

TouchBaseTM Health and Safety Policy

January 2018

This policy should be viewed and reviewed alongside the **TouchBaseTM Pets in the Workplace Policy January 2018**

This policy applies to all TouchBaseTM employees, associates, volunteers, sessional associates, contracted therapists, students or anyone working on behalf of TouchBaseTM. Throughout this document, they will be referred to as **'Employees and Associates'**. This policy also applies to clients or visitors to the TouchBase premises. Clients or visitors may be therapy clients, education, health, social service professionals, or members of the public visiting the TouchBase premises or taking part in TouchBase activities. Throughout this document, they will be referred to as **'Clients and Visitors'**.

General Statement of policy

The policy of TouchBase is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and work methods for all 'Employees and Associates' as well as 'Clients and Visitors' using TouchBase Premises or Services in order to prevent accidents, work-related ill health, and provide adequate control of health and safety risks from work activities.

We seek to ensure that all venues used for TouchBase activities are both accessible and safe for 'Employees and Associates' as well as 'Clients and Visitors'. If the venue/environment being used by TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' has an overriding separate Health and Safety policy then the policy of that venue/environment will be followed. It is the responsibility of the TouchBase 'Employee or Associate' to clarify this information.

We shall provide all necessary information to 'Employees and Associates' and 'Clients and Visitors' and maintain a programme to foster the awareness of health, safety, and welfare issues.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the specific arrangements to implement this policy are set out below. This policy and the way in which it operates will be reviewed annually by the appointed 'Safety Officer' Keeley de Freese.

Responsibilities

1. Levels of Responsibility

- 1.1 The appointed 'Safety Officer' Keeley de Freese will have overall and final responsibility for Health and Safety and will also be responsible for ensuring that procedures and systems are agreed and implemented. A team member is annually appointed as the Health and Safety Officer to effectively implement the procedures and systems including monitoring, prevention of hazards, and lone working environments and conditions – taking remedial action.
- 1.2 The Safety Officer should ensure that the TouchBase team including all 'Employees and Associates' and volunteers is updated twice per year (January and September) on health and safety matters, and may call a special team meeting where a health and safety matter requires urgent attention.
- 1.3 The Safety Officer is responsible for liaising with Louise Seedhouse (Site Manager for Westwerks) over health and safety in areas of shared responsibility and any other site managers responsible for other sites and environments where TouchBase is operating.
- 1.4 The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that TouchBase has adequate cover under the Employers' Liability Act 1969 and holds contents and accident insurance for the main office space. All other group meetings and any other meetings, therapy or events with, or pertaining to 'Employees and Associates' and 'Clients and Visitors' that happen in TouchBase offices or any rooms sub-leased from Westwerks for TouchBase activities are covered by the individual TouchBase Therapist's or Group Leader's public liability and indemnity insurances. Parents and carers bringing clients are covered by individual therapist insurances. Only 'clients and visitors' on TouchBase client related business are covered by therapist or group leader's public liability and indemnity insurances. It is the responsibility of therapists and group leaders to check the entire remit of their insurances. It is usual that all meetings pertaining to their work with clients will be covered.

Westwerks holds a separate Public Liability insurance for the Westwerks building. 'If a visitor became injured on the TouchBase Hove premises as a result of negligence by The Werks Group there is Public Liability cover for this. 'If a visitor became injured as result of the negligence of any of our client companies (tenants) then they may take legal action against that company.'

The Safety Officer will therefore ensure that all 'Employee and Associate' therapists and Group Leaders have relevant and up-to-date public liability and indemnity insurance. Relevant therapist or group leader insurances will be checked annually in September. 'Employees and Associates' working in other capacities on other premises must ensure that they are covered by the public liability insurances of those environments where they practise. It will be assumed that all schools under councils have relevant public liability insurance. It should be taken into consideration that TouchBase volunteers do not have public liability or professional indemnity insurance at TouchBase and should therefore not to be asked to undertake work pertaining to clients or activities where they could potentially create a risk or hazard.

2. Safety Officer

- 2.1 Day-to-day management of Health and Safety will be delegated to a named member of staff. The member of staff named in January 2017 is Keeley de Freese.
- 2.2 The Safety Officer is responsible for arranging the following: safety inspections of our rooms; monitoring of the maintenance of equipment; and investigation of accidents, making sure they are entered in the accident book held in the main TouchBase Office in Hove.
- 2.3 The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring Risk Assessments are carried out within work practices, use of equipment and other hazards in accordance with HSE Risk Assessment guidelines. (Refer to '**TouchBase Risk Assessment Form**'). In the case of certain TouchBase clients there will be individual risk assessments. Refer to **TouchBase Individual Client Risk Assessment Form**). In the case of Lone Working there is a separate '**Lone Working Risk Assessment Form**'.

