



The Inclusive Kitchen

Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment Procedures

Date written / reviewed	Date of policy: June 2025 Reviewed October 2025 Review of policy: June 2026
Written / Reviewed by	Mrs Julieanne Cresswell
Review due by	Review of policy: June 2026

The Inclusive Kitchen

1. Policy Statement

The Inclusive Kitchen is fully committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of our participants, staff, volunteers, and visitors. We believe that everyone has the right to work and learn in an environment free from unnecessary risks. Our approach is built upon the principles of proactive risk management and continuous improvement.

This policy has been signed off by the Senior Manager, affirming our organisational commitment to maintaining the highest health and safety standards in every aspect of our operations.

Legislative Framework Used to Guide the Policy

This policy is informed by key UK legislation and statutory guidance relevant to small educational and community-based settings, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 – overarching duty of care for all persons affected by our activities.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – risk assessment and control measures.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 – safe handling of cleaning and food-safe substances.
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 – fire safety procedures and equipment.
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 – incident reporting.
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998 – equipment safety and maintenance.
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations 1992 – guidance for screen use and ergonomics.
- These were selected to reflect best practice and legal compliance for a small, inclusive educational provider working with vulnerable groups.

Emergency Procedures Summary

Emergency procedures are clearly defined and rehearsed to ensure swift, safe responses:

- **Fire Safety:** Regular fire drills, clear evacuation routes, and designated assembly point at the Bottle Banks in the car park.
- **Evacuation Protocol:** Lead facilitator ensures exits are unobstructed and all individuals are accounted for.
- **Fire Equipment:** Extinguishers and fire blanket located throughout the venue; staff trained in their use.
- **Emergency Contact:** 999 call protocol includes location details (Whepstead Community Centre, Bury Road, Whepstead IP29 4TA).
- **Lone Working:** Pre-approved with check-in protocols and mobile access.
- **Incident Reporting:** Immediate reporting via form, email, or verbal communication; documented and reviewed.

Signed: Mrs J A Cresswell

Senior Manager, The Inclusive Kitchen Date: 5/6/2025

2. Statement of Organisation

The Inclusive Kitchen offers tailored cookery lessons to children (ages 11–17) and young adults (ages 18–25) with SEND and EHCPs. As a small organisation comprising a single teacher, volunteers, and occasional employees, we are dedicated to ensuring that all our activities—whether in-person or online—are delivered in a safe and supportive environment. We recognise that effective health and safety management is a shared responsibility and is integral to our approach in delivering high-quality services.

3. Arrangements for Managing Health & Safety

Our health and safety management is structured around the following key elements:

Risk Management: All activities and services undergo comprehensive risk assessments to identify, evaluate, and mitigate potential hazards. This process applies to our cooking sessions, workshop activities, and any online engagements where participants' safety is paramount.

Training and Competency: Our staff, volunteers, and occasional employees receive ongoing, role-specific health and safety training. This training is designed to ensure that all team members are aware of safe practices and are capable of spotting, reporting, and mitigating potential risks.

Safe Working Environment: We commit to maintaining a safe physical space by regularly reviewing our facilities, procedures, and equipment. Any necessary adjustments or repairs are promptly addressed, ensuring that our environment meets safety standards at all times.

Consultation and Communication: We encourage open communication regarding health and safety issues. Team members and participants are invited to share ideas and feedback, which are used to continuously improve our safety practices.

4. Responsibilities for Health & Safety

Senior Manager/Director: Overall accountability for health and safety within The Inclusive Kitchen lies with our Senior Manager/Director. They ensure that the organisational policies, procedures, and practices comply with legislative requirements and best practices.

Health & Safety Coordinator: We designate a Health & Safety Coordinator (who may also be the designated safeguarding lead or a similarly appointed role) responsible for:
Coordinating and maintaining risk assessments.

Ensuring that all staff and volunteers have access to current health and safety information and training.

Acting as the point of contact for all health and safety concerns.

