



Policy Name: Risk Assessment Policy

Owner: The Bursar

Date Last Reviewed: Sept 2025

Date of Next Review: Sept 2027

Policy revised biennially or as regulations or review demands

The Governors of Mayfield School are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Their priority lies in ensuring that all the operations within the school environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully with not just the law, but with best practice. Risks are inherent in every-day life but it is the responsibility of the School to control these risks. To do this we need to think about what might cause harm to our staff, pupils and visitors to the site and decide whether we are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm.

WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?

A risk assessment is a tool for identifying sensible measures to control the risks that exist in every workplace. It helps employers identify how accidents and ill health could happen and focuses on real risks – those that are most likely and which will cause the most harm. A risk assessment also helps to identify measures that can be put in place which help to control risk.

WHAT AREAS REQUIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS?

There are numerous activities carried out in Mayfield School, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. Some key areas need individualised and specialised risk assessments such as fire safety (see Fire Safety Policy) whilst other areas can be managed as part of the whole for example there is a risk assessment in place to cover all offices within the school.

Risk assessments are also needed for each subject area and this may be further broken down by activity if it is identified that specific activities carry a high level of risk e.g. Hockey or Swimming. Public events which take place in the school require risk assessments as do Educational Visits.

At Mayfield School we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits. We subscribe to the CLEAPSS Advisory Service that provides model risk assessments for our lessons in science, as well as providing professional training courses for both teachers and technicians who work in Science.

Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral policy is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping herself safe on the in all situations. For example, our Life Skills 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 Cyber worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken. Our science lessons encourage students to conduct their own safety-related research into the potential hazards of chemicals, gas, electricity and flammable materials.

Medical and First Aid

The Health and Wellbeing Centre has risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures. The school has a separate medical policy which explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency and is accompanied by a risk assessment.

Unsupervised Access by Pupils

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool, lakes and the science laboratories. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use. The lakes are fenced off. All flammables are kept securely locked. Pupils are not permitted to access the Grounds and Maintenance Storage areas and Catering areas of the school, unless accompanied.

Child Protection

Our Child Protection policies and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. Safer recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the School is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children, and are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors, volunteers and the adult members of the households of staff who are accommodated on site, 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 Housekeeping: risk assessments and/or training are required for items of catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Maintenance: risk assessments and/or training are required for tools and items of equipment, as well as for 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 and refresher training covers risk assessments, safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment.
- Grounds: risk assessments and/or training are required for every tool and piece of machinery, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Office 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. Risk assessments are in place for general office areas which include the use of standard office equipment such as photocopiers.

CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT

Our policy at Mayfield School is not to carry out any high-risk activity. This is clearly outlined in a very comprehensive guide to organising educational visits. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with older pupils, such as riding and skiing but only using specialist/qualified instructors.

Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment, such as helmets, and to follow instructions. We will always employ specialists for high-risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.

For more information on how to write a risk assessment see the Risk Assessment Procedure contained in Annex A to this Policy.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The Bursar arranges for independent specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Health and Safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Pressure Vessels
- Building Conditions Surveys

Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and that review is recorded either annually, when a major change to the area or activity is planned, or in the event of an accident. The fire risk assessments are typically reviewed once a year. The separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for catering and cleaning and for water sampling.

Responsibilities of all Staff

All members of staff are given a Health and Safety induction which includes guidance on risk assessments. 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 co-operating with the Headmistress, the Bursar and other members of the SLT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar.

ANNEX A - RISK ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

As part of managing the Health and Safety of the School we look to control the risks which occur in every workplace. To do this we need to think about what might cause harm to people and decide whether we are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm.

This process is known as a risk assessment, and it is something that we are required by law to carry out. A risk assessment is about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in our workplace.

Identify the hazards

One of the most important aspects of a risk assessment is accurately identifying the potential hazards in the workplace.

A good starting point is to walk around the workplace or work through the steps of an activity and think about any hazards. In other words what is it about the activities, processes or substances used that could injure someone or harm their health. When you work in a place every day or carry out the same activity regularly it is easy to overlook some hazards so try to imagine you are seeing the location or carrying out the task for the first time. Sometimes it can be helpful to talk about the potential hazards with colleagues who may identify different risks.

It can also help to check manufacturers' instructions or data sheets for chemicals and equipment as they can identify hazards and to put them into a true perspective. Looking back at previous accident and ill health records can help to identify less obvious hazards whilst thinking about non-routine activities such as maintenance, cleaning or activities which take place when the School is non-operational can also support with identification. Whilst we tend to think about risk being a one-off event it can be beneficial to think about long-term hazards to health such as high levels of noise from machinery or exposure to harmful substances.

Who might be harmed?

Then think **how** employees, pupils, contractors or visitors might be harmed. For each hazard you need to be clear about who might be harmed as this will help you to identify the best way of controlling the risk. This does not mean listing everyone by name but rather identifying groups of people. Remember:

- Some workers have particular requirements e.g. young workers, new or expectant mothers or people with disabilities;
- Think about people who might not be in the workplace all the time such as visitors, contractors or maintenance workers;
- Take members of the public into account if relevant;
- Think carefully about the pupils and consider that what may appear as an obvious hazard to you may not to them.

Evaluate the Risks

Having identified the hazards you then have to decide how likely it is that harm will occur and what to do about it. Risk is a part of everyday life and you are not expected to eliminate all risks. What you must do is make sure you know the main risks and the things you need to do to manage them responsibly.

Generally you need to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. This means balancing the level of risk against the measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble. However you do need to take action if it would be grossly disproportionate to the level of risk.

Your risk assessment should only include what you can reasonably be expected to know – you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

Look at what you're already doing and the control measures you already have in place. Ask:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not how can I control the risk so that harm is unlikely?

Some practical steps you could take include:

- Trying a less risky option;
- Preventing access to the hazards;
- Organising your work or that of others to reduce exposure to the hazard;
- Issuing protective equipment;
- Providing welfare facilities such as first aid and washing facilities.
- Educating staff and/or pupils on potential risks

Record your significant findings

Make a record of your significant findings – the hazards, how people might be harmed by them and what you have put in place to control the risks. Use the School's template document to help you record this.

When writing down your results keep it simple and don't over-complicate it.

A risk assessment must be suitable and sufficient or in other words it should show that:

- A proper check was made;
- You asked who might be affected
- You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved;
- The precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low;

If the risk assessment identifies a number of hazards put them in order of importance and address the most serious risks first. Identify long-term solutions for the risks with the biggest consequences as well as those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health. Establish whether there are improvements that can be implemented quickly, even temporarily, until more reliable controls can be put in place.

Remember the greater the hazard the more robust and reliable the measures to control the risk of an injury will need to be.

Regularly review your Risk Assessment

Few workplaces stay the same. Sooner or later new equipment, substances and procedures will be introduced that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense to review what you are doing on an ongoing basis, look at your risk assessments again and ask yourself:

- Have there been any significant changes?
- Are there any improvements you still need to make?
- Have staff members identified a problem?
- Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses?

As a minimum risk assessments should be reviewed on an annual basis at the commencement of the Autumn term.