



Annual unit risk assessment

You should complete this risk assessment for your unit meeting place (including external areas) once a year. You should then review it each term, updating it if necessary. Think about risks that might affect volunteers, young members, visitors and anyone else, including members of the public.

General

Risk factor	Control measures What is, should or could be put in place to control the risk?	Action needed	Confirm controls in place, or actions being taken and who is taking them If not applicable, insert N/A	Date completed
Actions not completed from a previous risk assessment	Incomplete actions from the last risk assessment are reviewed and brought forward	Review the last risk assessment and make sure that all the actions have been completed. List uncompleted actions against relevant sections in this risk assessment.		
Suitability and competence of volunteers and leaders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete recruitment and vetting processes • Out-of-date Girlguiding disclosure checks • Inadequate training and awareness 	Volunteers undergo a recruitment and vetting process which includes Girlguiding disclosure checks. They are expected to follow the volunteer code of conduct and undertake a safe space training. Leaders undertake a leadership programme. More training is available for leading adventurous activities. Training requirements are checked via GO.	Have all volunteers got an up-to-date disclosure check? If they don't make sure they're supervised. Have they completed the right training for any planned activities? Has any of their training expired? If they don't have the right training, make sure they're supervised. Prompt volunteers to sign up for any training they need. Recruitment and vetting policy Volunteer code of conduct		

General - continued

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Fitness/ability of volunteers, young members and others	<p>Adjustment or wellbeing actions plans are encouraged for pregnant individuals or anyone with additional needs.</p> <p>Individuals are asked to report any condition that might impact on their ability to undertake an activity safely. This includes allergies to food, animals, insect bites, latex, pollen and other allergens.</p>	<p>Are adjustment and wellbeing action plans in place and current for volunteers or young members who are pregnant or who have additional needs?</p> <p>Making reasonable adjustments</p> <p>Have you considered allergies or other issues in relation to the activities you've planned?</p>		
Adult to child ratios to make sure there's adequate supervision	<p>Girlguiding provides detailed guidance to follow on this. It's important that the number of adults available to supervise an activity meets the needs of the unit and activities, and the minimum ratio requirement.</p> <p>Efforts are made to make sure no volunteer is left alone with a child.</p>	<p>Review the activity and make sure you have enough volunteers available to supervise effectively. What will you do if your number of volunteers reduces, or number of young members increases at short notice?</p> <p>Consider drop-off and pick-up and take steps to avoid any volunteer being alone with a child.</p> <p>Adult to child ratios</p>		

General - continued

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Communication, and control of activities	<p>HQ consults with volunteers when developing policies and guidance.</p> <p>Locally, there is communication between volunteers and the contact for their unit meeting place, highlighting any issues identified.</p> <p>Volunteers maintain emergency contact information in the emergency file.</p> <p>Units have agreed ways to behave in place to make sure young members listen to instructions.</p> <p>Units provide safety information to volunteers, young members and parents or carers, updating it depending on the activities taking place.</p>	<p>Is there anything you need to communicate to the contact for your unit meeting place this term?</p> <p>Is your emergency file up to date?</p> <p>Emergency file – contact info</p> <p>Do you have agreed ways to behave in place to make sure young members listen to instructions?</p> <p>Have you provided volunteers, young members, parents and carers with appropriate safety information? Are any consent forms required, and have you received them?</p> <p>Getting permission</p>		
Clothing and footwear	<p>The clothing needed depends on the activity, including where it is taking place, if it is outside and the weather conditions at the time. For example hats, coats, gloves and appropriate footwear may be needed.</p> <p>Shoelaces to be done up.</p> <p>Protective suncream to be worn.</p> <p>Neckers, jewellery and dangly bits of clothing that may get caught up or catch fire to be removed.</p>	<p>When running the activity a dynamic risk assessment should be undertaken. There are certain things that are unknown until running the activity, for example the weather outside when playing wide games.</p> <p>A dynamic risk assessment is one done on the spot and doesn't need to be recorded. Think about what's around you and any hazards there might be. Consider what you can do to make things safer, especially if you are outside and/or in an unfamiliar area. Stop and think and you could stop an accident from happening.</p>		

