

Individual Risk Assessment and Management Policy

Please refer to Practice Guidance, ReS 6.11.1

1 Policy

Please note the reference to “people who use our services” refers to any children, young people or adults in receipt of services from the Hesley Group.

1.1 In seeking to provide services that support positive risk management we expect the following outcomes will be achieved:

- Enabling people using our service to take part in daily living activities and lifestyle choices within a framework of acceptable risk
- Managers, practitioners and staff are well supported through the provision of guidance and practical tools for effective identification, assessment and management of risk relating to individuals, and
- The organisation learns by effective review of incidents.

1.2 To achieve these outcomes the following requirements should be in place:

- Processes that identify and assess risk and evaluate measures that can reduce the chances of an event taking place.
- Support to be provided for staff and managers.
- Individual risk assessments are to be carried out as part of the care and support planning processes and regularly reviewed and updated by competent staff. Clear plans for the management of all identified risks must be developed as a consequence of the assessment.
- Risk assessment should involve a level of management that is appropriate to the nature and scale of the risk.
- Decisions will need to be clearly documented and the resulting actions implemented through procedures outlined in Hesley Group’s Lifestyle Planning (Adults), ReS 4.1A, the Supporting Care and Health Needs Policy and Activities and Trips (Children), ReS 4.1B, policies and associated guidance.
- Clear reporting procedures must be in place and risk assessment and management actions must be recorded.

Risk Assessment and Management Plans must be reviewed regularly and at a minimum every six months.

2 Why we need a policy

For most people risk and risk taking is an accepted part of our lives. We take risks without conscious thought most of the time. But people with learning disabilities are often discouraged from taking risks. This can be because of real or perceived limitations or a fear that they or others might be hurt or otherwise harmed. We worry about being blamed if this should happen.

The difference for people using our services and people living independently is that when they take risks they will do so when being supported by a support worker and/or teacher or vocational worker. Also we worry that a person using our service may take a risk on their own before a support worker is able to intervene, but our service might be held responsible if harm occurs.

Policy and best practice in supporting people with a learning disability means people are being encouraged and supported to extend their life experience and involvement in everyday activities and special activities that many non disabled people take for granted, such as educational, vocational and employment opportunities and the chance to have a meaningful social life.

This contrasts with previous approaches' focus on the 'problems' resulting from people's impairment or learning ability.

Generally speaking approaches to risk have in the past been concerned with avoiding potentially harmful situations to people who use services and to staff. Now, in order to support people to take part in everyday activities means accepting there are risks that cannot be avoided but can be **minimised and prepared for**.

We, therefore, need a policy to set out the approach that Hesley Group expects its staff to manage the issue of risk when they work with people with learning disabilities. The approach must be balanced and proportionate with our responsibilities to people using our services, their staff, visitors and members of the public, including requirements in relation to Safeguarding Children and Adults, care standards and health and safety legislation.