

The Potteries School

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POLICY: Risk Assessment

COMPILED

IMPLEMENTED

COORDINATED

REVIEWED

24/09/2019

24/09/2019

Andy Joynson

29/09/2025

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

The Potteries School is one of the key elements in an integrated, tripartite model of care, education and therapy for learners experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties (S.E.M.H.) based in mid-Wales. All our learners are Looked After Children and present complex needs with regard to interpersonal, emotional and social issues.

The Potteries School provides a positive, supportive and child-centred educational environment for all its learners. Through a process of creating a safe learning space, building effective teacher-learner relationships and precision identification of individual learning need, the School supports learners to achieve and attain and prepare for the next steps on the educational ladder.

Many of the learners have a history of school exclusion or had limited access to learning prior to admission. Most have been unable to manage in a formal educational setting and often the risks their behaviours present has impacted on their ability to be educated alongside large peer groups.

The education offered at the Potteries School seeks to reengage learners in a creative and meaningful curriculum, assisting them to catch up on missed learning and an assessment programme that identifies their learning needs accurately. All learning is offered in an inclusive environment and delivered by education professionals with an understanding of the needs of the learners, working to build self-esteem and learning confidence, develop peer relationships and progress independent learning skills.

Our aspirational aims are to ensure that every learner is able to:

- Experience bespoke learning in a safe and secure environment
- Access opportunities to compensate for missed school experiences
- Develop positive social interaction skills with their peers and adults
- Be supported in managing their behaviour to progress and achieve
- Establish patterns and routines of learning for their next step in education
- Successfully become part of the school and wider community

The learners, teachers, therapists and support staff believe that our school can and should provide:

- Sensitive but assertive care to prepare learners for school
- An integrated approach to care, therapy and education
- Excellent teaching and learning across the curriculum
- A framework that promotes reengagement and participation
- Strategies to assist learners with regulating their own behaviour
- Individual learning planning tailored to the needs of learners

- A learner-focussed approach to formative assessment
- Education activities that provide transferable skills
- Positive role-modelling to prepare learners for adult life

Rationale

Historical trauma and behavioural difficulties experienced by the learners at the school mean they are particularly vulnerable to a range of risks during their school and home day. Whilst requiring access to a wide range of experiences to enrich their learning, these need to be in a controlled and safe environment with careful, precision practice to ensure safety and progress.

This policy aims to:

- support the school's mission statement and aims for learners;
- place consistency of safe practice across the school as paramount;
- ensure all understand that risk assessment practices can support the aims of our learners;
- enable external agencies to understand the procedures followed to maximise learner safety.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school policies for Health and Safety, Educational Visits, First Aid and Safeguarding.

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;
- Risk potential is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring;
- A risk assessment is the assessment of the severity of the outcome;
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk.

Risk assessments can be used to identify potential hazards to people (staff and learners, visitors and contractors), property, strategic direction (reputation, loss of pupils, impact on development), compliance (Independent Schools' Standards and child protection issues), environmental hazards (asbestos, legionella) and financial loss.

It is recognised that accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money, and it is recognised that preventative measures can often be surprisingly simple and cost effective, for example, the application of hazard warning tape to a trip hazard or ensuring that chemicals are properly stored in locked containers.

What areas require risk assessments?

Within the school context, separate risk assessments are produced for environmental hazards and potential hazards resultant from individual learner behaviour. Environmental hazards include asbestos control, fire safety, health and safety and online safety.

