

Risk Assessments for Youth & Children's Groups in the Diocese of Derby.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify hazards that could cause harm, assess the risks that may arise from those hazards and decide on suitable measures to eliminate, or control, the risks.

This approach might appear to be novel to those involved but, in reality, we all carry out risk assessments to a variable extent everyday, for example, when crossing a road or carrying a heavy load from a car to an upstairs room.

It is recommended that the approach to carrying out the risk assessment follows the **5 Steps approach**:

- 1. Identify the hazards**
- 2. Decide who is at risk and how they may be harmed**
- 3. Identify current controls**
- 4. Plan any future controls**
- 5. Decide who is responsible for these controls and when by.**

In order to ensure that a structured approach is taken to identifying risks associated with an event and to enable all involved to be aware of the measures that are being taken, it is advised that a written risk assessment should be prepared for all activities. It's good practice to carry out a risk assessment at least once a year for each of your children's groups.

You should also complete a separate risk assessment for any outings which are planned.

Why do I need to do it?

It might seem like an additional piece of paper/admin, but the reality is that IF there was to be a serious accident, a court of law could want to know what precautions you had put in place to help prevent such an accident. You cannot completely eradicate risk, obviously, but the law requires us to protect people as far as "reasonably practicable". Having a completed risk assessment in your file is one way that you could show that you had done this. (Of course, you need to act on it too!)

How will I do it?

You can use the attached form.

Step 1 Identify the HAZARDS and list them. Use the checklist on the following page, this highlights some important areas which may pose a risk. Walk around the location of the group and imagine what happens when there are adults and children in the room. Your risks could include reference to ratios, having leaders who have been recruited according to safer recruitment principles (ask if you're not sure) as well as physical hazards like scissors, loose carpets, unsafe door latches etc.

Step 2 Decide WHO might be at risk. Children or adults? Is one age group at greater risk than another? WHAT might happen?

Step 3 Identify Current Controls: Write down what you currently do to minimise this risk. Most of us judge and act on risks as we go along, often without really thinking about it. This is a chance to write down the existing good practise you use.

And these current controls are ESSENTIAL!

- Ensure that all of the leaders and helpers in your group have an up to date CRB/DBS, in addition to references and confidential declaration forms are completed, signed and collected by the safeguarding adviser.
- Ensure your leaders and helpers have attended Safeguarding and First Aid training.
- Ensure that you have up to date information sheets for all your children so that you know about allergies and any other relevant medical information and that you know who to contact in an emergency. Ensure these forms are securely stored and accessible to leaders when needed.

Step 4 Plan any Future Controls (further action) which could be taken to further reduce the risk.

You could start by asking yourself two questions:

Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?

If not, how can I control the risks so that harm becomes less likely?

Here are some ideas that you could consider.

- Try a less risky option, change the materials or tools you are using.
- Prevent or limit access to the hazard eg. One child does it at a time.
- Put safety equipment in place eg. a gate across a thoroughfare etc.
- Make sure you have first aid resources ready to help deal with injury promptly.
- Present any finding of material defects (such as loose carpets, ill-fitting cupboard doors etc.) to the relevant person on the PCC/Church fabric or maintenance group.

Step 5 Decide who is going to make sure that these actions are in place each time that the group meets.

This could be more than one person if you have a rota for the group. It is essential to ensure that all on the rota know what actions need to be taken, you might need to check that they are actually done, at least until they become part of the routine.

It is good practice to allow the Incumbent and/or PCC to see these risk assessments, and you might need to do this if there are any funding issues revealed.

Write a note in your diary to revisit them in 12 months' time, but if anything changes in the meantime, (for example the group increases in size, or if an accident occurs) you might need to re-do a Risk Assessment sooner.

Risk Assessment Checklist

	Area	Risk assessment needed Y/N
1	Recruitment of leaders & safeguarding issues	
2	C&YP being dropped off/collected	
3	Registration & medical/allergy needs	
4	Behaviour issues	
5	Strangers, Neighbours and visitors	
6	Entrances, Exits and Windows	
7	Stairs	
8	Heating	
9	Kitchen Facilities & Food Hygiene	
10	Furniture	
11	Electrics & electrical equipment	
12	Cleaning materials and other noxious substances	
13	Stationery/Craft materials/Tools	
14	Toilets & Storage areas	
15	Fire & Carbon Monoxide	
16	Plants & Toys	

Socket Covers

British 13 Amp sockets have built in automatic shutters to protect against children poking things in them.

- First introduced more than 60 years ago, they are considered the safest in the world and do not require external covers.
- No responsible national body recommends using socket covers. That includes the UK Government, RoSPA, Ofsted, Child Accident Prevention Trust and Electrical Safety Council.
- Ofsted does not require you to use socket covers
- Sockets are made to accept plugs which meet very exact requirements. Anything which is not a standard plug **MUST** be made to the same dimensions as required for plugs. No socket covers which meet those dimensions are available!

