St. Nicholas
Nursery & Preschool

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Risk assessment

Risk assessments are carried out to ensure the safety of children, staff, parents and visitors. Legislation requires all individuals in the workplace to be responsible for the health and safety of premises, equipment and working practices. We have a 'corporate responsibility' towards a 'duty of care' for those who work in and receive a service from our provision. Individuals also have responsibility for ensuring their own and others safety.

Generic risk assessment form is completed for each area of work, and the areas of the building that are identified in these procedures

Access audit is completed to ensure inclusion and the health and safety of all visitors, staff, and children. The relevant procedure is modified if required to match the assessment.

Prioritised place risk assessment is completed for offering prioritised places during a national pandemic (such as Covid-19). A separate form is completed for each child who is prioritised because they are vulnerable, or meet any other criteria stipulated by the Government at the time. Risk assessment is also completed for each individual group/room as appropriate. If the risk assessment indicates a high risk if the place is offered, that cannot be minimised, and the offer of the place may be withdrawn at the discretion of the setting manager.

Risk assessment means: *Taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities that that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to and is updated when necessary.*

The law does not require that all risk be 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 play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Daily safety sweeps and checks indoors and outdoors

Safety sweeps are conducted when setting up for the day prior to children arriving or closing in the evening. Sometimes a safety sweep will identify a risk that requires a formal risk assessment on form. For example, if a window latch is becoming stiff and a practitioner has to stand on a chair in order to reach it to ensure it has closed properly.

Health and safety risk assessments

Health and safety risk assessments inform procedures. Staff and parents should be involved in reviewing risk assessments and procedures, as they are the ones with first-hand knowledge as to whether the control measures are effective and they can give an informed view to help update procedures accordingly.

The setting manager undertakes training and ensures staff have adequate training in health and safety matters. The setting managers also ensures that checks/work to premises are carried out and records are kept.

- Gas safety by a Gas Safe registered gas/heating engineer.
- Electricity safety by a qualified electrician.
- Fire precautions to check that all fire-fighting equipment and alarms are in working order.
- Hot air heating systems/air conditioning systems cleaned and checked.
- Deep clean is carried out in kitchen.

The setting manager ensures that staff members carry out risk assessments that include relevant aspects of fire safety, food safety, in each of the following areas of the premises:

Entrance and exits.

Outdoor areas.

Passageways, stairways and connecting areas.

Group rooms.

Sleep areas.

Main kitchen.

Staff room.

Rooms used by others or for other purposes.

The setting manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for off-site activities, such as children's outings (including use of public transport), including:

forest school and beach school

home visits

Other duties off-site such as attending meetings, banking etc.

The setting manager ensures staff members carry out risk assessment for work practice including:

changing babies, and the intimate care of young children and older children

arrivals and departures

preparation of milk and other food/drink for babies

children with allergies and special dietary needs or preferences

serving food in group rooms

cooking activities with children

supervising outdoor play and indoor/outdoor climbing equipment

settling babies/young children to sleep

assessment, use and storage of equipment for disabled children

visitors to the setting who are bringing equipment or animals as part of children's learning experiences, for example 'fire engines'

following any incidents involving threats against staff or volunteers

following any accident or incident involving staff or children

The setting manager liaises with Crime Prevention Officers as appropriate to ensure security arrangements for premises and personnel are appropriate.

This policy was reviewed September 2026. Date of next review August 2027