

This policy was reviewed in: June 2024

This policy is due to be reviewed in: June 2025

This policy applies to the whole school including EYFS

Comment from the Bursar – 12 June 2024:

“Risk Assessment Policy – I have reviewed this and no changes are needed”

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Introduction

The Governors are fully committed to ensuring that the premises of the School are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for, the activities undertaken and are committed to promoting the welfare of all in our community so that effective learning can take place, both within and outside the School.

The School is committed to managing health and safety effectively and to having suitable and sufficient risk assessments in place to meet its legal obligations under the Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999.

As an integral part of its management of health and safety, the School maintains a set of risk assessments for reasonably foreseeable risks in order to consider what might cause harm to staff, pupils and others and to decide what reasonable steps can be taken to prevent that harm.

The purpose of this policy is to outline how the School systematically manages risk assessment to ensure it complies with relevant statutory provisions. This covers the general duties under various legislation including the following:

- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974;
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992;
- Management of Health and Safety Work Regulations 1999;
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations;
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002;
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (amended 2002);
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005;
- Control of Vibration at Work 2005;
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992;
- Working at Height Regulations 2005;
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended).

This is not an exhaustive list and current regulations should be consulted.

This policy and the associated guidance is applicable to all those at Pipers Corner School with responsibility for undertaking risk assessments for departments, tasks, activities, trips and educational visits which are under their control and that present significant risk.

Training and guidance are provided to staff on how to complete risk assessments, so that they know how to identify risks and the importance of implementing reasonably practicable controls, so that risks are managed at an acceptable level. Risk assessment training is provided through the School's online training portal (The National College) and additional support is available from the Health & Safety Coordinator, Estates Manager, Compliance Manager, Educational Visits Administrator, Educational Visits Coordinator and the Bursar.

Further guidance on undertaking risk assessments in particular areas is set out in the specific policies covering those areas (eg School Visits Policy).

Definitions

Risk Assessment: is a careful examination of what, in your work or environment could cause harm to yourself or others. You need to consider whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

Hazard: is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from height, an open drawer etc.

Risk: is the chance, low or high, that someone could be harmed by these hazards and how serious the harm could be.

Dynamic Risk Assessment: is an assessment that considers unexpected, short term or temporary changes that require immediate amendments to be made to risk assessment control measures, examples would include changes in weather conditions or breakdown of heating system.

General Risk Assessment: is an individual assessment covering the common significant hazards that staff, visitors and students may be affected by the activities the school faces daily; these may include low risk activities such as general office activities or repeated activities that can be documented in another way such as a safe system of work or, for example, CLEAPSS (Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services).

Specific Risk Assessment: is an assessment whereby any staff member or pupil may be subjected to risk within their environment or whilst carrying out an activity for example, when using a noisy machine or carrying out an experiment. As well as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, other regulations require assessments to be carried out. It should be noted that if, for example, a COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) risk assessment has been carried out on a particular substance, and if that assessment is applicable to the risk assessment being carried out, it need not be repeated and vice-versa. The following is a selection of Regulations that require a specific formal assessment:

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002;
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005;
- Control of Vibration at Work 2005;
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002);
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended);
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992;
- Working at Height Regulations 2005;
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005.

NB: This is not a complete list and current regulations should be consulted.

Responsibility

The Governors and Headmistress are ultimately responsible for the overarching risk management policy of the School.

Heads of Department and Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are conducted and reviewed for their departments and/or areas of responsibility.

To support the risk assessment process and their duty to take reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of visitors, all members of staff are responsible for reporting hazards, risks or defects to their Line Manager or through the Estates service request reporting system as soon as they are noted.

The Health and Safety Committee, chaired by the Bursar, is the prime forum for discussing and monitoring risk assessments.

The majority of risk assessments are completed within individual departments and Heads of Departments are responsible for maintaining their departmental risk assessments. Such risk assessments must take account of the nature of activities within the department, and appropriate external guidance, such as CLEAPSS for Science, DATA for Design and Technology, AfPE and national governing body guidelines for PE and sports. Reference to the appropriate guidance should be incorporated into Departmental handbooks.

Risk Assessments will be monitored by the Health and Safety Coordinator. Heads of Department must forward copies of their risk assessments when they review them to the Health and Safety Coordinator, where they will be checked for commonality across the School where appropriate. These will include school teaching area risk assessments and support area risk assessments such as Grounds, Maintenance and Housekeeping. The intention is that in due course all risk assessments will be available for completion and viewing on line on the School's intranet.

The Health and Safety Coordinator will maintain a Risk Assessment Tracking Document and a list of all outstanding Health and Safety action points.

