# This document provides guidance for policy development in outline/template form only. It is not a sample policy.

***(Policy Number)*** *TEMPLATE* RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY WITH GUIDANCE

## Please note: The risk management policy must be developed in line with the Health and Safety Authority: A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements[[1]](#footnote-1).

## Rationale and Policy Considerations

The Risk Management Policy deals with assessing any potential risks to the safety, health and welfare of the children attending the service, and outlines the steps taken to either eliminate those risks or to reduce them. A Risk Management Policy also needs to include the approach to reviewing past accidents or incidents and implementing changes to prevent or reduce future accidents or incidents.

Under the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/), as an employer, an early years service provider is also required to carry out risk assessments relating to the safety, health and welfare of the staff members, and prepare a safety statement and implement what it contains.

The Risk Management Policy and Procedures set out how safety, health and welfare is being managed. The policy covers risk assessments, the safety statement, and the associated procedures and practices. It also sets out how and when risk assessments are carried out, who is involved in assessing risks, what aspects the risk assessments cover, what records are needed and how these are to be kept.

### Legislation and regulatory requirements

* The [Child Care Act 1991(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print) require that Risk Management is implemented as set out in Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. Regulation 10 specifically requires a Risk Management Policy that addresses risk management. Regulation 14 requires an annual review of the Risk Management system.
* [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/)

### Children’s needs

Children need:

* Everything that is possible to be considered and done to protect their safety, health and welfare.
* To be educated and involved in everyday procedures and practices relating to their own and others’ safety and welfare.

### Parents’/Families’ needs

Parents/guardians need to:

* See that all possible consideration is given to the service’s approach to protecting their children’s and other children’s safety, health and welfare.
* Be involved, as appropriate, in some of the everyday risk assessment processes.
* Cooperate with some of the procedures and practices that have been assessed as being necessary to protect everyone in the service from risks to their safety, health or welfare.
* Be clear on the service’s overall approach as well as their own role.

### Staff needs

Staff members need:

* To know very clearly what processes and procedures are necessary to ensure the safety, health and welfare of everyone in the service. This includes absolute clarity on the risk assessments that must be carried out, by whom and in what way, as well as how the actions identified in the risk assessments are to be carried out.

### Management needs

Responsibility for safety, welfare and health and risk management ultimately rests with the employer. *[This responsibility is often delegated to managers, supervisors and other employees.]*

Management needs:

To ensure that everything required under legislation, regulation *[you can also include here ‘and quality practice standards’ (e.g. Síolta Standard 9 Promoting the health and welfare of the child requires protection from harm, provision of nutritious food, appropriate opportunities for rest, and secure relationships characterised by trust and respect.)]* is done to protect the safety, health and welfare of everyone in the service as well as any visitors to the service.

* Everyone in the service (including all children who are old enough, their parents and all staff team members) to be clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to helping to ensure the safety, health and welfare of everyone in the service and everyone who visits the service.
* To clearly define, document and communicate to all staff their roles and responsibilities.
* To ensure that parents are given all of the information they need to be assured that everything possible will be done to help keep their child/children safe and well while attending the service.

### National Quality Frameworks

* [Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](http://siolta.ie/)
* [Keeping Communities Safe – A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland](http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migrated-files/en/Publications/Community/FireandEmergencyServices/FileDownLoad%2C32381%2Cen.pdf)

## Definitions/Glossary

*[Include definitions here of any words used that may need explanation.]*

A **hazard** is anything with the potential to cause injury or ill health, for example chemical substances, dangerous moving machinery, or threats of violence from others.

**Risk** is the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard. It also takes account of how severe the harm or ill health effect could be and how many people could be affected.

A **Risk Assessment** is ‘… a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.’ [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Small_Business/Getting_Started/Risk_Assessments_Made_Easy/Guidelines_on_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.pdf)Health and Safety Authority, 2016

It is a written document that records a three-step process (HSA, 2016):

1. Identifying the hazards in the workplace(s) under your control.
2. Assessing the risks presented by these hazards.
3. Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk of these hazards causing harm.

