

Risk Assessment Policy

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Introduction

The school and Governors are committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Priority lies in ensuring that all operations within the school environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully not just with the law but with best practice. It is recognised that risks are inherent in everyday life and that the need is to identify them and adopt systems for minimising them. It is important for our students to be educated to cope safely with risk.

Health and safety legislation *Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999*. requires **every employer to carry out a “suitable and sufficient” risk assessment, but the way this is done must be appropriate and proportionate.**

A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. It should identify **practical actions that protect people from harm and injury** and for most school assessments short bullet points work well.

A documented risk assessment is not required for every activity; neither does the law require that we eliminate all risk but to protect people as far as is ‘reasonably practicable’.

Therefore, school arrangements for risk assessment should be proportionate to the level of risk involved with more consideration being given to significant risks (those with the potential to cause real harm) which need to be formally documented, rather than undertake excessive paper-based risk assessments of very low risk activities.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure risk assessments are conducted. The actual assessment process may be delegated to other members of staff however each assessment must be approved by the Headteacher. Risk assessments will be checked and monitored termly by LGB and governors to ensure that significant risks are being adequately controlled.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation:

Hazard	something with the potential to cause harm
Hazardous event	for a hazard to cause harm, a hazardous event must happen
Risk	evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring
Risk assessment	resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (for example, loss of life, destruction of property)
Risk control measures	measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (for example, staff training, clear work procedures, preliminary visits, warning signs, barriers and insurance)

Risk assessments can be used to identify potential hazards to people (slipping, falling) and property (fire) and strategic hazards (reputation, loss of students, impact on development), financial hazards (falling student rolls), compliance hazards (Child Protection issues) and environmental hazards (asbestos, legionella).

It is recognised that accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money, and it is recognised that preventative measures can often be surprisingly simple and cost effective, for example, the application of hazard warning tape to a trip hazard, or ensuring that chemicals are properly stored in locked containers.

What areas require risk assessments?

There are numerous activities carried out at the school, each of which requires its own separate risk assessment. Areas in which risk assessments are of particular importance are:

- Asbestos Control
- Legionella
- Educational Visits and Trips
- Fire Safety
- Health and Safety

Risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including:

Educational

Science

Food Technology

Sport, PE and Dance

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

Art and Design

Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss)

Drama (including the theatre backstage, stage, props room and lighting box)

The school makes use of model or generic risk assessments for educational activities and visits. We subscribe to the CLEAPSS Advisory Service, and we follow their advice regarding risk assessments for all science and food and design and technology activities. The risk assessments cover both the lesson and preparation activities.

Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral care is to ensure that each student becomes a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping him/herself safe whether at home or outside the home. Our PCSHEE programmes and assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the student develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and of sensible precautions that should be taken. Our Science lessons encourage students to conduct their own safety-related research into the potential hazards of chemicals, gas, electricity and flammable materials.

Support Areas

Catering and Cleaning - External providers onsite

Risk assessments and training cover all significant risks concerning catering and cleaning equipment, manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction training and refresher training cover risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices. This is the responsibility of external providers to carry out but the school will monitor compliance by asking for copies of risk assessments and appropriate records, as well as carrying out spot checks to ensure that these processes are being followed.

Caretaking and Security

Risk assessments cover all significant risks. Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising fire risks and security risks by adhering to good practice. Risk assessments also cover manual handling, working at heights, and asbestos. Induction training and refresher training include training on risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.

Maintenance

Risk assessments and training cover all significant risks including, manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, asbestos, control of contractors on site, electricity, gas, water, and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction training and refresher training include training on risk assessments, safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment. External contractors are required to ensure safe working practices including the use of appropriate PPE.

Grounds

Risk assessments and training cover all significant risks including manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction training and refresher training include training on risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices. External Contractors are required to ensure safe working practices including the use of appropriate PPE.

Administrative Staff

Risk assessments are required for the display screen equipment used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

The school holds a risk register for activities which require a risk assessment as detailed above.

Conducting a Risk Assessment

The school uses the model Risk Assessment found in Appendix A of this document. The school's policy is not to carry out any high risk activity. Activities involving students are normally low risk. Some medium risk outward bound type activities are undertaken with students, for example on Trips i.e. PGL, Duke of Edinburgh's Award training. The school uses specialist/qualified instructors provided by the centres/schemes for these activities. The school always employ specialists to run higher-risk tasks. School staff may carry out medium rated activities only if they have been specifically trained for the activity. In the event that external specialists will be working with students without school staff present they are required to have appropriate DBS checks.

Students are always:

- given a safety briefing before participating in medium/higher risk activities.
- expected to wear personal protective equipment provided and assessed as required for the activity.
- expected to follow instructions.

All members of staff are also expected to wear personal protective equipment for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its use.

