

Witham Prospect School

Risk Assessment, Risk Management and Planning

Relevant Legislation and guidance

- The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 – UK Gov.
- Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards April 2015 – DFE.
- Social Care Common Inspection Framework SCCIF: children's homes (latest version) – OFSTED.
- Positive environments where children can flourish (latest version) – OFSTED.
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (latest available, revised) – UK Gov.
- Education Inspection Framework: EIF (latest version) – OFSTED.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges (latest version) – DFE.
- Regulation 10: The health and well-being standard.
- Guide to the health and well-being standard.
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children: Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England 2015.
- The Enjoyment and Achievement Standard
- The Care Planning Standard
- Promoting the Health and Well-being of Looked-After Children (Department for Education)
- Assessing Risk in Children's Homes (Ofsted)

Applies to:

All staff, residential and school based, volunteers and visitors.

Related Documents:

Health & Safety Policy Manual

Health and Safety section of the employee handbook

Prevent Policy

E-Safety, Television, and internet use policy

Self-Harm and Suicide Policy

Transporting Pupils and keeping Safe on Trips Policy

Admissions Policy

Pupils Risk Assessments

Availability:

This document is made available to parents/carers and visitors via the school website or upon request from the school office. Staff will be made aware of this policy during their induction and repeatedly via their training programme.

Monitoring and review:

This policy will be monitored and refined on a continuous basis and reviewed bi-annually by either the Directors, Registered Manager, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Changes in legislation, regulatory requirement or best practice guidelines will trigger earlier review.

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Risk Assessment, Risk Management and Planning

Introduction

Witham Prospect School will seek to identify risks and take action to reduce the probability of the risk and/or to limit their impact.

Operational risk assessments will be conducted to assess the environment, the activities, and the equipment to ensure that it is safe and suitable for children and young people, staff and visitors. Written formal risk assessments will be kept on site and will be accessible at all times. Management will maintain a record of all safety issues and any action taken. Daily risk assessments will be carried out on each indoor and outdoor area prior to use. Formal risk assessments will relate to the inside and outside environments, activities, planned excursions and individual children and young people. All staff will be involved in the risk assessments away from the premises.

Risk assessments will also be completed for each individual child/young person prior to their admission. These are live documents and are continuously monitored, reviewed, and updated as and when needed and at 6 monthly intervals in line with the child/young person's care plan. Further information regarding children and young people's risk assessments and other risk assessments that will be carried out and reviewed can be found in the following Policies:

[Admissions Policy](#)

[E-Safety, Television and Internet use Policy](#)

[Prevent Policy](#)

[Self-Harm and Suicide Policy](#)

[Education and Care Visits Policy](#)

In many instances, straightforward measures can control risks, and whilst the law does not expect employers to eliminate all risks, they are required to protect people so far as is reasonably practicable.

Purpose of Risk Assessment

The purpose of any risk assessment should be to reduce harm or the risk of harm and evidence that these risks are now minimised. It should consider all the risks as well as control measures that need to be in place; it should be fit for purpose and consider every issue relevant. It must provide enough information to all relevant people so that they can care for the children safely and appropriately.

Risk assessments are completed in relation to premises, business operations, equipment used for the child/ young person, risks associated with the needs and behaviour of the child/ young person, from other people and activities.

Risk-sensible not risk-averse practices should be followed when completing any risk assessment so a realistic and proportionate approach to risk is in place which enables children and young people to grow and learn.

Risk assessments must be in place to support staff and the child or young person in relation to any identified risks.

Risk assessments are carried out by all agencies involved in Children's Social Care and the children's social worker should provide the Children's Home with all up-to-date local authority risk assessments relating to the child or young person they support. The Children's Home must be in receipt of the most up to date risk assessment upon commencement of the placement. It is the registered manager's role to ensure that these are received, and the information is disseminated to all staff through our own internal risk assessment processes.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments are an important step towards protecting employees, children and young people and others affected by our business and is a requirement in health and safety law.

Main areas of risk that assessments must be completed for: -

- Risks to individual children and young people due to their intellectual disability and co-morbid conditions which may affect their coordination, judgement, and ability to identify risks and keep themselves safe.
- School buildings and property associated with fire and water damage, subsidence, explosion and theft.
- Risks to staff, children and young people and others who use the school premises and/or children's home.
- Accidents, structural failure, and other threats to physical safety are obvious risks to health and safety that can expose the company to liability.
- Physical, chemical and/or biological agents
- Working conditions and processes
- Manual handling activities
- Exposure to infection and illnesses
- Work-related stress
- Workstations and children and young people's learning areas, play areas and recreational areas.
- Activities and outings
- Petty theft and low-level vandalism or accidental damage to buildings
- Risks to company funds from fraud, theft, and inappropriate use
- Loss of data
- Loss of good reputation
- Risks connected with the proposed site development.
- Other workplace hazards.

