



Wychwood School
OXFORD

Risk Assessment Policy
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Last Reviewed: March 2021
Date of next Review: March 2022

The School's Directors are committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all members of the school community. Directors' 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 pupils to be educated to cope safely with risk.

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:

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm.
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring.
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (for example, loss of life, destruction of property).
- Risk control measures are the 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 (e.g. slipping, falling) and property (e.g. fire, flooding) and strategic hazards (e.g. reputational damage, loss of pupils, impact on development), financial hazards (e.g. falling pupil rolls), compliance hazards (e.g. Child Protection or Safeguarding issues) and environmental hazards (e.g. 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.

Risk assessments are reviewed and updated annually by Heads of Department to include the Head of Boarding and the Bursar.

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
- Educational Visits and Trips
- Fire safety
- Fitness Suite safety
- Health and Safety

- Water safety

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

Educational

- Science
- Food Technology (currently not taught)
- Sport and PE
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- Art and Design
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss)
- Drama (including the hall, stage, props room and lighting box)
- Dance

The School makes use of model or generic risk assessments for educational activities and visits. We subscribe to the Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services (CLEAPSS) Advisory Service and to the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) service, and we follow their advice regarding risk assessments for all science and food technology activities.

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 Personal, Social, Economic and Health Education (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 lessons encourage pupils to conduct their own safety-related research into the potential hazards of chemicals, gas, electricity and flammable materials.

Medical and First Aid

The School has written procedures for medical incidents and accidents and First Aid. The accident forms are maintained in the Bursary, and it is the injured person, witness or First Aider who is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Bursar and the relevant senior member(s) of staff.

Safeguarding

Our **Safeguarding Policy** and training for all staff form the core of our child protection and Safeguarding risk management. Safe recruitment 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 Directors, volunteers and the adult members of the families of staff who are accommodated on site, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular safeguarding 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. 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, swimming pool maintenance 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, 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 the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

Conducting a Risk Assessment

The School uses principally the model recommended by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in its publication, *A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace*.

The School's policy is not to carry out any high-risk activity. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake some medium risk activities with older pupils, for example, skiing and Duke of Edinburgh's Award training but use only specialist/qualified instructors. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and pupils are expected to wear protective equipment and follow instructions. We always employ specialists to high-risk tasks. Support staff may carry out medium rated activities only if they have been specially trained and

work in pairs. All members of staff and all pupils are 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 Bursar arranges for specialists to carry out risk assessments concerning the following:

- Fire (every year - last assessment September 2017)
- Asbestos (full survey February 2015)
- Legionella (every two years from May 2014)
- Gas (servicing & testing every year)
- Electricity (Fixed wire testing every 5 years from August 2011 – full survey August 2016 and recommendations being implemented 2017/18 to 2018/19)

Review of Risk Assessments

All risk assessments are regularly reviewed.

The School's arrangements for the management of Health and Safety describe the arrangements for regular Health and Safety audits of the fabric of the School, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for auditing the catering and cleaning functions and for water sampling. The School maintains a copy of completed risk assessments and these are available for reference by staff.

Responsibilities of All Staff

All members of staff are given an induction into the School's health and safety arrangements for risk assessments and Health and Safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. Staff are, however, responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head, the Bursar and other members of the SMT in order to enable the Directors to comply with their Health and Safety duties. All members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar.

Accident Reporting

It is the responsibility of the Bursar to record and report to the HSE, in accordance with the *Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR)*, any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises involving a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor. All notifiable accidents and near misses are reviewed by the School's Health and Safety Committee, with a view to assessing whether any measures need to be taken to prevent recurrence.

Audit Compliance Statements

The Directors carry out regular reviews of the School's activities and the systems in use. This is for the purpose of planning for the future and assessing major risks to which the School is exposed. The Directors are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks as summarised below:

- a) Financial procedures and controls
- b) Major risks to the School, including:
 - strategic risks
 - loss of fee income
 - damage to reputation
 - failure to teach the correct syllabus
 - Safeguarding and child protection issues
 - gaps in Directors skills
 - conflicts of interest

- employment disputes
- major Health and Safety issues
- possible data loss
- risks of fire, flood and land slip
- poor cashflow management
- fraud
- loss through inappropriate investments
- other areas of potential risk

The measures taken to protect the School against such risks, including:

- safe recruitment of staff, Directors and volunteers
- measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff and Directors
- insurance
- strong financial controls that are regularly reviewed
- use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc. as needed
- formal review of compliance with the School's charitable objectives