



Risk Assessment Policy

Date Ratified by BOG: _____

Principal Signature: _____

Chair of Board of Governors: _____

Overview

This policy is designed to assist the school in fulfilling their legal duties in assessing risks. Risk management is the consideration of the risks that arise in the workplace and then putting in place sensible health and safety measures to control them.

In accordance with our duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2000, the school is required to undertake regular risk assessments and take any necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety policy and elsewhere.

The Purpose of a Risk Assessment is to identify hazards and evaluate any associated risks. This includes areas such as:

- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Security
- Fire Safety
- Site Security
- School Trips
- Critical incidents

The Principal is responsible for making sure that risk assessments are completed, logged and effectively monitored. Reviews are conducted when there is any change to equipment or resources, any change to the school's premises, or when particular needs of a child or other visitor necessitate this.

All staff are responsible for carrying out a Risk Assessment according to their roles and responsibilities.

The Principal is further responsible for conducting any necessary reviews or making changes to the school's policies or procedures in the light of any potential risks that they or other members of staff discover.

A visual inspection of both the equipment and the entire premises - both indoor and outdoor - will be carried out daily. This will, ordinarily, be carried out by a designated member of staff (Building Manager) on arrival at the school and will be completed before any children arrive.

During the school day, staff will be vigilant and continuously aware of any potential risks to health and safety arising from:

- The School's environment, both indoors and outdoors;
- All surfaces, both indoors and outdoors;
- All equipment used by children or staff.

On discovering a hazard, staff will take all steps necessary to making themselves and any other people potentially affected safe. They will then notify the building manager and/or Principal.

The Principal is then responsible for ensuring that any necessary action is taken. As already stated, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 require that suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk arising out of work are carried out.

Understanding Risk Assessments

What is a Risk Assessment?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines a risk assessment as "a careful examination of what in your work could cause harm to people so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm". The assessment will help you to identify the likelihood of harm and whether you can reduce the risk to a reasonable level, through the introduction of control measures.

There are three different types of risk assessments. These are **generic, specific and dynamic**.

Generic activities are those which although they are carried out at different times and locations, the hazards and risks are largely the same and do not change. For this type of activity generic risk assessments can be produced as a model for guidance only.

A specific risk assessment may be applicable where the hazards and risks are only applicable to a certain activity and also where there is a requirement in legislation to undertake a specific assessment.

A dynamic risk assessment is a continuous process of identifying the hazards that occur in for example an emergency situation, assessing the risks and taking immediate action to eliminate or reduce these to an acceptable level.

What can be risk assessed?

Risk assessments can be undertaken on an object or substance, a process, a location, an activity, or a person.

What is a hazard?

A hazard is anything which can cause harm e.g. electricity, chemicals, etc.

What is risk?

Risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

The Process of Risk Assessment

The following five step process will be followed:

Step 1: Identify the hazards

The following areas will be considered:

- Location
- Activities
- Equipment
- People

Identify the Hazards:

- **Chemical** - paint solvents/exhaust fumes
- **Biological** - bacteria
- **Physical** - noise/vibration
- **Psychological** - occupational stress

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard list who might be harmed, identify the groups of people - such as staff members or members of the public/pupils. 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

Consider how likely it is that each hazard will occur and what control measures you already have in place. Have the control measures in place got rid of the hazard altogether or reduced the risk so that harm is unlikely? If the task has not been adequately controlled what further actions are required? If any further actions are required name the person responsible for actioning the task and the projected completion date. Record the actual completion date in the completed column.

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Put the results of the risk assessment into practice. Write down the results of your risk assessment and share them with the staff.

Step 5: Review your assessment and update if necessary

Risk assessments will be reviewed and if necessary updated every year. However, a review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, or there are significant changes to the premises, staff or procedures.

Record Keeping

Risk Assessments and associated documents must be kept for a minimum period of three years from the date which they are superseded as they may be required in the event of a litigation claim for compensation (note that claims for compensation can, generally be made up to 3 years from the date of the incident occurring). It should be noted that risk assessments which relate to the use of substances may need to be kept for 40 years, in order to trace exposure to substances which are known to have ill health effects e.g. asbestos.