

ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL SJA

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Conducting Risk Assessments

a) Health and safety are key considerations for all St Joseph's Association (SJA) committee members. Before putting on any event the SJA will carry out a full risk assessment. The SJA will maintain a record of its findings and the SJA will produce these in the event of an incident at our event.

b) Committee members are made up of trustees (parents/carers, teachers and elected representatives) as outlined in the constitution.

c) Saint Joseph's Association (SJA) is also referred to as Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

What is a risk assessment?

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) states that a risk assessment is:

"...simply a careful examination of what [at your event] could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm."

2. The HSE also states:-

"The law does not expect you to eliminate all risk, but you are required to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'.

3. A risk assessment will help the PTA to identify potential hazards, identify who might be harmed and how to determine whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more action needs to be taken to reduce the risk.

4. Definitions

A hazard is something that may cause harm, such as trailing cables, hot water, overcrowding, wet floors

1. The risk is the chance, low or high, that persons at an event could be harmed by the hazards, together with an understanding as to how serious the harm could be.

C How the SJA will assess the risks at our PTA events

Step 1: Look at the hazards

1. The PTA will consider how people assisting and attending the event might be potentially harmed. This should include the build up to the event, the event itself and the break-down of the event. The PTA will:-

- arrange to see the venue so that the PTA can familiarise ourselves with the building(s) and rooms the PTA will be using

- make a note of what might reasonably be expected to cause harm and talk the preliminary findings through with the rest of the PTA committee

• look at the risk assessments held on file at the school/event the SJA are using taking into account when preparing our own and make sure the PTA adheres to the recommendations, e.g. if the school risk assessment states that the school hall holds a maximum number, this must be adhered to

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

1. For each hazard the PTA need to understand who might be harmed as this will help the PTA to identify the best way to manage the risk. This doesn't mean listing everyone that is likely to be at the event but rather by identifying groups of people e.g.:

- PTA committee members
- pupils
- school staff
- the general public

2. In each case the PTA will try to identify how the person(s) might be harmed, i.e. what type of injury might occur. For example, children on a bouncy castle might fall off and injure themselves and the likelihood of such event occurring.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks, decide if they are acceptable, agree the precautions needed

1. Once the hazards have been identified, the PTA Committee will then decide what to do about them. The law requires the PTA to do everything reasonably practical to protect people from harm. The PTA will assess the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate; if not, decisions to what more needs to be done to bring the risk down to an acceptable level will be made. The PTA will look at what plans are in place and discuss what steps to take to minimise the risk e.g.:

- site the bouncy castle on the grass
- place PE mats around the fall-out area
- limit the numbers using the bouncy castle (and by age-range)
- have at least two "spotters"
- remove over-excited users that might cause harm to themselves or others

2. When evaluating the risks the PTA will ask the question - can the hazard be removed completely? If not, the PTA will agree what needs to be done to control the risks so that an accident is unlikely and to reduce the likelihood to an acceptable level.

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

1. Once the PTA has identified the various hazards and agreed the steps needed to minimise the risk, the PTA will record the findings and share them with the PTA committee. This will help when putting the findings of the risk assessment into practice which is the most important part of the whole process.

2. When recording the findings the HSE states that this can be kept very simple, for example - 'members of the public may trip over rubbish - black sacks will be strategically located and PTA Committee members will remove and replace at frequent intervals'.

3. The SJA has a duty of care to show that:

- the SJA have undertaken a comprehensive check
- advice taken from the school/venue and local authority (if applicable)
- we have considered who might be affected was identified
- we have taken appropriate steps to deal with hazards where agreed
- the precautions to reduce the risk are understood and any remaining risk is low; and
- all PTA committee members are aware of the process

4. The PTA will keep all risk assessments on file and are to be used as a starting point for similar, future events.

Step 5: Review your assessment and update if necessary

1. Even if the PTA is running the same event, at the same time, in the same place every year, no two events are ever exactly alike. The PTA will therefore review what they are doing, at the planning stage of every event. The PTA have the right to use a previous risk assessment as long as it has been reviewed to consider:

- have there been any changes?
- have our fellow PTA colleagues identified another potential hazard?
- have we learnt anything from the previous event - what accidents, incidents happened last time?

A risk assessment template used by the school can be used and/or adapted to suit the appropriate event.