

**WEST KIRBY EDUCATIONAL TRUST**

*A charity changing children's lives*

# **Risk Assessment Policy**

Mark Hall September 25

## **Risk Assessment Policy Statement:**

In response to:

Health and safety at work Act  
Management of Health and Safety at Work Act  
The Children's Act  
Section 550(a) of the Education Act  
Care Standards  
National Minimum Standards  
Children and Families Act

## **Statement of Intent:**

***Risk Assessment:** is a fundamental part of what we do in our daily lives. Put simply, a risk assessment is finding out what can cause harm to people and deciding if you have done enough as the responsible person to reduce the potential for harm and protect others.*

West Kirby Educational Trust (WKS) expects that comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken on all pupils. The aim of which is to identify the preventative and protective measures required to be put in place to minimise the risk of harm to pupils, staff and others. For the purpose of this statement harm is defined as: *any actual physical, emotional or psychological damage to an individual, disruption to good order which jeopardises safety and the probability of significant damage to the fabric of the organisation.* Additionally risk assessment should be used as a tool to manage predicted risk in a safe manner to support the development of children and young people.

All staff must make themselves aware of the risk assessment details concerning pupils they work with, or are likely to work with at any given time; along with those risk assessments associated with the wider organisation and activities being undertaken by children and young people under the direction of staff. Employees must not deviate from the judgements that have been reached within a pupil's, activity, organisation wide risk assessment without the prior knowledge and agreement of the headteacher / Deputy Head (DSL/Behaviour and Attitudes). Risk assessment will be monitored and evaluated as an ongoing process.

## **Undertaking a risk assessment:**

### ***Aim***

- To identify activities, environments or the behaviours and needs of individuals which are associated with risk
- To establish the likelihood of adverse outcomes
- To estimate the consequence if such outcomes were to occur
- To take steps to avoid unreasonable risk

### **Objectives**

- To assess individual pupils requirements within the context of positive handling strategies; may lead to Positive Handling Plans (PHPs)
- Harmonise pupil Proactive Behaviour Plans within the overall framework of agreed practice (*agreed practice* is defined as those practices endorsed within the schools policies)
- To sustain staff confidence and improve future practice
- To provide a legitimate response to situations where positive intervention strategies may be required
- To maintain the central belief of the school to respect and care for all individuals and ensure safety and security.

### **Context**

By law the planning and delivery of education and care services must include an assessment of risk for children and young people. All pupils are entitled to have their exposure to risk comprehensively assessed and managed. Therefore the headteacher and all employees must work together in order to take reasonable measures to reduce the level of risk, particularly where adverse consequences would have significant impact on the individuals health or general well-being. Pupils as of right will make certain choices and it is possible that some of these choices made will result in adverse risk and outcomes. Employees are responsible for ensuring that the risk associated with such choices is 'reasonable' and does not involve any unreasonable risk.

### **Risk Assessment at Admission**

Upon admission all pupils will begin an induction period of 8 weeks initial induction including risk assessment period which will be assessed by the school's Pastoral Care Team. The initial risk assessment will be reviewed prior to the induction review and a finalised risk assessment agreed at the meeting.

### **Reviewing Risk Assessments**

All Individual risk assessments change over time and will be reviewed on a minimal termly basis by staff involved. Copies should be forwarded to all relevant agencies involved with the child or young person. This should be co-ordinated by the school's Deputy Head (DSL/Behaviour and Attitudes) and Pastoral Care manager. In respect of activities and environments this will be by the Pastoral Care Manager and Estates, Operations and Health & Safety Manager respectively as part of an annual process or response to known change of circumstance.

All pupils at the school are assessed as part of their induction period but risk assessment must also be undertaken in response to a major incident, or a series of significant incidents, or whenever new information becomes available or pertinent to the individual. Weekly

meeting to view incident data are held by PCT manager, data compliance officer and DDSL to review risk assessments.

### **Levels of Risk Assessment**

At WKS & AVPS there are three types of risk assessment applying to individual, activities and settings, they are:

- (a) Global / Environmental – this relates to generic risk assessments which provide an overview of risk and advice across a section of school' setting or provision (e.g.: Residential settings). These risk assessments are completed by the Premises Manager annually and reviewed termly with the support of staff. All employees if they become aware of a material change should notify Estates, Operations and Health & Safety Manager of a known new risk so that this can be accommodated. Any changes that require action should also be logged through the school's maintenance ticketing system
  
- (b) Activities – this looks at undertaking risk assessments of events and activities that involve pupils and staff as part of their access to provision arranged by the school. It is the responsibility of all staff leading an activity to complete a risk assessment when taking pupils off site. These assessments should be reviewed each time this activity is undertaken or a change is likely to have impact is identified (e.g.: the use of an alternative provider or setting to that normally accessed). This type of risk assessment should be completed in one of two formats:
  - (i) Local community access / activity
  - (ii) Planned significant event / Overnight activity / outdoor activity

Both of the above risk assessment will be added to the Evolve Visits System and the BehaviourWatch Risk Assessment tool to be agreed by the Deputy Head (DSL/Behaviour and Attitudes). AVPS will use CPOMS

- (c) Individuals – this looks at a more in depth risk assessment of a pupil and the identification of actions and strategies to reduce / mitigate risk. Individual Risk assessments are the responsibility of all staff working alongside pupils. The review of individual risk assessments is co-ordinated by the Pastoral Care Manager, and is reviewed on a weekly basis based on incident data from Behaviour Watch. They are also updated in designated time by key staff on a half-termly basis.