Learner activity requires discrete risk assessments for each learning activity both onsite and offsite. The new risk assessment documentation includes comparing environmental risk with individual safety concerns regarding learners behavioural needs (see below). These assessments are completed for:

- Sport and recreation
- Educational visits
- Life and independence skills (inc. horticulture)

| THE POTTERIES SCHOOL | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--|--|---------------|---|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| ACTIVITY PLANNING AND RISK ASSESSMENT FOR OFFSITE VISITS | | | | | | | | |
| (Sport & Recreation :: Life & Independent Skills :: Home Management :: Educational Visits :: Horticultural Skills) | | | | | | | | |
| LEARNER(S): | | HAZARDS & SAFETY MEASURES | | | | | | |
| ACTIVITY TYPE: | | SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS | WHO MIGHT BE AT RISK FROM HARM? | | CONTROL MEASURES REDUCING RISK | SCORING | | |
| LOCATION: | | Pre-activity behaviour Attitude towards staff Cues from handover information | Learners Supervisory staff Education support staff | | Familiarised with risk assessment Discussion with leamer/teacher Consider not running the activity | The risk | | |
| ESTIMATED DISTANCE: | | Disruption in the vehicle Non-cooperation with peers Exploitation of low staff levels | Learners Supervisory staff Other road users | | Vehicle seating plan Stopping protocol Return to home policy | | | |
| SUPERVISING ADULTS: | | Flee from vehicle or site (MISPER) Exploit low staff levels Negative collusion with peers | Learners Supervisory staff General public | | Arms length supervision Appropriate staffing levels Solo activity if appropriate | | | |
| NAMED FIRST AIDER: | | Adverse weather conditions Lack of necessary equipment Learning objectives unclear | Learners Supervisory staff Education support staff | | Dynamic RA alternative offered Equipment check in advance Briefing with headteacher | | | |
| INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOURS CAUSING CONCERN: | | Inability to regulate behaviour Aggressive response to requests Requires assertive management | Learners Supervisory staff General public | | Diversion/ distraction/guidance RPI if criteria are met Phone assistance/return to home | | | |
| | | Unqualified staff/inadequate ratio Lack of first aid qualification Little experience of activity | Learners Supervisory staff General public | | Balance staffing ratio in handover Insist on first aid provision at onset Match staff to preferred activities | | | |
| | | Medication not taken/forgotten Physical needs of learner unmet ALN unrecognised/unplanned | Learners Supervisory staff Education support staff | | Return to home if not supplied Dynamic assessment environment Pre-activity documentation (ILT) | | | |
| HEADTEACHER (Print): | Andy Joynson | LIKELIHOOD: | 1 Very unlikely | 2 Unlikely | 3 Possible | 4 Likely | 5 Very Likely | 6 Highly likely |
| Signed: | | RISK RATING: | Score: | | Score: | | Score: | |
| Date: | | | | | | | | |

assessments are completed by the Headteacher in conjunction with the allocated staff for each learner before the onset of the activity. If the threshold figure of 29 or above is reached on the scoring matrix, the activity is suspended until relevant changes can reduce the level of risk. The 'Individual Behaviours Causing Concern' is a dynamic element to the risk assessment as the behavioural needs of learners at the school are in constant in flux.

The risk assessments for Outdoor Education activities are monitored by the OE instructor and more site specific. Here's a sample risk assessment:

| | | | | | |
|------------|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Activity : | Lake Vyrnwy Walking Circuit | Assessed by : | | Last Reviewed : | October 2018 |
| Venue : | Llyn Efyrnwy, Llanwyddyn | Location : | NGR: (001201) | Index : | RA403 |

| Hazard | Who may be harmed | Risk (1low – 5 high) | | | Control Measure |
|---|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| | | Likelihood & value | Outcome & value | Factor (1-25) | |
| Parking in car park (other vehicles) | Students Staff | Low 1 | Medium 4 | Low 1 x 4 = 4 | Group briefed & supervised. |
| Traffic on road around lake (public road) | Students Staff | Low 1 | Low 5 | Low 1 x 5 = 5 | Group briefed & supervised carefully by staff Group to stay together and not spread out. High-visibility vests or similar to be used. |
| Blisters etc. from distance on hard surface. | Students Staff | Low 2 | Low 1 | Low 2 x 1 = 2 | Trainers rather than boots are fine for this walk. First aid-kit to be available. 'Patrolling' vehicle used if possible. |
| Effects of weather (poor weather, extremes, heat & cold) | Students Staff | Low 2 | High 5 | Medium 2 x 5 = 10 | Adequate clothing / equipment worn & taken. Adequate food & drink available. Emergency equipment carried (see SOP). |
| Slips / trips / falls | Students Staff | Low 2 | Medium 3 | Low 2 x 3 = 6 | Group briefed & supervised. Proper footwear worn. No running downhill. |
| Inappropriate or dangerous behaviour resulting from lack of behavioural / emotional stability of individual students on the day | Students Staff | Low 1 | High 5 | Low 1 x 5 = 5 | Group briefed & supervised. Consultation with accompanying staff at outset. Limitation on activities undertaken / removal of that YP from the activity as required. |

