



SEND Safety Policy

Introduction

There is an element of risk involved with many of the tasks carried out to support children with complex health needs. These risks cannot be removed completely, but it is possible to manage them.

Every child has individual needs and risks should be assessed on that basis. The management of risks forms the basis of ensuring that children with health, physical, learning, social, emotional and behavioural needs are included in schools and early year's settings.

Staff may have a number of concerns about the risks involved to both children and staff in ensuring the inclusion of children with complex needs in mainstream settings, including the fear that they will be blamed if something goes wrong, lack of insurance, inadequate training. These anxieties can be minimized if staff assesses all relevant areas of risk, take adequate steps to minimize them and ensure that their actions are 'reasonably practicable'.

Legislation

The Policy recognizes that a balance has to be achieved with all legislation in order to maintain safety and dignity of the individual. This has to be balanced in a way that ensures the human rights of each group are maintained.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1972 (HSWA) and supporting regulations require employers to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees so far as is reasonably practicable.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999 (Management Regulations) employers need to assess the risk to the health and safety of employees and others who may be affected by their activities.

Under the Disability and Equality Act 2010, disabled students' include those who have an impaired condition which has 'a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day to day activities'. This would apply to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and other pupils as their personal circumstances warranted it. This group of pupils may include those with:

- Sensory difficulties
- Progressive illness
- Complex medical conditions
- Developmental impairment
- Learning difficulties
- Mental health conditions
- Injury to body or brain

Protecting the health and safety of such students must be done in a way that is consistent with employer's duties under the DDA and in a way that does not place any unreasonable restrictions on students' rights to autonomy, privacy or dignity. For example, a student cannot be excluded solely on health and safety grounds.

To help employers achieve this balance the health and safety executive guidance sets out some guiding principles:

- There should be a balance between the health and safety considerations of employees and individual students' rights to dignity, autonomy and privacy.
- Employees' health and safety should be maintained, but this should not be used as an excuse for denying disabled students and students with SEN access to educational opportunities.
- Effective management of health and safety considerations for disabled students and students with SEN should allow them maximum opportunities in their education.

Scope

Activities in school should be risk assessed taking account of those that take place both on site,

- general access, fire evacuation, etc.,

As well as 'off-site',

- Educational visits and trips, swimming, etc.

For the students it will ensure:

- That they are not exposed to unacceptable risk
- That they can take part and enjoy all the activities of the school or early years.

For the staff it will ensure:

- That tasks are carried out in the safest possible way
- That any risk to staff is minimized.

Responsibilities

School Governing Bodies

They should ensure that Health and Safety management arrangements are in place including risk assessments.

They also have a legal duty not to discriminate against disabled students, and to take reasonable steps to avoid placing disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled students.

Head teachers

They must ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed, records are maintained and control measures implemented. If required, they should ensure that training is given to those charged with carrying out risk assessments.

Local Authority

To provide outreach support to schools and, where required, offer training.

Risk Assessments

There are two risk assessments,

- Medical & Physical Needs
- Behavioural Needs

Step 1 – Consider potential risks:

Information **can be obtained from:**

1. Education Health Care Plans
2. Health Care Plans including medical information e.g. nut allergy / EpiPen
3. Support Plans
4. Individual Behavioural Plans
5. SEN Service Assessments
6. Environmental Audits outlining the areas around school that may cause difficulties or hazards to visual or hearing impaired pupils
7. Any other services involved with the child / young person

Take account of what happens in the day, from the time the child arrives to when they leave. By assessing the general environment, daily activities and the child's needs, significant hazards that are likely to cause harm can be identified.

They will include,

Mobility

- Access into/out of buildings
- Movement around setting
- Reaching tables
- Obstruction of furniture
- Access to areas of learning
- Flooring
- Lighting
- Moving/handling requirements

Personal Care Needs

- Infection control and training around,
- Dressing
- Use of toilets
- Washing
- Managing
- Contenance
- Tubes

Feeding

- Eating
- Drinking
- Choking
- Tubes
- Allergies

Communication

- Visual difficulties
- Hearing difficulties
- Cognitive difficulties
- Speech and Language difficulties/ Communication aids

Medication

- Training, storage and roles and responsibilities around
- Medicine supplies storage and disposal
- Safe administration of medicines
- Accountability and responsibility
- Procedures and record keeping

Step 2 – Who is at Risk:

In particular for Behavioural Needs consideration must be given to others who may be at risk;

- Other pupils
- Other employees
- Members of the public
- Contractors
- Individual concerned

Step 3 – Evaluate the Risk and Implement Control Measures:

By identifying and prioritising the measures that needs to be taken to avoid and control the risk.

It is a combination of the likelihood of something harmful happening and the seriousness of the potential injury.

The risks are assessed as **high, medium** or **low**.

Control measures are identified through deciding what further action needs to be taken to minimise the level of risk.

Children with medical/complex needs

Many children with complex health needs may use wheelchairs or need additional assistance in terms of moving around. Moving and handling should form part of the risk assessment plan for such children, if required.

As with other risk assessments, assessments on moving and handling are likely to be both general (e.g. applicable to the children who use wheelchairs) as well as specific (relate to the particular needs of an individual child).

These areas are:

- Storage of medicines
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations (COSHH)
- Clinic waste
- Infection control
- Fire and evacuation procedures
- Moving around schools
- Moving around classrooms
- Additional considerations for specific subject areas, e.g. science, DT
- Dignity of the child – appropriate changing areas

There is a hierarchy of measures when deciding on the measures to implement,

- Eliminate e.g. relocate away from hazard e.g. storage of medication away from children
- Reduce e.g. Use mini cylinders, Personal Evacuation Plans to be prepared in the event of fire, provision of Evacuation Chairs for fire evacuation, communications i.e. Augmentative Communication Systems, Visual Aids, Hearing Loops, Hearing Aids and Signing/ Makaton
- Isolate e.g. in adverse weather conditions pupil to remain inside in a prearranged placed
- Control / Substitute e.g. emergency procedures in place, nominated or trained personnel to administer medication, First Aiders always available, for PE/swimming individual plans to be included in lesson plans and Educational Visit Risk Assessments
- Training, Information, Instruction, Supervision e.g. Training by nurse on the administration of medication, supervision at all times during an education visit, communicating relevant information to teachers and relevant staff, Positive Handling training
- Personal Protective Equipment e.g. hats and harnesses may need to be used on Educational Visits

Step 4 – Record Significant Findings:

On the assessment all of these details must be recorded and somebody responsible appointed for ensuring that the action is carried out and provide a target date for completion. There should be a system in place to ensure that the recommendations have been actioned.

Step 5 – Risk Assessment Review and Revise:

Risk assessments need to be reviewed from time to time which will help decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done. These should be completed at least annually and conditions which might warrant a review of the policy on a more frequent basis include:

- Changes to medical circumstances or behaviour;
- New training needs;
- Changes in personnel;
- Changes in legislation;
- An accident;
- Parents concern;
- Educational Visits.

Policy Review and Evaluation

In order to ensure that this policy continues to be effective and applicable to the Council, the program will be reviewed biennially by Risk and Emergency Planning and relevant stakeholders. Conditions which might warrant a review of the policy on a more frequent basis would include:

- Changes to legislation;
- Employee concern.

Following completion of any review, the program will be revised and/or updated in order to correct any deficiencies. Any changes to the program will be consulted through the relevant stakeholders.

Amendments made to policy line with HBC model policy (Schools SLA) September 2014

Last Reviewed: November 2018, November 2021

Next Review: November 2019

Policy to be reviewed when there is a change in HBC Policy or a change in legislation.