



Introduction

Various types of risk assessment are required in order to maintain a safe and healthy environment in school and to safeguarding and promote the welfare of pupils.

This policy covers two aspects of risk assessment:

1. Guidance for Risk Assessments relating to Health and Safety
2. [Guidance for Risk Assessments relating to Safeguarding and Promoting Pupil Welfare](#)

It should be read in conjunction with the [Health and Safety Policy](#) and the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#) and other safeguarding policies.

Risk management also forms part of the following key areas. Separate policies exist for each of these areas.

1. [Educational visits](#)
2. [Security](#)
3. [Foreseeable Crises](#)

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RISK ASSESSMENT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please note, there is a slightly expanded version of this section of the policy on the [Health and Safety](#) portal tile.

1. STATEMENT - RISK ASSESSMENT

- 1.1 The purpose of the risk assessment is to enable the school to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the duties under the relevant statutory provisions. This covers the general duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the more specific duties contained within subordinate regulations.
- 1.2 More specific requirements for risk assessments can be found in other legislation including the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (amended 2002).

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Risk Assessment:** is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.
- 2.2 **Hazard:** is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer etc.
- 2.3 **Risk:** is the chance low or high, that someone could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.
- 2.4 **Dynamic risk assessment:** is an assessment that takes into account unexpected or 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 systems.
- 2.5 **Generic risk assessment:** is an individual assessment covering the common significant hazards that staff and others who may be affected by the activities the School faces on a day to day basis; 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).

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IN PRACTICE

- 3.1 There are no fixed rules about how a risk assessment should be carried out; it will depend on the nature of the work or business and the types of hazards and risks. The risk assessment process needs to be practical and take into account the views of staff and any safety representative who will have practical knowledge to contribute.
- 3.2 Heads of Department, Hms and line managers are responsible for ensuring that arrangements for risk assessments are adequate for the school/department and are communicated effectively.
- 3.3 Heads of Department, Hms and line managers must ensure that all activities are formally identified and appropriate risk assessments undertaken by a competent person, which identify hazards, decide who might be harmed and how and then evaluate the risks and decide on what control measures are necessary to minimise those risks, as far as reasonably practicable. Also

that risk assessments are recorded and any significant hazards are communicated to relevant persons including the arrangements in place for controlling those risks.

4. GUIDE TO UNDERTAKING A RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 An assessment of risk is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people so that you can assess whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill through the activities at work. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and affect your school/department in regard to damaged equipment, loss of staff, insurance cost increases, or criminal prosecutions under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions or controls so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. For instance, electricity can kill but the risk of it doing so in an office environment is remote, provided that electrical equipment is suitable for the task, bought from a reputable supplier and is maintained.

5. SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENTS

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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. Occupational Safety and Health can advise as to whether an activity is covered by specific or general legislation.

HOW TO ASSESS THE RISKS IN THE WORKPLACE

1. In most schools/departments the hazards are easy to recognise. Checking them is common sense, but necessary. You may have already assessed some of them, for example, the use of toxic or dangerous chemicals should already have an assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). If so, you can consider them 'checked' as there is no difference in a risk assessment completed under COSHH than other general risk assessments apart from COSHH assessments are looking at controlling the specific risks from work activities with hazardous substances such as chemicals and biological material. For other hazards, you probably already know whether you have machinery that could cause harm, or if there is an awkward entrance or stair where someone could be hurt. If so check that you have taken such reasonable precautions that injury can be avoided.

Step 1 – Look for the hazard

2. Walk around your area of responsibility and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people. Ask the staff and Director of Estates what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers' instructions or data sheets can also help spot hazards and put risks in their true perspective. So can accidents and ill health records. Look only for hazards that could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace. 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 (School workshops)
- Work at height (scaffolding around experiments etc.)
- Ejection of material (workshops, experiments etc.)
- Pressure systems (laboratories etc.)
- Vehicles (e.g. fork lift 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.).

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed, and how

3. In addition to staff, think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time e.g. cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance personnel, etc. Include students, members of the public, or people that share your workplace, if there is a chance they could be hurt by your activities. There is no need to list individuals by name – just think about groups of people doing similar work or who may be affected, e.g.:

- Office staff
- Operators
- Maintenance personnel
- Cleaners
- Contractors
- Members of the public

4. Pay particular attention to the following as they may be more vulnerable:

- Staff and students with disabilities
- Inexperienced staff
- Visitors
- Lone workers
- Pregnant workers
- Young people on work experience

5. Staff have a responsibility to report to their line manager any personal circumstances that would change the risk assessment for example any temporary or permanent disability or health condition that would mean that they are at greater risk.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.

6. Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risk remains. Decide for each significant hazard is whether this residual risk is high, medium or low. First, ask whether you have done all the things that the law says you have got to do. For example, there are legal requirements relating to fire safety, statutory inspection of plant and equipment, water systems to prevent legionella risks etc. Then, consider whether generally accepted industry standards are in place. But don't stop there –the law states that employers must do what is reasonably practicable to keep the workplace safe. The real aim is to make all risks small by adding to precautionary control measures as necessary.

7. Introducing a hazard may affect other control measures that are in place for a work activity or in the building for example the fire safety precautions. Ensure that timely information is provided to the Director of Estates where the findings of any risk assessment requires that the Fire Risk Assessment will need to be updated whether temporarily or on a permanent basis. Triggers for this will include a work activity being introduced into a building which is a fire risk and is not normally carried out in that building. For example, if experiments with flammable substances are required to be made in areas where such work is not normally carried out such as offices. In such circumstances the occupier must ensure that the building fire risk assessment is reviewed. This would not apply if additional flammable work was being carried out in a laboratory based building where such work is already being undertaken elsewhere.

8. Another trigger would be if the fire precautions had to be temporarily disabled to allow the work activity to proceed. Further advice is contained within the school Fire Safety Policy. If you find that something needs to be done, ask yourself:

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

9. Only use personal protective equipment when there is nothing else that can be reasonably done. If the work tends to vary a lot, or if staff move from one location to another, select those hazards which can be reasonably foreseen and assess the risks from them. After that, if you spot any unusual hazards when you get to a place get information from others on site and take what action seems necessary. If you share a workplace, ensure that the risks your work could cause and what precautions you are taking is communicated to others including any other HoDs, line manager and Director of Estates. It is important that managers consider the risks to their staff from those who share the workplace. Are existing precautions adequate against the risks from the hazards listed? For example, have you provided?

- Adequate information, instruction or training?
- Adequate systems or procedures?

10. Do the precautions:

- Meet the standards set by a legal requirement?
- Comply with the recognised industry standard?
- Represent good practice?
- Change existing precautions in place?

11. Reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable (a balance between the risk and the cost of preventative measures in time, money and effort i.e. it would not be reasonably practicable to invest substantial amounts of money and time where the risk and injury level are very low but it would be reasonably practicable to introduce all measures possible where the risk is high and the possible results are death or major injury). Improving health and safety need not cost a lot. For instance, putting some non-slip material on slippery steps is an inexpensive precaution considering the risks. If so then the risks are adequately controlled. But it is necessary to indicate the precautions in place. Refer to procedures, manuals, local departmental rules etc. giving this information.

Step 4 – Record your findings

12. This means (1) writing down the more significant hazards and (2) recording most important conclusions – for example, “Portable electrical equipment inspected and tested and found sound” or “Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked”. Staff must be informed about the risk assessment findings. It is good practice to get staff to sign that they have read and understood the findings of relevant risk assessments.

13. There is no need to show how the assessment was carried out provided that:

- a proper check was made;
- the assessment details who might be affected;
- all the obvious significant hazards are considered, taking into account the number of people who could be involved; and
- the precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.

14. Assessments need to be suitable and sufficient, not perfect. The real points are:

- are the precautions reasonable;
- is there something to show that a proper check was made?

15. Keep the written document for future reference or use. It can help if an inspector questions your precautions, during a health and safety audit and particularly if you become involved in any action for civil liability. It can also remind individuals and managers that a particular hazard and control measures require effective monitoring. This guidance contains a risk assessment template that may be helpful.

Step 5 – Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

16. Sooner or later the school/department will bring in new machines, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. If there is any significant change, produce an additional assessment to take account of the new hazard. It is good practice to review risk assessments from time to time, the Estates Office recommend annually. Don't amend the assessment for every trivial change, or for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards of its own, you will want to consider them in their own right and do whatever you need to keep the risks as low as reasonably practicable. Staff are responsible for advising their line manager of any changes in activity which may affect the findings of the risk assessment. For example any activity that would require the fire risk assessment to be reviewed and updated.

17. Don't forget to initial and date the assessment when it is reviewed and ensure that it is brought to the attention of all relevant members of staff and others who may be affected

References:

- A. The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- B. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- C. Management of Health and Safety Work Regulations 1999
- D. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- E. Reporting of injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

APPENDIX 2 - MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999 – RISK ASSESSMENT

Area/task/category/persons being assessed:

Name of assessor:

Date of assessment:

Review:

Hazard	Persons affected	Risk Level*	Existing controls	Resultant Risk Level*	Further action required

Notes on completing risk assessment form

The above form is used for all risk assessments at Benenden School. It is recommended that you use this form for all general risk assessments.