Specialist Risk Assessments and High-Risk Activities

We always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks at the school. The School Business Manager arranges for specialists to carry out risk assessments concerning the following:

- Fire
- Asbestos
- Legionella

Staff Responsibilities

Responsibilities of All Staff

All members of staff are given an induction into the school's health and safety arrangements including risk assessments, and records are kept of all induction training. Specialist training is given to staff whose work requires it. Staff are, however, responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of students and visitors. Staff are responsible for following risk assessments in their areas of work. Staff sign risk assessments which are relevant to them and a central record is maintained. Staff should produce risk assessments for all activities/events using template in Appendix A and categorise as per Risk Rating Matrix in Appendix C. Every Risk Assessment needs to be submitted to the Headteacher to be checked. Staff should raise with their line manager in the first instance if they need any support with Risk Assessments.

Head of Department Responsibility

Heads of Department (HODs) are responsible for ensuring all curriculum risk assessments are completed as per this policy and reviewed as specified.

Trip Leaders Responsibility

Trip leaders must complete risk assessments for all trips and external activities. The risk assessment must be uploaded to evolve for approval by the EVC. Full approval for trips can only be granted by the EVC once this is complete and approved

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Responsibility

Sign off and agree all risk assessments on evolve as per School visits and journeys policy

School Business Manager Responsibility

School Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are completed for all premises and maintenance areas in school. Is responsible for ensuring the Risk Register is complete and all risk assessments are reviewed as per the policy. Ensure staff are trained appropriately for their roles in regard to health and safety and managing risk.

Senior Leadership Group (SLG) Responsibility

Risk assessments will be checked and monitored termly by SLG to ensure that significant risks are being adequately controlled.

Headteacher Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure risk assessments are conducted. The Headteacher is responsible for approving all risk assessments within school.

Governors Responsibility

The Governors for Health and Safety attend school to complete a Health and Safety inspection. As a minimum once a term the governors with responsibility for health and safety attends school to conduct an inspection, within this inspection a review of risk assessment and department checks are included. The governing body will confirm all assessments are up to date, quality sample/sense check risk assessments and compare these against observed practice. This is for the purpose of planning for the future and assessing major risks to which the school is exposed. Health & Safety is a standard agenda item on the Governors Finance and Site committee meetings.

Five Steps to Risk Assessment

Step 1 – Identify the Hazards

First you need to work out how people could be harmed.

In most cases these can simply be identified by observation of the task/workplace and consulting those staff involved in the activity. The focus should be on identifying **significant** hazards and not the trivial.

Step 2 – Identify who might be harmed and how

For each hazard be clear about who might be harmed e.g. staff, students, contractors, visitors etc. this will help identify the best way of managing the risk.

Remember that you may have a higher duty of care for some individuals with additional needs e.g. new and young workers, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities/medical conditions who may be at particular risk.

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Risk is usually evaluated by considering the likelihood of the harm occurring and the potential severity of the injury. This will help identify if the existing procedures and controls in place are adequate or if any additional actions need to be taken. i.e. whether you have done all that is reasonable to protect people from harm.

Involve staff in the writing of risk assessments, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice. It will also ensure they understand the risk assessment and aid ownership of responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others.

Risk rating	Actions	
1-2 Possibility of minor injury only	No action	No further action but ensure controls are maintained.
3-6 Possibility of minor injury only	Monitor	Look to improve at next review or if there is a significant change.
8-12 Possibility of significant injury or over 3 day absence occurring	Action	Further controls must be implemented if reasonably practicable to do so
15-16 Possibility of fatality/serious injury occurring	Urgent action	Take immediate action and stop activity if necessary. You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating and maintain controls rigorously.
20-25 Strong likelihood of fatality / serious injury occurring	Stop	The activity must not take place at all. Take immediate action You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating prior to commencing activity

Within risk management the first option is look to eliminate the risk, if this is not possible then control is needed, see below list of priorities

Prevention and Control

1. Elimination (e.g. buying ready sawn timber rather than using circular saw).
2. Substitution by something less hazardous and risky.
3. Enclosure (enclose it in a way that eliminates or controls the risk).
4. Guarding/segregation of people.
5. Safe system of work that reduces the risk to an acceptable level.
6. Written procedures that are known and understood by those affected.
7. Adequate supervision.
8. Identification of Training needs.
9. Information/instruction (Sign's/handouts).
10. Personal Protective Equipment.

The above are listed in rank of order of effectiveness. Where people are involved, their level of competence needs to be taken into account.

Step 4 – Record and Implement the Findings

The level of detail in an assessment should be proportional to the risk. The purpose is not to detail each trivial hazard but to ensure that significant hazards are adequately assessed with the aim of informing safe working practices. In the majority of cases the use of simple bullet pointed controls would be sufficient.

Completed risk assessments should be signed off by the person completing the assessment and must be agreed by the Headteacher. These are then shared with other staff as appropriate to use. All staff using the Risk Assessment must sign the declaration and a central copy kept.

The school maintains a copy of completed risk assessments and these are available for all staff via the Intranet service. A central hard copy of all risk assessments is also available in the Headteachers office. Departments will have hard copies of risk assessments for their areas for staff to access easily.

All actions identified within the Risk Assessments must be completed within the agreed timescale and recorded as completed with a date in the Risk Assessment.

Specific risk assessments relating to individual staff or students will be stored on the individuals file with individuals concerned also receiving a copy.

