

Hot Drinks Policy

Whenever we say parents in this document, we mean parents and carers. Whenever we say child, we mean children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND)). Whenever we say Staff, we include all paid employees as well as any volunteers.

Each week, more than 300 children in the UK are rushed to hospital with hot drink scalds. Most of these children are very young and some will be left scarred for life. Hot drink scalds are the number one cause of scald injuries among young children.¹

Babies and young children are particularly vulnerable to scalds from hot drinks because their skin is much thinner than an adult's. A mug of hot drink with milk, left standing for 10 minutes, can scald a baby or toddler in less than 1.5 seconds.²

1. Purpose

To ensure the safety of all staff, volunteers and families that visit The Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity (the "Charity").

2. Objectives

All staff are trained to recognise and raise awareness of the need to keep hot drinks away from babies and children and to lead by example. Therefore, all staff with hot drinks will remain in the office end of reception (upstairs and down) and all hot drinks will be kept well out of the reach of children. Staff are instructed to take particular care when carrying hot drinks from the kitchen to the office space.

If hot drinks are being taken to the boardroom or service office (e.g. either mezzanine space), the drinks carrier must be used.

¹ Information provided by Dr. Amber Young in Child Accident Prevention Trust's [Too hot to handle](#) DVD resource pack.

² Child Accident Prevention Trust, November 2012, [The cost of Hot Drink Scalds](#), Making the Link.

3. Policy Statement

All services using The Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity building must adhere to the hot drink policy.

There should be no hot drinks in either the service or sensory rooms. Hot drinks are only allowed in the office area or in the upstairs mezzanines, and only if children are not present.

Hot drinks may be offered to visitors who must drink them in the reception area. However, this can only take place if there are no children present.

Thermal mugs should not be used as they retain heat and keep drinks hot for longer periods of time, therefore increasing the potential for scalds to occur.

Cold drinks should be made available for staff, families and visitors at all times, but only within the reception and office areas and upstairs mezzanines.