



Registered Charity # 1203754

Risk Assessment Policy

Introduction

Houghton and Wyton Pre-school recognises the importance of identifying and managing risks to ensure a safe and secure environment for children, staff, parents, carers, and visitors. We are committed to conducting risk assessments that are thorough, proportionate, and responsive to change. This policy supports our legal responsibilities and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (2023).

Aim

To protect the safety and wellbeing of everyone within the setting by systematically identifying potential hazards and implementing reasonable precautions to mitigate those risks.

Objectives

We will achieve this by:

- Completing appropriate and timely risk assessments for all areas of the setting, activities, and practices.
- Promoting a culture of shared responsibility for health and safety.
- Reviewing risk assessments regularly and involving staff and parents in the process.
- Ensuring staff are trained and supported to recognise hazards and respond appropriately.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Pre-school Manager:** Leads on all risk assessment processes, ensures staff are trained, and liaises with the Primary School and external agencies as needed.
- **All Staff:** Follow guidance and control measures identified in risk assessments and report any new or emerging risks.
- **Parents and Visitors:** Expected to follow safety measures while on site and report any concerns.

Implementation Procedures

What is a Risk Assessment? A risk assessment involves:

- Identifying potential hazards in the environment or through specific activities.
- Deciding who might be harmed and how.
- Evaluating the risks and deciding on precautions.
- Recording findings and implementing control measures.
- Reviewing and updating the assessment regularly or following an incident.

The law does not require all risks to be eliminated but expects that reasonable precautions are taken. This includes supporting children in managing appropriate risks through play and exploration.

Types of Risk Assessments Risk assessments are carried out for:

- **Setting areas:**
 - Entrances and exits
 - Outdoor areas and connecting paths
 - Main classroom, kitchen, staff room/office
 - Shared or multi-use rooms
- **Work practices:**



- Changing and intimate care routines
- Arrival and departure of children
- Managing allergies and dietary needs
- Cooking with children
- Supervision during indoor and outdoor play
- Use of specialist equipment or aids for children with disabilities

- **Off-site activities:**
 - Forest School sessions
 - Home visits
 - Trips using public transport or walking
 - Staff duties carried out off-site (e.g., banking, meetings)

- **Events and visitors:**
 - Visits involving animals, equipment, or vehicles (e.g., fire engine visit)

- **Emergencies or incidents:**
 - Any threatening behaviour or safety concern involving staff, volunteers, or children
 - Any accident or incident triggering a review

Access and Inclusion

An access audit is carried out regularly to ensure that the environment is safe and inclusive for all children, staff, and visitors. Procedures are updated accordingly.

Pandemic-Related Risk Assessment

During a national emergency (e.g., COVID-19), prioritised place risk assessments are completed:

- For each eligible child (e.g., those deemed vulnerable).
- For each room or group.
- If the risk to a child cannot be mitigated, the offer of a place may be withdrawn at the manager's discretion.

Daily Safety Sweeps and Checks

Staff carry out informal visual checks:

- At opening and closing
- Inside and outside
- Noting anything that requires immediate attention
- Raising a formal risk assessment if a significant issue is identified (e.g., broken equipment, window latch problems).

Maintenance and Compliance

In collaboration with Houghton Primary School, the Pre-school Manager ensures the following are completed and recorded:

- Annual gas safety checks by a registered Gas Safe engineer
- Annual electrical checks by a qualified electrician
- Monthly fire equipment checks and maintenance
- Cleaning of heating and air conditioning units
- Deep cleaning of the kitchen



Review and Monitoring

- Risk assessments are reviewed:
 - Annually
 - After any incident
 - When new activities or areas are introduced
- Input from staff and parents is welcomed to inform reviews.
- All updates are logged and communicated to relevant parties.

Record Keeping & Confidentiality

- All risk assessments and related documentation are securely stored.
- Confidentiality is upheld, especially where risks relate to individual children, staff, or families.

Communication and Accessibility

- Risk assessments and safety procedures are available to all staff.
- Key safety protocols are shared with parents via induction, notices, and digital platforms.
- Documents can be made available in accessible formats on request.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is informed by:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (2023)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Children Act 1989
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations 2001

Acknowledgment

All staff, trustees, volunteers, and families must read and acknowledge this policy. By doing so, they commit to supporting a culture of safety and risk awareness.