17.RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.RATIONALE AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The Risk Management Policy deals with assessing any potential risks to the safety, health and welfare of the children attending the service and all Staff and visitors, and outlines the steps taken to either eliminate those risks or to reduce them. A Risk Management Policy also needs to include the approach to reviewing past accidents or incidents and implementing changes to prevent or reduce future accidents or incidents.

Under the [**Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005**](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/), as an employer, an early years service provider is also required to carry out risk assessments relating to the safety, health and welfare of the Staff members, and prepare a safety statement and implement what it contains.

Our Risk Management Policy and Procedures set out how safety, health and welfare is being managed. The policy covers risk assessments, the safety statement, and the associated procedures and practices. It also sets out how and when risk assessments are carried out, who is involved in assessing risks, what aspects the risk assessments cover, what records are needed and how these are to be kept.

### Legislation and regulatory requirements

* The [**Child Care Act 1991(Early Years Services) Regulations 2016**](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print) require that a Risk Management Policy is implemented as set out in **Regulation 23**: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child. **Regulation 10** specifically requires a Risk Management Policy that addresses risk management. **Regulation 14** requires an annual review of the Risk Management system.
* Under the [**Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005**](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/) an employer is required to carry out risk assessments, prepare a safety statement and implement what it contains. Specifically:  
  **Section 19** of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires that employers and those who control workplaces to any extent must identify the hazards in the workplaces under their control and assess the risks to safety and health at work presented by these hazards.  
  **Section 20** of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires that an organisation produce a written programme to safeguard:
  + the safety and health of employees while they work
  + the safety and health of other people who might be at the workplace, including customers, visitors and members of the public

### Children need:

* Everything that is possible to be considered and done to protect their safety, health and welfare.
* To be educated and involved in everyday procedures and practices relating to their own and others’ safety and welfare.

### Parents/Guardians need to:

* See that all possible consideration is given to our service’s approach to protecting their children’s and other children’s safety, health and welfare.
* Be involved, as appropriate, in some of the everyday risk assessment processes.
* Cooperate with some of the procedures and practices that have been assessed as being necessary to protect everyone in the service from risks to their safety, health or welfare.
* Be clear on our service’s overall approach as well as their own role.

### Staff needs:

* To know very clearly what processes and procedures are necessary to ensure the safety, health and welfare of everyone in our service. This includes absolute clarity on the risk assessments that must be carried out, by whom and in what way, as well as how the actions identified in the risk assessments are to be carried out.

### Management needs:

* To ensure that everything required under legislation, regulation and quality standards is done to protect the safety, health and welfare of everyone in the service as well as any visitors to the service.
* Everyone in the service (including all children who are old enough, their parents and all Staff team members) to be clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to helping to ensure the safety, health and welfare of everyone in the service and everyone who visits the service.
* To clearly define, document and communicate to all Staff their roles and responsibilities.
* To ensure that parents are given all the information they need to be assured that everything possible will be done to help keep their child/children safe and well while attending the service.
* To provide a building map which shows fire exits.

Responsibility for safety, welfare and health and risk management ultimately rests with the employer.

### National Quality Frameworks

* [Tusla Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Síolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education](http://siolta.ie/)  
  **Síolta Standard 9** **– Health and Welfare:** ‘Promoting the Health and Welfare of the Child requires protection from harm […] and secure relationships characterised by trust and respect’
* [Keeping Communities Safe – A Framework for Fire Safety in Ireland](http://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/migrated-files/en/Publications/Community/FireandEmergencyServices/FileDownLoad%2C32381%2Cen.pdf)