Step 5 – Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

Risk assessments will be reviewed regularly. At the school this will be annually or as soon as any significant changes have occurred.

Risk assessments are also reviewed immediately after there has been an accident or incident in order to identify what went wrong and whether any additional controls are required.

Risk assessment reviews are signed off by the Headteacher and reviewed by Health & Safety Governors.

Measuring performance in managing risk can be achieved in a number of proactive ways:

- Teaching observations
- 1-2-1 / performance management
- Staff / Departmental meetings (A regular item on meeting agenda provides a brief opportunity to review practice in relation to accidents, near misses etc.)
- Inspection/audit by head of department/governors

Risk assessment in the curriculum

Teaching staff must be aware of relevant generic/model risk assessments and consider any significant health and safety issues such as class size, student behaviour, maturity, limitations of space, layout, equipment etc. as part of their planning and preparation, risk assessment is just another name for that process.

For most activities rather than create additional paper records, or a specific risk assessment this is generally best achieved by incorporating your assessment into materials normally used in teaching, annotating schemes of work, lesson plans, student worksheets etc.

For those curricular activities in areas of higher risk (Design and Technology, Science, PE, Art, Drama and Music) guidance and generic risk assessments are produced by advisory bodies such as CLEAPSS and AfPE.

Heads of department should review courses against these and:

- **check any new practical activities against the model risk assessments.**
- **satisfy themselves that the 'model' risk assessment is appropriate to their work; and**
- **adapt the model to their own actual work situations.**

Simply referring to model assessments or other published schemes is insufficient, there must be some evidence that these assessments have been consulted and adapted if necessary to suit the school.

Where lessons/activities are not adequately covered by model assessments or are beyond the scheme of work then a specific and more detailed assessment must be conducted.

The school's approach to risk assessment within the curriculum could be evidenced by a range of documents highlighting any specific precautions or warnings from model risk assessments and demonstrating that risks have been adequately considered.

For example:

- Scheme of work;
- Lesson plans;
- Daily use texts such as student worksheets;
- Attendance registers (evidencing progression);
- Minutes of meetings;
- Medical information;
- CPD / professional records showing specific competency requirements;
- Lab / workshop rules;
- Departmental policy

Examples of how these documents can be used in practice is outlined below.

When revising/reviewing your scheme of work check practical activities against model risk assessments, in particular be aware of any changes in advice from advisory bodies e.g. CLEAPSS (DT and science re-issued annually, newsletters/website highlight updates), AfPE (Safe Practice in school sport is reissued every 3 years) etc.

Further guidance

Evidencing risk assessment through existing documents

Straightforward / routine activities

There may well be no significant risks which require documenting. e.g. cutting paper with scissors, food test tasting where no allergies are present etc.

Any specific risks / controls would be considered as part of the normal lesson planning process and documented as short bullet points if significant.

E.g. Relevant student information (SEN, medical etc.), a need to recap on safety issues etc.

Activities with more risk

Example DT Acrylic project year 7

- Scheme of work references CLEAPSS and BS4163:2014 and key precautions / risk are highlighted as bullet points.
- Lesson plan considers any specific needs e.g. class size, SEN, student behaviour, maturity, limitations of space, layout, equipment etc. documented as short bullet points.
- Student worksheets include reference to relevant risks and safety precautions, students undertake risk assessment activity.
- Register evidences level of progression.
- Records kept of student competency and that they have been shown how to safely use relevant machinery.
- Workshop rules in place.
- Training records evidence staff have relevant DATA accreditation

Activities outside scheme of work and / or with no model risk assessment

More enhanced planning with consideration of location/environment, tasks being undertaken and individuals involved. Specific risk assessment required template included in Appendix A.

If you require any further assistance with completing risk assessments contact REAch2 in the first instance who is fully trained in the risk assessment process and can support where needed the completion of risk assessment. Risk assessments primarily need to be led by the competent persons from area.

Relevant Links/Information Sources

CLEAPSS provide information, guidance for science, art and D&T. An extensive amount of guidance is available from their website at <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/> . Please contact your School Business manager for user access to CLEAPSS support services.

Design & Technology

DATA risk assessment in secondary schools <http://www.data.org.uk/>

CLEAPSS <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/secondary/secondary-dandt>

BS 4163:2014 Health and Safety for Design and Technology in Schools and Similar Establishments

Science

CLEAPSS <http://science.cleapss.org.uk/>

Safeguards in the school laboratory 11th edition, ASE 2006 <http://www.ase.org.uk/>

Topics in safety, <http://www.ase.org.uk/resources/health-and-safety-resources/revise-topics-in-safety/>

Art and design

CLEAPSS <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/secondary/secondary-dandt>

National Society for Education in Art & Design (NSEAD)

<http://www.nsead.org/hsg/index.aspx>

Physical Education

Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport' BAALPE / AfPE

<http://www.afpe.org.uk/>

Specific national Governing body advice e.g. British Gymnastics

Offsite visits

Evolve <https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/>

HSE guidance for school trips <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.htm>

Outdoor education <http://www.oeap.info/>