#### **2.2. RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations**

RIDDOR imposes duties on persons responsible for the activities of people at work to report to the Health & Safety Executive or the local authority the following:

- Fatal accidents
- Major injury, accidents, conditions (all fractures – excluding fingers, thumbs or toes; all amputations; dislocation of shoulders, hips, knees or spine; loss of sight – temporary or permanent; injury to the eye; a chemical or hot metal burn to the eye; electric shock/electric burn injuries; loss of consciousness resulting from asphyxia or harmful substances; any acute illness requiring medical treatment/loss of consciousness resulting from the absorption of any substance; toxin exposure leading to acute illness; any other injury which results in admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours.
- Dangerous occurrences
- Accidents causing more than 3 days incapacity from work
- Certain work-related diseases
- Certain matters dealing with the safe supply of gas

Any major accident will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive immediately by phone, and confirmed in writing within seven days. (A major accident is defined as one resulting in death, major injury, or one in which a person is seriously affected by electric shock or poisoning, or injuries relating to back problems). A dangerous occurrence, which could be described as a “near miss”, should also be reported.

### **2.3. First Aid Arrangements**

A first aid box is available at the library. The Proper Officer will be responsible for the maintenance of the box.

## **3. FIRE**

### **3.1. General**

All requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are complied with including employee & volunteer training and evacuation procedures. Employees and volunteers must ensure that they are familiar with the fire evacuation procedures and the fire/emergency routes.

### **3.2. Fire Extinguishers**

The location and type of fire extinguishers are publicised.

### **3.3 Procedure in case of fire**

- Anyone discovering a fire must break the glass to set off the fire alarm and shout “Fire!”
- Using an appropriate fire extinguisher tackle the fire ONLY IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.
- Telephone the Fire Service (999) making sure you have an outside line first but ONLY IF IT SAFE TO DO SO.
- Evacuate the building by the shortest available route, closing all doors behind you.
- Assemble at the designated assembly point.
- No one is allowed back in the premises until instructed to do so by the Fire Brigade Fire Officer.

NB Employees and volunteers are responsible for advising any visitors present, on the safe evacuation of the area when the alarm is sounded.

If you are unable to evacuate the building because your exit route is too dangerous (e.g. fire, smoke, heat, etc), take the following action telephone the Fire Service (as above) and explain your situation.

### **3.4 General Precautions**

- Fire exits will be kept clear at all times.
- Fire/emergency evacuation drills will be held periodically.
- Fire extinguishers will be checked annually and replaced as and when deemed necessary.

## **4. ELECTRICITY AT WORK**

Electricity is potentially lethal and must be treated with respect. In particular the following instructions apply to **portable items of electrical equipment** i.e. those that are connected to the mains by a flexible lead and plug:-

### **4.1. Sockets**

Sockets will not be overloaded - the total load imposed on one socket should never exceed the current-carrying capacity of one 13A plug.

### **4.2. Portable Equipment**

For every separate item of equipment, steps will be taken to ensure that:

- the plug is correctly fitted and in good condition
- the cable is correctly clamped by the plug
- the correct capacity of fuse for the item of equipment is fitted
- the cable is in good condition, with no kinks and undamaged insulation
- the equipment is labelled as having been inspected by an authorised person
- the item is listed in a locality register kept of all items of portable electrical equipment: no unlisted item in that register shall be used.

### **4.3. General Electrical Safety**

- all employees and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that their electrical equipment is switched off when they leave the office. It is not necessary to unplug each item at the end of the working day.
- Employees and volunteers should not attempt to mend faulty electrical equipment, OTHER THAN BY THE SIMPLE REPLACEMENT OF A FUSE, and should not change plugs.
- electrical leads should not be left attached to a socket without the appliance attached to the end. This is particularly dangerous in the presence of water.

- trailing electrical leads should not cross the floor at any point where people may walk; in such places they must be enclosed by a protective cover fixed down to the floor.

## 5. USE OF COMPUTERS AND VDUs

### 5.1. Breaks

Work routines should be organised to allow breaks - the best principle is "little and often" : short breaks of 5-10 minutes after 50 -60 minutes continuous VDU work are preferable to longer breaks after longer periods of use. Such breaks should be away from the screen, and ideally should take the form of alternative work activities that can be interspersed with work on the screen. Preferably such activities should avoid reading/writing since these do not relax the concentration on visual/mental processes. Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library, its employees and volunteers are jointly responsible for ensuring that sufficient breaks are taken to minimise any risks to employees' health posed by the use of VDUs identified in individual risk assessments.

## 6 Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health

6.1 Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will meet its legislative duty to assess risks related to hazardous substances e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc. Risk assessments will be written and completed by nominated competent person. Where a risk is identified:

- (a) In the first instance action will be taken to **remove** any hazardous substances
- (b) If this is not possible then action shall be taken to find a **substitute** for the hazardous substance
- (c) If this is not possible such substances shall be **enclosed** within a safe environment

If none of the above is possible **protective equipment** will be issued to ensure employee safety.

### 6.2 MONITORING

6.2.1 If for any reason an employee or volunteer has to be exposed to a possibly hazardous substance; levels of exposure will be monitored.

6.2.2 At all times levels of ill-health related to exposure to hazardous substances at work will be monitored.

### 6.3 REMOVAL, SUBSTITUTION, ENCLOSURE AND PROTECTION

6.3.1 All employees and volunteers shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available they should be used (e.g. water based markers, correction fluid etc). If there is no way of avoiding use of a hazardous substance, then employees and volunteers must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other workers, and use proper protective equipment, which shall be made available by Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library.