2. Definitions/Glossary

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| --- | --- |
| CONTROL MEASURES | The steps to be taken to remove the hazards, or at least reduce the risk of them causing harm to as low a level as possible. |
| HAZARD | Anything with the potential to cause injury or ill health |
| INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT | An assessment of the potential risks that might occur in relation to a child and their individual needs. It is completed if the individual needs of a child warrant it, for example, a child with allergies, medication requirements or difficulties relating to their behaviour. An individual risk assessment provides an input to a child’s Individual Care Plan and is kept in the child’s individual record. |
| RISK | The chance that someone will be harmed by a hazard or by any human activity or external circumstances. It also takes account of how severe the harm or ill health effect could be and how many people could be affected. |
| RISK ASSESSMENT | A careful examination of what, in a workplace, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.’ (From: [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Small_Business/Getting_Started/Risk_Assessments_Made_Easy/Guidelines_on_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.pdf) -Health and Safety Authority, 2016)  It is a written document that records a three-step process (HSA, 2016):   1. Identifying the hazards in the workplace(s) under your control. 2. Assessing the risks presented by these hazards. 3. Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk of these hazards causing harm.   A further two steps are:   1. Recording findings and implementing them. 2. Reviewing the assessment and updating it if necessary. |
| SAFETY STATEMENT | The written commitment to managing safety and health in your business and how you are going to do this. |
| SEVERITY | A measure of how serious an injury or health effect could be, as a consequence of unsafe working or of an accident. The severity can be influenced by the environment, the number of people at risk, and the steps already taken to control the hazard. |
| STAFF | Every person employed by Play Together Crèche at any title, **including students and volunteers**, has an active role in the education and wellbeing of children, whether as an educator, management or administrative employee, cleaner, kitchen worker or in any other capacity. Therefore, whoever works with us needs to take responsibility for the education end wellbeing of children through role-modelling and by following the present policy. This is why we use the term “Staff” rather than specific terms such as “teacher”, “educator” or “practitioner”, and include students and volunteers in the definition of Staff in the present policy. |

3. Policy Statement

Play Together Crèche strives to ensure that all children in our care learn through play and enjoy their childhood in a safe and caring environment. We also ensure that all Staff, parents and visitors on our premises are safe. We commit to achieve this through teamwork, strong management, and compliance with current legislation, regulation and following up-to-date research evidence, as outlined in the sections above.

A certain measure of risk is always present in all human activities and teaching children to manage risks is part of their education, for the sake of their psychological well-being and of the development of a healthy emotional life (Sandseter & Kennair, 2011).

Hazards, instead, are elements of danger posing a threat to safety, and must be removed (Health and Safety Authority, 2013).

To protect children, Staff, families and visitors from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury, Play Together Crèche will manage risks in order to reduce their severity.

To achieve this, and in compliance with current legislation and regulations as set above**, Play Together Crèche has a Risk Management Strategy included in our Safety Statement through a Risk Assessment system**. Through these documents we assess any potential risks to the safety of the children, Staff and visitors attending the service.

This allows Play together Crèche to implement controls to reduce the severity, chance of happening, and probable number of people involved, as reasonably possible.

Play Together Crèche promotes standards of Health and Safety in the workplace to avoid or reduce the risk of accidents or illness.

This policy applies to all Play Together Staff members, children and their parents, visitors, and all service’s activities.

### Regular risk assessments are carried out to identify risks to

* any child attending the service
* their parents while accessing the service
* any adult working in the service
* any visitors to the service

### Risk assessments are carried out in relation to:

* The governance of the service
* The health, safety and welfare of each individual
* The safety of the service
* The premises being safe, suitable and appropriate for care and education of children.

Risk assessments are carried out involving all relevant parties (including children and their parents/guardians if appropriate) and the risk assessment records show who is involved.

### **Each risk assessment details the following:**

* The potential risk being assessed
* The current controls in place to address the risk
* Any additional controls needed to reduce the risk
* Those responsible for implementing the additional controls

### Individual risk assessment

An individual risk assessment for a child will be developed where required and all relevant parties will be involved. (see blank Risk Assessment Form in Safety Statement)

### Roles and Responsibilities

* **Owner/Manager**: Iwona Sawicka
* **Health and Safety Officer**: Lidia Glowka
* **Fire Safety Officer**: Lidia Glowka
* **Safety Representative**: Lidia Glowka

It is responsibility of the employer/management (Iwona Sawicka):