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| Description of Venue / Route for day : | Notes (effects of weather, student suitability, specific requirements of this venue / route): |
| <p>This large lake (reservoir) is approximately 11.4 miles for a complete circuit.</p> <p>The start/finish car park is approx. 1 mile North of the RSPB visitor centre and cafe (toilets) by the dam on the Western side of the lake, at the large Lechwedd-du parking and picnic area. Circuits in either direction are fine.</p> <p>Take care with vehicular traffic on the encircling road; most drivers are slow and courteous but some scream along. Good group control required.</p> | <p>Most of the way is well-sheltered by trees, as the shore is almost completely forested.</p> <p>Watch out for the usual on a route of this distance; blisters, dehydration etc.</p> <p>No fires, BBQs, cookers allowed at the picnic area.</p> |

The attached Risk Assessment (Index: **RA403**) has been approved and signed-off by:

| | PRINT NAME & ROLE | SIGNATURE | DATE |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|------|
| Outdoor Instructor | | | |
| Technical Advisor | | | |
| Head of Education / Senior Management | | | |

Review / revision frequency: **Annually**

The School and home form an integrated model of education and care and initial documentation concerning learner behavioural risks are contained within the **Risk Management Document** for each young person. These relate historical patterns of risk behaviour with a current needs analysis and thus inform practitioners of the strategies

required to support learners and reduce their risks in all aspects of their school and home day. An example is included below:

RISK MANAGEMENT DOCUMENT

| Needs | Staff Pro-active Response |
|--------------------|--|
| Staffing | XXXX will be staffed at 2-1 at all times |
| Vehicles | XXXX will sit behind the passenger seat with a staff member sat behind the driver seat. |
| Absconding | Staff to ensure that XXXX is kept in full visual at all times whilst in the community. If XXXX attempts to abscond staff to follow and intervene if required to maintain safety. Staff to ensure they reflect every incident with XXXX to support his understanding of risk and potential strategies to support repeat of incidents. Staff to ensure that ID cards are carried. Misper form in place. |
| Money | XXXX is not to have cash in hand due to absconding and putting himself at risk |
| Damage to Property | Staff are to positively support XXXX and ensure his and staffs safety are paramount. If XXXX needs to be guided away or supported staff are to engage in MAYBO. Staff to check all security systems are in good working order throughout the day. |

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| Self-injury behaviour | XXXX to experience staff supervision consistent with his level of presented risk. All items such as knives, tools, etc. will be removed from XXXX if it is safe to do so. Staff to conduct waking nights if the risk is deemed serious, (consult manager) Staff to work closely with therapist to ensure alternative ways of expressing/coping are identified to reduce the level of self-harming behaviours. XXXX's welfare is paramount, staff to implement risk management strategies to keep XXXX safe and reduce potential harm to his health. (Provide emergency aid within their remit). No objects to be kept in his room, if there is a concern, speak to Manager, on-call with regard to conducting a room search. If XXXX's behaviour becomes a significant danger to himself, physical intervention will be used but only as a last resort. |
| Sexualised behaviour | Ensure any public conveniences are checked for safety prior to XXXX using them to ensure there are no vulnerable individuals present. |