Managing Risks relating to Children and Young People

All risks should be known before offering a placement to a child or young person.

When social workers complete a Placement Referral form this should include a risk assessment. If the Risk Assessment is not included with the referral form, then the Senior Leadership Team must request additional information, including the risk assessment as part of the decision-making process or obtain the risk assessment along with other relevant documents during the face-to-face assessment process. No placement can be offered if the current risk assessment has not been obtained. The local authority risk assessment will inform the placement process and ensure that any risks posed are known and can be managed by the Children's Home and School. The risk assessment should distinguish between fact and opinion. The risk and frequency of risk should be recorded and how this should be managed in different environments. All known vulnerabilities should be recorded for the child/ young person and set out any actions to address these risks. The Children's Home and School staff should feel they can provide the child/ young person with appropriate and safe care.

Children and young people who are placed at Witham Prospect School may have experienced a number of events in their lives which may impact on the level and type of care they require to keep themselves and others safe. They will also have a diagnosis of severe intellectual disability and other associated co-morbid conditions, such as autism spectrum disorder, epilepsy, and communication difficulties. It is therefore unlikely that the children and young people placed at Witham Prospect School will possess the cognitive ability to contribute towards their risk assessment document. However, staff will make all reasonable efforts to help each child/ young person to understand the risks associated with certain aspects of their care, hobbies, and interests as part of their development and independent living programme. This will include (but not limited to) teaching children and young people about internet safety, relationships and sex education, travel and community access safety and safety within the home setting.

Risks may come from a variety of sources and there may be external factors to the immediate placement (family/environment, peer relationships, sexual exploitation, county lines). The risk assessment should be child focused and identify how the child/young person can be supported in their development.

Possession of a risk assessment does not guarantee safety and cannot prevent unpredictable situations. However, a risk assessment can be a useful tool to help prevent a situation occurring. Staff should always seek advice around dangerous behaviours and/ or changes to behaviour.

Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child/ young person and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child or young person, their Placement Plan, agreed between the Children's Home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the Children's Home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis.

Children placed within the children's home at Witham Prospect School will be educated on site by our education department. Risk assessments relating to children and young people are relevant in

both the care and education settings and therefore we do not undertake separate risk assessments for care and education. Each child will have an overarching Individual Risk Assessment which identifies all risks associated with the care and support needs, including identified behaviours of concern and the steps to take to reduce the risks associated with behaviour. Individual Risk Assessments will also include risks associated with health and medical conditions, specific activities/ equipment required for the care of the child/ young person and any other significant risks individual to the child. It is the Children's Home Registered Managers responsibility to ensure that each child/ young person has an appropriate and up to date risk assessment in place and that all staff working within the children's home have read and understood the children/ young people's individual risk assessments. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the education staff have read and understood the children and young people's individual risk assessments. All staff are responsible for identifying and reporting any new risks associated with children and young people.

Each child/ young person also has a Sherwood Risk Assessment that is in line with the requirements of the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN). The behaviour support team undertake these risk assessments and they are focussed on the risks associated with restraint and restrictive practices that may be required to keep a child/ young person and other children and young people safe when their behaviours of concern are presenting a risk to their personal safety and in situations whereby the risk of not undertaking restrictive intervention would place the child/ young person or others at significant risk of harm. The Children's Home Registered Manager is responsible for signing these off and ensuring that all residential staff have read and understand these risk assessments and the Head Teacher is equally responsible for ensuring that staff in the education team have read and understand these risk assessments.

When completing Risk Assessments, staff should take reasonable precautions and make informed professional judgements based on the individual child/ young person's needs and developmental stage. Outside of the Risk Assessment document staff should be continuously assessing the environment and the risks present in the particular circumstances when deciding when to allow a child/ young person to take a particular risk or follow a particular course of action. If a child makes a choice that would place them or another person at significant risk of harm, staff should assist them to understand the risks and manage their risk-taking behaviour to keep themselves and others safe.

Where a child runs away persistently or engages in other risky behaviours, such as frequently attempting to access adult content on the internet or going missing from care, the registered person, in consultation with the child/ young person's placing authority, should convene a risk management meeting to develop a strategy for managing risks to the young person. The strategy should be agreed with the child's placing authority, the local authority where the home is located and the local police.