Please note, ALL UK power sockets (three rectangular pins) have shutters, even those which are 60 years old! Socket covers introduce a variety of dangers; they make sockets less safe, not more. Some socket covers have many faults, some just a few, but none makes sockets safer than they already are. www.fatallyflawed.org.uk has lots of detail on socket covers, the dangers they create, and reviews of many different types.!

In the interests of safety you should regularly check the condition of your sockets, and you may want to include that in your risk assessment

PLEASE DON'T USE SOCKET COVERS!

Risk Assessment Form

Name/address of church	Assessment carried out by	On behalf of _____ group
Date	Date of review	PCC noted on (date)

Potential hazard	Who is at risk?	Current Controls (what you are currently doing to reduce risk)	Future Controls (Future action needs to be taken to reduce the risk)	By whom & when?

Sample Risk assessment for activities in a Church hall. Note this is just an example and does NOT cover all the issues listed above.

Potential hazard	Hazard effect Who is at risk? What is the risk?	Current Controls (measures already in place)	Future Controls (things to be implemented)	By Whom and when
Entrances, Exits and Windows	C&YP & Adults Children wandering off Running or walking into windows or glass doors. Getting lost or tripping on way in or out.	Ensure small children cannot wander off. Ensure a responsible adult is at the door and that children who need to be accompanied leave with a known adult. If in any doubt about the person collecting then check with parents first. Fit laminated glass or safety film where appropriate.	Fit additional lighting	
Stairs	C&YP & Adults and those with mobility issues. Falling or dropping equipment	Ensure small children are always accompanied up and down stairs. Ensure trapdoors and any doors opening on to stairs are kept closed/locked where appropriate. Ensure lighting is working and switches are accessible	Consider installing a stair gate.	
Cleaning materials & other noxious substances	C&YP & Adults Ingestion of alcohol or harmful substances Burns to skin or damage to clothing, furniture or equipment	Lock all cleaning materials in a safe cupboard. Ensure cleaning staff are aware of the need for care. Ensure that if poisons are used that they are securely stored.	Ensure that the communion wine and vergers supply of beer is locked away	
Toilets	C&YP & other users Child being locked in Users being exposed to germs or hazardous substances. Users slipping on wet floors.	Maintain good standard of cleanliness, hygiene and security. Ensure floor covering is suitable for the age group and in a clean/safe condition. Ensure changing equipment is in good repair & there are adequate facilities for disposal of nappies.	Ensure that a mop and bucket and cleaning equipment is available.	
Toys	C&YP & Adults Children choking on bits of toys Children getting hurt on damaged toys All tripping over toys	Only use toys that carry the safety marking. Inspect toys regularly & dispose of any that are damaged/unsafe. Ensure that young children do not have access to toys unsuitable for their age; that may, for example; pose a choking risk.	Ensure that the is a designated play area.	

Sample Risk Assessment form: Activity ... Young people allowed to explore grounds on a visit to a big house with gardens!

Potential hazard	Hazard effect Who is at risk?	Current Controls (measures already in place)	Future Controls (things to be implemented)	By whom and when
<p><i>Garden</i> 2 ponds within garden. Visitors will be allowed to wander freely in garden</p>	<p>Young people Danger of deep water and slipping around edge of pond in herb garden.</p>	<p>Life belt in place <i>Both ponds</i></p>	<p>All visitors to be informed of location of ponds and life belt before visit and appropriate behaviour around water During welcome period visitors to be told that they must not run on the steps. All trip hazards removed – stairway as clear as possible</p>	
<p>Play area – private area containing trampoline and other play facilities.</p>	<p>Danger of YP using this unsupervised and falling off.</p>	<p><i>Play area</i> Fenced off and clear sign stating area is private Visitors to be informed of this verbally</p>	<p>Provide a supervisor to wander the grounds and ensure young people avoid this area.</p>	
<p>Workshop area – danger from tools machinery and chemicals.</p>	<p>C&YP & adults</p>	<p>Low risk as area will be off limits and locked</p>	<p>Supervisor to check that the workshop is locked</p>	
<p>Pond Steps Stone steps of various heights and depth</p>	<p>possible trip and slip hazard</p>	<p>During welcome period visitors to be told that they must not run on the steps. All trip hazards removed – stairway as clear as possible</p>	<p>Provide a supervisor to wander the grounds and ensure young people avoid this area.</p>	

**Risk Assessment form - Activity: Enjoying the Alton Towers Theme Park Event
(Travel and camping should be done separately)**

