

Greenbank Pre School

Risk Assessment - Premises Policy



Greenbank Pre School

Edinburgh Greenbank Parish Church of Scotland
Braidburn Terrace
Edinburgh EH10 6ES

*SPPA Registration No: 0923
Charity No SCO11325*

Risk Assessment

Why?

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 impose an obligation upon employers to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable:

- the health, safety and welfare of all their employees
- the health, safety and welfare of persons, not in their employment, who might be affected by
- the undertaking and activities of the employer
- The employer is also required to assess the risks to the health, safety and welfare of staff and any others affected by the activities.
- Where more than five staff, paid or unpaid, are employed the employer has a duty to:
 - record the significant findings of the assessment
 - identify any group of employees, or other persons who are regarded as being especially at risk.
- **Even where there are fewer than five employees, paid or unpaid, SPPA recommends that the significant findings of the assessment are recorded.**
- A risk assessment is a process that provides a systematic examination of the work activity and requires the employer to:
 - Identify the hazards present. A hazard can be defined as something with the potential to cause harm or injury.
 - Identify the people who might be at risk. A risk can be defined as the likelihood of harm or injury from a hazard.
 - Identify factors/causes which contribute to risks - e.g. faulty/unguarded equipment, poor hygiene routines etc.
 - Evaluate the consequences of risk - i.e. whether harm or injury will be very likely or unlikely to happen and whether it will likely cause minor or more serious to life threatening injury.
 - Determine and implement changes which are needed to eliminate or control the risk whenever a particular activity is being carried out.

Risk assessment helps:

- the management of health and safety
- reduce the possibility and cost of injuries, illness, property and equipment damage
- compliance with the law
- produce a quality working environment

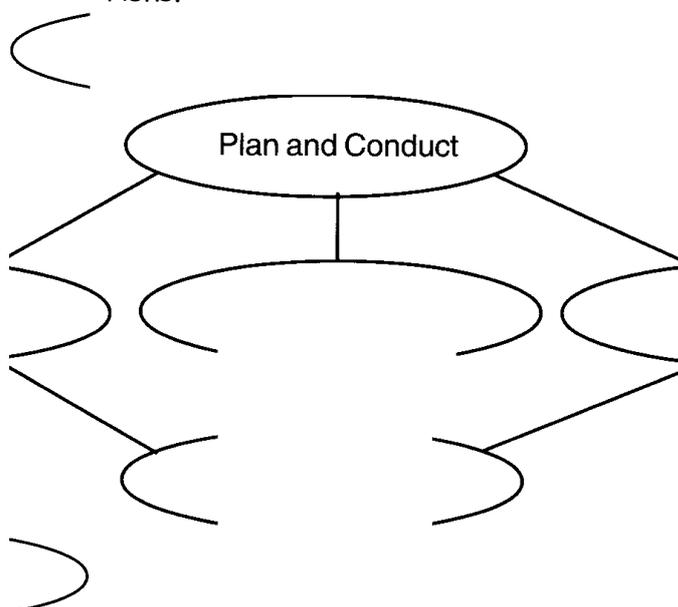
Pre-school groups and Risk Assessments

Pre-school groups are responsible for the safety and well-being of the children attending the group. They are also responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all staff, paid or unpaid, and other adults who are involved, in any

way, in the activities and undertakings of the group.
Pre-school groups have a duty to eradicate or control any risks to children, staff, parents and others associated with the work of the group.

SPPA recommends that all pre-school groups:

- conduct a risk assessment
- record significant findings of the assessment
- monitor the management of risks by ensuring discussion of risks and hazards are on the agenda at staff and committee meetings
- accurately record and report accidents or incidents as they occur
- carry out a review every 6 months in order to ensure risks are being managed or eliminated appropriately and to identify new or emerging risks.



Pre-school groups should all have a written health and safety policy. The policy should influence how the pre-school group organises and carries out its activities and should identify hazards which might occur, the associated risks, and the control measures to be taken to eliminate or minimise the risks.

Who should carry out the risk assessment?

The effective implementation of a group's health and safety policy requires the commitment and involvement of staff, parents, children and other adults. Most pre-school groups appoint a health and safety officer to ensure the group maintains a safe, healthy and secure environment. The health and safety officer is the most obvious person to undertake the task but parents, committee members and staff should be consulted and asked for their input. In some of the areas where risks are identified, guidance and advice should be sought from the professional agencies - e.g. environmental health or the fire services - to ensure appropriate measures are taken to eliminate or control risks.

The process of risk assessment should be manageable and those involved should

take all reasonable care in carrying it out to ensure all hazards are identified, as far as is reasonably practicable~ The written assessment should be attached to the group's health and safety policy statement.

Pre-school groups need to establish a positive attitude and culture towards health and safety and should ensure that

- people have the skills and knowledge to carry out tasks safely
- people are instructed and trained in health and safety matters
- sound advice and help are sought in health and safety issues, as appropriate
- people identified to carry out risk assessments are adequately trained and have sufficient resources
- people know and understand their responsibilities
- information about hazards, risks and preventative measures are known to staff, parents, children and others as appropriate

What are hazards in pre-school groups?

