

4:3 HAZARD MANAGEMENT POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

Managing hazards is one of the key elements of an effective health and safety system. It is a continuous process and requires centres to systematically identify and manage new and existing hazards. It is not difficult to do. It involves all staff and is a requirement of legislation. It however goes beyond the consideration of hazards for employees and now includes all hazards for children.

What is a hazard?

- Means an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm; and
- Includes – A situation where a person's behaviour may be an actual or potential cause or source of harm to the person or another person; and – Without limitation, a situation described in subparagraph above resulting from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock, or another temporary condition that affects a person's behaviour.
- In simple terms a hazard is something UNSAFE OR UNHEALTHY THAT HAS OR MIGHT CAUSE PEOPLE HARM. You could say it is 'an accident waiting to happen' but by taking steps to control the hazard, you can reduce the chance of being injured.

Hazards to take into consideration

- Cleaning agents, medicines, poisons, and other hazardous materials
- Electrical sockets and appliances (particularly heaters)
- Hazards present in kitchen or laundry facilities
- Vandalism, dangerous objects, and foreign materials (e.g broken glass, animal droppings)
- Equipment faults
- Poisonous plants
- Bodies of water

Hazard Identification

Everyone a responsibility to report hazards to the Manager, and to comply with the control measures laid out in the Hazard Register and Hazard Control Plans.

Hazards can be identified in a number of ways:

- Daily OSH check
- Term playground safety / OSH check
- Annual hazard review
- Employees reporting day to day hazards as they are identified
- Incident reports
- During an assessment when planning to introduce a new piece of plant equipment

Reporting and Controlling Hazards

The hazard management system needs to be able to:

1. **Identify** all hazards in the centre and record these on a hazard register
2. **Assess** the seriousness of each hazard
3. **Take action** – control the hazard or minimise, isolate, eliminate
4. **Review** hazards

Identify the hazard

- Complete the Hazard/Incident Reporting form
- Describe what the hazard is, where it is and the potential harm/injury that could occur.
- When describing a hazard be specific eg: the item is a hazard because 'action and/or harm and/or damage' could happen. If you are unsure as to how to complete the form please refer to the Manager.

Hazard control

The Health & Safety Employment Act requires we take all practical steps to firstly eliminate, and if not practicable, to isolate, before minimising likelihood of injury.

'Minimising' includes use of appropriate protective clothing and equipment and monitoring exposure. This information is then shared with all employees. The hazard and the control are recorded in the hazard register.

Briefly, 'all practicable steps' means doing what is reasonably able to be done in the circumstances, taking into account:

- The severity of any injury or harm to health that may occur;
- The degree of risk or probability of that injury or harm occurring;
- How much is known about the hazard and the ways of eliminating, reducing or controlling it; and
- The availability, effectiveness and cost of the possible safeguards.

The standard/expectation of hazard management applies when the person knows or ought reasonably to know about.

It is important that you focus first on those hazards that are most likely to cause illness or injury. Assessing and prioritising hazards is far from an exact science. It is helpful to involve staff in discussions and realise that some of the decisions you make will be subjective.

Significant hazards must be controlled through a process of either, eliminating, isolating or minimising the hazard, These involve:

1. **Eliminating the hazard** – Eliminating the hazard is to remove it completely. A significant hazard will have been eliminated when the source of the hazard has been completely removed from the place of work. Substituting one substance or process with another may have removed the original hazard, but introduced a new hazard. The new hazard will have to be assessed. *If it is not practicable to eliminate the hazard you must isolate it.*
2. **Isolating the hazard** - To be effectively isolated the process or procedure adopted must separate the employee from the hazard by enclosing or permanently guarding the hazard in such a manner that it is no longer accessible by employees.
3. **Minimisation of the hazard** - If it is not practicable to eliminate or isolate the hazard, the hazard must be minimised to reduce the likelihood it would cause harm.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Teaching Team Responsibilities

Teaching teams are responsible to:

- Identify any hazards which affects the health and safety of staff and visitors in their centre.
- Assess whether these hazards are significant and where the hazard is significant; decide upon the appropriate method of control eg: Eliminate, Isolate or Minimise.
- Ensure that the centre Hazard List is prominently displayed and that all visitors to the centre are made aware of this.
- Communicate to their centre manager any new hazards which have arisen through new equipment, new work processes or accidents and require action.
- Review their hazard list and following an accident/incident, new equipment, building modifications or with a new team member.
- Record any changes/review of the hazard list on record/review sheet and update hazard list.
- Notify their centre manager of any new significant hazards.

Management Responsibilities

Management are responsible to:

- Promptly providing funds and support to centre teaching teams to ensure that hazards which affect health affect health and safety of staff, or children are prioritised, allocated the necessary funds, and actioned.