



Risk Assessment Policy

Implementation Date: August 2015
Date / Term of last review: Michaelmas Term 2025

This policy applies to the whole school including those in the EYFS.

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1. Aims and objectives:

- 1.1. Risks are inherent in everyday life. We need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. Our pupils need to be educated into how to cope safely with risk.
- 1.2. The aim of this policy is to set out the systematic approach for suitable and sufficient risk management throughout the school. This policy pays particular attention to the welfare of its pupils, ensuring that appropriate action is taken to identify and reduce potential risks to a practical and manageable level. This includes the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (ISSRs) 2014 and Early Years Foundations Stage.
- 1.3. The objectives of this policy are to:
 - Ensure that major risks are identified and managed as part of an overarching policy with a view to promoting children's welfare.
 - Meet the ISSR requirement for a written risk assessment policy to be in place and to meet the requirement for leadership in and management of schools.
 - Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for activities where there is likely to be significant risk including school trips
 - Identify control measures and ensure these are implemented to control risk so far as reasonably practicable.
 - Ensure those affected by school activities, receive suitable information on what to do.
 - Certify that the risk management strategy and risk assessments are recorded and reviewed when appropriate.
 - Identify those in the school responsible for conducting risk assessment and monitoring its implementation.
- 1.4. The Governors of Oakwood School are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Their highest 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 not just with the law; but with best practice.
- 1.5. The purpose of a risk assessment is to identify hazards, analyse and evaluate controls used to mitigate the risk to a practical and safe level. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Safeguarding & Child Protection
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Fire Safety & Fire Risk Retention Policy
 - Educational Visits & Activities Policy
 - Accessibility Policy & Plan

2. What is a risk assessment?

- 2.1. Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focusing on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong. In many cases simple measures are very effective and not costly.
- 2.2. Within the Health and Safety Executives sensible risk management framework, it is recommended that appropriate controls are identified and put in place based upon the level of risk presented.
"Sensible risk management is about the application of practical steps to manage real risks, not bureaucratic paperwork and back covering. Addressing the real risks, not only to pupils/students, but also to the health and wellbeing of staff."

(Health and Safety Executive)

- 2.3. 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 (e.g. fire).
 - A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring (e.g. a chip pan will catch fire if left unattended).
 - 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 and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).

3. What areas require risk assessments?

- 3.1. There are numerous activities carried out in Oakwood School, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. A list of areas and most important of these occasions cover:
- Science Laboratories
 - Art, Design & Technology
 - Food Technology
 - Outdoor Learning
 - Swimming Pool
 - Lyne Hall
 - Recruitment & Safeguarding – when a new member of staff is late receiving their DBS
 - Fire safety, procedures and risk assessments
 - Educational visits and trips
 - EYFS settings.
 - Sports facilities & fixtures
 - Play equipment
 - Kitchen
- 3.2. We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool, the science laboratory, the IT Suite, etc. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use. All flammables are kept securely locked. Pupils do not have access to the Maintenance and Catering areas of the school.

4. Risk Assessment Responsibilities

- 4.1. All employees at Oakwood School are responsible for undertaking risk assessments when participating in educational activities that may expose children to a range of hazards.
- 4.2. Head of Department/SMT are responsible for ensuring that teachers engaging in an activity with hazards, have identified and implemented appropriate control measures to reduce the risk to as practically possible.
- 4.3. The Operations Manager or in their absence a member of SLT will review all risk assessments passed to them prior to the activity taking place.
- 4.4. It is the responsibility of the SLT to ensure that all staff have appropriate training in assessing risk and completing risk assessments including understanding the legal position with regards to completing a risk assessment for hazardous educational activities. All staff will undertake Health & Safety including Risk Assessment training with Pearson Consultancy in January 2025.

5. The Risk Assessment Process

- 5.1. Risk Assessments do not have to be complicated. The level of detail contained within should be relevant to the level of risks involved with the activity. In many cases, the risk assessment will simply clarify the best practice protocols and procedures that would have been in place.
- 5.2. Identify, assess and evaluate are the key principles used when conducting a risk assessment. The risk assessment process will consist of the following key steps:
1. Identify the hazard – *what potentially could go wrong and cause harm?*
 2. Identify the individuals involved – *assess who might be harmed?*
 3. Assess the risk and decide on its likelihood of occurrence – *how likely is it to go wrong?*
 4. Evaluate the risk exposure – *how serious would it be if it did go wrong?*
 5. Identify the controls needed to mitigate and reduce the risk exposure to an acceptable level – *what are you going to do to stop it from happening?*
 6. Evaluate whether controls are effective – *how are you going to check that your plans are working?*
 7. Evaluate the risk assessment and update where necessary – *record and review findings.*
- 5.3. Risk assessments are reviewed when there are changes to the activity:
- after a near miss or accident
 - when there are changes to the type of people involved in the activity
 - when there are changes in good practice
 - when there are legislative changes
 - annually if for no other reason
- 5.4. Following any accident, incident or near miss, applicable risk assessments should form part of the formal investigation process and be updated and reviewed accordingly.
- 5.5. All risk assessments are centrally stored, available on the staff shared portals and all are reviewed at appropriate timescales/at least annually.

