



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

Services for Children, Young People and Families

Children in care

Children's homes

Risk assessment for children in care

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Author

Sally Rimmer

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Introduction

The risk assessment approach to safe care should be embedded in practice. A risk assessment must be completed for all children who are placed in –

- **Foster placements including Regulation 24 Family and Friends Placements**
- **Residential Children's Homes including those children who are placed in external residential placements.**

The risk assessment will initially be completed by the child's social worker with the parents, and will be updated and amended at the Placement Agreement Meeting or 72 hour meeting where carers and other agencies involved in the child's welfare will contribute to the child's risk assessment.

Risk assessment relies on the sharing of information and where there are concerns for a child all agencies must work together to identify, manage and reduce risks to a child.

Risk assessment must not be looked upon as a paper exercise simply to comply, it should be used as a tool to control or reduce risks to children.

Risk assessment and risk management are undertaken in order to reduce the likelihood of harm.

Who should carry out the risk assessment and when

A child's social worker is responsible for completing a child's initial risk assessment. This should be shared with the carer prior to placement if possible and reviewed at the Placement Meeting for foster placements or at the 72 hour meeting for children's homes.

For children in foster care it remains the responsibility of the child's social worker to review and update the child's risk assessments annually or earlier if the identified hazards change or new hazards are identified.

For children at Trafford Children's Homes it is the responsibility of the child's social worker to complete the initial risk assessment and the responsibility of the Registered Manager to review and update the child's risk assessment either annually or earlier if the identified hazards change or new hazards are identified. For Children's homes a separate risk assessment form must be completed for each identified risk. These are reviewed every month or sooner if needed.

Children in care come into contact with a wide range of others who should be involved in the risk assessment process; foster carers, residential workers, health professionals, schools, YOS workers, Police.

Wherever possible and appropriate the child should be involved in the process and sign that they agree on the risk assessment form.

Risk assessments for children who go missing must be completed using the Missing From Home or Care Policy documents.

For children placed in a residential children's home

A separate risk assessment must be undertaken and recorded when it is planned for a child to go on a holiday. In the children's homes the manager is responsible for signing this off once satisfied that the control measures put in place are adequate.

For children in foster care

The social worker and foster carer should agree on the control measures to be followed.

Process of undertaking a risk assessment

The gathering of information about the child, their experiences, their family, their activities and their behaviours will provide the worker with identified risks/hazards.

Risk assessment involves the identification and evaluation of sources of potential harm and the management of the identified risks:

1. Identify the activity/vulnerabilities

What activity is creating potential risks? This can include substance misuse, bullying, self-harm, inappropriate sexualised behaviour, aggression, contact with certain individuals and truancy from school. Is the child vulnerable? List vulnerabilities.

2. Identify risks/hazards

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. For example; personal safety, physical injury, criminality, damage to health, emotional distress.

3. Identify who is at risk

Specify if the risk is to the child, carers, peers, others.

4. Control measures

These are the actions put in place to reduce or prevent the hazards. This can be a whole range of actions dependent on the risk. Control measures could include –specific pieces of work undertaken by different agencies, discussion with the child regarding dangers, referrals to specialised services, adequate agreed levels of supervision, training for carers or staff, role model of carer or staff, policies and procedures, the calling of an ambulance, raising awareness.

5. Are these control measures adequate?

It must be agreed if they are adequate or not. This will often depend upon the placement and if the control measures identified are sufficient or not. If not further control measures can be agreed.

6. Monitoring

The control measures must be monitored at regular intervals to ensure they are being adhered to and working effectively. The children's homes managers are responsible for this task but all others involved in the child's care are responsible for alerting the manager to concerns.

7. Review

All Risk assessments must be reviewed quarterly or earlier if there are changes in the risk or control measures to be taken. As ABOVE, at Kindle, each risk assessment is reviewed every month or sooner if needed.

8. Recording

All risk assessments must be recorded, signed and dated.

Children's home: Risk assessment form

Name of children's home
Name of child
Date of birth
Date of assessment
Name of Social Worker
Risk assessment
Any historical factors in relation to identified risk
Risk Level
Identified risk or behaviour concern
Person(s) at risk
Strategies to lessen identified risk, for example, what increases risk and what decreases risk?
Any further actions required to be implemented
By who and when

Name of children's home
Name of child
Date of birth
Date of assessment
Name of Social Worker
Name of staff member(s) completing form
Staff signature(s)
Young person's signature: (if required)
Manager's additional comments:
Name of manager
Manager's signature:
Date of review (End of the month or when identified risk requires reviewing - whichever is sooner):