General - continued

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
<p>Lone volunteering (This doesn't mean being totally alone. It's rather any situation where someone is doing a volunteering activity where visual or verbal contact with other volunteers or members is likely to be infrequent AND where accidents or incidents may prevent them from being able to raise an alarm.)</p> <p>Information about lone volunteering is included in section 10 of our health, safety and welfare procedure..</p>	<p>When lone volunteering, follow section 10 of our health, safety and welfare procedure.</p> <p>Lone volunteering is not permitted when working at height or in a roof void - loft or attic.</p>	<p>If lone volunteering is likely to happen, have you read the relevant section of Girlguiding's procedure? Do you have suitable arrangements in place?</p> <p>Think about whether you'll be lone volunteering when opening and closing your unit meeting place.</p> <p>Health, safety and welfare procedure</p>		
<p>Reporting of incidents, accidents and near misses, and post-incident support</p>	<p>Volunteers report the following incidents to Girlguiding HQ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those resulting in significant injury and/or discomfort • Those resulting in damage to property • Incidents that involve aggression or violence towards a member of staff or volunteer, including verbal abuse. (If the incident involves young members, you should report it to the HQ safeguarding team.) • Any significant near misses • Any potential insurance claims 	<p>Have all reportable incidents been reported appropriately, with details of the investigation and any action undertaken to prevent a reoccurrence?</p> <p>Emergency file</p> <p>Accident notification form</p> <p>Health, safety and welfare procedure</p>		

General - continued

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Design and condition of the building, fixtures, fittings and equipment	The design and condition of the unit meeting place is the responsibility of the unit meeting place management. Volunteers carry out a visual check of equipment before use. Volunteers flag up any defects or issues with equipment or structure during normal use to the unit meeting place contact.	Have you identified any damage to equipment or the structure of your unit meeting place during normal use? Have you brought this to the attention of the contact for your unit meeting place? This includes issues with lighting and known areas of asbestos.		
Opening and closing the unit meeting place	Everyone who opens and closes the unit meeting place is aware of what to do. Checks are done to make sure nobody is left inside. Volunteers should be vigilant for suspicious vehicles or people in the surrounding areas and know to contact the police if necessary. When the unit meeting place is closed with no-one inside, all doors are secured.	Is everyone involved in opening and closing your unit meeting place aware of what to do? Are they following these procedures? Health, safety and welfare procedure		
Special events, visits or adventurous activities as defined in our adventurous activities policy	Subject to a separate risk assessment.	Have you completed an appropriate risk assessment for any planned special events, visits or adventurous activities? Guidance on activities Does everyone using vehicles for transporting young members have the appropriate driving licences and insurance cover? Transport Drivers' handbook Vehicle insurance		

General - continued

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Insurance	See Girlguiding HQ guidance on insurance requirements.	Do you have all the appropriate insurance cover in place? Insurance		
Virtual meetings	Subject to a separate risk assessment, checklist and consent form.	If you're holding any virtual meetings, complete our virtual meeting checklist and risk assessment Virtual meeting checklist and risk assessment Virtual meeting parent/carer consent form		
Visitors at meetings or members of the public entering the building unexpectedly	There is an external visitors checklist and agreement form. Volunteers should challenge any unknown visitors.	If you're planning to have any visitors at your meetings complete the visitors checklist and other forms at Visitors at your meetings		

Biohazards including infectious disease

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Managing the spread of infectious disease	Anyone who's unwell is asked not to attend meetings. Soiled items are disposed of appropriately. Everyone washes their hands regularly and thoroughly. Ventilation in the building is maximised by opening windows where possible.	Consider regular hand washing during planned activities. Work out which windows can and should be opened during meetings, and make sure to do this. Does the management of the unit meeting place say if any should be open for ventilation?		

Burns and scalds

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Burns from hot equipment, steam, camp fires, food and drinks and other hot items	Care is taken to make sure everyone knows items are hot. Where appropriate, protective equipment is used, for example oven gloves. Where necessary, the number of people involved is limited so there is adequate supervision and to avoid the risk of overcrowding and people being pushed onto hot surfaces.	Do you have any activities planned that may need protective equipment? Do you need to limit the numbers involved in any activity to manage risk?		

