

2.1 RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires employers to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of:

- a) the health and safety risks employees are exposed to whilst at work and
- b) the health and safety risks to persons other than employees, arising out of or in connections with the business

Suitable and Sufficient

The legislation requires that risk assessments are suitable and sufficient, in practice this means that:

- The risk assessment should identify the risks arising from or in connection with the work, activity, location or equipment
- The level of detail in the risk assessment should be proportionate to the risk; greater or more complex risks will require a more sophisticated assessment.
- Once all the risks have been considered insignificant risks can usually be ignored
- The general risks associated with life in general can also usually be ignored unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks.
- The completing of a risk assessment needs to be a practical process and should include consultation with those employees involved in the process.

Responsibility

The School will assess all reasonably foreseeable risks, and record significant findings. The safety policy documentation, together with the School's documented regular inspection and assessment reports, form the basis of the broad risk assessment.

In accordance with the Schools Organisational Arrangements (Part B of this manual), responsibility for ensuring risk assessments are completed, recorded and reviewed is delegated as follows:

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|-----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| • General Risk Assessments | all 3 sites | Assistant Bursar |
| • Departmental Risk Assessments | Upper | Heads of Department |
| | Prep | Prep Head |
| | Pelican | Pelican Head |
| • Pre-Employment Risk Assessments | all 3 sites | Director of HR |

The Assistant Bursar will provide assistance/guidance on the completion of departmental Risk Assessments on request.

Procedure:

Risk assessments will be undertaken using the following steps:

1. Identify the Hazard

A hazard is anything that may cause harm. This can be chemical, biological, physical or ergonomic. Hazards may be identified in a number of different ways:

- Observation of the environment, equipment and work being carried out
- Discussion with those undertaking the work/activity
- Information from manufacturers, professional bodies, health and safety executive, trade associations and safety professionals.
- As a result of accidents or near misses

2. Decide who might be harmed

The assessment will take into account the risks faced by all who may be affected by the hazard.). This will include pupil and staff, and any visitors, parents or contractors in the vicinity. It will also consider individuals for whom the hazard may represent a greater risk (e.g. new and expectant mothers, young people, those with specific health issues or disabilities).

3. Evaluate the risks and decide on the requirement for further precautions

The risk is the chance that someone could be harmed by the hazard. The extent of the risk will depend on:

- the likelihood of the harm occurring
- the severity of the harm
- the number of people who may be harmed

The means of evaluating the risk and resulting controls required is dependent on the situation; the level of detail should be proportionate to the risk. Insignificant risks or those arising from routine activities associated with life can usually be ignored.

The effectiveness of controls should be considered and the extent of risk remaining assessed. When deciding if precautions are acceptable, the assessor should take into account the legal requirement to do all that is “reasonably practicable” to protect people from harm.

If the remaining risk is unacceptable then further controls must be identified to further reduce the risk.

When deciding on appropriate controls, the following hierarchy should be used:

- **Eliminate** – if possible remove the hazard
- **Substitute/reduce** - replace the hazard with something less hazardous (i.e. switch to a less hazardous chemical), or reduce the frequency of exposure (i.e. complete the task less often)
- **Engineering controls** - prevent access to the hazard (i.e. guarding moving parts of machinery, pedestrian routes to prevent contact with moving vehicles)
- **People Controls** - organise the work to reduce the individuals’ exposure to the hazard (i.e. use more people to complete a task involving manual handling therefore reducing the risk to any individual.)

- **Personal Protective equipment (PPE)** – use of PPE to prevent contact with hazard (i.e. gloves, mask, goggles). The use of PPE as a control measure should be the last resort if other controls in the hierarchy are not appropriate, however PPE may be used in addition to other controls as a additional measure.

Where further action is necessary this should be recorded in the the risk assessment, and should include:

- name of employee responsible for completing the action
- target date for completion
- any interim measures to reduce risk in the short term
- confirmation that the action has been completed
- re-assessment of the level of risk following completion of the action.

4. Record your findings and implement controls

Findings should be recorded on an appropriate form. Various risk assessment templates are available to down load from SharePoint (Health and Safety Section) or from the Assistant Bursar, these include:

- General Risk assessment templates
- Departmental risk assessment, for use when considering multiple risks
- Risk assessment for new and expectant mothers
- Manual Handling task risk assessment
- Risk assessment for drama productions

The findings of the risk assessment should be shared with the staff involved in the activity. New members of staff are provided with any risk assessments relevant to their role as part of the induction procedure.

