

Hill House School Policy

Risk Taking – Individuals

Hill House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. It is our aim that all young people fulfil their potential.

Legislation

To comply with the expectations in legislation / regulations and requirements under the Quality Standards 2015 Social Care, England Children and Young Persons, England The Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015. The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2015.

Purpose

Risk taking is an integral part of the process of growing up. Limiting all risk-taking limits personal growth and development. Hill House work with young people to address the risk-taking behaviours that they present with. Staff role model and teach young people positive behaviours

When considering issues of risk, it is important to consider both the risks that young people take as well as the risks that they pose to others and the risks that others pose to them.

The better the understanding of the risky behaviour, the more prepared staff are to reduce unpredictability and achieve better outcomes for young people.

Risk assessments must be based on reliable information obtained from young people themselves as well as observations of staff and others who have had responsibility for their care in the past, including LAC documents and information from placing authority.

Policy

To promote the safety and welfare of young people, staff and visitors to Hill House School.

To ensure that risk assessments are undertaken on all aspects of young people’s care, behaviour, activities, events and situations and appropriate risk management interventions are in place.

To clarify expectations for staff in relation to issues of risk assessment and management and to ensure they receive the necessary training and support to discharge their responsibilities.

To ensure a proper record is made of all risk assessments and management strategies and that these are regularly reviewed.

Methods of Assessment

The quality of risk assessments is determined by the level of access that staff have to relevant information and the amount of time available for gathering and analysing such information. For Children Homes it is a requirement that all staff are provided with LAC paperwork relating to the young person as part of the admission to the home and this is further supported by the Care Planning and Review Guidelines. (see Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review: The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations)

Staff at Hill House will aim to make holistic assessments, considering both clinical and actuarial information which will reflect both predisposing and situational risk factors. They will also use the information that is received as a framework until the young person has settled in and then, if this behaviour is not presented, the risk level will be reduced accordingly and any risk management plan will be archived.

Information will be obtained from:

- Access to past records (case histories, chronologies etc)
- Self-report by young people
- Noting discrepancies between reported and observed behaviour
- Reports from significant others involved with the young person in the past- family, friends, previous carers, social workers, probation officers etc
- Previous risk assessments
- Observation of young people

Risk Assessments, Impact Assessments, Behaviour Support Plans

Having an accurate, up-to-date individual risk assessment and Behaviour Support Plan for each young person in relation to the whole range of their behaviour and activities is essential to ensure the on-going safety and welfare of all who live and work at or visit our homes.

Before a young person starts at Hill House the Head of Care will complete an Impact Assessment to enable staff to best plan to protect and safeguard the young person as well as considering any risk factors that have been identified and may impact others. This will be based on information referred to above. If particularly serious or previously unidentified risks emerge which have resource implications for keeping the young person or others safe then this will be discussed between the Principal, Head of Care and the Regional Lead / Director with a view to seeking additional support from the placing authority.

Risk Management

Risks can be dealt with in one of three ways:

- Accepted in full
- Avoided
- Managed (mitigated)

Sometimes it is not possible to eliminate all risk from a given situation. When this occurs staff will aim to reduce risk to the lowest achievable level. Often there will be occasions when staff are confronted with dilemmas (situations in which there are risks whatever action is taken). When this happens, staff will take the least worst option i.e. a course of action to reduce risk which, while not ideal, is better than if no action were taken.

Risk management strategies will be developed in consultation with the Head of Care, young person and other interested parties. The strategies will address all the risks identified within the risk assessment, will be practicable and realistic and responsibility for implementation will be clearly identified. The degree of intervention in a young person's behaviour or activities will be proportionate to the levels of risk identified, bearing in mind the balance between the need to keep young people safe with their right to make choices about what they do and where they go.

The purpose of the risk management strategy is to:

- Minimize the likelihood of risky behaviour occurring
- Minimize the severity of its impact if it does emerge
- Ensure that staff at all levels are aware of the risks posed by young people and how to avoid them.
- Ensure that any necessary precautions are followed by staff and young people.
- Ensure that what is proposed is lawful
- Clarify who has been involved in the decision making

Only when the benefit of the proposed course of action outweighs the risks associated with it AND the residual risk (if any) can be reduced to acceptable levels will young people be allowed to take the proposed course of action.

Promoting Independence

Achieving independence is an essential part of the journey to adulthood. Hill House recognise that some of our young people need help, support and guidance to keep themselves safe while learning to become independent. Each young person has an individual risk assessment that enable staff to assess the risk involved in any given situation. These are reviewed on a regular basis with the aim of working towards the least restrictive environment possible.

Recording

It is essential that the risk assessment process and the creation of risk management plans are supported by clear and effective recording.

All risk management strategies will be recorded in the Behaviour Support Plan in the Master Care Plan for the individual involved. There will also be a record of the date when the interim and comprehensive risk assessments were completed and by whom. For each young person there will be a schedule of identified risk, an indication of the level of risk, control measures (i.e. the risk management strategy) and who will be responsible for implementation.

Each young person's individual risk assessment will be reviewed as confirmed on the plan.

In the event of a serious incident, consideration will be given to the need to review any particular assessment / management strategy and the necessary action taken without delay.

Risk assessments and Behaviour Support Plans are appropriate tools which will evidence and enhance the strategies offered to manage problematic behaviour. All staff should have training on how to complete these and should be aware of the risks posed by each young person.

Confidentiality

The best risk management strategies are achieved by the effective collaboration of all concerned with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people working in partnership with young people themselves and their parents and carers. Typically, such people will include social workers; education staff; CAMHS and health professionals, etc.

It is important that these individuals receive and share sufficient information about the young person for them to contribute to the development of an effective risk management schedule. It is equally important that information is shared on a "need to know" basis. Staff must adhere closely to this rule and to not give information to people who have no need of it nor any entitlement to it (not withstanding their wish to have it)

Related Policies

Health & Safety Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Safeguarding Policy
Behaviour Management Policy
Hill House Guidance on Keeping Safe in the Home.

Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Principal.

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