

Risk Assessment Policy

A risk assessment is an important tool in protecting employees, parents, children and visitors by analysing hazards and identifying risk reduction measures. The law requires that everything 'reasonably practicable' is done to protect people from harm. It helps to focus on the risks that really matter in the workplace and on Educational Visits and Trips away from school – the ones with the potential to cause real harm. In many instances, straightforward measures can be effective in controlling risks.

Aims:

To ensure that staff understand the process of risk assessment and how it can be integrated into effective management practices.

How to apply the Policy:

Staff will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out for all tasks, activities, locations and work activities that present a significant hazard in their area(s) of responsibility.

Staff must plan, coordinate and monitor how risk assessments will be managed locally. Actions must include the following:-

- Establishing the activities/tasks/locations/work equipment to be assessed;
- Identifying competent people to carry out the assessments;
- Defining the system to manage completed assessments, any associated actions, communication and review;
- Establish communication and information sharing for the outcomes of the risk assessment with all staff and others who may be affected by the risk, including volunteer and parent helpers on trips;
- To involve staff and their representatives in assessing the risks; and
- Refer risks to the appropriate senior manager or forum/committee where they cannot be managed locally.

Employees are required to:

- Be aware of risk assessment and control measures for their area of work;
 - Cooperate with and engage in the risk assessment process;
 - Use and comply with control measures implemented to ensure the health and safety of themselves or others; and
 - Report any workplace hazards or concerns regarding health and safety of themselves or others.
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- Complete a written risk assessment for their work area and update every 2 years, or when working arrangements and procedures change
 - Complete a written risk assessment for places that the pupils will use at school and update every 2 years, or when working arrangements and procedures change
 - Complete a written risk assessment for new activities with significant risk
 - Complete a written risk assessment for educational visits

- Carry out “on the spot” (dynamic) risk assessments within the context of their own competencies and in consultation with others, as situations arise. (see Glossary of Terms)

Procedure

Stages of Risk Assessment

1. Identify the hazards:

Staff will identify all the hazards associated with their area of responsibility that could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Hazards can be identified by:

- Observing the task or area;
- Referring to available guidance and information about best practice;
- Looking at accident and ill-health records;
- Checking manufacturers’ instructions or data sheets;
- Asking staff for their views.

2. Identify the people who might be harmed and how:

For each hazard the groups of people who might be harmed and how must be identified. The groups of people to be considered include:

- Pupils
- Staff with particular requirements e.g. new and young workers, people with disabilities, new or expectant mothers;
- Cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers who may not be in the workplace all the time;
- Members of the public, service users;
- Shared workplaces – how the work affects others and the risks to staff from those who share the workplace.

3. Evaluate/assess the risks and decide on the precautions to control the risks (Standard operating procedures or Control Measures):

For each hazard identified the level of risk must be evaluated (High/Medium/Low). This evaluation may include the level of harm presented by the hazard, the number of people involved, and the likelihood of the harm occurring.

Once the level of risk is established managers must consider what control measures are already in place and what actions are already being taken to reduce the risk, consider whether these are suitable and sufficient and whether further control measures are required.

Controlling the Risk

When controlling risks the following principles should be applied, where possible in the following order:

- Eliminate the hazard altogether;
- Substitution by something less hazardous or risky;
- Prevent access to the hazard e.g. by guarding

- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard e.g. putting barriers between pedestrians and traffic
- Create safe methods of work and safe systems of work designed to reduce the risk
- Issue personal protective equipment e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc
- Provide welfare facilities e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination
- Provide suitable information, instruction and training
- Ensure appropriate supervision.

4. Record the significant findings.

Recording Risk Assessments

General risk assessments - Assessments of processes or areas rather than an individual person should be recorded on the General Risk Assessment Form or Educational Visits Risk Assessment Form.

Dynamic Risk Assessments

On rare occasions, there may be a need for staff to undertake a Dynamic Risk Assessment. In these circumstances, staff must work within the context of their own competencies and in consultation with others where possible. The need for a dynamic risk assessment may arise when an unforeseen event occurs and a previously unidentified risk becomes apparent.

Once the dynamic risk assessment has been taken place, a formal written risk assessment record must be made of this as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event.

5. Update the Risk Assessment and review as appropriate:

- At regular intervals not exceeding two years
- Following a significant change and/or if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid e.g. after an accident, ill-health incident, violent incidence or malfunction has occurred.
- The risk assessment must remain up to date and valid and available at 'point of use'.
- Once a risk assessment is obsolete it must be archived for a minimum of 5 years.

Communication

The Head of Provision and any Line Managers are to ensure that the persons at risk are provided with comprehensive and relevant information on the identified risks and the preventive and protective control measures. Everyone should understand what they must do and why. Where necessary, job safety instructions, standard operating procedures, should be issued to employees and appropriate training provided. All staff on trips should be aware of the trip risk assessment.

Training

Line Managers that are responsible for the planning, coordination and monitoring or risk assessments may wish to receive appropriate risk assessment training. Staff involved in the creation of risk assessments (e.g. as part of a risk assessment team) must receive training in the risk assessment process.

Last Updated: September 2024
Next Reviewed: September 2025

Training can be provided by the Health Safety and Compliance Officer (Andrew Dean).

Monitoring

Managers will monitor the effectiveness of control measures and ensure that physical control measures are used, installed correctly and suitably maintained.

Employees shall report any defects in control measures, personal protective equipment, etc immediately to their Head of Department and/or Line Manager.

All risk assessments are 'signed off' by the person taking "Ownership" of the event and the Health and Safety Officer.

Specialist Advice

It is important when completing risk assessments to be aware of individual limitations in terms of knowledge and competence. If further support is required you should contact the Health and Safety Officer.

Legislative Framework

- The Health and Safety at Work Act
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Further advice and Information

Health and Safety Executive (HSE): www.hse.gov.uk/