3. Employees and Associates

- 3.1 Health and Safety forms part of a short induction for all new associates or volunteers and anybody working on TouchBase premises or activities arranged by TouchBase not under another Health and Safety Policy. 'Plot 22' is covered under their own charity Health and Safety policy.

All 'Employees and Associates' have the responsibility to develop, within the staff team, measures to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others. All work environments, on or off site, (except where the off-site environment comes under its own Health and Safety Procedures e.g. in schools. This must be clarified before the off-site work takes place). All new activities will be assessed for risk and appropriate action taken to ensure the safety and well-being of all 'Employees and Associates' as well as 'Clients and Visitors' using the TouchBase premises or work environments.

- 3.2 All 'Employees and Associates' are responsible for health and safety within their area of work. They will put right a hazard or unsafe work practice as soon as they notice it or have it reported to them. If a hazard cannot be put right, it should be reported to the Safety Officer (Keeley de Freese) and the piece of equipment, activity or area of any TouchBase premises (unless covered by an overriding Health and Safety policy e.g. Plot 22) should be suspended until it is safe to re-use.

The Safety Officer will engage and consult with all 'Employees and Associates' on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide supervision on matters such as carrying hot drinks, accident reports, fire exits, and routines and hazards such as chemicals left out in lavatories. Overall she will ensure safe and clean environments for children and young people as well as all other 'Clients and Visitors', using TouchBase premises or activities arranged by TouchBase, not under another Health and Safety Policy.

General Arrangements

4. Accidents and First Aid

- 4.1 A named member of the TouchBase team or volunteer will always be present during the entirety of any TouchBase group activity, and will be the **Appointed Person** responsible for taking charge in an emergency. Fire exits and procedures should be pointed out at the beginning of all group activities. All TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' should be inducted to the fire and evacuation procedures at TouchBase Hove Premises. Fire and evacuation cards will be displayed in a prominent position in each TouchBase office and therapy room.
- 4.2 Suitably stocked first aid boxes should be in a prominent position on each floor at TouchBase Hove. One will be in 'Treehouse' therapy room and one in the Main Office. A portable first aid kit will be stored in the Main Office to be taken to activities using outside venues. All TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' should be given details of first aid arrangements.
- 4.1 All 'Clients and Visitors' including children and young people using the TouchBase Hove meeting rooms and therapy rooms will be informed of emergency, fire and first aid procedures. Therapists will explain/show these to their therapy clients in an appropriate manner at the beginning of their therapy contract.
- 4.2 The appointed person responsible for giving information on first aid arrangements to all 'Employees and Associates' and managing the first aid boxes is Keeley de Freese.
- 4.3 The Safety Officer is responsible for reporting accidents and diseases notifiable under RIDDOR. www.hse.gov.uk/riddor
- 4.4 The Accident Record book is in the Main Office, TouchBase Hove.

5. General Fire Safety

- 5.1 The Safety Officer is responsible for Fire Safety arrangements; these include checking that the Westwerks buildings manager Louise Seedhouse provides adequate signed escape routes from the building and that Fire Action notices are kept up to date.
- 5.2 All TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' have a duty to be aware of the Fire Action instructions and the location of Fire Alarms.
- 5.3 'Employees and Associates' are responsible for ensuring that, during a fire, all 'Clients and Visitors' follow the Fire Action instructions and leave the building safely.
- 5.4 All 'Employees and Associates' are responsible for checking that escape routes and exits are clear and fire extinguishers in place at all times.
- 5.5 The Westwerks building manager Louise Seedhouse is responsible for weekly checks of smoke alarms, emergency lighting, fire exit signs and Fire Action notices

(in accordance with the maintenance checklist) and servicing of fire extinguishers.

