



WISBECH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Risk Assessment Policy (A10)

Scope:	Whole School (including Boarding)
Release date:	June 2021
Review date:	October 2022
Author:	Health and Safety Advisor
Reviewer:	Bursar
Approval body:	Board of Directors

Linked documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the

- Health and Safety Policy (A9)
- Template Risk Assessment Form (Internal)
- Generic Departmental Risk Assessment (Internal)
- Risk Assessment Guidelines (Internal)
- Risk Assessment Sign-Off Form (Internal)
- Policy for the Management of Educational Visits (Internal)
- Sports Transport Protocol (Internal)

Acronyms

D&T	Design and Technology.
CLEAPSS	Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services.
iHasco	Name of an online training company used by the School.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CoSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
EVC	Educational Visits Coordinator
ISI	Independent Schools Inspectorate

Availability

This Policy is available to parents and prospective parents on the School website, and a printed copy may be requested from the School office / Pupil Services Team.

Policy Statement

Scope

This policy applies to all departments of the Senior and Prep School, including Boarding.

Breadth

This policy states the process to be used at the School for completing, reviewing and storing risk assessments, used to assess and safely control any aspect of the School's undertaking as a business. Risk assessments, as required, may reasonably be expected to cover risks to our own staff, our own pupils, our visitors (including but not limited to visiting pupils, staff, parents, guests and contractors) and anyone else who might be affected by our undertakings.

Definition

Risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to people at work/at School so that we can weigh up whether we have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

Aim

The aim of this policy is:

- To ensure that a systematic, suitable and sufficient evaluation of areas or tasks is carried out to identify any hazards that might exist.
- To identify and put in place the necessary control measures which are required to reduce the risk posed by the hazard to an acceptable level and wherever possible, to prevent risk to harm entirely.
- To ensure that any health and safety regulations which state that a risk assessment must be carried out and recorded, are met.
- To prevent accidents and injuries at the School and off-site, when part of our School undertaking.

Policy Procedure

Responsibilities

Heads of Department/Line Managers/Leaders of Activities, both teaching and support will:

- Complete risk assessments for all areas, activities and tasks under their control, and implement the control measures identified as required by those assessments.
- Ensure that every person who could be affected by the factor in question is considered and protected; most notably within the School setting, our pupils as young persons under our care.
- Review risk assessments as often as is necessary to ensure that every assessment continues to be suitable and sufficient. Where there have been major changes in any significant factor, e.g. such as staffing, equipment or process used, risk assessments should be reviewed as soon as changes are due to be made. As a general rule, all teaching risk assessments should be reviewed annually (as expected by ISI), and all support risk assessments should be reviewed at least every 4 years or sooner.
- Ensure that all relevant staff understand the risks and controls listed in any risk assessments pertinent to them. It is good practice for the Head of Department/Line Manager/Leader of Activity to require their staff to sign the Risk Assessment Sign-off form which denotes they have seen and understood the document. This should be used at annual review also.
- Store their risk assessments in hard copy within their department and send a soft copy to the Health and Safety Advisor for inclusion on the T drive:/health and safety/staff resources/Risk Assessment if possible. Within some departments, this is not possible due to the nature of the risk assessments currently used and preferred in order to control risk.
- Where relevant, use the risk assessments to enhance the teaching and learning opportunities within the School by ensuring that learning is directed towards promoting an increasing understanding of life skills, in line with pupil maturity levels, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken. Where appropriate, the technique of risk assessment will be taught to pupils to directly increase their understanding of risk in everyday life.

Members of staff to whom the risk assessment pertains will:

- Follow the requirements of the risk assessment in order to ensure their own and other's health and safety.
- Alert their line manager immediately if they do not feel the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient in order to protect the health and safety of anyone who could be adversely affected.
- Where relevant, use the risk assessments to enhance the teaching and learning opportunities within the School by ensuring that learning is directed towards promoting an increasing understanding of life skills, in line with pupil maturity levels, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken. Where appropriate, the technique of risk assessment will be taught to pupils to directly increase their understanding of risk in everyday life.