Choking hazards

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Choking hazards including food and small items that someone may accidentally swallow. Items worn round the neck that might get caught up and tighten	All activities are age-appropriate for everyone involved. Everyone removes neckers, jewellery, scarves etc if they're likely to get caught up during activities.	Consider the age of young members and volunteers' children who are taking part in activities. Are the activities age-appropriate? For example, food like grapes and marshmallows can be a choking risk in under-5s. Young children may also pick up and swallow things like beads. Do young members/volunteers need to take off anything they wear around their neck for any activities you've planned?		

Collision with a stationary object

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Tables, chairs and other items Collisions with obstacles or tripping on them causing injuries to people during games	Volunteers organise moving chairs, tables and any other obstructions out of the playing area, storing them in a suitable place before a game.	Consider if you'll need to move tables, chairs and other obstructions to do any activities when planning the activity.		

Cuts and lacerations

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor housekeeping or storage Unstable items that could fall Protruding items that people could walk into Sharp objects on the floor that people could step on or trip over 	General good housekeeping is maintained and routine checks are carried out in the unit meeting place.	Is general housekeeping of a good standard with no obvious hazards?		
Use and sharpening of sharp items like knives, scissors, axes and saws.	Supervision and controls are put in place as appropriate for the activity.	Will you be using knives, scissors, axes or saws? What, if any, additional controls are needed?		

Electric shock

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
<p>Use of electrical appliances and extension leads</p>	<p>Using battery-powered electrical items is preferable. Where there isn't an alternative, electrical items are used close to the socket to avoid trailing leads.</p> <p>Volunteers carry out checks of the area before using electrical equipment to make sure there aren't any issues, for example the area isn't wet.</p> <p>Volunteers check items' condition by looking for exposed wires and damage to plugs.</p> <p>Any damaged equipment is removed from use.</p> <p>Only fully unwound, fused extension leads with a clearly visible on/off light are recommended.</p> <p>Extension leads must NEVER be plugged one into another.</p>	<p>Do a visual pre-use check. If you have any concerns about the condition of equipment, such as exposed wires or cracked plugs, take them out of use until they can be repaired or replaced. In addition to pre-use checks, it's a good idea to visually check the condition of wiring of portable equipment owned by the unit at least annually.</p> <p>Are extension leads fully unwound and fused with a clearly visible on/off light?</p> <p>Single-block, multi-plug adaptors aren't unsafe, but the weight of the plugs and the leads can start to pull the adaptor out of the wall socket and increasing the risk of fire.</p> <p>Extension leads must NEVER be plugged into one another.</p>		

Fall from height/doing things at height

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
<p>Doing things at a height below 3m for a short duration. For example, window cleaning, retrieving items from storage in a loft or putting items on a wall</p>	<p>All activities are reviewed to try to reduce doing things at height wherever possible.</p> <p>Items which are difficult for 1 person to handle because of their size or weight are located so that it's easy for 2 people to access together and steps aren't needed.</p> <p>Items above 7kg aren't to be stored where they require stretching above head height.</p> <p>An item of up to 15kg, which can be lifted by a single person, can be waist height in relation to the individual when accessing from steps as long as it's not awkward or bulky to handle.</p> <p>When doing things at height, the surrounding area is kept clear and tools secured to stop them falling onto people below.</p>	<p>Review activities and consider whether doing things at height can be avoided. If not, is there appropriate equipment in good condition available and are the controls being adhered to?</p>		

Fire

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Fire starting at the unit meeting place	<p>Activities involving fire are controlled. Volunteers are aware of action to take in the event of fire, including raising the alarm and assembly points.</p> <p>Fire escape routes are clearly marked. Escape routes and fire exit doors are kept clear at all times.</p> <p>Volunteers should never attempt to put out a fire but should get everyone out of the building. Volunteers are provided with instruction about which extinguishers are appropriate for which fire to assist with escape if needed.</p>	<p>Look at our risk assessing programme activities for information:</p> <p>Is your fire evacuation information form up to date and have all volunteers been briefed on its contents?</p> <p>When was your last real or practice fire evacuation? You only need to practise an evacuation once a year; a real evacuation can count. Ideally, your unit meeting place management should conduct the evacuation. If this isn't practical then you can walk through the evacuation process.</p> <p>Fire safety</p>		