### **Assessing Risk**

In completing a risk assessment it is necessary for staff to make reasonable judgements on the level of risk and the strategies to manage them. **Frequency** relates to likelihood of

harm occurring, this needs to be considered alongside the **Severity**, which relates to the potential for an activity / individual to cause harm.

Those running a school trip are required to act responsibly by ensuring that they have:

- Put in place sensible precautions
- Know when and where to put into place alternate plans
- Paid heed to advice and warning from others

Calculating Risk and Hazard:

		<b>Severity</b>					
		1	2	3	4	5	
1		1	2	3	4	5	
2		2	4	6	8	10	<b>Frequency</b>
3		3	6	9	12	15	
4		4	8	12	16	20	
5		5	10	15	20	25	

(Level of judgement: 1-2 = low; 3-4 = medium; 4-5 high)

**Unacceptable level of risk (score 25)** – such an activity would be predicted as very likely to result in harm that could be fatal. No such activity should be considered on this basis.

**Very High Risk (score: 20)** – this identifies that the likelihood and impact of the activity / individuals involvement is of significant and possibly of injury. In such circumstances the event / activity involving the individual should NOT go ahead, or have a series of **specific** actions that reduce this risk to a more acceptable level. Serious consideration should be given to an alternative, or the inclusion of the individual concerned and should not go ahead without the express consent of a senior manager.

**High Risk (score: 12-16)** – identifies that there is either a higher degree of hazard, or likelihood of risk associated with this event, activity or individual. The risk assessment should therefore include **specific** mitigating actions and strategies that minimise the risk and potential for harm. Such activity should not go ahead without the express consent of a senior manager. This level of risk is likely to be associated with long distance / Overnight / highly physical activities (e.g.: D of E expedition)

**Medium Risk (score 8-10)** – identifies that there may be a high level of risk that has the potential for low hazard, or vice versa. This is likely to reflect most localised off site activities (e.g.: going to the cinema). In completing the risk assessments it is important to identify the

**general** strategies being undertaken in respect of the activity / event and any **specific** actions in regard to individuals

**Low Risk (score 1 – 6)** – identifies activities that have only a general level of risk or potential for injury. This risk assessment should consider the **general** strategies required to minimise potential for harm. This would relate to short localised activities (e.g.: visit to shops)

**Off site permission forms** – these are required at the point of taking the children and young people off site and serve as a final check in regards to any changes of circumstances that have occurred (e.g. change of pupils / staff absence etc.) They are NOT a full risk assessment but do form part of the overall system. An off-site permission slip must be completed via the Evolve Visits Systems and should not replace undertaking of a risk assessment via BehaviourWatch.

### ***Completing an Individual Risk assessment***

As identified above undertaking a risk assessment is associated with comparing the level of **Severity** (the potential to cause harm), against the **Frequency** (the likelihood of occurring), when making a formal risk assessment. This applies to individuals as much as it does to an activity. However it becomes more complex in respect of factoring in the particular needs and a working knowledge of the individual concerned. You should seek help and support if you feel you do not know the child or young person well enough to make the appropriate risk assessment. However risk assessment should not be viewed as a difficult or technical process. In most cases staff will already be aware of the main hazards involved in an activity and as part of planning the access to an activity / event will have built in management of these aspects. In many cases when visiting other settings it will be possible to gain their own risk assessment and this should be done wherever possible to inform our own process.

Risk assessment and management is particularly important for children and young people with social, learning and communication difficulties. Challenging behaviours are often foreseeable, even though it may be difficult to predict exactly when they will occur or to what degree. The measures established for managing identified risks should assist all staff in their daily work. Risk management is a shared responsibility and should therefore incorporate contact / permission from home when accessing an activity / event.

The completion of the Individual risk assessment should be done collaboratively during the Induction period at the school and incorporate the development of the Proactive Behaviour Plan. From this point the review of the Individual Risk Assessment becomes the responsibility of the Form Teacher and Class based TA, or keyworker in the residential setting, as they will have the greater practical working awareness of the child on a daily basis.

### ***Dynamic Risk Assessment***

A dynamic risk assessment may be carried out following a specific incident or change in a pupil's circumstances.

### ***Lone working***

Risk assessment in such circumstances involves common awareness of needs and the availability of support. There is a generic lone working risk assessment which can be used to address specific individual needs as they may arise