



Name:	Date written:
Risk Assessment and Positive Risk-Taking Policy	Sept 2021
Written by/Reviewed by:	Date of Review:
Louise Lloyd-Evans/Emma Holmes	15/9/23
Policy Statement	
<p>General routines and areas all have a Risk Assessment to ensure the safety of children and staff at all times.</p> <p>We also consider positive risk-taking to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the identification, assessment and management of risk across nursery activities. This policy ensures that nursery staff are clear about their responsibilities and that the children and their families are safeguarded and involved in any risks taken.</p>	
Aims and Purpose	
<p>Risk Assessments are carried out by Jes and Emma using a template from the Health and Safety Executive. We risk assess general routines and nursery spaces/equipment. These are reviewed yearly and when anything is new or an incident occurs.</p> <p>We also train our staff in the importance of dynamic risk assessment which enables them to make on the spot observations, assessments to be able to analyze an environment while the children play and remove risk when needed. This is a child-centered approach where each risk is calculated to work on a child's strengths and supports them to conquer challenges. We believe that risk-taking when pre-assessed can have positive benefits for children by helping them develop the skills and confidence to do new activities and learn to manage the risks associated with them.</p> <p>At Young Friends we value positive risk taking and endeavor to guide and teach our children to be their own risk takers. We aim to ensure all children can access play opportunities which offer variety, adventure and challenge.</p> <p>Positive risk for personal choice, growth and development for people with all abilities and contributes to achieving fulfilling and meaningful life experiences.</p>	
Applicability	
<p>Staff Parents</p>	
Definition of Terms	
<p>n/a</p>	
Overview	

General Risk Assessments
Risk Benefit Assessments
General Procedures
Managing Risks
Partnership with Parent/Carers
Examples

Procedures

General Risk Assessments

Using the risk assessment template from the HSE, we assess the hazards and risks of everyday routines, spaces in around the nursery and equipment. Sometimes situations need to be risk assessed e.g works done by outside contractors, Summer and Winter Celebrations etc. These risk assessments are reviewed yearly or when necessary. We measure the hazard and the risk using a risk matrix.

Risk Benefit Assessments

A risk benefit assessment is dynamically completed by staff for all new activities, resources, trips outside or new play areas within the nursery to ensure a base of safety is provided for all children. We complete a formal risk assessment as the backbone of also assessing the benefit.

Our garden is a focus area - we have assessed risks throughout it to ensure a safe but challenging area for children to learn gross motor skills and become as steady and understanding of levels of risk in their future lives.

General Procedures

At Young Friends we:

- o **Allow children to take risks within a safe and secure environment**
- o **Formally risk assess the areas the babies will access, each morning.**
- o **Ensure all team members are proactive and dynamic in this, letting children know that taking risks is not only OK but often a good thing to do. They should be there to encourage, monitor and perhaps advise against if they feel they may be taking 'too much' of a risk e.g. for their age/stage of development.**
- o **Train our team to enable the children to achieve their own challenges – not limit them from attempting them in the first place.**
- o **Design many of the experiences we provide from 'real life' and include building, clearing up, woodwork (for the older children), cooking and sewing, gardening, and climbing real life objects such as wooden logs and pallets**
- o **Have pets so that children may learn to care for them but that there are risks involved – for example if they don't touch them gently or if they treat them badly, they may bite or scratch them. We have assessed this risk and all animals at young friends are regularly health checked...**
- o **Develop confidence and high self-esteem through the children becoming increasingly autonomous within the setting.**

- o Ensure that each area and/or experience has its own rules which children are expected to follow. For example: the child who cooks washes up, the child who goes outside in winter wears a coat and who paints wears an apron etc.
- o Teach our practitioners that they have a responsibility to be active in creating conditions that make children feel that almost anything is possible and achievable.
- o Know the areas of the setting that provide the most risk and challenge are the ones that the children largely choose to go to and enjoy the most
- o Understand that taking risks builds on a child's language, autonomy, confidence, and self-esteem. Limiting children can also have a detrimental effect on their growing autonomy. For example: practitioners saying 'do not build above your shoulder' immediately limits what children can do with a set of blocks.

Managing Risks

The nursery will manage the risks children can take by....

- o Observing and assessing the nursery environment and the children in it.
- o Every month, we evaluate our accident and incident forms to identify frequent accidents. From this each space is individually evaluated and signed off by management, identifying any emerging patterns so we can address them
- o At monthly staff meetings, we also share the above findings with the team, so they are all aware and work out how to supervise accordingly, as a team.
- o Carrying out regular risk assessments before something new is done, or a new place visited etc.
- o Making sure broken toys/equipment are removed and where possible replaced
- o Watching and supervising the children and having clear set rules regarding different equipment and level of risk/support required
- o Letting the children decide their own challenges then observing closely to assess any potential risks. If age-appropriate, our staff will initiate discussions with the children to help them understand both the possibilities and the potential dangers and discusses possible solutions. The practitioner will then allow the child to try out the experience which they have assessed together
- o Acknowledge that in many cases we may need to be prescriptive and explain our reasons. For example, when using knives or scissors: 'This is how you hold the knife.' And 'Always look carefully at what you cut.', 'Hold it like this.' And 'Carry the scissors like this.'

Partnership With Parents/Carers

Most of our parents view their children's increasing independence very positively and are fully aware of its benefits. By communicating with us they come to understand how carefully the staff manage risk. Parents/carers are always encouraged to talk to a pod lead or manager, or simply call or email if they are worried about any aspect of our provision.

Examples

The following are examples of risks we allow the children to take:

- o Building high and with heavy blocks in groups

- ◁ Woodwork
- ◁ Cooking and preparing their own snack etc. The children chop, cut, pour, roll, stir and observe how ingredients combine and change. They also use proper' cooking equipment e.g. graters
- ◁ They use needles and scissors with close supervision.
- ◁ Running, jumping and climbing and using crates to build a platforms/trains/seating area etc. Balancing on wobbly logs
- ◁ Toddlers toddle around the uneven levels of the garden
- ◁ Negotiating lots of different surfaces e.g. the hill at the back of the garden, stones, paving, grass, mud, tree stumps etc. These provide challenges for the little ones
- ◁ Helping to clear out and feed and handle our nursery guinea pigs. They learn to be quiet and gentle – if they are not, they may get a little scratch teaching them to nurture other living creatures
- ◁ Helping to cut paper etc. and carry 'heavy' items when setting up activities with an adult
- ◁ Frequent trips on public transport, to local shops, recycling points, the beach, the park and the kitchen garden

External Links and Organisations

Information from the Health and Safety Executive: [Risk assessment: Template and examples - HSE](#)

Relevant Policies and Documents

Health and Safety Policy
 Safeguarding Children Policy
 Accident and Emergency Policy
 Outdoor Trips Policy
 Learning and Development Policy

Authorisation

Signature:



Louise Lloyd-Evans
 Owner and Director

Young Friends Nature Nursery
 89 Holland Road
 Hove
 East Sussex
 BN3 1JP