The completed risk assessment form must be signed by the members of staff completing the assessment. The assessment must then be verified by a senior member of staff, usually the Bursar or Assistant Bursar, or the Head of Department if they have not been involved in preparing the assessment. Please contact the Assistant Bursar for further guidance in this matter.

The completed risk assessment must be forwarded to the Assistant Bursar.

5. Review your assessment

Risk assessments should be reviewed as circumstances dictate (i.e. changes in equipment or procedures), but **at least every 2 years**.

In reviewing existing risk assessments Heads of Department should consider the work activities taking place within their area of responsibility to ensure that risk assessments are in place for all activities that warrant them.

New and Expectant Mothers at Work

A "new or expectant mother" is a school employee who is pregnant, who has given birth within the previous six months, or who is breast-feeding. Risks include those to the unborn child or child of a woman who is still breast-feeding, not just risks to the expectant mother.

The employee should be encouraged to notify the school in writing that she is pregnant (but there is no statutory obligation for her to do so until such time as required by the school's maternity leave policy). The Assistant Bursar must then undertake a risk assessment in consultation with the individual and their line manager. A template for this risk assessment is available to download from SharePoint (Health and Safety Section) or from the Assistant Bursar.

If there is significant risk to the health and safety of an identified new or expectant mother the following actions will be considered in the order given: removal of the problem, prevention of exposure, control of exposure.

In the unlikely event of a significant risk still remaining then the school will take the following steps to remove the employee from the risk:

- Temporary adjustment of the working conditions and/or hours of work, or if it is not reasonable to do this, or if this would not avoid the risk then –
- Suitable alternative work if any is available will be offered, or if that is not feasible then –
- The employee will be suspended from work (with paid leave) for as long as necessary to protect her safety or health or that of her child.

These actions will only be necessary where as the result of a risk assessment there is genuine concern. Before offering alternative employment, paid leave, or if there is any doubt, professional advice will be sought.

The risks will be kept under review as they may change, for example, as pregnancy progresses.

Young Persons at Work

The Regulations require formal written risk assessments for young people (i.e. those under 18 years of age) but do not otherwise demand more than that which is already needed by health and safety legislation. Such a risk assessment will generally stress the enhanced level of supervision that will be required in such cases.

Young people must be protected from any risks to their health and safety which arise as a consequence of their lack of experience, absence of awareness of existing and potential risks, or immaturity.

Work Experience

If young people are to be employed by the School (young persons on work experience are designated as employees for the purpose of health and safety legislation) a copy of the Health and Safety Executive publication "Young People at Work" ISBN 0 7176 1285 6 should be obtained for consultation from the Assistant Bursar.

Before young people start work a written risk assessment must be carried out.

In carrying out the risk assessment, the following must be taken into account:

- The possible inexperience, lack of awareness of risks and immaturity of young persons
- The form, range and use of work equipment and the way in which it is handled
- The extent of the health and safety training provided, or to be provided, to the young persons
- Risks from agents, processes and work listed in the Annex to the European Directive on the protection of young people at work, which is contained in "Young People at Work".

The school is already prohibited by specific legislation from employing young persons in certain areas of work.

In addition, the school must not employ any young person for work which:

- is beyond their physical or psychological capacity
- involves harmful exposure to agents which are toxic, carcinogenic, cause heritable genetic damage or harm to the unborn child, or which in any other way chronically affect human health
- involves harmful exposure to radiation
- involves a risk of accidents which it may reasonably be assumed cannot be recognised or avoided by young persons owing to their lack of experience or training
- presents a risk to health from extreme cold or heat, noise or vibration
- except for where the young person is over the minimum school leaving age, the risk has been reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable, the work is necessary for his or her training and the young persons are supervised by a competent person.

Pre-Employment Risk Assessments

The School undertakes the checks specified in the Recruitment Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure for new members of staff prior to their employment commencing. However in some circumstances these checks can be delayed. The member of staff may be allowed to start work prior to completion of all the checks under controlled conditions.

These conditions include the completion of a risk assessment and the implementation of appropriate controls (safeguards). The manager and employee are both made aware of the controls and the risk assessment reviewed at least every two weeks.

The responsibility for ensuring these safeguarding risk assessments are completed and kept under review rests with the Director of HR