First aid

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Provision of emergency first aid and handling and disposing of items contaminated with bodily fluids	<p>Volunteers are encouraged to complete Girlguiding's 1st response first aid training, which covers appropriate handling of bodily fluids.</p> <p>At least 1 person on site during unit meetings must have valid 1st response or equivalent first aid training.</p> <p>First aid boxes with suitable and sufficient contents must be accessible.</p>	<p>Is there someone on site during your meeting with valid 1st response or equivalent first aid training?</p> <p>Have you checked your first aid box contents are complete and in date?</p> <p>Using a sticker with the next expiry date on the seal of the box means you'll only need to check the contents if the seal is broken.</p> <p>First aid training for guiding 1st response training</p>		

Food safety

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Storage and cooking of food Allergies and food intolerances	Basic food hygiene training and simple guidance is available for all volunteers. Allergies and food intolerances are covered in fitness/ability of individuals above.	If you're planning to prepare food work through Girlguiding's simple flow chart. Food safety guidance Going away with scheme		

Hazardous chemicals

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Incorrect storage and handling of chemicals	Volunteers assess any chemicals being used by looking at the hazard warning information on the labels and any first aid-related information. Appropriate precautions are taken if required.	Are you planning to use any hazardous chemicals (any item labelled with a hazard warning sign). For example glues, aerosols, cleaning chemicals? Have you read the label and thought about any first aid or precautions that might be needed, such as providing protective gloves?		

Manual handling

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Lifting and handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dropping heavy items • Overloading • Trapping • Size and weight of item • Condition and texture • Repetitive movement • Twisting and turning • Frequency and timing 	There's guidance on manual handling in our health, safety and welfare procedure. People ask for help if required, and don't carry out repetitive tasks.	For information only. No action required.		

Mental health difficulties or stress

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Mental health difficulties and stress	Resources are available to help volunteers identify signs of stress and mental health difficulties in themselves and others. Offer appropriate help or make reasonable adjustments.	You should review Girlguiding's resources - do you need to take any action locally? Mental health and inclusion Mental health and guiding		

Slips, trips and falls

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Objects on the floor, wet slippery floors, untied shoe laces, breakages and spillages	Young members and volunteers are encouraged to dynamically assess the unit meeting place before activities start. Temporary signs are used to alert people to any risks while they're being addressed. Breakages and spills are dealt with as soon as they happen or are noticed. If necessary, the area is supervised or cordoned off. Cleaning equipment to clear spillages are available. As far as possible surfaces are left dry and free from debris.	Is there sufficient and adequate cleaning equipment and signs available?		

Struck by a moving object

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Items being thrown during games or activities Hit by people moving around	People taking part in activities are aware of participants and spectators. Buildings and surroundings are taken into consideration when planning activities.	Think about your building and surroundings. Is there a risk of property damage and do you need to take additional precautions?		
Moving vehicles during drop-off and collection, or when crossing roads during activities	Everyone dynamically assesses road risks as they go, using any available safe crossing points, for example zebra and pelican crossings. Volunteers supervise young members if needed. Staggered start and finish times are considered when 2 groups are using the facilities on the same night to avoid congestion. Volunteers relay any specific instructions from the unit or the management of the unit meeting place to parents.	Are there any specific requirements for your unit? Do these need to be included in the safety briefing for parents and carers?		

Violence

Risk factor	Control measures	Action needed	Confirm controls/actions	Date
Verbal abuse, bullying, harassment and acts of violence or aggression	Girlguiding has anti-bullying and harassment and whistleblowing policies in place, and provides guidance on managing challenging behaviour.	For information only. You only need to take action if issues are identified. Anti-bullying and harassment policy Managing challenging behaviour guidance		

Name of unit risk assessment completed for:	
Address of usual meeting place covered by the risk assessment:	
Name of person completing risk assessment:	
Role:	Membership number:
Date review initially completed:	Signature*:

Review history		
Date	Signature	Summary of changes (if any)

* Both electronic and wet ink signatures are acceptable.