A further two steps are also required:

1. Recording findings and implementing them.
2. Reviewing the assessment and updating it if necessary.

*[Some risk assessments may be simple and arise directly from observation such as obstructions in the corridor creating a tripping hazard. Some hazards may be more complex, for example, the risks associated with a group outing.]*

**Severity** is a measure of how serious an injury or health effect could be, as a consequence of unsafe working or of an accident. The severity can be influenced by the environment, the number of people at risk, and the steps already taken to control the hazard.

**Control measures** are the steps to be taken to remove the hazards, or at least reduce the risk of them causing harm to as low a level as possible.

A **Safety Statement** is the written commitment to managing safety and health in your business and how you are going to do this.

**Individual risk assessment** is an assessment of the potential risks that might occur in in relation to a child and their individual needs. It is completed if the individual needs of a child warrant it, for example, a child with allergies, medication requirements or difficulties relating to their behaviour. An individual risk assessment provides an input to a child’s Individual Care Plan and is kept in the child’s individual record (see [Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)).

3. Policy Statement*[The Policy Statement outlines the principles, values and the purpose of the policy. It will generally be quite short. The Policy Statement can be included in the Parents/Guardians Handbook.]*

This policy applies to all service staff members and all service activities.

Regular risk assessments are carried out to identify risks to: any child attending the service; their parents while accessing the service; any adult working in the service; or any visitors to the service in relation to:

* The governance of the service;
* The health, safety and welfare of each individual;
* The safety of the service; and
* The premises being safe, suitable and appropriate for care and education of children.

Risk assessments are carried out involving all relevant parties (including children and their parents/guardians if appropriate) and the risk assessment records show who is involved. A notice is displayed to make parents and guardians aware that records of risk assessments are available to view at any time on request.

Each risk assessment details the following:

* The potential risk being assessed;
* The current controls in place to address the risk;
* Any additional controls needed to reduce the risk; and
* Those responsible for implementing the additional controls.

**Individual risk assessment**

An individual risk assessment for a child will be developed where required and all relevant parties will be involved.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Job descriptions include safety and health responsibilities, and safety and health performance is included in staff supervision (see Recruitment Policy and Staff Supervision Policy).

All staff members work to maintain a safety and health culture in our team and in our service and implement a clear Health and Safety Policy and Procedures.

**Accidents and Emergency Planning**

Procedures are established to respond to accidents and emergency situations, and to prevent and minimise the safety and health impacts associated with them as required by Section 11 of the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/)

*[Emergency planning must also be considered and should cover:*

* *The development of emergency plans*
* *The testing and rehearsing of these plans and related equipment, including firefighting equipment and fire alarms*
* *Training staff members and the children on what to do in the event of an emergency, particularly those people who have to carry out duties (for example, fire-fighting teams, first-aiders. See* ***Fire Safety Policy****.)*

*The emergency plan itself should include:*

* *Details on the availability and testing of suitable warning and alarm systems (e.g., fire, security).*
* *Details of emergency scenarios that might occur, including the ways for dealing with these scenarios (e.g. Critical Incident Plan).*
* *The emergency procedures in the service, including the responsibilities of key people, procedures for fire-fighting and evacuation of everyone on the premises and first-aid requirements*
* *Details of emergency services (e.g. fire brigade, ambulance services, GP) and the contact information for these services.*
* *Plans for communicating the emergency plan to all who need to know in the service and outside of the service i.e. parents/guardians and carers.*
* *Training plans and testing for effectiveness (e.g. fire drill).*
* *Details on the availability of emergency rescue equipment and its maintenance (e.g. pull down stairs escape route, evacuation cots, EpiPen).*

*Emergency preparedness and response procedures should be periodically tested, reviewed and revised, in particular after any occurrence of an accident, incident or emergency situation. The emergency plan should dovetail with the Safety Statement as required by Section 20 of the* [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/)*.]*

**Records Management and Review**

All risk assessments completed are documented, recorded and reviewed annually or more frequently if warranted.

Risk management records are kept for *[state period of time]* and our Risk Management system is reviewed as part of our annual review.

