



Risk Assessment Policy

Tree of Life Educational and Therapeutic Ltd
(SEMH Alternative Provision with Therapy-Led Practice)

Review date: 19/09/2025

1. Policy Statement

Tree of Life Educational and Therapeutic Ltd is committed to ensuring that risk assessments are a proactive and integral part of safeguarding the health, safety, and wellbeing of pupils, staff, therapists, and visitors. As a therapy-led SEMH provision, we recognise that risks are not only physical but also emotional, psychological, and relational. Risk assessments therefore place therapies and therapeutic practice at the forefront of planning and decision-making.

2. Aims of this Policy

This policy aims to:

- Ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant legislation.
- Provide a structured process for identifying, evaluating, and reducing risks in all areas of provision.
- Incorporate therapeutic and trauma-informed approaches in assessing and managing risk.
- Ensure risk assessments are living documents, regularly reviewed, and responsive to individual pupil needs.

3. Responsibilities

Directors and Leadership Team

- Ensure a risk assessment framework is in place across the provision.

- Allocate resources to support effective risk management.
- Review and approve high-level risk assessments (e.g., premises, therapies, offsite activities).

Therapists

- Complete therapy-specific risk assessments for their sessions (e.g., art therapy materials, sensory spaces, movement therapy).
- Identify emotional and behavioural risks that may arise during therapeutic work.
- Contribute to Individual Risk Reduction Plans (IRRP) for pupils.

Staff

- Carry out classroom and activity-based risk assessments.
- Participate in dynamic risk assessment, particularly in response to behaviours of concern.
- Report hazards or changes in risk promptly.

Pupils

- Where appropriate, contribute to their own risk planning by agreeing to safe boundaries.
- Be supported to develop self-awareness of risks and coping strategies.

4. Types of Risk Assessments

1. General Risk Assessments

- Cover the physical environment, premises, fire safety, and daily operations.

2. Therapeutic Risk Assessments

- Ensuring therapy spaces are safe and conducive to wellbeing.
- Considering risks linked to disclosure, emotional distress, or crisis behaviour.
- Assessing materials and equipment used in therapy (e.g., art supplies, weighted blankets, outdoor spaces).

3. Individual Risk Reduction Plans (IRRP)

- Developed for pupils with identified behavioural, medical, or emotional risks.
- Include triggers, early warning signs, strategies, and safe interventions.
- Reviewed regularly with input from staff, therapists, parents/carers, and pupils where appropriate.

4. Activity and Off-Site Risk Assessments

- Required for all trips, community engagement, and experiential activities.
- Include both physical risks and SEMH-related considerations (e.g., anxiety in public spaces, sensory overstimulation).

5. Risk Assessment Process

1. Identify hazards – physical, emotional, relational, and therapeutic.
2. Evaluate risks – likelihood and potential impact.
3. Control measures – actions to eliminate, reduce, or manage risks.
4. Record findings – ensuring clarity, accountability, and accessibility.
5. Review and update – at least annually, or sooner if circumstances change.

6. Training and Competence

- All staff and therapists will receive training in risk assessment processes.
- Specific training will cover trauma-informed and SEMH-specific risk awareness.
- Staff will be encouraged to use dynamic risk assessment in real-time situations.

7. Monitoring and Review

- Risk assessments will be stored securely and accessible to relevant staff.
- The Leadership Team will carry out termly audits.
- Lessons learned from incidents will be integrated into future risk planning.
- Policy will be reviewed annually or in response to significant change.

8. Policy Communication

- This policy will be available to staff, therapists, parents/carers, and other stakeholders.
- Key principles will be shared with pupils in accessible and age-appropriate ways.