

01 Health and safety procedures

01.1 Risk assessment

Risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents/carers and visitors.

Legislation requires all individuals in the workplace to be responsible for the health and safety of premises, equipment and working practices. Little Doves CP has a 'corporate responsibility' towards a 'duty of care' for those who work in and receive a service from the provision. Individuals also have responsibility for ensuring their own and others safety.

- 01.1a – 01.01i Risk assessment forms are completed as necessary for each situation/area and the procedure is modified according to needs identified for the specific environment/situation.
- 01.1j Access audit is completed to ensure inclusion and the health and safety of all visitors, staff, and children. The relevant procedure is modified if required to match the assessment.
- 01.1k Prioritised place risk assessment is completed for offering prioritised places during a national pandemic (such as Covid–19). A separate form is completed for each child who is prioritised because they are vulnerable, or meet any other criteria stipulated by the Government at the time. Risk assessment is also completed for each individual group/room as appropriate. If the risk assessment indicates a high risk if the place is offered, that cannot be minimised, the offer of the place may be withdrawn at the discretion of the pre-school manager.

Risk assessment means: *Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that 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 and is updated when necessary.*

The law does not require that all risk be 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.

Daily safety sweeps and checks indoors and outdoors

Safety sweeps are conducted when setting up for the day prior to children arriving or closing in the afternoon and a Daily risk assessment form 01.01b is completed. Sometimes a safety sweep will identify a risk that requires a formal risk assessment on form 01.01d General risk assessment, for example, if a window latch is becoming stiff and an educator has to stand on a chair in order to reach it to ensure it has closed properly. Termly (form 01.01a) and Ongoing (form 01.01 c) risk assessments are also completed.

Health and safety risk assessments

Health and safety risk assessments inform procedures. Staff and parents/carers should be involved in reviewing risk assessments and procedures, as 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.

Risk Assessments are based on five steps as follows:

- Identification of risk: Where is it and what is it?
- Who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents/carers, cooks, cleaners etc?
- Assessment as to the level of risk as 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: 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.

The 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 risks are managed if asked by parents/carers and/or carers and inspectors
- checking for and noting hazards and risks indoors and outside, and in the premises and for activities
- assessing the level of risk and who might be affected
- deciding which areas need attention
- developing an action plan that specifies the action required, the time-scales for action, the person responsible for the action and any funding required.

The manager undertakes training and ensures staff have adequate training in health and safety matters.

The manager works with Navestock Village Hall caretaker/committee to ensure that building checks and any necessary work to the pre-school premises are carried out and records are kept, for example;

- gas safety by a Gas Safe registered gas/heating engineer
- electricity safety by a qualified electrician
- fire precautions to check that all fire-fighting equipment and alarms are in working order
- deep clean is carried out in kitchen.

The pre-school manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, food safety, in each of the following areas of the premises:

- entrance and exits
- outdoor areas
- passageways, stairways and connecting areas
- group rooms
- sleep areas, if applicable

- main kitchen.
- office/staff room.
- rooms used by others or for other purposes.

The manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for off-site activities, such as

- children's outings (including use of public transport)
- home visits
- other duties off-site such as attending meetings, banking etc.

The pre-school manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for work practice including:

- the intimate care of young children and older children
- arrivals and departures
- preparation food/drink for children
- children with allergies and special dietary needs or preferences
- serving food
- cooking activities with children
- supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment
- settling young children to sleep, if applicable
- 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 pre-school who are bringing equipment or animals as part of children's learning experiences, for example, 'fire engines' 'baby chicks'
- following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers
- following any accident or incident involving staff or children.

The pre-school manager liaises with Crime Prevention Officers as appropriate to ensure security arrangements for premises and personnel are appropriate.

The pre-school takes precautions to reduce the risks of exposure to Legionella (Legionnaires disease). The manager ensures that the pre-school is familiar with the HSE guidance and liaises with the landlord regarding the risk assessment relevant to the premises.