

## **RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CYPSC**

### **WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?**

The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify possible causes of harm, the likelihood of that harm actually occurring given the safe guards in place and any further safe guarding measures needed to reduce that likelihood still further.

### **WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SHORT BREAKS/FOSTERING SERVICES?**

Completion of the risk assessment may involve collecting information from parents, carers and other professionals including medical staff, nursing staff, social worker, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech and language therapist and dietician.

### **COMPLETING THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SOCIAL CARE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

#### **Identifying or describing hazards or risks:**

- What can happen?
- How can it happen?
- Who might be harmed?

#### **Assessing the risks:**

- What is the level of risk? (consider existing controls or safeguards to reduce the risk)
- What is the likelihood of harm occurring?
- What is the consequence?
- Prioritise risks for further action

#### **Managing the risks:**

Not all risks can be eliminated but in many cases, further action can be taken to reduce or manage the risk.

- What measures are already in place?
- What further action is necessary?
- Measures to manage risk may include training, use of personal protective equipment, more information (e.g. specific management protocols), referral to other health professionals, education/training, environmental modification, introduction of specialist equipment etc.

## COMPLETING THE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

### HAZARDS OR RISKS RELATED TO THE CHILD'S HEALTH, DISABILITY OR MEDICAL NEEDS

Consider:

- Symptoms of illness or disability (e.g. reflux/vomiting, falls, seizures) and associated risks
- Does the carer need to administer medication to the child? If the child administers their own medication, are there any risks associated with this? If the child has a complex medication regime how will this be managed?
- Does the child require any Invasive nursing procedures? Who will perform these?
- Does the child have epilepsy and how is this to be managed?
- Gastrostomy care
- Nasal gastric feeds
- Tracheotomy care
- Infectious diseases
- Allergies

### HAZARDS OR RISKS RELATED TO THE CHILD'S PERSONAL CARE, MOVING AND HANDLING OR OTHER SUPPORT NEEDS

**Personal care** tasks include hygiene, grooming, bathing, dressing, toileting, changing and feeding tasks. Consider:

- What is the child's personal care routine?
- What is the level of personal care support that is required? Is the child independent? If assistance is needed, what is the level of assistance that is needed? How many persons are needed to support performance of personal care tasks?
- Is specialist equipment required to complete personal care tasks? Is the necessary equipment available within the short breaks/foster care setting? What are the consequences if the necessary equipment is not in place?
- Where will personal care tasks be undertaken?
- Is the child's privacy and dignity being maintained during the personal care routine?

**Moving and handling** refers to "any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force". Children with disabilities often require support for repositioning (e.g. moving

from lying to sitting) or transferring (e.g. moving from bed to a wheelchair) and this may involve moving and handling by the carer. Consider:

- How does the child move his body to reposition himself? How does the child move from one surface to another? Is moving and handling needed to support a change in body position or transfer from one surface to another?
- How is the child moved at home/school? What equipment is in place in these settings?
- What level of support is needed? Is the child independent with mobility and transfers? If assistance is needed, what is the level of assistance that is required? How many persons are needed to support transfers?
- Is specialist equipment (e.g. sling, hoist, transfer board, profiling bed) needed to perform moving and handling safely? Is the necessary equipment available within the short breaks/foster care setting? What are the consequences if the necessary equipment is not in place?

**Other support needs** may be varied but may include the child's means of communication (including use of specialist communication systems) and ability to make choices, play and social needs, night care needs.

#### HAZARDS OR RISKS LINKED TO THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR

Consider

- Does the child have any behaviour that is physically challenging?
- Does the child have any behaviour that is emotionally challenging?
- Does the child have any behaviour that is verbally challenging?
- Does the child ever harm themselves or others?
- Are there any risks associated with the child wandering or absconding?
- Sexualised behaviour
- Alcohol or drug use
- What level of supervision does the child currently need?

#### HAZARDS OR RISKS LINKED TO THE CARE ENVIRONMENT (Physical/Social/Cultural Environment)

Consider

- Are there any home safety requirements related to the child's disability and have these been addressed?

- Can the care environment be accessed safely? Does the child have safe access to key facilities such as bedroom, bathroom and toilet?
- If specialist equipment is necessary, is this in place? Where equipment is in place, is it in good working order? Have service records (i.e. for lifting equipment) been maintained?
- Is there an appropriate bed/profiling bed/cot bed to meet the child's needs?
- Can medications be stored safely and securely?
- Are there any risks associated with pets?
- Are there any risks associated with bedroom safety? Would there be any risks associated with bedroom sharing?
- What carers, family members, staff or other children are within the placement?
- Are there risks attached to placing this child with other children?
- Do staff and carers feel confident in meeting the child's needs (including moving and handling and use of specialist equipment)? Have all carer training needs been addressed?
- Is there a safe play area available? Is the external garden area safe and accessible?
- Are hazardous household products stored safely?
- Are there risks associated with heating? (e.g. gas fires, radiators)

#### HAZARDS OR RISKS LINKED TO THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

- How does the child access the community? Does the child travel in a car? Is specialist seating or other equipment required? Is the required equipment in place?
- Does the child require transportation in a wheelchair accessible vehicle? How will this be facilitated?
- What level of supervision does the child require? Can the child go out alone? What safeguards need to be put in place? How far can the child travel from the residence? How long can the child be away from the residence?
- Can the child manage money?
- Is there a safe play area available? Is the external garden area safe and accessible?

#### HAZARDS OR RISKS LINKED TO OTHERS

Consider

- What level of supervision does the child require? Can the child go out alone? What safeguards need to be put in place? How far can the child travel from the residence? How long can the child be away from the residence?

- Is the child vulnerable to abuse or exploitation?
- Does the child understand 'stranger danger'?