Most pre-school groups identify hazards and carry out ad hoc risk assessment on a day to day basis to control the risks. For example:

- safety mats are placed around the climbing frame
- faulty equipment is noted and withdrawn
- children are supervised outside
- fire exits are kept clear

However, it is good practice to take a more structured approach so that:

- all aspects of the group's activity are monitored and reviewed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, staff, parents and others
- the group is consistently complying with specific health and safety acts and/or regulations
- consistency in looking at hazards and risks is established
- procedures to manage or eliminate risks are established and followed in the workplace
- all groups of people - children, parents, staff, visitors etc. - who might be affected are considered. Some may be identified as being particularly at risk
- existing preventative and precautionary measures can be evaluated and reviewed
- necessary changes to procedures are made quickly and all the relevant people informed

What are the significant risks in pre-school groups?

All pre-school groups are different and it is difficult to specify precisely what areas of group activity are hazardous and therefore what needs to be assessed. However, groups should examine all the activities and work environment to identify what could cause harm to people so that they can take precautions to eliminate harm and comply with legislation.

Some areas to consider are:

- access and departure points
- preparation and giving of snacks
- adventure play - indoors and outdoors
- outings
- cleaning up spillages and disposal of bodily waste and fluids
- water activity - indoors and outdoors
- woodwork
- visitors to the group
- cooking equipment and activities
- electrical sockets and appliances
- heating apparatus
- storage of cleaning materials
- setting up, packing away and storing equipment

SPPA's *Code of Practice for Sessional Playgroups* gives some guidance on eliminating and minimising risk.

SPPA recommends that pre-school groups carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment which identifies the significant risks arising out of the work of the group.

The purpose of the assessment should be to provide a set of control measures which should be followed whenever a particular activity, range or piece of equipment is used in the course of the group's work. The control measures should aim to eliminate, or manage and minimise, potential harm or injury to any person, child or adult, engaged in the activity.

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It is possible to rate the potential for risk. The rating is dependent on two factors: the probability of something happening, which is termed the probability rating, and the the severity of the consequences should it happen, which is termed the effect rating.

The risk rating is arrived at by multiplying the effect rating by the probability rating. Groups should use the ratings given below:

Probability Rating

1. Unlikely to happen
2. May occur at sometime
3. Possible and could happen
4. Probable
5. Very likely to happen

Effect Rating

1. Negligible
2. Minor injury or irritation
3. Some injury, not too serious
4. Serious injury or illness
5. Life threatening injury or illness

The example for water play shows how risk assessments might be recorded (Appendix 1). Blank pro formas are attached (Appendix 2) for groups to photocopy and use.

Monitoring

As with any aspect of pre-school group activities, it is important to keep a watch on health and safety matters in order to gauge how successfully the group is operating. Monitoring health and safety performance requires the group to regularly examine and check that:

- safety standards and procedures are being implemented
- the controls introduced to eliminate or minimise risk are working
- information and insight gained through monitoring are used to improve practice and procedures
- accidents and incidents are recorded and brought to the attention of appropriate personnel

If injury, illness or damage to property occurs, or nearly occurs, the group needs to investigate what and why something happened so that remedial action can be taken to control the risk. The outcomes of monitoring health and safety performance must feature regularly on the group's management agenda.

Remedial actions, as a consequence of monitoring, may require:

- organisational and policy changes
- group expenditure on resources and equipment
- updating health and safety information to parents
- health and safety training

Pre-school groups are expected to keep a record of all accidents and incidents which occur during the course of the group's activities*. They should investigate the accident and incident thoroughly to ensure they get to all the underlying causes of the accident/incident. Thorough investigations will help identify the hazards involved and will suggest measures to take to avert such accidents/incidents happening again.

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Reviewing

Monitoring provides information which lets the group review and evaluate its performance in health and safety matters.

The information can:

- show to what extent health and safety policy and standards are being complied with
- identify areas which need attention
- demonstrate what's been achieved

Examining the accident and incident record provides information about the types of injury and incidents which occur from which an analysis can be made of:

- the immediate and underlying causes of accidents and incidents
- trends in occurrence of accident and incidents
- common features

Assessing all the information will help the group to identify where improvements need to be made and the action necessary to make the improvements.

The information provided in this document should help pre-school groups establish and maintain a healthy and safe environment for all the people involved in its activities. Formulating and implementing a health and safety policy which incorporates risk assessment helps to establish quality health and safety practices and procedures in the group. People involved in the group are protected; incidents and damage to property are controlled.

A positive and proactive approach to health and safety is nurtured and assured within the group.

Useful Reading

A Guide to Risk Assessment Requirements, Managing Health and Safety - 5 steps to success.

HSE books tel 01787 881 165

General Information

The laws covering Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Noise at Work Regulations 1989

Control of Substances Hazards to Health Regulations 1994 Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992

(this is needed if the group has an office)

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All staff and committee members will have a working knowledge of this policy.

Date of review September 2016

Name Joan Ritchie

Due review by September 2019