4. Procedures & Practices

*[Outlines the specific steps and/or guidance to be followed in order to implement the policy.]*

*[Provide an overview of the risk management structure for your service, that is, who is involved in risk management and what their responsibilities are.*

*Outline risk categories (appropriate to your particular setting) under the general headings: Governance; Health, Welfare and Development; Safety; and Premises.*

#### Governance

*For example include:*

* *Recruitment*
* *Staff Support and Supervision*
* *Supervision of Children*
* *Confidentiality*
* *Staff absences*
* *Record Management*

#### Health Welfare and Development

*For example include:*

* *Children Arriving and Leaving*
* *Challenging Behaviour*
* *Play Indoors*
* *Play Outdoors*

*[There has been much debate and discussion of the value of providing for a degree of risk for young children within their play opportunities, in order for them to explore, to solve problems and test their own capabilities in order to learn effectively. It is important to consider any risk assessments undertaken in light of this. Remember “if we remove all challenges then children lose their ability to risk assess” Warden 2010[[2]](#footnote-2).]*

* *Use of the internet, photographic and recording devices.*
* *Infection Control*
* *Nappy Changing and Toileting*
* *Sleeping and Resting*
* *Medications*
* *Food (including allergies, choking hazards)*

***Safety***

*For example include:*

* *Outings*
* *Fire Safety*
* *Use of the Internet, Photographic and Recording Devices*
* *Outdoor Play Structures*
* *Waste Disposal*
* *Accidents and Incidents*

***Premises***

*Include:*

* *Building (including access and egress, windows, doors etc.)*
* *Parking Area (if relevant)*
* *Kitchen*
* *Equipment*
* *Toys and Materials*

*Risk assessments must be carried out at regular intervals for all risk-associated activities and areas in the setting. The safety, health and welfare of all children, all staff team members and all visitors to the setting must be considered.*

*Specific responsibilities and timeframes must be assigned for each category of risk.*

*You must describe the process by which you will ensure that actions identified to control or reduce risks, in the course of any risk assessment, are carried out effectively and in good time.*

*Identify clearly what records are needed and how, where and for how long these must be kept.*

*Describe the risk management review process you will implement.]*

## Communication Plan *[For staff & families]*

*[Suggested wording as follows]*

All parents are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding Risk Management on registration and made aware that all have a role to play in protecting others from risks.

Staff members will check with parents that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy will be included in the parent handbook. This policy will also be reviewed with staff at induction and annual staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff members and parents in the Policy Folder located in ……………………………………...

Parents may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request. Parents and all staff members will receive written notification of any updates.

## Related Policies, Procedures and Forms

## *[List of all related documents. The policies in bold are those required under the Early Years Regulations 2016.]*

## Policy on Accidents and Incidents

* **Policy on Managing Behaviour**
* **Fire Safety Policy**
* **Policy on Outdoor Play**
* **Outings Policy**
* **Policy on Safe Sleep**
* **Complaints Policy**
* **Policy on Administration of Medication**
* **Policy on Infection Control Policy on Staff Absences**
* **Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children**
* **Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices**
* **Staff Training Policy**
* **Supervision Policy**
* **Recruitment Policy**
* **Health and Safety Policy**
* Child Protection Policy
* Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy

7. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation*[List of any relevant Legislation and Practice Guides referred to in drafting the policy.]*

* [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print)
* [A Short Guide to The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/Short_Guide_to_SHWWA_2005.pdf) Health and Safety Authority
* [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/A_Guide_to_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.html)Health and Safety Authority, 2016
* [Outdoor Play Risk Assessment](https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/quality-practice/play/outdoor-play/risk-assessment/) Early Childhood Ireland

## Who Must Observe This Policy

This policy must be observed by all managers and all staff members.

## Actions to be Followed if the Policy is not Implemented

*[Add in any relevant actions to be taken]*

10. Contact Information*[Who to contact for more information]*

If you need more information about this policy, contact:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Phone number or email |  |

## Policy Created

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date this policy was created |  |

## Signatures

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name and position | Signature |
| Approved by |  |  |
| Approved by |  |  |

## Review Date

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Date this policy will be reviewed |  |

1. # <http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/A_Guide_to_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.html>

   [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Warden ,C.(2010). Nature Kindergartens. Perth: Mindstretchers [↑](#footnote-ref-2)