Heads of Departments are required to confirm compliance with health and safety requirements on an annual basis by completing an Annual Declaration of Health and Safety Compliance initiated by the Bursar. This confirms that health and safety policies, procedures and assessments (including COSHH and safe systems of work where appropriate) are up to date, have been read by staff in the department, and that all appropriate and necessary training has taken place.

Risk Assessments for educational trips and visits are completed by the member of staff with overall responsibility for organising the visit, the Trip/Visit Leader (TVL), and submitted for approval to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) via the Educational Visits Administrator (EVA), in accordance with the procedure set out in the School Visits Policy.

Guiding Principles

The School endorses the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management' published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which state that:

Sensible risk management **is** about:

- Ensuring that everyone is properly protected;
- Balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing 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.

Sensible risk management **is not** about:

- Creating a totally 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.

These principles will therefore be applied in assessing risks.

The Five Step Approach

The School adheres to the 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' approach recommended by the HSE.

How to assess health and safety risks

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting people, as well as complying with the law. It helps us to focus on the risks that really matter – the ones with the potential to cause real harm.

In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks, for example ensuring spillages are cleaned up promptly so people do not slip, or cupboard drawers are kept closed to ensure people do not trip.

The law does not expect us to eliminate all risk, but we are required to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. This guidance tells you how to achieve that with a minimum of fuss.

What is risk assessment?

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether we have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

How to assess the risks

There are five steps to undertaking a successful risk assessment:

Step 1 - Identify the hazards

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them

Step 5 - Review your assessment and update if necessary

When thinking about a risk assessment, remember:

- a hazard is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer etc;
- the risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Step 1 - Identify the hazards

First you need to work out how people could be harmed. When you work in a place every day it is easy to overlook some hazards, so here are some tips to help you identify the ones that matter:

- Walk around and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Use the following examples as a guide:
 - Slipping/tripping hazards (e.g., poorly maintained floors or stairs)
 - Fire (e.g., from flammable materials)
 - Chemicals (laboratories etc.) and how they are used and in what quantities
 - Moving parts of machinery (workshops)
 - Work at height (scaffolding around experiments etc.)
 - Ejection of material (workshops, experiments etc.)
 - Pressure systems (laboratories etc.)
 - Vehicles (e.g., forklift trucks, minibuses)
 - Electricity (e.g., poor wiring, portable appliances, electrical experiments)
 - Dust (e.g., metal grinding, cement etc.)
 - Fume (e.g., welding, chemicals etc.)
 - Manual handling
 - Noise (noisy machinery or process)
 - Poor lighting, low temperature etc
 - Biological hazards (lab work, gardening, contact with body fluids etc.)
 - Consult colleagues. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious;
 - Check equipment manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals
 - Remember to think about long-term hazards to health (e.g. high levels of noise or exposure to harmful substances) as well as safety hazards

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard you need to be clear about who might be harmed; it can help you identify the best way of managing the risk. That does not mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people. In each case, identify how they might be harmed, i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur.

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Having spotted the hazards, you then have to decide what we can do about them. The law requires us to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm, so first look at what measures are already in place to control the risk of harm. Consider:

- Can we get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can we control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

When controlling risks, apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- try a less risky option (e.g. switch to using a less hazardous chemical)
- prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding piece of equipment)
- arrange to reduce exposure to the hazard (e.g. put barriers between pedestrians and traffic)
- issue personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc)

Step 4 - Record your findings and implement them

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference. Writing down the results of your risk assessment and sharing them with others, encourages you to do this. When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example 'Tripping over rubbish: bins provided, staff instructed, weekly housekeeping checks'.

We do not expect a risk assessment to be perfect, but it must be suitable and sufficient. You need to be able to show that:

- a proper check was made
- you asked who might be affected
- you have identified all the significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved
- the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low and
- employees have been involved in the process

It is important to make a plan of action to deal with the most important things first. Health and safety inspectors acknowledge the efforts of organisations that are clearly trying to make improvements.

A good plan of action often includes a mixture of different things such as:

- a few cheap or easy improvements that can be done quickly, perhaps as a temporary solution until more reliable controls are in place
- long-term solutions to those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health
- long-term solutions to those risks with the worst potential consequences
- arrangements for training
- regular checks to make sure that the control measures stay in place and
- clear responsibilities – who will lead on what action, and by when

Remember, prioritise and tackle the most important things first. As you complete each action, tick it off your plan.

Step 5 - Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

Few workplaces stay the same. Sooner or later, you will bring in new equipment, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense, therefore, to review what we are doing on an ongoing basis. Every year or so formally review risk assessments.

Look at each risk assessment again. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements we still need to make? Has anyone spotted a problem? Have we learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

During the year, if there is a significant change, don't wait. Check your risk assessment and, where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you're planning changes.

