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1.0 INTRODUCTION

OFG believes that Risk Assessment is a key tool for managing risk. The purpose of risk assessment is to ensure we are complying with the relevant statutory requirements, to proactively remove risk where practicable and then to reduce remaining risk to an acceptable level by developing appropriate policy and control measures.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Registered/Department Managers, Head Teachers/Principals

Registered/Department Managers, Head Teachers/Principals have direct responsibility for health and safety matters relating to premises under their control and for persons reporting directly to them and are therefore responsible for the implementation of a robust risk assessment process by:

- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are conducted in the area(s) under their control, including those for new and expectant mothers.
- Ensuring that risk assessments consider who could be harmed and clearly identify those groups or individuals in the assessment
- Ensuring that the staff team is involved in the risk assessment process and that risk assessments are not undertaken in isolation.
- Ensuring that people we support are involved in the risk assessment process as is meaningful to them.
- Ensuring that where the risks cannot be sufficiently reduced, the service supports/signposts the People we support into other more appropriate services.
- Ensuring that People we support are aware that reviews can be initiated at any time by themselves.
- Ensuring that persons involved in the risk assessment process are given adequate information and training.
- The risk rating is determined by considering the severity of the impact/outcome of the hazard and the likelihood of its occurrence in order to prioritise the risk reduction measures required.
- Risks are rated and prioritised for action using the method described in the “Risk Rating Scale”.
- Safe systems of work are developed to eliminate, reduce or control risk and compliance with these systems is effectively monitored

RISK ASSESSMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

- Where generic risk assessments are adopted, these are thoroughly reviewed and adapted, as appropriate, to ensure their relevance to the service.
- Risk assessments and risk action plans are recorded on the appropriate documentation and are available for inspection.
- Risk assessments are communicated to all the relevant personnel (employees and others) so they are fully aware of the hazards and risks as well as the control measures required to prevent injury loss or damage.
- Risk assessments are reviewed at least annually, and/or when circumstances change or the assessment is thought to be no longer valid for any reason.
- Staff receive training appropriate to the safe performance of their work activities.
- Senior managers are made aware of any resource implications related to risk assessments

Employees

All employees are responsible for ensuring that they are fully aware of risk assessments in their area and the action they need to take as individuals to ensure compliance with control measures identified as being necessary, namely by:-

- Familiarising themselves with the risk assessments for their service based work activities.
- Undertaking dynamic risk assessments of their working environment (including whilst supporting people we support in the community, recording any significant findings and bringing these to the attention of managers and their colleagues.
- Identifying risks where they arise and bringing their concerns to the attention of their manager.
- Complying with the safe systems of work.
- For expecting mothers, notifying their line manager in writing once a pregnancy has been confirmed.
- Attending training as required to enable them to participate in the risk assessment process and perform their work activities capably and safely.
- Reporting all incidents to the manager in accordance with the Group's Accident/Incident Reporting Policy.
- Not placing themselves or others at risk. This may, on occasion, include a refusal to enter into or complete a task because the risk is deemed too great.

3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

All managers must ensure that risk assessments are carried out, which detail the range of foreseeable health and safety hazards associated with the operation of their service.

All managers must ensure that any assessment relating to the use of a hazardous substance (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health - COSHH) or the use of display screen equipment (DSE) is carried out before the commencement of any work involving the use of that substance or workstation.

RISK ASSESSMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

A manual handling assessment also needs to be carried out where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid the need for staff to undertake any moving or handling task, which involves potential risk of injury.

Risk assessments must be carried out by a competent person i.e. someone who has the skills and knowledge of the particular task or work area and is trained in the use of the risk assessment system.

All risk assessments must be documented on the Group risk assessment template relevant to the assessment.

The outcome of all risk assessments must be communicated to all 'at risk' persons; this includes contractors carrying out work on site.

Safe systems of work/safe procedures will be drafted and implemented by the appropriate manager and staff.

All assessments must be current for the tasks or work area to which they apply and be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect that they are no longer valid, or there has been any significant change (e.g. changes in legislation, technology, staffing or the loss of experienced specialist staff). As a minimum, assessments will be reviewed on an annual basis. There may be a requirement to re-evaluate the level of risk following the implementation of further control measures.

