

General Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety

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

At Trinket Box, 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 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.

The basis of this policy is risk assessment. Pre-school Learning Alliance risk assessment processes follow five steps as follows:

- Identification of risk: Where is it and what is it?
- Who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents, visitors etc?
- Assessment as to the level of risk as high, medium, low. This is both the risk of 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, in order 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

- 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 they are managing risks if asked by parents and/or carers and inspectors;
 - checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in our premises and for 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.
- Where more than five staff and volunteers are employed the risk assessment is written and is reviewed regularly.
- We carry out a full risk assessment daily before the session begins, this is reviewed regularly.
- Checks, such as electricity and gas safety checks, and any necessary work to the setting premises are carried out annually and records are kept. These are carried out by the Site staff, under the agreed licence with the owner of our building.
- The Manager/Deputy ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, food safety for all areas of the premises.
- The Manager/Deputy 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 outdoor climbing equipment;
 - putting young children to sleep
 - 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
 - following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers.
- The Manager/Deputy ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments for off-site activities if required, including:
 - children's outings (including use of public transport)
 - forest school and beach school and
 - other off-site duties such as attending meetings, banking etc.
- We take precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to Legionella (Legionnaires disease). Our manager ensures that we are familiar with the HSE guidance and risk assess accordingly/have seen the risk assessment relevant to the premises from the landlord.

Legal framework

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Further guidance

- Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE 2011)
- Legionnaires' Disease – A Brief Guide for Dutyholders (HSE 2012) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg458.pdf

This policy is approved by the Committee and reviewed annually

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

- Managing Risk (2009)