All Staff, Volunteers, and Occasional Employees: Every team member must adhere to this policy and promptly report any health and safety issues or incidents. Their active participation in health and safety practices is essential to maintaining a safe environment.

5. Competent Health & Safety Advice

The Inclusive Kitchen obtains independent and specialist health and safety advice from qualified external advisers when necessary. This ensures that our safety procedures are aligned with current legislation and industry best practices. We periodically review our approach based on the latest guidance, including statutory requirements relevant to small educational settings.

6. Risk Assessments

Purpose: Risk assessments are conducted to identify potential hazards within all our activities. This process involves evaluating the likelihood and severity of incidents to implement effective control measures.

Process:

- Identification: A detailed inspection of all physical spaces, activities, and online interactions is undertaken to pinpoint areas of potential risk.
- Evaluation: Each risk is assessed for its potential impact on health and safety. Control measures are then identified and implemented.
- Documentation: All risk assessments are documented, maintained securely, and made available during any monitoring visits or meetings upon request.
- Review: Risk assessments are reviewed periodically or following any incident, change in service delivery, or upon expert recommendation.
- Evidence: Evidence of risk assessments will be available for review during monitoring visits or meetings, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement.

7. Reporting Procedures

Incident Reporting: Any health and safety incidents, near misses, or concerns should be reported immediately to the Health & Safety Coordinator or Senior Manager.

- Method: Reports can be submitted via email, in-person communication, or through our designated incident reporting form.
- Action: All reported issues will be investigated, and appropriate remedial actions will be taken. Documentation of the incident and subsequent actions will be maintained in accordance with our record-keeping procedures.
- Feedback: All staff, volunteers, and service users are encouraged to provide feedback on health and safety practices to help the organisation identify areas for improvement.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

Internal Monitoring: Regular internal reviews are conducted to ensure compliance with this policy and the effectiveness of implemented health and safety measures. This includes scheduled checks of facilities, equipment, and risk assessment updates.

External Monitoring: Monitoring visits and meetings may be conducted by external regulatory bodies or independent health and safety advisers. We ensure full cooperation and provide all necessary documentation and evidence to demonstrate compliance.

Performance Review: Health and safety performance is integrated into our overall operational reviews. Findings from risk assessments, incident reports, and feedback are used to continually refine our risk management practices.

9. Fire Safety

Smoking is not permitted in the building or when there is a pupil/young adult present. During the time a pupil or pupils are on site, allocated staff are not permitted to smoke on the premises or land surrounding the building, even though this is common ground.

The Inclusive Kitchen takes fire safety extremely seriously and ensures that all staff, volunteers, and visitors are aware of fire prevention measures, emergency procedures, and the location of fire safety equipment.

Fire Alarms and Drills

- Fire alarms are tested regularly in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Fire drills are conducted at least once per term or prior to any new programme launch to ensure all team members and participants are familiar with evacuation procedures.
- All staff and volunteers must know how to activate the fire alarm and respond appropriately in the event of an alert.

Fire Exits and Evacuation Routes

Before any session begins, the lead facilitator must ensure that fire exits are clearly identified and unobstructed. The designated fire exits at Whepstead Community Centre are:

1. The Main Entrance (must remain unlocked while the hall is occupied).
2. Double doors opening onto the Play Area.
3. Double swing doors leading past the kitchen to the Playing Field.

All exits with 'Push to Open' bars must be accessible at all times. Tables, chairs, or equipment must not block these routes.

Assembly Point and Evacuation Protocol

- The Fire Assembly Point is located at the Bottle Banks in the Car Park.
- Upon arrival, guests must be informed of the fire exits and assembly point.
- At least two responsible persons must be appointed to oversee evacuation, ensuring no one remains in the Store Room, Toilets, or Kitchen.
- The lead facilitator is responsible for confirming that all individuals are accounted for at the assembly point.

