**Guidance on Risk Assessment**

Conducting a risk assessment for activities involving children and adults at risk is essential to identify potential hazards, evaluate risks, and implement measures to ensure safety. Below is a structured approach tailored to safeguarding these groups:

**1. Identify the Activity**

* Clearly outline the activity, its purpose, location, and duration.
* Determine the age range and specific needs of the participants (e.g., physical, emotional, or cognitive vulnerabilities).

**2. Identify Hazards**

* Physical Risks: Unsafe environments (e.g., sharp objects, uneven floors, or lack of emergency exits).
* Emotional Risks: Potential for bullying, emotional distress, or exclusion.
* Those to whom the policy applies Risks: Inappropriate behaviours, lack of training, or insufficient supervision.
* Health Risks: Allergies, medical conditions, or lack of first-aid support.
* Environmental Risks: Poor lighting, extreme weather, or remote locations.

**3. Assess Who Might Be Harmed and How**

* Consider participants’ specific vulnerabilities (e.g., disabilities, language barriers, or medical needs).
* Include risks to those to whom the policy applies who may also require support or resources.

**4. Evaluate Risks and Implement Control Measures**

* Those to whom the policy applies Safeguarding:
  + Conduct background checks (e.g., police checks).
  + Provide safeguarding training.
  + Ensure adequate staff-to-participant ratios.
* Supervision:
  + Assign roles and responsibilities for supervision.
  + Establish clear boundaries and behaviours expectations.
* Environment:
  + Inspect the venue for hazards and ensure accessibility.
  + Provide safe spaces for children or adults at risk to retreat if overwhelmed.
* Emergency Preparedness:
  + Ensure access to first aid and emergency contact information.
  + Develop and communicate emergency procedures.

**5. Record and Communicate Findings**

* Document the risks, their potential impact, and the steps taken to mitigate them.
* Share the risk assessment with all staff, volunteers, and relevant stakeholders.

**6. Monitor and Review**

* Continuously monitor the activity to identify any emerging risks.
* Conduct a post-activity review to assess what worked well and what can be improved for future activities.

**Additional Considerations for Safeguarding:**

* Parental/Guardian Consent: Obtain written consent for participation, including permission for specific activities (e.g., photography, trips).
* Confidentiality: Protect personal information and ensure secure handling of sensitive data.
* Reporting Concerns: Establish clear procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns, and ensure all staff know how to escalate issues.

By following these steps, you can create a safer environment that prioritizes the well-being of children and adults at risk while minimizing potential risks **during activities.**

The risk assessment will allow you plan on how you will mitigate against any possible risk, putting controls in place to create and maintain a safe environment for all.

It would be good practice to complete a risk assessment for each activity that involves the participation of children or adults at risk. Those involved in leading the activities should meet with the person in charge and the safeguarding person and complete the following steps:

1. Identify and list the risks: look for hazards in the nature of the activity, and in the place where you are holding the activity.

Areas to be considered include:

• Have all people been recruited properly? (including reference checks etc).

• Have all people had safeguarding awareness in relation to working with children and/or adults at risk?

• Does everyone understand their role?

• Does everyone know what to do if they are concerned about a child/vulnerable adult (reporting protocols)?

• Have appropriate supervision ratios been put in place?

• Have children (and their parents/guardians) given their consent to participate and been informed of rules for the activity?

Have the adults at risk (and their carers if applicable) given their consent to participate and have been informed of the rules for the activity?

• Have practical considerations been assessed for risk – e.g. where are toilets, washing and changing facilities?

• What security measures have been considered – e.g. access to the venue by non- participants?

• Will internet /technology be used in the activity? Who has access and how is it monitored?

• Has consideration been given to the safe collection of children/adults at risk after the activity?

• Has everyone been briefed on the content of the risk assessment and what polices to follow in the event that a concern is identified?

• Does everyone know who the Safeguarding Person is and how to contact them?

It may be helpful to consider these risks in stages of the activity, for example, what are the risks in advance of the activity, on arrival, during the activity and after.

1. . Identify the controls/plan that needs to be put in place to limit the risk.
2. Identify who is responsible for managing the risk and the correct implementation of the associated procedures. This should include those directly responsible for the children/vulnerable adult’s activities and those with specific responsibilities for safeguarding.
3. These steps should be used to complete the risk assessment form. The leaders of each local activity involving children/adults at risk’ activities are required to identify risks and procedures relevant to its own situation.

The risk assessment tool must be available to all. Leaders of activities with children/adults at risk’ must have a copy and be aware of its contents.

**Reviews**

Risk should be periodically reviewed, especially in circumstances when a venue changes, a new activity takes place or the members of the group change. If no new risks are present, a review of the risk assessment should take place at least annually.