

## Guidance for Staff on Conducting Risk Assessments for EYFS Outings

A Legal Requirement incorporated into the EYFS Statutory Framework, an ISI Reporting Standard for Independent Schools with Early Years provision,

References:

- A: The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2008 ([www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))
- B: The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide, DCSF guidance ([www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk))
- C: Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Checklist and Monitoring Reference for Inspectors, September 2009 ([www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net))
- D: A Guide to the Law for School Governors, April 2009 ([www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk))
- E: General Inspection Queries, but with particular reference to EYFS, Independent School Association (ISA) guidance ([www.isaschools.org.uk](http://www.isaschools.org.uk)): an ISBA Briefing Document, February 2009
- F: Minibus and Coach Seats: DFT guidance ([www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk))

### INTRODUCTION

St Andrew's School is legally required to have risk assessments in place that cover a great many of its activities, including educational visits and trips that are made by St Andrew's School pupils. The EYFS Statutory Framework places additional requirements. It states:

*“Children must be kept safe whilst on outings.*

*“For each type of outing, providers must carry out a full risk assessment, which includes an assessment of required adult: child ratios. This assessment must take account of the nature of the outing, and consider whether it is appropriate to exceed the normal ratio requirements.... . in accordance with providers' procedures for supervision of children on outings. The assessment must be reviewed before embarking on each specific outing.” (Page 24, the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework).*

### CONTENTS OF POLICY

This policy is a companion document to the school's policy: “Educational Visits for EYFS Children” and is intended to be read by staff in conjunction with that policy. It concentrates therefore on the practical processes of carrying out risk assessments. Taken together, the two documents provide a framework of the school's requirements for taking young children on outings from the Nursery Departments.

ISI Inspectors of EYFS settings will expect to see evidence of both of the school's policies in operation and are likely to require evidence of full risk assessments being conducted for *each* outing. Although St Andrew's School may make use of "blanket" risk assessments where older children are engaged in routine, activities out of school, such as sporting fixtures, this is specifically prohibited for Nursery Department children.

This policy is about conducting risk assessments for *EYFS outings*. The technique of conducting a risk assessment which is described can be applied in other contexts.

## WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation.

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property)
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, preliminary visits and insurance).

## THE STARTING POINT

The starting point for conducting a risk assessment on an outing is to consider the following in turn:

- Identify all of the potential hazards, such as a child getting lost, or run over, a traffic accident, a child falling over, sun burn, getting cold or wet on an outing.
- Who might be affected by the hazards? The children, staff, volunteers, school property, school reputation. Children with SENs will need to be considered separately.
- What safety measures will reduce the potential impact of the hazard? Examples include: using a higher staff ratio on all outings than are used inside the school, ensuring that one member of the party is qualified in Paediatric First Aid, frequent head counts, a clear missing child policy that is known to all, taking a first aid kit and water, asking parents to send appropriate protective clothing to mitigate impact of weather, sound preparation in advance, including briefing all of the adults (staff and volunteers) on their respective roles. Emergency procedures should be rehearsed in advance with the accompanying staff.

## CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT

There are several possible techniques. One model that we use at St Andrew’s School, known as the “Traffic Lights Model” is set out below:

HAZARD	SEVERITY	LIKELIHOOD	INITIAL RISK RATING	FURTHER ACTIONS	RESIDUAL RISK RATING
1	2	3	4	5	6
List each. Carry out actions 2-6 for each hazard	Rate each 1 – 6 in ascending order of severity	Rate each 1 – 6 in ascending order of likelihood	Multiply severity with likelihood (Col 2 x Col 3)	List measures to reduce severity for each hazard	Adjusted Numerical score ( <i>Must be no higher than 11</i> )
Date:					
Signature:					
Signature of Education Visits Coordinator:					

On completion of the risk assessment, the residual risk score is coloured coded as follows:

**Red – scores of 24-36**

**Amber – scores of 12 -23**

**Green –scores of 0 -11**

Our policy as St Andrew’s School is **not** to carry out any activity with EYFS children which is rated as **red or amber after the risk reduction measures have been put into effect**. Activities involving our youngest pupils will only be carried out, if they can be awarded a residual score of green. **Green activities can be:**

- **A hazard that is highly likely but is of low residual rating.** For example

The likelihood of a coach in a city being stuck in traffic would be rated as 6

The severity of leaving teachers, teaching assistants and children waiting outside in hot sun/wet weather for an unknown period of time would be rated as 2.

The initial risk rating would be 12 (Amber).

But putting all of the following measures in place reduces its severity to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 6 (Green):

- Teacher in Charge and Driver are in mobile phone contact
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and discovered where the party can wait out of the rain/sun
- Bottled water is carried
- All staff carry visit packs, and can phone the school to advise that there will be a delayed return

- All parents' emergency contact details are available to the School Office, who phones them and explains that the coach has been stuck in traffic; but there is nothing to worry about
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand

- **A hazard may be fairly likely and have a low residual rating.** For example:

The likelihood of a child falling over and grazing a knee on a walk in the countryside would be rated as 4.

The initial severity would be 3.

The initial risk rating would be 12 (Amber)

But putting the following measures into place reduces the severity to 2, leaving a residual risk rating of 8 (Green):

- Teacher in Charge has First Aid kit
- One member of staff is qualified in Paediatric First Aid
- Teacher in Charge has mobile phone
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand

- **A hazard may be very unlikely; but have a high severity rating.** For example:

The likelihood of a child going missing on an organised school outing headed by a qualified Teacher, who has been trained in leading visits, and was appropriately staffed would initially be rated as 3.

The severity would be 6.

The initial risk rating would be 18 (Amber).

But putting the following measures into place reduces the likelihood to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 6 (Green):

- Children have been briefed about the purpose of the visit and the expectations of behaviour
- All children understand where they should go if they accidentally become separated from the rest of the group
- Teacher in Charge and other staff carry mobile phones
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and planned the route inside the location (e.g. museum) in advance
- Children are divided into groups of 4 each supervised by one member of staff, assisted by a volunteer
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment and the Missing Child Policy beforehand
- All members of staff know what to do in an emergency
- All volunteers have been briefed thoroughly on their respective roles.
- All children are wearing school uniform and are readily identifiable
- Head counts are taken on leaving the classroom, on sitting in the coach, on leaving the activity and on returning to the coach. The coach does not leave until everyone is accounted for.

## Conclusion

The three examples quoted above are intended to illustrate that everyday risk assessments for school outings are no more than practical tools that are designed to assist teachers who are in charge of an outing. The issues:

- What if the coach is delayed?
- What if a child falls over and injures him/herself?
- What if a child goes missing?

can arise, and need to be anticipated in advance. However, conducting risk assessments on EYFS outings does not require specialist knowledge.

## ROLE OF THE EDUCATION VISITS COORDINATOR

The role of the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) in training and supporting staff who are involved in taking and leading visits of EYFS children is explained in the school's companion policy: "Educational Visits for EYFS Children". All new staff have a session on planning school visits as part of their induction training.

Every risk assessment is checked and approved by the EVC as part of the process of approving each outing.

## ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN CHARGE

Again, the role of the Teacher in Charge, and the training given to those who take on that important role is explained in the school's companion policy: "Educational Visits for EYFS Children". All Teachers in Charge are given assistance and training with conducting risk assessments, with emergency procedures, as part of their training for the role. They understand the importance of setting clear procedures for everyone in the group – staff, volunteers and children.

## LIBRARY OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

The EVC maintains a "library" of risk assessments which may be drawn on by anyone planning an outing.