Potential hazard	Hazard effect Who is at risk? What is the risk?	Current Controls (measures already in place)	Future Controls (things to be implemented)	By Whom and when
Young person becoming lost during event	All young people Danger of distress or harm if alone	Encourage young people to use common sense Monitor the behaviour of young people Do regular "silent" head counts at all times, including at concert and work on an open and honest relationship between young people and adults to build up trust.	Collect all mobile phone numbers and store in place known to all adults. Brief young people about the dangers of going off alone Expressly instruct young people to stay in small groups as they wander the park	Leader in charge on day
Getting lost	Danger of young person becoming distressed and alone	Insist that young people explore the park in small groups, Ensure that each group has a mobile phone and it has the leaders number programmed in Publicise a return time and a place. Arrange a rota for leaders to be seated to a central meeting place, eg cafe in the park. With health forms and first aid kit. Encourage the staff to wander the park and enjoy the rides and activities. Invite young people to join with adult groups and ensure that lone young people are welcomed and accompanied.	Ensure that the young people know where the minibus is parked. Walk with the young people to the meeting place and ensure that they all know that meeting time. Consider arranging for all to meet back together for lunch. Encourage young people to pop back and share news about the day.	Leader in charge on the day
Road at event	Risk of collision with traffic	Choose a location where roads that are safe to cross Insist that young people explore the shop in small groups Do a head count before departing from lunch stop	Carry a first aid kit in the minibus. Ensure that health forms are accessible at all times.	Minibus driver in advance of day Leader in charge on day
Pubs/ Off Licence/ Bar at Event	Risk of getting drunk and losing control or inhibitions	Monitor the behaviour of young people If appropriate, warn the group that	Gain consent of other leaders for all to refrain from	Leader in charge at

		purchasing alcohol is forbidden	drinking alcohol at the event	team meeting in advance of day
Rides and activities	Risk of injury or distress	Encourage young people to use common sense and choose rides appropriately Draw young people's attention to park rules and regulations Monitor the behaviour and attitude of the young people.		

Sample Risk Assessment form Health issues during a camp

Potential hazard	Hazard effect Who is at risk?	Current Controls (measures already in place)	Future Controls (things to be implemented)	By whom and when
Young People becoming ill during camp	All young people Becoming ill through known or unforeseen medical conditions	Ensure that there are trained first aiders Nominate a medical officer Ensure all young people complete a health form Ensure young people are aware of who the medical officer is Ensure that young people are aware of medical facilities on site	Speak to parents about any concerns raised on medical form on the phone Place First aid kit in a public place, ie kitchen.	
Adult becoming ill on site	All adults, as above	Ensure that there are trained first aiders Nominate a medical officer Ensure all adults complete a health form Ensure that adults are aware of who the medical officer is Ensure that adults are aware of medical facilities on site	Ensure that adults have completed next of Kin section on medical form. Request that adults are encouraged to declare health issues confidentially to medical officer.	
Young person becoming lost	All young people	Encourage young people to use common sense Monitor the behaviour of young people Do regular "silent" head counts at all times, including at services and Work on an open and honest relationship between young people	Collect all mobile phone numbers and store in place known to all adults. Brief young people about the dangers of going off-site alone Expressly instruct young	

		and adults to build up trust.	people to tell an adult if they are going off site. Expressly instruct young people never to go off site alone.	
Young people being hurt at night	All young people	Encourage young people to share single gender inhabitant tents and that health issues, (Eg epilepsy) are known by fellow tent-mates Monitor young people's behaviour at evening and overnight Do a tent check at 11pm and ensure that the young people are in bed before leaders retire	Ensure that ALL young people know where the adults are situated and that this is fairly central to the camp.	

Sample Risk Assessment form Youth group camping at a festival

Potential hazard	Hazard effect Who is at risk?	Current Controls (measures already in place)	Future Controls (things to be implemented)	By whom and when
Tent guy lines	Risk of	Choose site of each tent carefully Ensure that paths between tents are not a direct route to an important meeting point. Ensure opening of tent is facing the central arena.	Mark exposed guys with a light coloured flag.	
Tent fire	Risk of fire on site	Ban smoking on site. Monitor use of gas lights. No candles in tents	Have small fire extinguisher and fire blanket/bucket on site. (Check that Walsingham have provided these and that everyone knows where they are)	
Kitchen	Risk of burn	Campers are briefed about how to use stoves. Remove fuel store from near to stoves No cooking in tents. Cooking process closely supervised	Ensure layout of kitchen allows for several cooks to work conveniently together. Organise crockery and washing up to be away from the	
Food	Risk, due to poor food hygiene	Leader to have food hygiene certificate Cooking process closely supervised	Ensure tables have easy wipe surface Ensure washing up is done in	

		Have hand sanitizer liquids available Ensure regular use of disinfectant and j-cloths.	hot clean water.	
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