Appendix 1

The Types of Risk Assessment Carried Out at the School

The School completes many different types of risk assessment, including the following:

- Fire risk assessments in each building
- Task, activity or area risk assessments
- Departmental risk assessments – both educational and support wherever deemed necessary. These may include a large number of different risks and noted controls, such as for lone work etc.
- On-site event risk assessments
- High-risk activity or area risk assessments
- Off-site risk assessments such as:
 - Educational visits and trips risk assessment
 - Generic trip risk assessments
 - Away sports fixtures
- Asbestos risk assessments (as part of the Asbestos Management Plan and Register)
- Legionella risk assessments
- Absence Notification risk assessments (e.g. following staff absence and remaining injury)
- New and Expectant Mothers risk assessments
- Young Persons risk assessments
- Display Screen Equipment risk assessments
- Extraordinary risk assessments – e.g. for COVID

Within this list, pupils, staff, visitors, contractors and any others who may be affected by our work or premises as a School are included.

Completed risk assessments are held with the Health and Safety Advisor and/or with the relevant Head of Department or person completing. In some departments, such as D&T and the sciences, much of this information is held in hard and soft copy within the department or through use of separate websites or organisations such as CLEAPSS.

Higher Risk Areas

Risk assessments of all areas of the school reinforce the policy of ensuring that our pupils do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas.

- The school employs a variety of security measures to ensure that this happens, such as electronic access control, punch lock access or locks on our buildings to prevent access to pupils or unauthorised persons.
- Doors to higher risk areas, such as science labs, maintenance areas etc. are kept locked unless in use, with very strict control on keyholders.
- Where the risk is lower but still of concern, increased discipline and prohibited pupil access (without supervision of staff) is employed. In some areas, such as within the main D&T room, all electrical machines are electrically isolated from use hence the building can be accessed by pupils for form rooms, but with no risk from powered tools. Wherever pupils are felt to be at too high a risk, a higher level of control is used, such as locking off/out.

- Traffic signage, use of physical barriers and robust management is used to promote safe traffic and pedestrian separation.

The areas within the School bounds considered to be higher risk and therefore controlled through use of the measures listed above are as follows:

- Chemical stores
- Plant rooms
- Workshops
- General stores
- Loft or roof areas
- Balconies
- Science laboratories
- Design and technology department
- Grounds stores
- Maintenance areas
- Catering areas
- Building sites, refurbishment areas or areas where work is being carried out.
- Pavilion
- Circulation routes between buildings, especially where traffic and pedestrians may meet (car parks).
- Any areas under our control which could be at risk of fire with unauthorised cigarette use.
- Any other areas which we consider to be a higher risk.

Off-Site Risk Assessments

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Educational Visits Coordinator for the Prep School (EVC Prep) deal with all off-site School risk assessments for the Senior School and Prep School respectively. These are controlled in line with the Policy for the Management of Educational Visits. (T:\Educational Visits\Staff Resources\Policy) The Policy also controls our off-site sports fixtures which involve an overnight stay or as a trip to watch professional matches.

Our weekly sports fixtures (home and away) are controlled through use of sports risk assessments and the Sports Handbook. Where this is not appropriate, a specific risk assessment will be completed for the activity being proposed.

Off-site risk assessments are sometimes more difficult to complete as we have less control over areas which we do not own and also may have to rely on the health and safety arrangements of other organisations, such as hotels, centres or other educational sites. We use high-quality providers of services, centres and activities, using licensed Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations sites wherever possible, to ensure that we can be assured of a high level of care and health and safety awareness. It is the duty of the trip organiser to carry out checks to ensure whether the provider is legally required to hold a licence for the activities it offers and, if so, that the provider actually holds a licence. If a provider is not required to hold a licence, the trip organiser should check necessary details such as safety arrangements and qualifications of staff/instructors. Teaching staff can check whether or not a provider is licensed by going to the website of the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (www.hse.gov.uk/aala)

We as a School still need to ensure that we have completed reasonable checks, given the foreseeable risk, of other sites which we will be using, which do not have or do not require a licence, whether school-led or organised by an activity provider. The member of staff managing the trip is required to assess the safety arrangements of the venue and the events to be carried out. If any external leaders are involved, the trip organiser should ensure these external leaders are competent and adequately insured.