Certain hazards and risks are covered by specific legislation. These include the exposure to noise, disposal of special waste, asbestos etc. The organisation will make provision for guidance and for specialist risk assessment advice in such areas.

5.0 THE RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Ensure there is a team approach to undertaking any risk assessments and that it is not carried out by one person in isolation. To meet the HSE criteria for risk assessments being deemed as "suitable and sufficient" employees or their representatives must have been involved in the process and asked in relation to who may be affected.

It is important to remember that no one person can be aware of all the hazards and associated risks, and neither can one person in isolation be expected to have the answers to identify reasonable control measure to minimise the risk to an insignificant/low level.

The following 5 steps to risk assessment must be followed:

5.1 IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND WHO MAY BE HARMED

Concentrate on those hazards that are most significant and foreseeable first or could have the greatest adverse effect or consequence. Other foreseeable hazards can be identified once the significant one have been identified.

List all foreseeable hazards. Consider all possibilities. Use accident records to identify priority areas. Do not forget non-routine work such as maintenance or persons such as visitors, night workers, cleaners, security, activity organisers and members of the public.

5.2 DECIDE WHO MAY BE HARMED AND HOW

Identify the people/groups of people who are exposed to the hazards. Consider all groups particularly those who may be vulnerable.

Consider the potential impact the hazards may have on people, services or property.

Decide:

- who might be harmed and how
- what you're already doing to control the risks
- what further action you need to take to control the risks
- who needs to carry out the action
- when the action is needed by

5.3 EVALUATE THE RISK

This stage is about taking action to create a safe work environment. Evaluate the likelihood and severity of risks and then put precautions and control measures in place.

While you're not expected to eliminate risk, as often this isn't possible, you should take action proportionate to the level of risk. This means risks that pose a bigger threat should receive more extensive control measures than low-risk hazards.

5.4 RECORD YOUR FINDINGS

It is a legal requirement to document the findings of risk assessments and the action taken to reduce the level of risk.

A written risk assessment provides proof that hazards were evaluated and appropriate action was taken to reduce risk.

To support consistency of risk assessments, OFG have produced a number of templates to be used:

- General Risk Assessment Template
- COSHH Template
- Display Screen Equipment Self Assessment
- First Aid Assessment of Needs
- Generic Stress Risk Assessment
- Home Working Risk Assessment Checklist
- Individual Stress Risk Assessment
- Lone Working Risk Assessment
- Level 1 Annual Fire Risk Assessment Review
- Manual Handling Assessment Checklist
- Medical Conditions causing limitations in Workplace
- New and Expectant Mothers
- Vibrating Equipment General Risk Assessment Template
- Work Experience College Placement
- Young Persons and Work Experience Risk Assessment Template

5.5 REVIEWING THE ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is not a one-off activity, as hazards and risks do not remain static. It is therefore necessary to carry out a periodic review of risk assessments in order to ensure that they remain valid and to ensure that:

- Actions have been implemented appropriately and the risk mitigated.
- The likelihood or impact of a risk has not been altered by other factors.

Reviews should be undertaken in the following circumstances: -

- Following an accident: incident; near miss or dangerous occurrence.
- Where there is a significant change in the work activity (if any circumstances change);

- Where there is a change in the employees' e.g. new employees; young workers, expectant mothers; people with disabilities.
- Changes to equipment, plant and work processes.
- Changes in legislation and/or Government Guidance
- As a result of monitoring or audit
- As a result of advice or action by Enforcing Authorities
- New information becomes available relevant to the work activities
- Improved control measures become available
- Special "one-off" occasions (e.g. building alterations)

In all cases, risk assessments must be reviewed at least annually and re-written every three years. Risk assessments will also be reviewed following serious incidents as part of the accident investigation process.

The findings of any central monitoring of incident data will be fed into the risk assessment review process.

6.0 COMMUNICATING THE RISK ASSESSMENT

It is important to regularly update employees on what risk assessments have been completed/reviewed, and any actions that have been implemented/changed as a result. This will allow staff to be aware of changes that happen as a result of the risk assessment process and encourage compliance with it.

Employees should be updated on new/reviewed risk assessments especially those relating to the people we support as soon as practically possible following the review.