



Risk Assessment Policy

Christ Church Playgroup believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and visitors by identifying, assessing and minimising as far as possible the hazards and risks in the environment.

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 supervised play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Our risk assessment policy is based on five steps:

- 1. Identification** of risk: Where is the risk, and what is it?
- 2. Determining** who is at risk: Childcare staff, children, parents, cook, cleaner etc.?
- 3. Assessment** of the level of risk as high, medium, low. This applies to both the risk of the likelihood of it happening, as well as the possible impact if it did.
- 4. Reduction or elimination** of risk through control measures: What will you need to do, or ensure others will do, in order to reduce that risk?
- 5. Monitoring and review:** How do you know if the actions you take are working, or are thorough enough? If the action is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.

How risk assessments inform our procedures

- 1. Training.** The manager and the designated Health and Safety officer undertake training and ensure staff have adequate training in H&S matters.
- 2. Process.** Our risk assessment process accounts for both adults and children and includes:
 - 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;
 - determining where it is helpful to make some written risk assessments in relation to specific issues, both to inform staff practice, and also to demonstrate clearly how we are managing risks; 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.

3. Factors or practices covered by risk assessments. The manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include or cover:

- relevant aspects of fire safety;
- food safety for all areas of the premises, including preparation and serving of food and drink, and ensuring the safety of children with known allergies;
- the safety of entrances and exits to the playgroup areas;
- other aspects of work practice including
 - changing children;
 - supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment;
 - the use and storage of substances which may be hazardous to health, such as cleaning chemicals;
 - admitting visitors to the setting who are bringing equipment or animals as part of children’s learning experiences;
 - off-site activities if required, including children’s outings, forest schools, library or shopping trips, or home visits.

4. Regular checks. We maintain lists of health and safety issues which may be checked:

- daily before the session begins, e.g. safety of toys and activities for that day; or
- weekly, e.g. first aid kit; or
- on a termly basis, when a full risk assessment is carried out.

5. Statutory premises checks. In conjunction with Christ Church, the manager ensures that checks, such as electricity and gas safety checks, and any necessary work to the setting premises are carried out annually and that records are kept.

Legal framework:

- *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992)*
- Further guidance: *Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE 2006)*, www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

This policy was agreed on 1.04.22

And will be reviewed in April 2023

Signed:

Janet Gilbert, Chair of Management Committee

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Elsa Smirthwaite, Playgroup Manager