We need to ensure that the extent of our checks reflect the risk involved in the activity being proposed, i.e. a higher risk activity would require more stringent checks on our part. For trips abroad, we will aim to use specialist trip providers to ensure that the activities, services and venues being used have been checked by them and that they, in turn, can assure us of their suitability, quality and safety. An exploratory trip ahead of booking the venue would also be an option for staff, especially if there are concerns or queries about the arrangements. As this is a complicated area of health and safety law, staff are able to direct any queries or concerns which they have to the EVC (where applicable) and/or Health and Safety Advisor.

It should be noted that although risk assessments, whether generic or specific may be completed in advance of the activity, there may be occasions when these risk assessments are found to be lacking due to unforeseen factors. In this case, dynamic risk assessment on site can be used to reduce the risks. Help and assistance can again be sought from the EVC or Health and Safety Advisor as necessary.

Appendix 2

Support For Our Staff In Completing Risk Assessments

Staff can access the materials required to complete a risk assessment on the T drive:/Health and Safety/Staff Resources/Risk Assessment.

- **The Template Risk Assessment Form** (Appendix 3) can be used by staff who need to complete a risk assessment without any other relevant School information already contained.
- **The Generic Departmental Risk Assessment** (Appendix 4) can be used by staff completing their Departmental Risk Assessments and contains information on the generic risks and controls already present within the School as a whole, for example, fire risks and controls.
- **The Risk Assessment Sign-Off Form** (Appendix 5) can be used by staff to ensure that they can be assured that their staff (or any relevant person) has read and understood the risk assessment. This form should then be stapled to the relevant risk assessment.
- **The Risk Assessment Guidelines** (Appendix 6) can be used by staff to remind them of why and how we undertake risk assessments.

Training

Many different persons within the school are required to carry out risk assessments as part of their duties under the Health and Safety Policy. In order to support this:

- There is a rolling programme of training/refresher training where necessary for all Heads of Department/Line Managers/Leaders of Activities in Health and Safety Roles, Responsibilities and Risk Assessment.
- The School also ensures that relevant staff are trained in a variety of subjects relating to health and safety as core control measures within risk assessments, such as:
 - Manual handling
 - Work at height,
 - Fire awareness,
 - CoSHH (for working with chemicals),
 - Asbestos awareness
 - Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

This training may be undertaken in the form of Tool Box Talks within some departments, e.g. Estates Services.

- The School can also provide training in any other subject depending upon an identified need through risk assessment or as part of CPD. This training may be provided in-house or externally if more appropriate (e.g. D&T training through the Design and Technology Association and Fire Risk Assessor training through the Fire Training College)

Additional advice

The School:

- Employs a Health and Safety Advisor to assist and advise all staff whenever required.
- Subscribes to the CLEAPSS advisory service.
- Includes basic manual handling training and work at height training as part of its induction process for all staff
- Occasionally uses iHasco online training to ensure that we can access specific training required, such as Asbestos Awareness Training. All of these control measures are used to assist Heads of Department in ensuring their staff's welfare.



Appendix 3

The Template Risk Assessment Form

RISK ASSESSMENT

Activity / Task: Date(s):

Assessment Completed by:

Date of Assessment:

Date of next review:

What are the hazards? List significant hazards which could cause serious harm or affect several people.	Who might be harmed? List groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards identified.	Is the risk adequately controlled now? List existing controls or note where the information may be found. (e.g. information, instruction training, systems or procedures)	What further action is needed to control the risk? List the risks which are not adequately controlled and proposed action where it is reasonably practicable to do more.	Action by whom?
				Action by when?
				Completion date and initial



WISBECH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Appendix 4: Generic Departmental Risk Assessment

RISK ASSESSMENT

Activity/Task/Event: Example Generic Departmental Risk Assessment

Assessment Completed by:

