

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment**

Providers must have a clear and well-understood policy, and procedures for assessing any risks to children's safety, and review risk assessments regularly.

### **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.

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 safe and 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 hazard: Where is it and what is it?
- Who might be harmed and how?
- Assessment as to whether the level of risk is high, medium, low. This takes into account both the likelihood of it happening, as well as the possible impact if it did.
- Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk.
- Monitoring and review.

#### **Procedures**

- Our Health & Safety Officer undertakes training and ensures our 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 our premises and activities;
  - assessing the level of risk and who might be affected;
  - deciding which areas need attention; and
  - developing an action plan that specifies the action required, the time-scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.
- 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.
- Our Manager ensures 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;
    - following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers.
  - Our Manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments for off-site activities if required, including:
    - children's outings;
    - Forest School.

### Legal framework

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)

### Further guidance

- Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE 2011)

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|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| This policy was adopted by                        | CROWMARSH PRE-SCHOOL     | <i>(name of provider)</i> |
| On  | 5 <sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016 | <i>(date)</i>             |
| Date to be reviewed                               | MAY 2018                 | <i>(date)</i>             |
| Signed on behalf of the provider                  | <i>Reynolds</i>          |                           |
| Name of signatory                                 | MICHELLE REYNOLDS        |                           |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) | CO-CHAIR                 |                           |

### Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

Managing Risk (2009)