## **7 MANUAL HANDLING**

7.1 Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library employees and volunteers should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, employees and volunteers may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads. Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.

7.2 The most likely occurrences of manual handling for Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library employees are:-

- the receipt and storage of books stationary orders
- rearranging the office furniture and equipment
- handling loads at outside events organised by Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library.

7.3 All employees and volunteers should use aids which are available to reduce the risk of injury, e.g. sack trolley, lifts.

7.4 Employees and volunteers should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other employees and volunteers should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting in a team take instructions from one person only.

7.5 Any employee or volunteer feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the Accident Book. To continue may result in more serious injury.

## **8 TRAINING:**

8.1 Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library has overall responsibility for all training, including that related to health and safety.

8.2 It is acknowledged that in addition to the general training mentioned below, all employees and volunteers need training to ensure that they are able to do their job safely and special training may be needed for hazardous jobs.

## **8.3**

## **9 HOUSE RULES FOR CONTRACTORS AND VISITORS:**

9.1 Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will also meet its legislative duties under health and safety law when using employees employed by other organisations. The law requires co-operation and co-ordination between both employers to ensure that everybody involved is aware of the risks in the workplace, and that all necessary steps are taken to reduce those risks. Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library needs to know:

- exactly what the task involves
- how long the task will take
- any equipment /materials used meet legal standards

Contractors must be aware of Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library emergency procedures, e.g. reporting accidents, fire alarms, evacuations and first aid.

## **SECTION C: HAZARDS**

### **10 GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:**

10.1.1 Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will assess risks created by its undertaking, so as to identify the measures required to comply with health and safety legislation.

10.1.2 Competent person(s) will perform risk assessments and these will be accessible. It is also the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to report potential risks. The risk assessment documentation will be reviewed every 12 months.

10.1.3 There are numerous hazards to be avoided, which makes it very difficult to give comprehensive guidance of what to do or not to do. So much depends on "common sense". The following list gives examples:

- keep walking areas clear of obstructions
- take care when going through unglazed doors
- do not run - ANYWHERE - in the library
- wipe up spillages of liquids
- clear up broken glass with a dustpan and brush, NOT bare hands
- do not stand on a chair as a ladder-substitute
- do not lift, pick up or carry heavy loads unless absolutely necessary - if doing so, bend your legs, not your back.
- do not open more than one drawer of a filing cabinet at a time, and do not leave drawers open.
- do not overload upper drawers of filing cabinets; heavy items should be stored in lower drawers.
- do not leave cupboard drawers open
- store drawing pins and other sharp objects in a safe box

- store pencils and pens with the point downwards
- do not consume food or drink near keyboards
- ensure that there is sufficient light for your work, and that you are not working in your own (or someone else's) shadow
- always wash hands after visits to the toilet, and before handling any sort of food
- keep staff room areas scrupulously clean, and keep any waste food in closed bins. Any stored edible items should be kept in a refrigerator or cupboard and not left out on working surfaces. Prior to the weekend or public bank holidays, food should be checked for its 'use by date' and removed if this occurs during a period of office closure.

## **11 GOOD HOUSEKEEPING**

### **11.1 AISLES & GANGWAYS**

Gangways must be kept clear from obstructions and materials must be stored in safe areas. Under no circumstances must goods or materials be stacked immediately in front of or obstructing fire doors, fire exits, fire alarms or fire equipment.

### **11.2 SMOKING**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library offices are non- smoking areas.

### **11.3 OVERCROWDING**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will avoid unhealthy and overcrowded working conditions, ensuring compliance with the legally prescribed minimum space per person of 11 cubic metres and will consult employee on any changes in office layout.

### **11.4 VENTILATION**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will endeavour to provide a well ventilated workplace in which employee have control over their local level of ventilation.

### **11.5 TEMPERATURE**

In office workplaces a minimum temperature of must be maintained, Efforts will be made so far as is reasonably practical to ensure the workplace temperature does not rise to an uncomfortable level or fall below the minimum office workplace temperature of 16°C.

### **11.6 LIGHTING**

Adequate lighting will be provided and if lights are found to be out of order, the fault will be corrected as soon as reasonably possible.

### **11.7 NOISE**



Some employees share office space and therefore a certain level of noise is unavoidable, however noise levels will be kept to as low a level as is practicable.

#### **11.8 OFFICE ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTANTS**

Office equipment such as photocopiers and printers can emit pollutants into the atmosphere. Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will take reasonable precautions in ensuring that these levels are kept as low as is possible. Employees and volunteers will not be expected to work in enclosed spaces with equipment that emit atmospheric pollutants. Spaces where these pollutants are present shall be kept well ventilated.

#### **11.9 EQUIPMENT STORAGE AND USAGE**

- Equipment must not be left lying around but must be suitably stored.
- No wires must be left trailing across floors.
- Non-flammable rubbish bins must be positioned at various points.
- No paraffin, bar electric or calor gas fires will be used at Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library premises.

### **12 WELFARE ARRANGEMENTS**

#### **12.1 TOILETS AND WASHING FACILITIES**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library will ensure that employees and volunteers have access to toilets and washing facilities of clean hot and cold water, soap and drying facilities in accordance with the minimum requirements of Health and Safety legislation.

#### **12.2 DRINKING WATER**

An adequate supply of drinking water is provided for all employees and volunteers.

#### **12.3 HOURS OF WORK**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library employees and volunteers should not work excessively long hours, and should take adequate breaks for meals and rest.

### **13 PERSONAL SAFETY**

Dunchurch Parish Council & Community Library is committed to ensuring the personal safety of its employees and volunteers.