Date of Assessment:

Hazard Identified <i>List significant hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people.</i>	Who might be harmed? <i>List groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards identified.</i>	Is the risk adequately controlled? <i>List existing controls or note where the information may be found. (e.g. Information, instruction training, systems or procedures)</i>	What further action is needed to control the risk? <i>List the risks which are not adequately controlled and proposed action where it is reasonably practicable to do more.</i>	Action by whom?
				Action by when?
				Completion date and initial
Child Protection	Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff, volunteers, temporary staff and contractors are fully checked in line with DfE requirements, as set out in the WGS Suitability of Staff Protocol. All visitors to the department are either accompanied at all times, or checked in line with DfE requirements, as set out in the WGS Suitability of Staff Protocol. 	N/A	
Fire	Employees, pupils, visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fire risk assessment has been completed for the area and is regularly reviewed. 	N/A	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are management checks of the arrangements in place for prevention measures for and protection against fire. • Employees are advised about fire precautions at induction and termly evacuation practices with pupils are carried out. 		
Maintenance and use of equipment/ Electrical issues	Maintenance staff, all staff and pupils who use the equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment is PAT tested by maintenance or ICT on a regular programme. • The department conducts electrical user checks in line with the policy. Any issues are reported and faulty equipment taken out of use. 	N/A	
Maintenance and cleaning of general area	Maintenance and cleaning staff. Staff and pupils in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant departments have risk assessments in place to cover general tasks. • Robust reporting and remedial procedures are in place for any items/areas/aspects which need attention. • Head of Department can report any issues on the maintenance or caretaking email addresses. 	N/A	
Manual Handling	Staff, pupils or visitors could injure themselves if they lift and handle incorrectly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online or DVD training in manual handling has been completed by all staff and they are able to advise pupils on lifting safely. • Visitors would be unlikely to lift many items as this would be completed by staff before an event. • Staff, visitors or pupils would not be expected to lift or handle any very large, awkward or very heavy items and assistance would be offered for any additional moves if required. 	N/A	
Harassment/ Violence	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building will be manned at all times if unlocked and usually manned by at least 2 staff members. • Phones are available within the building to call for help or assistance if necessary • Lit areas outside the building and to the parking areas. • Most events/attendees at the School are by invitation/prior notice only and will involve parents/parental friends and pupils/staff only. • Security Guards are on site at key times during the week. 	N/A	

First Aid	Staff and pupils who need first aid assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and pupils are aware of whom to obtain first aid assistance from and lists of first aiders and first aid box locations are displayed. • The majority of teaching staff are trained in Emergency First Aid. • There are named staff members trained in Full First Aid at Work. 	N/A	
Lighting (including emergency lighting)	Staff, pupils and visitors	Lighting is well maintained around the School, including emergency lighting which is checked by the maintenance team.	N/A	
Floor condition (slips, trips and falls)	Staff, pupils and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The floors are well maintained. • Cleaners are careful to place warning signs in slippery areas • Robust reporting and remedial procedures are in place for any items/areas which need attention. 	N/A	
<i>Additional dept/activity hazards here.</i>				
As above				



WISBECH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Appendix 6

The Risk Assessment Guidelines

Risk Assessment Guidelines

Why do we do it?

Risk assessment is used within health and safety to ensure that a suitable and sufficient check of work areas or tasks is carried out to identify any hazards which might exist there. There are many health and safety regulations which state that we **MUST** carry these out.

- **Hazard** represents anything that can cause harm.
- **Risk** represents the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard

Where hazards to your own or another's health are possible, an assessment of its **severity** and **likelihood** against the **costs** to the business of avoiding or reducing the risk is undertaken through risk assessment.

Risk is therefore a balance of:

Hazard severity X likelihood of occurrence



versus

**the costs to the business of
addressing the hazard**

Of course, there are also costs to both the business and to others, such as employees, in **NOT** addressing the hazards. These costs can be in the form of accidents or ill-health as the result of an accident that could have been avoided, higher insurance costs and a damaged reputation for the School.

