



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

1. Statement of Intent

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd., a certified social enterprise, is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all its employees, volunteers, and participants, particularly young people aged 11-18 engaged in our mentoring programmes. This includes but is not limited to preventing accidents and cases of work-related illnesses, managing health and safety risks in our workplace and activities, and providing clear information and adequate training. We recognise our legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and aim to foster a safe environment, especially for our youth-focused initiatives.

2. Policy

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. is dedicated to creating a safe and supportive environment for all young people, parents/carers, employees, and volunteers involved in our activities. Our commitment to health and safety is reflected in the following principles:

- Young people are respected, supported, and empowered to feel safe, happy, and secure during all activities, both online and in-person.
- We ensure an inclusive environment that promotes cultural safety for Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children, and provides a safe space for children with disabilities, aligning with our Equality and Diversity Policy.
- We have a legal and moral duty to contact authorities if we are concerned about a young person's safety, in line with our Safeguarding Policy, including addressing any risks of grooming or harm.
- Potential health and safety risks are identified early through regular risk assessments, and measures are implemented to remove or reduce these risks to a satisfactory standard, particularly for in-person events.
- This Health and Safety Policy underpins all recruitment practices, ensuring staff and volunteers are selected with safety in mind.
- Staff and volunteers are provided with support and training to identify, assess, and minimise health and safety risks, including those specific to working with young people and lone working situations.



- We ensure ongoing support and training to enable staff and volunteers to enact these commitments effectively, fostering a proactive safety culture.

3. Responsibilities

Management

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety lies with the Managing Director of Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. Managers at all levels are responsible for ensuring this policy is put into practice within their areas of control.

Employees and Volunteers

Every employee and volunteer must take reasonable care for their own health and safety. They are also required to cooperate with management, follow any related rules and procedures, and report to them all health and safety concerns they might encounter. This includes supervising young participants during activities, ensuring compliance with safety briefings.

4. Risk Assessment

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. is committed to identifying and managing health and safety risks to ensure the safety of all children, young people, parents/carers, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers (including minor volunteers), and visitors.

Regular risk assessments will be carried out for all activities, venues, and work practices. These will be reviewed annually, after any significant change (e.g., new programme, venue, or activity), or following any accident/incident.

Key Principles:

- Assessments must consider the specific needs of young people (11-18), vulnerable adults, and minor volunteers.
- Particular attention will be given to risks such as slips/trips, allergies, conflicts, lone working, manual handling, and online activities.
- Minor volunteers will only be assigned roles appropriate to their age, maturity, and experience. Additional controls (e.g., higher supervision ratios) will be included in all risk assessments involving them.
- Vulnerable adults will have personalised risk assessments where



needed, considering disabilities, health conditions, or other support requirements, in line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Procedure:

1. Identify hazards.
2. Identify who might be harmed (including children, vulnerable adults, and minor volunteers).
3. Evaluate risks and implement control measures.
4. Record the assessment and share with relevant staff/volunteers.
5. Review and update regularly.

Link to Accident Recording: Any accident, near-miss, or incident must be recorded in the Accident Book (see Section 8). Risk assessments will be reviewed and updated following any entry in the Accident Book to prevent recurrence. Patterns identified in the Accident Book will inform future risk assessments.

Responsibility: The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are completed and communicated. All staff and volunteers must follow the controls identified.

5. Health and Safety Training

Appropriate health and safety training will be provided to all employees and volunteers to ensure they are competent to carry out their work safely and will be refreshed periodically. Training will cover fire safety, basic first aid, manual handling, and youth-specific safety protocols. Updates will be provided through regular meetings and company communications, with a focus on preparing staff for low-risk activities like collaboration games and snack management. Training will also include lone working awareness and safe practices.

6. Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures for fire, evacuation, and other critical incidents will be established. Regular drills will be conducted to ensure all employees and volunteers are familiar with these plans. For youth events in YMCA ICC, staff will be briefed on YMCA ICC evacuation routes and will conduct headcounts during drills. In case of serious incidents (e.g., medical emergencies), staff will



call 999 and liaise with venue staff or emergency services, ensuring participant safety.

7. Manual Handling

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. is committed to complying with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) to prevent injury from lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, or supporting loads (including equipment, boxes, furniture, or resources used in youth mentoring or Parents' Wellbeing Programme activities).

Our Approach:

- **Avoidance**

Where reasonably practicable, hazardous manual handling will be avoided (e.g., by using trolleys, storing items at waist height, purchasing lighter/smaller items, or redesigning tasks like using digital resources instead of physical materials).

