



## **RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY (HEALTH & SAFETY)**

The purpose of this policy is to enable the College to meet its duty of care to pupils and staff (and others) by creating a culture of undertaking risk assessments to reduce the risks of all College operations, as far as is reasonably practical. The aim is to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, visitors and others affected by our operations.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 dictate that the College has an absolute duty to carry out risk assessments to ensure such obligations are met.

The Independent School regulatory requirements demand that the College ensures the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks identified.

The College must take a proactive approach to managing risk, and thereby reduce the likelihood that pupils and others will be harmed through negligence and lack of foresight or proper planning.

By focussing on prevention, as opposed to reacting when things go wrong, it is possible to prevent accidents and injuries that could ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Once a risk assessment has been completed the significant risks must be communicated to staff and others, to enable their co-operation and informed decisions. Such communication can be done verbally or where appropriate more formally by providing a copy of the risk assessment and discussing the findings during a team or department meeting.

### **What is a risk assessment?**

Risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people, particularly in the College's case to staff and pupils that could result from an 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 (harm) occurring.
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property).

Risk control measures are the measures, actions and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, appropriate supervision, clear work procedures, preliminary visits, warning signs and barriers).

Risk assessments are used to identify the potential hazards to people from the College's activities.

Risk assessment is not merely a paper exercise that is an end in itself. Once risks have been identified, action must be taken to reduce them.

## **Responsibilities for Risk Assessments**

It is the College's responsibility, through its management, to ensure risk assessments are completed and implemented. The work involved to meet this responsibility is delegated to key roles within the school, including Heads of Departments and Managers. This responsibility includes recognition of the particular nature of the College as a school and the associated risks e.g. security of pupils.

The Chief Operating Officer monitors and evaluates risk assessments, and reports on risk to the governing body.

The College will provide suitable and sufficient training for staff required to complete risk assessments to ensure staff have the knowledge and understanding to fulfil this responsibility and undertake effective risk assessments.

Pro forma risk assessments and guidance on completion are available at Appendix Z of the Health and Safety Policy.

## **Heads of Teaching and Operational Departments**

The Heads of Departments and Managers:

- have control over the activities in that department and therefore need to ensure decisions made take into account safety requirements. A key way to achieve this is by completing a risk assessment and ensuring work activities within the department are carried out safely.
- are responsible, as part of their Local Management Arrangements (LMAs), for ensuring appropriate risk assessments are in place and reviewing them to ensure the risk assessment accurately reflects operations and activities in their department.
- should ensure that risk assessments are made available to the COO's Office for publication on the College's Health & Safety Portal and stored in a shared area for ease of access and reference.
- should ensure department risk assessments are reviewed regularly, after an incident/accident or at least on an annual basis.

## **Responsibilities of all staff**

All new members of staff are given an induction into the College's arrangements for health and safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. However, staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Health and Safety policy and arrangements (including risk assessments) and senior management in order to enable the College complies with its health and safety duties.

All members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks/defects or concerns to their line manager.

## General Arrangements

Each department is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place for all work activities. The Chief Operating Officer and Director of Estates will work with all departments to provide advice and support. General risk assessments should consider the following generic hazards:

- Safeguarding of pupils (including risks posed by late DBS checks, risk of bullying, visiting speakers, Prevent)
- Medical risks (including pupils with eating disorders)
- Manual handling, working at height, hazards from equipment/machinery used, substances hazardous to health (COSHH), slips and trips, noise.
- Security, Lone working.

However, every department will have specific hazards that need to be assessed; for example recruitment checks by the Human Resources Department, supervision levels in boarding houses, site security by Facilities Department and tree work by the Grounds Department.

Risk assessments should aim to eliminate the hazard where reasonably practicable and then look to reduce the risks, protecting pupils, staff and others, identifying safe ways of working and reducing the likelihood of ill-health or injury.

Managers and Heads of Departments are responsible for ensuring their staff are briefed on risks specific to their department and the control measures to be used to protect the health and safety of pupils and staff.

## Educational Areas

There are number of higher risk pupil focused activities which require risk assessment:

- safeguarding, child protection, and Prevent
- science experiments
- art activities and equipment
- music activities
- drama activities and sets
- design and technology equipment and tasks
- sport and PE activity
- outings and expeditions

- Duke of Edinburgh award and CCF activities

All staff responsible for completing risk assessments will be provided with training to provide them with the knowledge and understanding of the risk assessment process and the skills required to undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

### Conducting A Risk Assessment

The HSE's Five Steps to risk assessment are:

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| Step 1 | Look for the hazards and list any that will exist as a result of the task or activity                              |
| Step 2 | Decide who could be harmed and how   |
| Step 3 | Evaluate the risk level  |
| Step 4 | Detail the control measures you will be putting in place to control the hazard and reduce the likelihood of injury |
| Step 5 | Review your findings   |

A risk assessment should be carried out by anyone who is trained and competent to do so; someone who understands the circumstances and the potential harm.

To do a risk assessment, consider what in the activities might cause harm to people and decide whether you are doing enough to prevent that harm. Once you have decided that, you need to identify and prioritise appropriate and sensible control measures.

It is crucial that the risk assessment actually reflects the activities and arrangements that are in place. If a control measure is identified as being required in the recorded risk assessment this should be implemented.

Staff involved in the activities/operations should be consulted and involved with the risk assessment process and the results must be effectively communicated to staff and pupils. The written document should help with communicating and managing the risks.

When completing a risk assessment the focus should be on significant risks associated with the activity. You do not need to include insignificant risks. In other words, you do not need to include risks from everyday life unless your work activities increase those risks.

Risks should be reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority. This is what is meant by a hierarchy of control.

## **Review of risk assessments**

All risk assessments should be regularly reviewed:

- If there is significant change in the circumstances, e.g. new equipment/ways of working
- After an accident or incident
- If the original assessment is no longer valid, e.g. change in legislation or changes in technology/science
- In all other cases regularly (usually annually)

Risk assessments should also be reviewed and recorded, when major structural work is planned, if work practices change or in the event of an accident. The College's arrangements for the management of health and safety, includes plans for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment.