

Risk Assessment Policy and Guidance 2024/2025



'Believe, Persevere and Succeed'

Risk Assessment Policy and Guidance

This policy sets out the school's expectations for the undertaking of effective risk assessments and the responsibilities of different staff in contributing to a safe environment. The policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and documents.

Health and Safety Policy	Supporting Medical Needs and First Aid Policy
Fire Safety Policy and Plans	Health and Safety Handbook
Risk Management Policy and Register	

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Policy Statement/Introduction

The Governors of Bowdon Preparatory School recognise and accept their responsibilities as employers to comply with various Health & Safety legislation. However, all staff have responsibilities in risk assessment, and staff should be proactive in their approach to risk management. It is the policy of the school that a risk assessment is carried out in respect of all activities, processes, and substances and that it is regularly reviewed and documented where necessary. This responsibility rests with Governors, Headmistress and Bursar as stated in the school's Health & Safety Policy. The aim of the policy is to reflect the legislation and school practice and provide a working framework to help and ensure clear procedures are in place.

Legal Framework

The school has a responsibility under Sections 2 and 3 of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees and other persons (pupils, visitors, contractors, etc) who may be affected by the work activity. The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 further amplify this duty and impose a specific requirement upon

the school to carry out a 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of all risks to the health and safety of employees and others arising at or from a work activity. Furthermore, all modern legislation now contains a duty to carry out risk assessments for specific types of hazards such as those associated with substances, electricity, noise, manual handling, VDU work, etc. The purpose of this document, therefore, is to:

- (a) Provide guidance to enable the school to comply with risk assessment duties as required by relevant law.
- (b) Introduce a structured, systematic and pro-active approach to the management of risk.
- (c) Outline the five principal steps to risk assessment.

Definitions

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 and is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (for example, loss of life, destruction of property).

HAZARD: Something with the potential to cause harm. This can include substances, machines, method of work or work organisation.

RISK: Is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by the hazard

RISK CONTROL MEASURES are the measures and procedures that are put in place 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 pupils, impact on development), financial hazards (falling pupil numbers), 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 also recognised that preventative measures can often be 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.

Competency

Staff have termly professional development support to enable them to be effective in their duties and to ensure that assessments are conducted by competent staff. Assessors understand the workplace, have an ability to make sound judgements and know the best ways to reduce the risks identified. We recognise that competency does not require a particular level of qualification but may be defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, experience, and personal qualities.

Areas requiring Risk Assessment.

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:

- Classrooms
- Asbestos Control
- School events/ activities
- Educational visits and trips
- Fire safety
- Sport field safety
- Health and Safety
- Water safety

Risk assessments are also in place for many other areas, including:

Educational

- Science
- Food Technology
- Sport and PE
- Art and Design
- Dance

The school makes use of model risk assessments for educational activities and visits, which can be found on Teams.

If an assessment has already been carried out under any other statutory provision, e.g., Manual Handling Operations Regulations, COSHH, Noise at Work Regulations etc, no duplicate action is necessary because of this document.

Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral care is to ensure that each pupil becomes a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping herself safe whether at home or outside the home. Our PSHE programmes and assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupil develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and of sensible precautions that should be taken. Our science, PE and technology lessons encourage pupils to conduct their own safety-related research into the potential hazards of activities, equipment materials.

Medical and First Aid

The school has written procedures for Health Care and First Aid. The accident forms are maintained in the school office, and it is the injured person, witness or First Aider who is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the first aid leader or relevant senior member(s) of staff. The School's Accident Policy explains the procedures that are followed in the event of a medical emergency.

Child Protection

Our Child Protection Policies and training for all staff form the core of our Child Protection risk management. Safe recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children, or who are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors, volunteers, and the adult members of the families of staff, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular Child Protection training, we manage this risk to an acceptable level.

Support Areas

Catering and Cleaning

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.

Caretaking and Security

Risk assessments cover all significant risks. 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.

Grounds

Risk assessments and training cover all significant risks including manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, correct use of equipment, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction training and refresher training include training on risk assessments, protective equipment, and safety notices.

Administrative Staff

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

Risk Assessment Policy/Procedures

Risk assessments are carried out for all events that might pose a possible risk for staff and/or pupils. These include in-school for staff; in and out-of-school for pupils; social programme evening activities; social programme Saturday excursions and class outings led by a teacher. Risk assessments are also carried out for classrooms and other rooms in the school frequently in use by pupils and staff.

- Risk assessments are carried out the members of staff with responsibility for a particular area or activity with the support of Karen Pheasant (Bursar/Health & Safety Officer) and Helen Gee (Headmistress).
- Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the Headmistress and implemented by the Health & Safety Officer. The Bursar is responsible for checking that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

Risk Assessments for social events and extra-curricular activities

- Copies of risk assessments for the extra-curricular activities are located on Teams.
- Each risk assessment for evening activities and Saturday excursions has been written for that specific activity before it takes place. The risk assessment has a simple layout of seven columns that is easy to comprehend stating the possible hazards, precautions, level of risks and comments. There is a section on the trip planning forms for the member of staff to note any additional risks that may have been missed and should be considered for the next time that activity/excursion runs.
- A copy of the risk assessment (verbal or paper document) is given to all members involved in the activity to make them aware of any possible risks and the preventative measures they should take. They keep this until after the activity, write any comments needed and then return it to the Health & Safety officer.
- The Health & Safety Officer is then able to update the risk assessment if needed.