- **Risk Assessment**

If avoidance is not possible, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will be carried out for any manual handling task that could pose a risk of injury. Assessments consider:

- Task (e.g., distance, frequency, twisting).
- Individual (e.g., capability, training, health).
- Load (e.g., weight, shape, stability).
- Environment (e.g., space, lighting, floor conditions). Generic assessments will be used for common low-risk tasks (e.g., moving chairs/tables for sessions); specific assessments for higher-risk or unusual tasks.

- **Control Measures**

Risks will be reduced through:

- Provision of mechanical aids (e.g., trolleys, sack trucks) where needed.
- Team lifting for heavier items.
- Training in safe techniques (e.g., bend knees, keep load close, avoid twisting).
- Encouraging staff/volunteers to seek help if a load feels too heavy or awkward.
- No individual to be required to lift loads that exceed safe limits based on HSE guidelines (e.g., avoid routine lifting over 25kg for



men/16kg for women without controls).

- **Training and Information**

All staff and volunteers will receive appropriate manual handling awareness training during induction, covering basic safe techniques and when to seek assistance. Training will be recorded.

- **Reporting**

Any incidents, near-misses, or musculoskeletal issues related to manual handling must be reported immediately to the line manager/Managing Director and recorded for review.

- **Review**

Manual handling arrangements and assessments will be reviewed annually, after any incident, or when activities change (e.g., new equipment or venues).

Responsibilities

- **Managing Director/Managers**

Ensure assessments are completed, controls implemented, and training provided.

- **Staff and Volunteers**

Follow safe systems, use provided equipment, report hazards, and not undertake unsafe handling.

8. Accident Recording and Reporting (Accident Book)

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. will maintain an **Accident Book** (or digital equivalent, stored securely in line with our Data Protection Policy) to record all accidents, incidents, near-misses, and injuries involving staff, volunteers, young people, or vulnerable adults.

Procedure:

- All accidents/incidents must be reported immediately to the line manager or Managing Director and recorded in the Accident Book as soon as possible (ideally within 24 hours).
- The record must include: date, time, location, individuals involved (names, ages, roles), description of the incident/injury, first aid given, witnesses, and actions taken (including any RIDDOR reporting).
- The Accident Book will be reviewed regularly by the Managing Director to identify trends and implement preventive measures.

- RIDDOR Reporting: Any reportable incidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (e.g., death, specified injuries, over-7-day injuries, dangerous occurrences) will be reported to the HSE without delay.
- Parents/carers or next of kin will be informed promptly where appropriate.
- Records will be retained in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and statutory requirements.

9. Lone Working

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. recognises that some staff and volunteers may work alone (e.g., one-to-one mentoring, event preparation, or follow-up work). Lone working must be minimised, especially with young people, or vulnerable adults, and is subject to strict controls.

Scope: This applies to all lone working involving children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers (including minor volunteers).

Our Approach:

- **Avoidance where possible**

Lone working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults is strongly discouraged and only permitted where unavoidable. Group or paired working is preferred. Minor volunteers must never undertake lone working.
- **Risk Assessment**

All lone working activities must be risk assessed in advance using the TILEO framework (Task, Individual, Load/Equipment, Environment, Other factors). Assessments must specifically consider:

 - Risks to or from children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
 - Additional vulnerabilities of minor volunteers (e.g., inexperience, need for closer supervision).
 - Potential for allegations of misconduct.
 - Emergency procedures and communication.
- **Control Measures**
 - Pre-arranged check-in systems (e.g., text or call at agreed times).
 - Mobile phone with charged battery and emergency contacts.
 - Location sharing (where appropriate).
 - Minor volunteers must always have a named adult supervisor contactable at all times and must not be left unsupervised with participants.
 - Dynamic risk assessment: Lone workers must continually



assess risk and withdraw if unsafe.

- o Personal safety training (conflict de-escalation, awareness).

- **Accident / Incident Recording**

Any incident, accident, or near-miss during lone working must be recorded immediately in the Accident Book. The DSL must be informed if it involves a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.

- **Training and Support**

All relevant staff and volunteers (including those supervising minor volunteers) will receive lone working training during induction and annually. Minor volunteers will receive age-appropriate guidance and must not be placed in lone working situations.

Responsibilities:

- **Managing Director/Managers:** Ensure lone working risk assessments are completed, controls are in place, and training is provided.
- **Staff and Volunteers:** Follow procedures, conduct dynamic risk assessments, and report any concerns or incidents immediately.
- **Minor Volunteers:** Must work under direct supervision of a named adult and follow all lone working rules.

Created on: 13 September, 2024	Approved by: Managing Director
Reviewed: 12 March, 2025 10 February, 2026 15 June, 2026	No. of review: 3
Next review: 31 June, 2027	