Effective risk management involves the following actions:

Reducing the Probability of Risk

Identified risks will be assessed and where possible removed from the premises. Activities and equipment that are necessary for the care and education of the children and young people will be assessed and appropriate risk management strategies put in place to limit the risk associated. In conjunction with this, the company will seek to identify risks associated to the day-to-day operation

of the children's home and school, the property and the people using the premises and will also assess the potential risks and the frequency and severity of each risk, where possible based on careful analysis or recent experience. Action will be taken to prevent or reduce the risk probability. The Risk Assessments relating to the premises and business functions will be monitored by the Director of Operations and will be addressed in board meetings where more appropriate solutions/equipment will be explored to reduce the risk further (see below section for management of risks associated with children and young people).

Limiting the Impact of Risk

The school will complete, in addition to general risk assessments, the business continuity plan as a formal record of problems that could occur in the future which will have impact on the day-to-day operations.

Effective monitoring of company operations by the Directors, and Managers will contribute to elimination or reduction of risks.

The school has a Business Continuity & Incident Management Plan which is regularly reviewed by the Directors, the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team. This is aimed at both protecting personal health and safety and minimising the disruption to normal operation that may be caused by an unforeseen emergency.

Levels of Risk and Control Measures

Risks can be seen as the following:

- **Low** - where something may be likely, but the consequences are likely not to have a huge impact.
- **Moderate** - where the consequences may be high, but specialist support or skills can mitigate the risk.
- **High** - where the risk cannot be mitigated.

Control measures take the form of Advice, Protect and Avoid.

- **Advice** - where skills, appropriate training for staff; supervision and observation can reduce the risks.
- **Protect** - where specific equipment or specialist expertise can support the situation such as hoists, fire doors, advice in relation to moving and handling, signage.
- **Avoid** - where the risk cannot be mitigated by advice and protection.

All risk assessments should state what the risk is and how it will be safely managed. All risk assessments should be signed and dated and reviewed when situations change.

Employee's responsibilities

Employees will: -

- Co-operate with the Children's home and School's arrangements in respect of workplace risk assessments.
- Follow any training, information, guidance, and instruction given by the children's home and school.
- Comply with any control measures laid down within risk assessments.
- Report any hazards or defects to the Operations Director or Health & Safety Officer immediately. Hazards and defects needing immediate attention during evenings and weekends should be reported to the team leader on duty who will contact the appropriate person to deal with the problem, i.e. maintenance or approved external contractor/agency
- Report any changes in behaviour, identified risks or strategies used to maintain the safety of children and young people to the Registered Manager (Head of Care in her absence) and the Behaviour Support Team to ensure that PBS and Restrictive Intervention Risk Assessments can be completed.
- The assets of the company include the sites, existing buildings, buildings under construction, plant, furniture, equipment, and materials. This also includes data, such as staff, children and young people and financial records.

Monitoring and Reviewing Risk Assessment's

The level of risk may change over time and regular review of risk should take place noting how risk has been successfully managed. Staff will make an active contribution to the risk assessment based on their experience of caring for the child/young person.

Whilst it is important to consider risks that may have been previously identified, caution should be taken in labelling children/young people and the level of current risk should be continuously assessed.

Changes in risk should be considered as part of on-going work with the child/young person such as in staff supervision; as part of risk management meetings; and as part of looked after child reviews.

Witham Prospect School has a responsibility to make sure risk assessments are being followed by staff and that they are up to date and updated as and when necessary.

Training around how to complete a risk assessment is in place for staff to aid them in considering how risks and control measures should be addressed.

The following individuals/departments are responsible for signing off Risk Assessments:

- Child and Young People Individual Risk Assessments – Registered Manager
- Sherwood Risk Assessments – Behaviour Support Team and Registered Manager

- Activity Risk Assessments – Registered Manager and Health and Safety Officer
- Educational Activity/Visits Risk Assessments – Education Leads and Health and Safety Officer
- Environment Risk Assessments – Health and Safety Officer
- COSHH Risk Assessments – Health and Safety Officer
- Staff related Risk Assessments i.e. amended duties, pregnancy risk assessments – Department Lead and Human Resources Manager
- Risk Register – Operations Director/ Director of Care
- Business Continuity Plan and Risk Assessment – Operations Director/ Director of Care
- Fire Risk Assessment – External Contractors co-ordinated by Health and Safety Officer
- Outdoor Play Equipment Risk Assessment – ROSPA co-ordinated by Health and Safety Officer
- Premises, Property and Equipment Risk Assessments – Health and Safety Officer

This Risk Assessment Policy forms part of the Health & Safety Policy Manual where an extensive coverage of all Health and Safety subjects and matters can be found.