Risk Assessments for staff and pupils in and out of school

- Copies of risk assessments for staff and pupils in and out of school can be found Teams.
- The risk assessment has a simple layout of seven columns that is easy to comprehend stating the possible hazards, precautions, level of risks and comments.
- These risk assessments are reviewed and signed yearly by the Health & Safety Officer and the Headmistress.

Risk Assessments for class outings

- Pro formas for risk assessments for class outings can be found on Teams.
- Risk assessments are written for regular activities by the Health & Safety Officer. If a teacher is taking their class on one of these activities they must review the risk assessment, add any additional information required, e.g., hazards for specific pupils.
- If there is not a risk assessment for the activity the teacher is planning, then the teacher must complete their own using the relevant pro forma. Again, they must sign it, date it and submit it with the trip planning form at least a week prior to the trip taking place.
- The trip leader must brief the adult participants on the risk control measures and ensure a copy of the risk assessment, signed by all adults, is submitted to the health & safety Officer prior to the trip departing

- The Health & Safety Officer reviews the risk assessments at the end of every term or as and when necessary.

Review Record

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis

Date of update	(U) Updated (R) Reviewed by	How was update disseminated	Parents inform	Policy website
Mar 2015	HG (U)		No	No
Nov 2016	HG (U)		No	Yes
Jan 2017	NE (R)		No	Yes
March 2018	HG (R)	Staff INSET	Yes	Yes
Dec 2019	HG (R)	Staff briefing & email	Yes	Yes
Nov 21	KP (R)	Teams		Yes
13/09/23	K. Pheasant (R)	Read Through		
13/09/23	K. Wilkinson (R)	Read Through		Yes
01.10.24	K. Wilkinson (R)	Annual Review	Yes	Yes

Risk Assessment Document and Implementation Monitoring

Date of update	Reviewed by
Sept 2016	N. Evans
October 2017	Governor Finance: John Stevenson
Dec 2017	Chair: Gillian Healey
Nov 2021	Health & Safety Governor: Emma Howard
Oct 2023	Health & Safety Governor: Emma Howard
Oct 2024	Health & Safety Governor: Nick Edwards

Appendix 1 Carrying out the Assessment.

Step 1: Look for the hazards.

This necessitates an inspection of the area to identify what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Do not ignore the trivial, concentrate on significant hazards which could result in serious harm or affect several people. Involve both staff and pupils in this exercise because they may be aware of hazards which are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers' instructions, data sheets, check lists and accident records will assist in identifying hazards.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how.

Consider staff, pupils, contractors, and members of the public in general as well as those people who may not be in the workplace all the time, e.g., cleaners and maintenance personnel. Consider how such people may be harmed. Pay particular attention to lone workers and those with disabilities since they may be more vulnerable.

Step 3: Assess the risks

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

Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risks remain. Decide for each significant hazard whether this remaining risk is acceptable. Consider whether the existing precautions:

- Meet the standards set by legal requirement.
- Comply with a recognised industry standard.
- Represent good practice.
- Reduce risk as far as is reasonably practicable.

If the answer to any of the above is 'No' then consider what further precautions can be taken to control the risk so that harm is unlikely.

Step 4: Record assessment findings

Make a record of your significant findings. Keep it simple and focused on controls. What the hazards are, and how people might be harmed by them and what you have in place to control the risks. Only the most significant risks need to be recorded and should that:

- A proper check was made.
- You asked who might be affected.
- You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, considering the number of people who could be involved.
- The precautions are reasonable.

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. So, it makes sense to review what you are doing on an ongoing basis, look at your risk assessment again and ask yourself:

- Have there been any significant changes?
- Are there improvements you still need to make?
- Transfer to new technology.
- Any other reason to suspect that the original assessment is no longer valid or could be improved.
- A change in legislation

Hazard/Risk Control

The selection and implementation of the most appropriate method of risk or hazard control is crucial to any success in reducing the risk of injury or ill health to persons affected by work activities. A hierarchy of control options are available, but it may be necessary to implement a number of these measures in combination to adequately reduce the risk.

Elimination

The law does not expect you to remove all risks, but to protect people by putting in place measures to control risks, so far as reasonably practicable. Risk Assessment need only include what you could reasonably be expected to know – you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The use of PPE should be regarded as a last resort option in the absence of any more reliable or permanent means of control.

All these measures should be considered within the overall context of achieving 'a safe system of work' that reduces the risk to an acceptable level, and that accidents and ill health cost money, whilst safety, effectively managed, saves money.