6. Conducting a Risk Assessment

- 6.1. Where relevant, risk assessments will be completed using industry-standard assessment templates or guidelines. All other risk assessments should be completed using an Oakwood standard risk assessment template.
- 6.2. Risks are assessed in terms of severity and likelihood of occurrence. The matrix as attached in Appendix A is used by staff as a guide when assessing the level of risk and whether it falls into, 'High, Medium or Low' categories.
- 6.3. It is generally our policy at Oakwood School not to carry out any high-risk activity. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with older pupils, such as skiing; but only using qualified instructors.
- 6.4. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in such activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment, such as mouth-guards, and to follow instructions.

- 6.5. 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.
- 6.6. Support Risk Assessments will be managed by the Estates Project Manager and Operations Manager. These Risk Assessments will also be maintained in a standard template format although there may be occasions where this might require slight deviations dependent on the activity being assessed. All will be appropriate to meet the requirement for suitable and sufficient risk assessments.
- 6.7. When undertaking a risk assessment, it is important to engage and collaborate with those members of staff undertaking the task or in control of the group, as they have a greater depth of knowledge with reference to the environment, equipment, and students.

7. Specialist Risk Assessments

- 7.1. Where necessary, some specific risk assessments are required by legislation, for example those pertaining to fire safety, manual handling, substances hazardous to health, Legionella, provision and use of work equipment, asbestos and security. We will always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks.
- 7.2. External contractors are required to send their RAMS to the school prior to any on site work commencing.

8. Dynamic Risk Assessment

- 8.1. On rare occasions there may be a need for staff to undertake a **Dynamic Risk Assessment**. This term is used to describe the out of the ordinary judgements that employees have to make in respect of health & safety. They cannot be written down in advance because they are about making specific judgements in a certain situation. They are certainly not a substitute for risk assessment and foreseeable risks must still be assessed appropriately. In these circumstances staff must work within the context of their own competencies and in consultation with others where possible.
- 8.2. The need for a dynamic risk assessment may arise when an unforeseen event occurs and a previously unidentified risk becomes apparent. A delay in acting would increase the risk exposure and potential for harm.
- 8.3. Once the dynamic risk assessment has taken place, a formal written risk assessment record must be made of this as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event. It may be that the original risk assessment is updated to reflect the nature of the hazard so that future activities incorporate this aspect.

9. Educational Risk Assessments

- 9.1. At Oakwood School we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits. All teaching staff and technicians receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas. Risk Assessment training was provided for staff during September 2023. Additional staff refresher training with an external provider (Pearson Webb Consultancy) has been arranged for January 2025.

9.2. These can include but are not limited to:

- Science experiments
- Design and Technology
- Food Technology
- Each sport and PE activity
- Art
- Music
- Drama and dance
- General classroom
- School trips

9.3. The school may refer to the CLEAPPS Advisory Service for risk assessments in Science.

10. Medical and First Aid

10.1. The School has risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures. Accident forms are completed in every case and the Health and Safety reporting tool updated. The School's separate First Aid Policy explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency.

10.2. The Operations Manager is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

11. Reviews

11.1. All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the School's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety (which is recorded). 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 Headteacher, the Operations Manager 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 Operations Manager or member of SLT.

11.2. In line with KCSiE 2024, through safeguarding training, all staff are alerted to indicators of both child on child violence or the risk of involvement with serious violent crime, ensuring they are able to respond and manage incidences appropriately.

11.3. An annual risk review is presented by the Business Manager to the Governors to approve as Trustees of the Charity at the summer term Board Meeting. This review analyses:

- The financial procedures and controls
- The major risks to the School
- The measures taken to protect the School against such risks

11.4. Governors are invited to approve the risk review annually and to endorse the insertion of a statement along the following lines in the School's annual accounts:

"The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Trust, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks".

APPENDIX A

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

SEVERITY (CONSEQUENCE)	
1. Trivial	Plasters, cold pack injuries, basic first aid required
2. Slight	Sprain and strain, dressings applied, ongoing first aid treatment required
3. Moderate	Mild concussion, suspected fracture, recommended hospital visit by parent/guardian or school
4. High	Emergency services contact required. Complex fracture or injury requiring further medical investigation (A&E). Anaphylaxis reaction.
5. Very High	Fatality, life changing injury

LIKELIHOOD	
1. Improbable	Very unlikely / may happen once in 3 years
2. Unlikely	May happen once in 1 academic year
3. Even chance	May happen once during event or trip / termly
4. Likely	May happen multiple times during event or trip / termly or one incident a week
5. Almost certain	Imminent or multiple incidents weekly

RISK / PRIORITY INDICATOR MATRIX						
LIKELIHOOD	5	L	M	H	H	H
	4	L	M	M	H	H
	3	L	L	M	M	H
	2	L	L	L	M	H
	1	L	L	L	M	M
		1	2	3	4	5
		SEVERITY (CONSEQUENCE)				

SUMMARY	RISK RATING KEY AND SUGGESTED MITIGATION TIMEFRAME (IF REQUIRED)
High	Requires further action to reduce risk. If all levels of mitigation have been explored and risk is As Low As Reasonably Practicable, and the benefits outweigh the risk and approved by SLT then activity can proceed.
Medium	Take further action to reduce risk if benefits outweigh cost. Risk can be accepted if precautions are maintained and managed
Low	Acceptable and normal monitoring required