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| | XXXX not to have any unsupervised access to social media, phone or camera. Staff to ensure that there are two staff with XXXX at all times to ensure that all parties are safe. Staff to challenge XXXX positively on his language No access to Wi-Fi as per Potteries' policy. Staff to monitor XXXX in public places at all times, if XXXX becomes heightened/aroused, end activity, visit etc. to keep everyone safe. Staff to challenge XXXX on any negative touch or inappropriate sexualised behaviour. XXXX to experience staff supervision consistent with his level of presented risk. Staff to speak to XXXX about this inappropriate behavior, share information with the Therapist Staff to challenge XXXX on any inappropriate language/threats Remove from audience if appropriate Staff to ensure XXXX is in the right frame of mind before going offsite and into the Community. XXXX to be told this is not appropriate behaviour and return to vehicle. |
|--|--|

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| Free Time | No free time due to all the risks he presents |
| Behaviour Management | Staff to deploy de-escalating techniques. XXXX to be offered time-out periods in a quiet room (risk-dependant). Staff to explore XXXX's negative interactions and behaviours. (resolution meetings) If XXXX's behaviour becomes a significant danger to himself or others, physical intervention will be used but only as a last resort. Staff will attempt to physically support XXXX in a two person standing or seated hold but may be required to upgrade the hold to a three person T Supine floor hold to prevent further injury.(See Positive Handling Plan) |
| Allegations | XXXX may make allegations against staff when challenged over behavior. XXXX is staffed 2:1 at all times which reduces risk of allegations. Any concerns/threats to make allegations are recorded |

Medical and first aid

Accident forms are kept in the main office and accessed through the Headteacher or Registered Manager of the home. It is the injured person, witness or other supporting

adults responsibility to ensure that completed accident reports are passed to either the Headteacher for signing off.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and the accompanying training for all staff form the core of our safeguarding risk management. Safer recruitment procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children or who are not allowed to work in the UK.

COSHH

COSHH risk assessments and training cover all significant risks concerning cleaning equipment, manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction training and refresher training cover risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.

Shared practice and review of policy

All learners when participating in activities in the home or school are expected to be:

- given a safety briefing before participating on all activities;
- wearing personal protective equipment where appropriate;
- assessed as required for the activity;
- to follow direction from staff at the **first time of asking**;

All risk assessments are regularly reviewed by the Head Teacher in conjunction, where appropriate, with the Registered Manager of the home. The Health and Safety Policy details the school's arrangements in relation to Health and Safety. The school maintains a copy of completed risk assessments and these are available for reference. All members of staff are given an induction into the school's health and safety arrangements including risk assessments and records are kept of all induction training. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. Staff are, however, responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head, and other members of the school in order to comply with their Health and Safety duties. All members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Headteacher.

RIDDOR

In accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations

(RIDDOR), any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises involving a learner, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor must be recorded and reported to HSE. The measures taken to protect the school against identified risks, include:

- appointment of the Headteacher;
- safe recruitment of staff and volunteers;
- measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff;
- insurance;
- use of professional advice from external professionals as needed;
- review and maintenance of all risk and risk assessments.

Staff communication

The Potteries School and home have clear methods of formal and informal staff communication that is essential for effective working practice. The provision of forums for discussion and reflection, systems for regular communication and support and written documentation ensure an efficiency of purpose when it comes to dynamic risk assessment.

The Headteacher attends **all** handover sessions at the onset of the day be it a full-shift handover every three days or an interim arrangement with the team leader. Alongside other matters, it ensures any particular information or concern not previously shared can be incorporated into practice for that day. This morning process is accompanied by a congruent debrief at the end of the day that looks over individual learning targets and any risk management issues.

The Head Teacher ensures that all new written policies, documentation and information is passed onto staff as soon as possible in order for them to be aware of developments, implemented fully and incorporated into working practice.

REVIEW

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014, the Independent School Standards (Wales) 2024 and relevant guidance issued by the DfE and Welsh Government.

This document will be next reviewed on 29/09/2026.