

# Help Sheet

## 0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

### How to write an individual risk assessment.



#### Why?

- Staff need to be aware of hazards and risks in the setting for all children.
- Children and young people with SEND may face additional challenges and risks, so some children with SEND will need an individual risk assessment to support staff to keep them safe.
- An individual risk assessment may link to other setting policies e.g. Medicines Policy.

#### Key vocabulary:

<p><b>hazard</b> – things that may cause harm</p> <p><b>risk</b> – if the chance of harm is high or low</p> <p><b>severity</b> – how serious is the potential harm</p> <p><b>likeliness</b> – how likely harm is going to happen</p> <p><b>control</b> – what is put in place to reduce the risk</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> The <b>hazard</b> is threading beads. The <b>risk</b> is that the child puts a bead in their mouth and chokes. The <b>severity</b> is high because the child could die. The child often puts things in their mouth so the <b>likeliness</b> is high. The <b>control</b> is to use threading beads under adult supervision.</p>
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#### You will need:

- To observe the child and note any situations that present a hazard to the child or others.
- To watch how the child interacts with the environment and note hazards.
- To consider the risks and how likely they are to occur.
- To think about the skills that staff will need to keep the child safe e.g. medical training.
- To involve the parent in writing an individual risk assessment in collaboration with setting staff.
- To record the risk assessment - see 'Individual Risk Assessment Template'.

#### How? (based on the HSE 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment').

##### Step 1 - What are the hazards?

- Health risks – medical conditions, allergies.
- Hazards encountered by the child due to their physical or mobility needs.
- The child's level of awareness of everyday hazards.
- The ability of the child to communicate distress, pain, injury.

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- Sensory or environmental factors that could form a hazard due to the child's SEND.
- How difficult behaviours will be managed safely.
- Hazards that may need a bespoke response due to a child's SEND e.g. fire evacuation.
- Lone working – when a practitioner works out of sight of other staff.

### Step 2 - Who might be harmed and how?

- What harm could happen? To who?
- How likely is it to happen?
- How severe is the risk?
- Consider if the risks are high, medium or low.

### Step 3 - What are you doing already? What else can be done?

- What is already in place to prevent harm?
- What else can be put in place to prevent harm?

### Step 4 - How will you put the risk assessment into action?

- Ask the parents to comment on and contribute to the risk assessment and record it.
- Share the document with all adults who work with the child.
- Specify who will put the controls in place to minimise risk.
- Store the individual risk assessment as personal information.

### Step 5 - When will you review the risk assessment?

- Add notes as things change and develop – treat the risk assessment as a working document.
- Have a formal review if there are any significant changes for the child e.g. moving year group.

### Things to note:

A risk assessment should sensibly reflect the child's needs that are seen 'day to day'. The purpose is not to catalogue every hazard or to anticipate risks beyond the limits of current knowledge.

This resource sheet is part of the Individual Risk Assessment Toolkit.

- Help sheet – How to write an individual risk assessment.
- Template – Individual Risk Assessment.

### Reference / Evidence base – informed by:

Health and Safety Executive 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment'