

Buckinghamshire County Council

Health & Safety

The Swing of the Pendulum

THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION ADVISERS' PANEL



Buckinghamshire County Council

Keep it in Perspective

“... being alive is dangerous. There is risk even when we are in bed asleep. But from the moment we wake up the risk increases.

In Britain alone, 20 people are electrocuted every year by their bedside light or alarm clock; 20 are killed falling over as they get out of bed; 30 drown in the bath; 60 are seriously injured even just putting on their socks; 600 (nearly 2 per day) die from falling down stairs.

If we try to make the world perfectly safe we have to remove baths and socks and stairs. It would be impossible. Zero risk is not a meaningful option, because zero in this case can only be obtained by not doing anything at all. And imagining the world could be perfectly safe is not only impossible, it could be dangerous”.

(Gerald Wilde C4 TV 1999)

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Thank you for
driving carefully
through the
village

CINCINNATI
CARTS

Levels of Risk Assessment

- Generic – LEA/Employer – Establishment
- Site specific/group specific
- Ongoing





Health & Safety Executive

Is about

- Ensuring that workers and the public are properly protected
- Providing overall benefit to society by balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing the real risks – both those which arise more often and those with serious consequences
- Enabling innovation and learning not stifling them
- Ensuring that those who create risks manage them responsibly and understand that failure to manage real risks responsibly is likely to lead to robust action
- Enabling individuals to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility



Health & Safety Executive

It is not about

- Creating a risk free society
- Generating useless paperwork mountains
- Scaring people by exaggerating or publicising trivial risks
- Stopping important recreational and learning activities for individuals where the risks are managed
- Reducing protection of people from risks that cause real harm and suffering



How can bureaucracy be reduced?

- Misunderstanding on risk assessment
- Good planning and information systems reduce the need for separate risk assessments
- Generic risk assessments are the same as 'school rules'





