



Young Friends Kindergarten

Risk Assessment and Positive Risk-Taking Policy

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Next Review: June 2026

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Our Values

We see risk as an opportunity for growth — not something to fear, but something to understand. Our approach reflects:

- **Sustainability** – Thoughtful planning for physical and emotional safety over time
 - **Respect** – Valuing children’s ability to assess and manage challenges
 - **Authenticity** – Real tools, real learning, real risk — safely scaffolded
 - **Supportive Leadership** – Coaching our team to assess dynamically and act with confidence
 - **Community** – Keeping families informed and involved in how we keep children safe while encouraging exploration
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Policy Statement

This policy outlines how we identify, assess and manage risk in a way that keeps children and staff safe while offering rich, meaningful and appropriately challenging experiences.

We believe in **positive risk-taking** — supporting children to assess and manage challenges with appropriate guidance. We prepare children for real life, not just a risk-free bubble.

Purpose

- To ensure all areas and routines are assessed for risk
 - To guide staff in managing hazards confidently and in real time
 - To help children build resilience, confidence and physical skill
 - To maintain strong communication with families around risk
 - To promote independence, exploration and healthy challenge
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Applicability Applies

to:

- All staff
 - Children
 - Families
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Risk Assessments at Young Friends 1. General Risk Assessments

- Annual and incident-triggered assessments are carried out across the setting
- Conducted using **Health and Safety Executive templates**
- Reviewed when environments, equipment or routines change

2. Dynamic Risk Assessment

- Practised daily by all staff
- Encourages on-the-spot thinking while children play
- Reduces hazards and empowers educators to make quick, informed decisions

- Enables **child-centred risk response** based on age, stage and need
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Risk Benefit Assessments

Used to weigh up the benefits of an activity against potential risk.

Examples include:

- Woodwork
 - Cooking and food preparation
 - Gardening and tool use
 - Trips and transport
 - Real-life climbing, carrying, or building
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Positive Risk in Practice We

support children to:

- Take age-appropriate risks with confidence
- Develop balance, body awareness and hazard recognition
- Build resilience by facing challenge
- Reflect on their own safety and boundaries

Staff are encouraged to **guide, not limit**, and only intervene if a risk becomes unsafe.

Examples of Managed Risk Opportunities

- Climbing, balancing and building with heavy blocks or logs
 - Using real tools (graters, peelers, scissors, sewing needles) with support
 - Cooking with staff supervision
 - Helping to clean and care for guinea pigs
 - Managing uneven terrain in the garden (hills, stumps, gravel)
 - Participating in trips using public transport, walking to the beach or local shops
 - Woodwork sessions for older children with direct adult oversight
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Managing Risks: Staff Responsibilities

- Proactively identify and assess all hazards
 - Use a risk matrix where applicable
 - Ensure broken/sharp equipment and loose parts are removed and replaced
 - Teach children safe practices for tools and movement
 - Review **accident and incident audits monthly** to identify patterns
 - Discuss findings and adjustments in monthly staff meetings
 - Model and explain safe behaviours (“Carry scissors like this...”)
 - Use clear area-specific rules (e.g. safety goggles for woodwork, coats for outdoors)
 - Allow children to lead in safe risk-taking when possible
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Partnership with Parents

We share our approach to risk-taking with families.

We:

- Encourage open conversations about children’s developing independence
 - Reassure parents that risk-taking is thoughtful and observed
 - Encourage questions and feedback
 - Communicate our rationale clearly (e.g. for tools, garden features, or climbing opportunities)
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Linked Policies

- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding Children
- Outdoor Trips
- Accidents and Emergencies
- Learning and Development
- Behaviour Management