Guidance

The HSE provides appropriate guidance on the completion of risk assessments which can be accessed via the following link - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/>

The following Risk Assessment forms are available from the Bursary to be completed as and when required:

- Annual Declaration of Health and Safety Compliance
- Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form
- Classroom/Office Area Risk Assessment Checklist

The Health and Safety Coordinator has access to a number of other risk assessment templates or checklists which may be useful in ensuring that all relevant items are covered.

Calculating Risk

The School uses a calculated risk based on a Probability and Impact Scale. The risk is assessed by multiplying the Probability and Impact score to produce the overall risk. The risk can be assessed both pre- and post-mitigating actions/control measures to show the impact the mitigation will have on the overall level of risk (see Appendix 1).

Areas of Risk Assessment

Risk Assessments cover areas that present significant risk and shall include, but are not limited to:

- Premises
- Plant, equipment and facilities
- Fire and Emergency
- Hazardous Substances, including Asbestos and Legionella
- Educational Visits and Trips
- Events
- Risky areas of the School, including the Outdoor Classrooms and Pond
- PE and Games
- EYFS

Contractors

Contractors are expected to have their own Health and Safety Policy, risk assessments and method statements, together with evidence of their current liability insurance, all of which should be shown to the Estates Manager prior to the commencement of work.

Catering support is operated under contract with Holroyd Howe and their risk assessments are presented to the School on an annual basis for review.

Approved contractors are also checked through the safeguarding procedures for unaccompanied access. Other contractors are not permitted open unaccompanied access during term time and a risk

assessment should be carried out to ensure any measures have been put in place to prevent risks to staff and pupils.

All contactors are required to receive a Contractor Brief from the Estates Manager prior to starting work on site.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 ("COSHH") require the School to have in place appropriate measures to ensure that the risks to the health and safety of pupils and staff from exposure to hazardous substances are minimised.

Hazardous substances can definitely be found in Science, Art, DT, Cleaning, Catering, Estates, Grounds and Swimming Pool but may also be held elsewhere on an occasional basis. Heads of Departments must ensure that risk assessments are compiled for all hazardous substances and appropriate measures are put in place to prevent, reduce and /or adequately control exposure to these hazards.

Educational Visits

Risk assessments are carried out for every stage of a school trip or educational visit, when pupils are deemed to be 'off-site'. Risk assessments are reviewed after each trip. For further information on this process please see the School Visits Policy.

Events

Events require an Event Risk Assessment and this should be carried out by the member of staff co-ordinating the event, made available to all staff participating and checked to ensure that appropriate control measures are in place. For further information on this process please contact the Events Coordinator or the Administrative Assistant in the Bursary.

Fire Safety

Pipers Corner School has a fire risk assessment carried out by a qualified external contractor which is updated every three years and reviewed annually by the Estates Manager. Fire Procedures and risk assessments are reviewed every time a building is altered or extended, for new buildings or changes to the way the School operates.

First Aid

Pipers Corner School has a First Aid Policy which covers the provision of First Aid at the School.

Lettings

The Assistant to the Estates Manager will review the risk assessments for external organisations hiring the School's facilities and make them aware of any pertinent issues from our own risk assessments.

New and Expectant Mothers

Pipers Corner School aims to protect the Health and Safety of every expectant mother whilst working at the School or on their return to work in order to reduce their exposure to risk to as low as reasonably practicable. The School will carry out a specific risk assessment when notified of a member of staff being pregnant and will review this if there is a change in circumstances of the

pregnancy or a change in duties and on return to work. These risk assessments are carried out by the staff member's Line Manager under guidance from the HR Officer.

Security

A Site Security Risk Assessment will be carried out at regular intervals and in light of any incident on site or potential incident as a result of external threats and will both inform and be informed by the School's Security Policy.

Construction and Maintenance

Areas undergoing construction or maintenance activity are appropriately signposted and demarcated to ensure pupils, staff and visitors are kept safe and away from potential hazards.

Pupil Access

The School ensures that pupils understand that they are not allowed unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool, Science Laboratory, DT, Food Tech, and Pond. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use. Where direct access onto any roof may be possible, these rooms are also kept locked. First floor windows or above have restrictors fitted. Pupils do not have access to the school kitchens, sick bay or the grounds and maintenance areas or cleaning storage areas of the School.

Further Advice

Staff undertaking risk assessments should read and follow this guidance set out in this Policy when undertaking risk assessments.

If any staff are unsure about undertaking a risk assessment, they should consult the Health and Safety Coordinator in the first instance for advice, the School's Health and Safety Consultant, the Bursar, or relevant member of SLT.

Appendix 1

