



# Risk Assessments

Date reviewed: 15.09.2023

## Policy statement

We believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents, and visitors. Legislation requires all individuals in the workplace to be responsible for the health and safety of premises, equipment, and working practices. We have a 'corporate responsibility' towards a 'duty of care' for those who work in and receive a service from our provision. Individuals also have a responsibility for ensuring their own and others' safety.

## Risk assessment means:

*Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to.*

The law does not require that all risk is eliminated, but that 'reasonable precaution' is taken. This is particularly important when balancing the need for children to be able to take appropriate risks through physically challenging play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Health and safety risk assessments inform procedures. Staff and parents should be involved in reviewing risk assessments and procedures – they are the ones with first-hand knowledge as to whether the control measures are effective – and they can give an informed view to help update procedures accordingly.

## This policy is based on the five steps below:

- Identification of a risk: Where is it and what is it?
- Who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents, volunteers, students, etc?
- Assessment as to whether the level of a risk is high, medium, or low. This considers both the likelihood of it happening, as well as the possible impact if it did.
- Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk: What will you need to do, or ensure others will do, to reduce that risk?
- Monitoring and review: How do you know if what you have said is working, or is thorough enough? If it is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.

## Procedures

### Daily safety sweeps and checks indoors and outdoors

- Safety sweeps are conducted when setting up for the day prior to children arriving or closing after each session. Sometimes a safety sweep will identify a risk that requires a formal risk assessment on the form. For example, if a window latch is becoming stiff and a practitioner must stand on a chair to reach it to ensure it has closed properly.
- Our Practice Manager undertakes training and ensures staff and volunteers have adequate training in health and safety matters.
- Our risk assessment process covers adults and children and includes:
  - Determining where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, to inform staff practice, and to demonstrate how we are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers and inspectors.
  - Checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outside, in relation to the premises and activities; and procedures.
  - Assessing the level of risk and who might be affected.
  - Deciding which areas need attention.

- Developing control measures to reduce or eliminate the risk – the risk assessment should specify the action required, the timescales for action, the person responsible for the action, and any funding required.
- Monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the control measures to check they are working and amend if necessary.
- We maintain lists of health and safety issues, which are checked daily before the session begins, as well as those that are checked on a weekly and termly basis when a full risk assessment is carried out.
- Regular safety monitoring will include checking of the accident and incident records as a basis for risk assessment.
- All risk assessments are available for parents to see on request.
- Our Practice Manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, and food safety for all areas of the premises.

Our Practice Manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments to work practice including:

- Changing children.
- Preparation and serving of food/drink for children.
- Children with allergies.
- Cooking activities with children.
- Supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment.
- Assessment of use and storage of equipment for disabled children.
- The use and storage of substances that may be hazardous to health, such as cleaning chemicals.
- Visitors to the setting who bring equipment or animals as part of children’s learning experiences; and
- Following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers.

Our Practice Manager carries out risk assessments for off-site activities if required, and ensures that staff members read them, including:

- Children’s outings (including use of public transport).
- Home visits.
- Other off-site duties such as attending meetings, banking, etc.
- We take precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to Legionella (Legionnaire’s disease). Our Practice Manager ensures that staff members are familiar with the HSE guidance and risk assesses accordingly/have seen the risk assessment relevant to the premises from the landlord.

**Legal framework**

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

This policy was reviewed by Hanslope Pre-school on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Date to be reviewed 15<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Signed on behalf of Hanslope Pre-school

...B. Mudaliar.....

By Brittany Mudaliar Chairperson on 29/09/2023