- (1) Insert date that the assessment is completed
- (2) Insert name and signature of the competent person completing the form
- (3) The assessment will be checked by a line manager and passed to the Director of Estates
- (4) Insert the date when the risk assessment will be reviewed; it is recommended that this is annually or sooner if there are any significant changes or accidents/incidents.
- (5) Add the description on the location and the hazard. Look for all the hazards: include those that are significant and less obvious ones. The number of rows on the assessment is unlimited, how many are used for one assessment will depend on how the work activity/event has been sub-divided
- (6) Insert everyone who might be harmed by the activity and especially those groups who may be specifically at risk. Include cleaners, security staff, students, members of the public etc.
- (7) List all existing control measures that are currently in place. Start by considering whether the risk can be completely eliminated. List any control measures that are legal requirements then, consider whether generally accepted industry standards are in place. But don't stop there –the law states that employers must do what is reasonably practicable to keep the workplace safe. Include supervision arrangements, instruction and training
- (8), and (9) the simple matrix arrangement can be used to provide an indication of risk rating. Select a score of low, medium or high 3 for the severity of injury that the assessor believes the hazard could cause.
- (10) Identify any further action required to maintain and monitor the control measures to ensure that the risk level is maintained.

Risk Matrix

<u>Frequency/Possibility</u>	High (moderate)	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>High</i>
	Medium (unlikely)	<i>Low</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>
	Low (rare)	<i>Low</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Low</i>
		Low (minor)	Medium (serious)	High (major)

Impact/consequence

Impact / consequence

- Low – (moderate)** First Aid treatment
Low financial loss
- Medium – (serious)** Medical treatment
High financial loss
Moderate business interruption
- High – (major)** Excessive long term injury
Major financial loss
Major business interruption

Frequency / possibility

- Low – (rare)** The event may occur in exceptional circumstances
Less than once in 2 years
- Medium – (unlikely)** The event could occur at some time
At least once a year
- High – (major)** The event will properly occur at some time
At least once in 6 months

Signed by assessor:

Date:

Submitted to:

On (Date).....

Review matrix:

Name:		Date:	
Name:		Date:	

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF PUPILS

SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING PUPIL WELFARE

As all pupils are boarders, all policies are written with the awareness that pupils are vulnerable away from home. The [Boarding Handbook](#) details how the school meets the boarding standards and includes information about:

- Medical care of pupils
- Supervision and staffing in boarding houses

Further information about care of pupils can be found in the policies on [Pupil Supervision](#), [Pupil Mental Health](#), [Pupil Behaviour](#) and [Pupil Access to Risky Areas](#).

In addition to the Boarding Handbook, boarding houses have two risk assessments:

1. Health and Safety risk assessments (see section above about the writing of these)
2. Pupil Welfare risk assessment (see below)

In drawing up a risk assessment, staff should consider the detailed information in the section above on Health and Safety risk assessments and, in addition:

1. The accommodation/behaviour/interaction for which the assessment is being written:
 - i. What are the barriers to safety?
 - ii. What needs to be put in place to ensure safety?
 - iii. What control measures must be undertaken to remain safe and promote welfare?
 - iv. How regularly should any checks be carried out to ensure continuing safety/promotion of welfare?
2. You might need to consider:
 - i. Physical hazards e.g. trip hazards, moving vehicles, safety equipment
 - ii. Behavioural hazards – what could pupils do in the place which might endanger their safety and what behaviour could you encourage to prevent problems developing
 - iii. Emotional and psychological hazards – how might pupils react in a difficult or challenging situation

Staff will be aware that not all risk assessments need to be written down. On a daily basis staff and pupils make decisions about their own welfare and safety. Not walking alone in the dark or when to cross a road would constitute two obvious decisions made regularly. Boarding staff must consider which of the risks need noting on the relevant pro-forma and consider if they need to review and update the written risk assessments in the light of changes to boarding life.

BOARDERS WELFARE RISK ASSESSMENT

This risk assessment must be completed by the Housemaster/mistress (Hm) with input from the Deputy Hm and the Resident Matron. It should consider any aspects of pupil welfare related to being a boarder, not contained in the Health and Safety Risk Assessment. Consideration, depending on the nature of the House environment, could include:

1. How to establish new pupils in House
2. Mixed aged usage of common areas in the boarding house e.g. showers, kitchen, common room, house study
3. Vulnerable pupils
4. Groups of girls left unattended for extended periods of time
5. Potential for girls to become room-bound and isolated from their peers
6. Potential for unchecked bullying
7. Potential for abuse of the self-medication policy

- 8. Unauthorised adult access to dormitories
- 9. Induction and management of new member to the House Staff Team (in addition to the normal school procedures)
- 10. Access to staff accommodation.

The pro-forma for the assessment is shown here

RISK	MANAGING THE RISK/SITUATION

Signed by assessor:

Date:

Submitted to:

On (Date).....

The Risk Assessment is reviewed annually by the Hm at the beginning of the school year. It is authorised and monitored by the Assistant Head: Boarding and Pastoral.



