



Risk Assessment Policy

At Venture Outdoor Kindergarten we believe that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance. We make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers by assessing and minimising the hazards and risks to enable the children to thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

Risk assessment means taking note of aspects of your workplace and activities 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 is 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 risk. At Venture Outdoor Kindergarten we assess risks with the children. When we arrive at the day's site we ask them and discuss with them what the risks are and we take other regular opportunities to discuss risk assessment with the children.

If something arises during a session we will stop play and discuss the risk with the children. This may include finding dangerous items such as poisonous plants, the tide coming in, sharp objects brought in by the tide. When we return to a site the children are reminded of the previous risks and become more vigilant and aware.

Important note: All members of the team are responsible for keeping the children safe through risk assessment and ensuring adequate supervision of the children. If a team member feels that something is unsafe, this should be raised immediately with the Leader or Manager.

Venture Outdoor Kindergarten uses risk assessment processes to ensure the health and safety of our children and staff. We follow the forest school process to risk assessment:

1. Identification of hazard—where is it and what is it?
2. Who might be harmed and how.

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3. Control measures to reduce/eliminate risk –what will you need to do –or ensure others will do –in order to reduce that risk?
4. Record findings.
5. Monitoring and review –How do you know if what you have said is working, or is thorough enough? If it is not working, it will need to be amended, or maybe there is a better solution.

Our risk assessment process covers adults and children and includes:

Visual risk assessments being continually carried out by practitioners so that risks are assessed on an on-going basis.

Practitioners are trained that they need to be constantly vigilant as the setting is an ever-changing environment due to its outdoor nature. For example, a risk assessment may have previously been undertaken but practitioners cannot then become complacent as new hazards may arise e.g. due to the tide or weather.

Checking for and noting hazards and risks in our site and in areas which we visit.

Assessing the level of risk and who might be affected.

Deciding which areas need attention and taking action when required.

Our written risk assessments are reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the manager or more regularly if required and always following an incident.

Daily site risk assessments are carried out and any new risks highlighted to the manager for action. These are done with the children when appropriate.

Legal framework

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Health and Safety at Work Act (1996)

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1992

Further Guidance

Five Steps to Risk Assessment (HSE 2006): www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

Other useful Pre-Other useful Preschool Learning

Alliance publications school Learning Alliance publications Preschool Learning Alliance publications

Risk Management in Early Years Settings (2007)

Monitoring and review

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This policy is monitored by the staff and management of Venture Outdoor Kindergarten and will be reviewed annually or before if necessary.

This policy was written by Venture Outdoor Kindergarten September 2017.

Reviewed September 2018.

Reviewed August 2019.

Reviewed August 2020.

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