- 5.6 Fire Alarms are part of a system for the whole building and are the responsibility of Westwerks building manager Louise Seedhouse.
- 5.7 The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for liaising with the Westwerks building manager over Fire Action and the Joint Fire Safety Procedure which covers areas of the building shared between Westwerks and TouchBase.
- 5.8 There will be a TouchBase fire drill annually, utilising the fire drills organised by Westwerks.
- 5.9 All electrical equipment will be checked annually.
- 5.10 Flammable substances will not be purchased unless absolutely necessary. In this case they will be stored safely away from other combustible or inflammable substances, in a closed area.
- 5.11 Combustible materials, such as paper, will be stored in a way that does not pose a trip, manual handling, or fire hazard. Stored paper will not conceal, or be in direct contact with, electrical wiring.

General Work Environment and Practices

6. Hygiene and Welfare

- 6.1 Any staff that notices rubbish and recycling bins becoming full should empty them in order that they do not become a health and safety or fire issue. All 'Employees and Associates' are responsible for general office cleaning and washing up of cups and plates.
- 6.2 Hazardous waste will be disposed of using the sanitary towel disposal unit in the toilet.
- 6.3 Floors and spaces underneath furniture must be kept clear of trailing cables and other obstructions.
- 6.4 Furniture and equipment must be positioned so that it does not pose a hazard to passers-by. Filing cabinets and cupboard doors should be kept closed.
- 6.5 Also refer to hygiene as outlined in the **TouchBase™ Pets in the Workplace Policy January 2018**.

7. Safe Practices

- 7.1 All 'Employees and Associates' should move around the offices and open doors with due care and generally behave with consideration towards other staff and TouchBase visitors.

- 7.2 'Employees and Associates' should ensure that all 'Clients and Visitors' behave in a safe manner and do not cause hazards for themselves or others.
- 7.3 All 'Employees and Associates' should follow 'Manual Handling' procedures and take care that no-one carries the risk of injury through bad lifting techniques. They should familiarise themselves with safe practices through reading the relevant HSE guidelines link at the end of this policy.
- 7.4 Blinds will remain down when necessary to protect the privacy and confidentiality of therapy clients.
- 7.5 Notices will be placed on therapy room doors when the rooms are in use for therapy to protect the confidentiality and safety of clients.
- 7.6 Music will be played in the office next to the therapy room when therapy is in process to protect the confidentiality of Therapy Clients and 'Clients or Visitors' in support groups or confidential meetings.
- 7.7 All TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' to wear their identity badges at all times whilst working with Clients or Visitors or when representing TouchBase outside of TouchBase premises.

8. General Welfare

- 8.1 The Safety Officer is responsible for measures to enhance the general welfare of 'Employees and Associates' and 'Clients and Visitors', including areas such as temperature, ventilation, general noise levels, and lighting in TouchBase premises.

9. Hazards

- 9.1 TouchBase 'Employees and Associates' are responsible for checking that electrical cables, plugs and connections, and other equipment are in good condition and for reporting it if they are not in good condition.

10. Personal Safety

- 10.1 The appointed Safety Officer, Keeley de Freese is responsible for developing procedures and providing information to ensure the personal safety for TouchBase 'Employee and Associates' and for 'Clients and Visitors' whether within or outside the TouchBase offices.
- 10.2 Procedures for Safety during **Lone Working** should be made clear and a 'Lone Working Risk Assessment' should be carried out, particularly for therapists but for anyone who may find themselves working late or making a visit to TouchBase offices alone. It is highly recommended that the 'In Case of Emergency (ICE)' app. is downloaded and saved on mobile phones. Lone workers should be made aware of the nearest first aid box.
- 10.3 Procedures for safety during **home visits** should be followed with appropriate risk

assessment. It is highly recommended that the 'In Case of Emergency (ICE)' app. is downloaded and saved on mobile phones for all home visits. Any TouchBase 'Employee or Associate' should inform Keeley de Freese of the time of the expected home visit, where they are going including the full address of the visit and the expected duration of the visit. The 'Employee or Associate' making the home visit should ensure they have a fully charged mobile phone the telephone number of Keeley de Freese on their mobile phone and at least one other TouchBase Employee or Associate. All 'Employees and Associates' should wear their TouchBase identity badge during home visits.

Please read the 'Health and Safety made Simple' leaflet

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg449.pdf

A copy of this is available in the TouchBase Hove main office.

Additional Advice

Reporting accidents and incidents at work: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg453.pdf

Providing the right workplace facilities: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg449.pdf

First Aid: www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg347.pdf

Working Alone: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf

Manual Handling: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/INDG143.pdf

In creating this document reference has been made to the 'Speak Out' Independent advocacy for adults with learning disabilities in Brighton & Hove Health and Safety Document and to all the HSE documents listed above.