Fire Safety Equipment

Fire extinguishers are located in:

- The Entrance Hall
- Either side of the Main Hall
- The passageway to the Toilets
- The Kitchen (also equipped with a Fire Blanket)

In the event of a fire:

1. Ensure immediate evacuation of all individuals.
2. Call 999 from a mobile phone and report the location: Whepstead Community Centre, Bury Road, Whepstead IP29 4TA.
3. If trained and the fire is minor, use the appropriate extinguisher. Otherwise, evacuate without attempting to fight the fire.

Play Area Safety

The play equipment is regularly inspected, but supervision remains the responsibility of parents or guardians. The Inclusive Kitchen does not accept liability for injuries or damage in the Play Area. All users must engage with the facilities safely and responsibly.

Evacuation Plan Summary

The Inclusive Kitchen maintains a clear, rehearsed evacuation plan to ensure the safe and orderly exit of all individuals during emergencies. This plan complements fire safety procedures and outlines roles, routes, and responsibilities to protect participants, staff, and visitors.

Evacuation Plan – Key Steps

Trigger: Evacuation begins upon fire alarm activation or visible hazard.

Immediate Action: All individuals must evacuate calmly via the nearest safe exit—no belongings should be collected.

Exit Routes: Use designated fire exits (Main Entrance, Play Area doors, Kitchen corridor doors); ensure they are unobstructed.

Assembly Point: Gather at the Bottle Banks in the Car Park.

Accountability: Lead facilitator confirms all individuals are present.

Two responsible persons (Or one if there are only two adults) check Store Room, Toilets, and Kitchen.

Emergency Contact: Call 999 and report location: Whepstead Community Centre, Bury Road, Whepstead IP29 4TA.

Re-entry: No one may re-enter the building until cleared by emergency services.

11. COSHH Risk Assessment

The Inclusive Kitchen complies with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations.

- All cleaning products, food-safe chemicals, and other substances are clearly labelled and stored securely.

- Risk assessments are conducted for any substance used during sessions.
- Staff and volunteers are trained to handle substances safely and wear appropriate PPE when required.

12. Equipment Safety

Electrical Equipment

- All electrical appliances are PAT tested annually.
- Faulty equipment must be reported immediately and removed from use.
- Extension leads and adaptors are used sparingly and safely.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

- Staff using screens for extended periods are provided with ergonomic guidance.
- Breaks are encouraged to reduce eye strain and fatigue.

13. Lone Working

Lone working is permitted only under specific conditions:

- The Senior Manager must be informed in advance.
- A check-in protocol is followed, including scheduled contact and emergency procedures.
- Lone workers must have access to a mobile phone and be familiar with the location's safety features.

14. Manual Handling

All staff and volunteers receive guidance on safe manual handling practices:

- Lifting techniques are demonstrated during induction.
- Heavy or awkward items must be moved using trolleys or with assistance.
- Manual handling risk assessments are completed for any new activity or equipment.

15. Infection Prevention and Control

The Inclusive Kitchen follows best practices for hygiene and infection control:

- Handwashing facilities are available and promoted before and after sessions.
- PPE (e.g., gloves, aprons) is provided when handling food or cleaning.
- The environment is cleaned before and after each session, with high-touch surfaces disinfected regularly.

- Vulnerable pupils are identified and additional precautions are taken to protect their health.

16. Training

All staff, volunteers, and occasional employees receive health and safety training appropriate to their role.

- Induction includes fire safety, manual handling, infection control, and safeguarding.
- Refresher training is provided annually or when procedures change.
- Specialist training is arranged when new risks or responsibilities are introduced.

17. Conclusion

The Inclusive Kitchen is steadfast in its commitment to providing an environment that is safe, supportive, and compliant with all relevant health and safety regulations. By rigorously applying these Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment Procedures, we protect our participants, staff, volunteers, and visitors while upholding our organisational values.

For further information or to report a health and safety concern, please contact our Health & Safety Coordinator or Senior Manager using the contact details provided in our internal communication guidelines.

This document is designed to serve as a robust framework for managing health and safety at The Inclusive Kitchen. It will be subject to annual review and updated as necessary to reflect legislative changes or improvements in our operational practices.

Date of policy: June 2025

Reviewed October 2025

Review of policy: June 2026