* To identify the hazards
* To carry out a Risk Assessment
* To prepare a written Safety Statement
* To ensure that Safety statement and related Risk Assessments are present, updated, reviewed and implemented in compliance with relevant legislation set above
* To communicate the Safety Statement to all Staff, parents and others involved (e.g. contractors, delivery services) at least once a year, and whenever the Safety Statement is reviewed
* To make the Safety Statement available to all Staff, with particular regard to the specific hazards, risks and prevention measures concerning their particular job
* To involve all Staff, and where necessary and possible children and parents, in risk assessment and control measures

It is responsibility of all Staff

* To work to maintain a safety and health culture in our team and in our service and implement a clear Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
* Play Together Crèche’s job descriptions include safety and health responsibilities, and safety and health performance are included in Staff supervision
* To act in a professional and sensitive manner when identifying risks. They will respond quickly and effectively to minimise or remove risks to promote a safe environment free from harm and respond appropriately when incidents or emergencies occur
* To implement the Safety Statement and relative control measures relevant to their competence areas and their duties

It is responsibility of Early Years Educators:

* To involve children in assessing risks in developmentally appropriate ways, through curricular activities, circle time and the development of room rules together with the children, as documented live in the curricular section of the LittleVista management system

### The owner/manager of Play Together involves all Staff

* In carrying out Risk Assessments depending on their roles and tasks, through relevant checklists (see Safety Statement).
* Through discussion of relevant matters at Staff meetings
* Job descriptions include safety and health responsibilities, and safety and health performance is included in Staff supervision (see Recruitment Policy and Staff Supervision Policy).

### PlayTogether Crèche involves parents:

* Communicating relevant control measures to be put in place by parents through
  + The website
  + The LittleVista management system

All parents, contractors and visitors are expected to cooperate towards the compliance with relevant requirements of the Safety Statement.

### Accidents and Emergency Planning

Procedures are established as detailed in the next paragraphs to respond to accidents and emergency situations, and to prevent and minimise the safety and health impacts associated with them as required by Section 11 of the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/).

### Play Together Crèche plans for emergencies through:

* The instalment, regular testing and review of safety measures for the control of entrances and exits (see Safety Statement)
* The instalment, regular testing and review of firefighting equipment and alarm systems (see Fire Safety Policy and Safety Statement)
* The testing and regular rehearsing of safety plans and relating equipment (See Fire Safety Policy and Safety Statement)
* The training of Staff members and children on what to do in the event of an emergency, particularly Staff members with specific duties, specifically:
  + Room leaders are in charge of keeping with them the attendance record for children (see Fire Safety Policy)
  + The Fire Safety Officer Lidia Glowka is in charge of coordinating fire emergency procedures and fire related equipment review, and to call the Fire Brigade (see Fire Safety Policy and Safety Statement)
* Monthly fire drills involving all Staff and children (see Safety Statement)
* A **Critical Incident Plan** including:
  + Contacts of emergency services and professionals needed in case of a critical incident
  + Clear and detailed procedures for:
    - Dealing with critical incident scenarios, including evacuation and lockdown plans, and the individuation of shelter and safe places in the facility
    - Communicating the plan to all who need to know inside and outside the service, for example parents/guardians
    - Ensuring that the premises are regularly inspected for safety, including emergency planning (for example, the shutting off of all utilities
    - Dealing with food safety
    - Dealing with trespassing, assault or trauma accidents, including the individuation of a safe password and the procedure for step down in case of lockdown in the facility
    - Primary (first 24 hours) and secondary (24-72 hours) response, and follow-up
    - Communicating with the media
    - Review of the plan after a critical incident
    - Training and information

Play Together Crèche tests, reviews and revises emergency preparedness and response procedures periodically, and after any occurrence of an accident, incident or emergency situation.

The emergency plan dovetails with the Safety Statement as required by Section 20 of the [Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/).

### Records Management and Review

Risk assessment records are kept for 2 years and our Risk Management system is reviewed as part of our annual review.

All Risk Assessments completed are documented, recorded and reviewed quarterly or more frequently if required. They are live documents that need to be reviewed in case of new situations arising.

Fire Safety documents are kept for five years (see Fire Safety Policy).

The Safety Statement is a live document kept as long as the service is registered as an Early Years Service.

1. **PROCEDURES & PRACTICES**

Play Together Crèche’s risk assessments are carried out at regular intervals for all risk-associated activities and areas in the setting. The safety, health and welfare of all children, all Staff team members and all visitors to the setting inform policies and procedures.

