

## **Risk Assessment Policy**

**Policy statement** - We believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our Preschool 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.

We are committed to the highest standards of health and safety for children, staff, parents and visitors. In order to ensure this, we will conduct risk assessments and review them regularly – at least once per term or more frequently where the need arises. The risk assessment will cover outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys. A record will be maintained of areas which have been checked.

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 following areas will be considered when a risk assessment takes place:

- ↷ Boundaries and gates
- ↷ Water hazards, e.g. drains
- ↷ Hazardous substances and equipment
- ↷ Hazardous plants
- ↷ Pets and other animals
- ↷ Electricity and gas
- ↷ Socket covers
- ↷ Doors, windows and glass
- ↷ Floors and steps
- ↷ Stacked furniture
- ↷ Kitchen and food preparation/access to the kitchen
- ↷ Hot appliances
- ↷ Hygiene, cleanliness and minimising the risk of infection
- ↷ Outings and trips
- ↷ Fire safety
- ↷ Condition of toys and other equipment
- ↷ Sandpits and their protection from contamination
- ↷ Furniture, equipment and toys
- ↷ Forest School area

In creating these assessments we will consider

- ↷ Identification of risk: Where is it and what is it?
- ↷ Who is at risk: Staff, children, parents 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 we know if what we 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**

- ↷ The Preschool Leader 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, 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 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.
- ↷ The Preschool Leader ensures that checks, such as electricity safety checks, and any necessary work to the setting premises are carried out regularly and records are kept.

## Pickering Pre-School Playgroup

- The Preschool Leader 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 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;
  - assessment, use and storage of equipment for disabled children;
  - 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 Preschool Leader ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments for off-site activities if required, including:
  - children's outings;
  - home visits; and
  - other off-site duties such as attending meetings, banking etc.

**Legal framework** Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

**Further guidance** Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE 2006) [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf)

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Pickering Pre-School Playgroup held on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.**

**Date to be reviewed – Before end of August 2024.**

**Signed on behalf of the management committee**

**Name of signatory – Richard Allenby (Chairperson).**