

8.4 Risk assessment

Policy statement

We believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

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 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.

Procedures

- Risk assessment is carried out in September each year and at other times if necessary.
- 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.
- Staff regularly check furniture, equipment, the indoor and outdoor environment and are encouraged to be vigilant at all times.
- Any hazards are recorded on the assessment sheet and dealt with immediately where possible. Any matters we cannot deal with immediately are recorded on an Action Plan specifying the action required, the time-scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.
- Some matters are referred to the landlord, in writing.

The setting managers ensure that staff members carry out risk assessments for 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
- the use and storage of substances which may be hazardous to health, such as cleaning chemicals
- visitors to the setting who are bring equipment or animals as part of children’s learning experiences and children’s outings