Risk assessment is a crucial function of our setting and an important process for the prevention of injury and illness. Play Together ensures at least 4 times a year a full risk audit of building is being carried out to minimise potential of risk. Each Staff member has responsibilities and timeframes for each category of risk as detailed in the Safety Statement for each Risk Assessment.

### Responsibility for risk Assessment and Control measures

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005:

* Responsibility for Risk management ultimately stays with the owner/manager Iwona Sawicka
* All Staff are required to collaborate with the employer in all matters related to risk management, including Risk Assessment and implementation of control measures.
* Therefore, Play Together Staff are required to conduct Risk Assessments and/or daily checks relevant to their area of competence, as specified in their job description and/or training.

### Procedure for Risk Management

Play Together Crèche balances the size of any safety and health problems and what has to be done about them, following the Safety, Health and welfare at Work 2005 Act. With this goal, the owner/manager or any Staff identified as competent and responsible in the specific risk area must:

* Identify the hazards (see Risk Assessments)
* Carry out a Risk Assessment to:
* Rate the risk level
* Reduce the risk level
* Prepare a written Safety Statement
* Carry out daily checks (see Safety Statement)
* Implement control measures (see Risk Assessments)

### Procedure for Risk Assessment:

At any moment, the owner/manager Iwona Sawicka or any other member of Staff can identify a category of risk and propose to introduce the relevant Risk Assessment and Controls.

For every category of risk as listed below, the competent person fills the relevant Risk Assessment sheet (see Safety Statement), including:

* Person carrying out the Risk Assessment
* Date of the Risk Assessment
* Date of next review
* Hazards identified
* Persons at risk
* Controls
* Overall assessment of risk levels after control:
  + **Low**: Indicates risks, which either give rise to a minor injury or the likelihood of its occurrence is low.
  + **Medium**: Indicates a medium risk due to either increased potential severity of injury or to a likelihood or more frequent occurrence.
  + **High**: Indicates that a high risk (severe injury) is associated with that hazard and the likelihood of its occurrence is not so low as to be ignored.
* Actions to be taken if the overall risk is other than low
* Risk Assessments are immediately made available to all Staff and parents/guardians (see Section 5 below).
* All Staff ad parents/guardians have a role in ensuring safety and minimising risks through the implementation of control measures.

### Procedure for daily/weekly/periodical checks:

The competent person as identified through job description and relevant training, or at Staff meetings, will fill the relevant checklist within the timeframe identified for each check (see Risk Assessment) using the relevant sheet, including:

* Date/tick on day of the week
* Name of the person carrying out the check
* Details of the element being checked
* Details of compliance/noncompliance/ control measure put in place
* For weekly or longer timeframes, date of completion of the check sheet

### Play together Risk Categories (with review frequency) include (see Risk Assessments in the Safety Statement):

Governance:

* Employee stress – quarterly

Health, Welfare and Development:

* Accidents and incidents reporting – quarterly
* Burns and scalds – quarterly
* Camp fires – when activity is carried out
* Children hammering wood – when activity is carried out
* Climbing – when activity is carried out
* Extreme weather - quarterly
* Fall from height – quarterly
* Food safety – quarterly
* General child safety and welfare – quarterly
* Hall – when needed
* Healthy eating - quarterly
* Infection control – quarterly
* Sleep – quarterly
* Sleep - daily

Safety:

* Administering medication – quarterly
* Biological agents - quarterly
* Electricity – quarterly
* Fire Safety – quarterly
* Housekeeping and maintenance – quarterly
* Missing child – quarterly

Premises:

* Access and egress – quarterly
* Indoor environment – quarterly
* Office – quarterly
* Outdoor environment – quarterly
* Outdoor risk – daily
* Playroom risk – daily
* Sanitary – daily

New Risk Assessments may be carried out at any time for new processes/activities/equipment/spaces. In between reviews of the present policy, an updated list of all Risk Assessments is always available in the Safety Statement.

### Procedure for implementation of the control measures

* Each risk assessment contains specific control measures to be implemented
* It is responsibility of all Staff to read and, where competent, carry on the Risk Assessments and Daily Checks and follow up with control measures as specified for every Risk Category
* It is responsibility of the deputy managers Ela Grochowska and Lidia Glowka to supervise Staff and make sure everybody implements control measures in absence of the owner/manager Iwona Sawicka
* Parents/guardians have an important role in contributing to the implementation of the risk management system through compliance with measures agreed with the management following Risk Assessment

### Procedure for the review and update of the Risk Assessments

* The Risk Management System review, including Risk Assessment, is discussed annually with all Staff at a Staff meeting.
* Staff member contribution is noted and the result of the discussion is incorporated in the first draft of the review
* The owner/manager Iwona Sawicka, or a designated competent person, writes a draft of the review, incorporating Staff contribution
* The management makes the draft of the reviewed Risk Management System available to all Staff for further review and signature
* Staff members have 30 days for proposing any further modification/amendments or signing the draft of the Risk Management System, that becomes then the updated version to be followed

5.COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR STAFF AND FAMILIES

All parents/guardians are to be informed of the policy and procedures regarding Risk Management on registration and made aware that all have a role to play in protecting others from risks.

Staff members will check with parents that they have read and understood the policy and provide any assistance needed.

A summary of this policy is included in the Parents’/Guardians’ Handbook. This policy will also be included in Staff induction and annual Staff training.

A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to all Staff and to parents/guardians in the Policy Folder located on Play Together Crèche’s website at [www.playtogethergalway.com](http://www.playtogethergalway.com)

Policies are shared with all parents/guardians via email.

6. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FORMS

* **Policy on Accidents and Incidents**
* **Policy on Managing Behaviour**
* **Fire Safety Policy**
* **Policy on Outdoor Play**
* **Outings Policy**
* **Policy on Safe Sleep**
* **Complaints Policy**
* **Policy on Administration of Medication**
* **Policy on Infection Control**
* **Policy on Staff Absences**
* **Policy on Authorisation to Collect Children**
* **Policy on the Use of the Internet and Photographic and Recording Devices**
* **Staff Training Policy**
* **Supervision Policy**
* **Recruitment Policy**
* **Safety Statement with:**
  + **Risk Assessments**
  + **Critical Incident Plan**
* Health and Safety Policy
* Child Protection Policy
* Nappy Changing and Toileting Policy

7. References/Supporting Documents/Related Legislation

* [Tusla: Quality and Regulatory Framework](http://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-quality-and-regulatory-framework/)
* [Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2016/si/221/made/en/print)
* [A Short Guide to The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/Short_Guide_to_SHWWA_2005.pdf) Health and Safety Authority
* [A Guide to Risk Assessments and Safety Statements](http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Safety_and_Health_Management/A_Guide_to_Risk_Assessments_and_Safety_Statements.html) Health and Safety Authority, 2016
* [Outdoor Play Risk Assessment](https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/quality-practice/play/outdoor-play/risk-assessment/) Early Childhood Ireland
* Sandseter, E.B.H., Kennair, L.E.O. (2011) ‘Children’s risky play from an evolutionary perspective: the anti-phobic effects of thrilling experiences’. *Evolutionary Psychology*, 9(2), pp 257-284. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/147470491100900212>.

8. Who Must Observe This Policy

This policy must be observed by all managers and all Staff members.

9. Actions to be Followed if the Policy is not Implemented

If the policy is not implemented, investigation will be taken by Manager/Owner (Iwona Sawicka).

If you, as a Staff member or a parent, consider that this policy is not being implemented, you can follow the Complaints Policy and Procedure to make a complaint.

10. Contact Information

If you need more information about this policy, contact:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Iwona Sawicka |
| Phone number or email | 0833187143  091/458167 or 091/458999 |

11. Policy Created

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| --- | --- |
| Date this policy was created | ***March 2020*** |

12. Signatures

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Name and position | Signature |
| Approved by | Iwona Sawicka |  |

13. Review Date

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Reviewed | March 2021 |  |
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### Staff signatures

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date this policy was reviewed | March 2020 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Staff signature to confirm they had read this policy after revision/update |  |  |  |  |  |  |