Carrying out risk assessments

Carrying out a risk assessment is not difficult or complicated and is simply a consideration of the task or area at hand:

- what usually happens there?
- who is affected by it?
- what might happen in unusual circumstances, such as power cuts for instance? and most importantly
- how can we prevent or reduce the risk?

N.B. It is strongly advised that Heads of Department (HoDs) ensure that their team of staff read through, are trained on and then sign the sign-off sheet for each risk assessment annually.

The following points show you how to carry them out.

Identify the hazards to determine if a risk is present

Identify all hazards that exist in the area or task being considered.

- Think about the areas and activities which your department staff use or carry out. Include any areas which you might visit, on field trips for instance, within this.
- Investigate the area or task at hand to see if it is considered as hazardous using existing guidance on good practice – the HSE website is very good for this in addition to all acknowledged expert bodies.
- Talk to your departmental staff to see which activities or areas they believe pose a risk to them.
- Talk to the Health and Safety Advisor if you need further advice.

Decide whether that hazard is a significant risk to health and if yes, determine how high a risk.

Seriousness

You should first consider how seriously you or they might be affected by the hazard – are you looking at a slight cut on a finger or a broken bone; a bump on the head or major injuries?

Who might be affected

You should then consider who might be affected, for example:

- one person or many
- all persons in the area or just the worker
- other persons who might just be passing the building.
- certain persons more than others – such as persons with lower mobility, those who have existing injuries or conditions (such as asthma) or pupils for instance. These persons would then affect your assessment of how serious the risk might be and you may have to revisit this consideration.

Likelihood

Decide if that hazard is likely to occur and if yes, how likely; rarely, possibly, probably or almost certainly.

Control measures

Control measures are measures taken by an employer to eliminate or reduce the risks posed by work tasks or areas. The following are all control measures of differing effectiveness:

- Regular checks of fire corridors to ensure that they are clear
- Use of a fume cupboard
- Training on safe lifting techniques
- Pre-use checks carried out on minibuses
- Changes to working practices for expectant mothers

As you can imagine, the list is almost endless and specific to the tasks or areas being considered.

You may already have some control measures in place for any task or area, and you should take these into consideration before making your risk calculation. For instance, an activity such as mixing of certain chemicals might be hazardous without any control measures, but if you already use a regularly maintained fume cupboard for this and train your department staff on safe working procedures on a regular basis with written procedures, you may only be writing down your usual working practice on your risk assessment, referring to any current relevant paperwork and not increasing or changing any control measures.

You should also, however, take into account 'the hierarchy of controls' which is a prescribed order in which controls should be put into place, based upon the effectiveness of the measure. In essence, you should concentrate first on avoiding risks completely and only then consider the following measures, in this order:

- **Eliminate or avoid**
The best way to remove a risk is to remove the hazard. For instance, use a trolley rather than carry heavy items.
- **Substitute.**
If you can't remove it altogether, substitute the hazard for something less risky – using a non-bleach product in exchange for bleach as a cleaning product.
- **Engineered controls – contain, isolate, guard or lock**
Preventing access to a hazard with automatic effect is important when the hazard cannot be removed. For instance, having a fixed guard on a sharp moving blade is far preferable than having to 'be very careful'; this removes the risk far more effectively.
- **Administrative controls - reduce exposure, signs, discipline and information, instruction, training and supervision** (often known as IITS)
Reducing the exposure to the problem is another method of reducing harm. For instance, spending shorter periods of time at the computer in one session and varying the task. Safe systems of work can be employed in this way.
IITS, although regularly a crucial part of any safe system of work, should be used with other controls as part of that system. They should not be relied upon to control risks effectively as it only protects one person and relies upon that person to be receptive to the message given.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).**
This is the final choice for any task or area as it also only protects one person, must fit carefully, be suitable for the exact job being undertaken and can be very difficult to work with. It should never be used as the only control.

Risk Calculation

You can now calculate the risk by taking into account the risks and the current control measures to decide if the risk is acceptable.

Acceptability will be different depending upon all of the above factors. For instance, if a person working on a task was likely to be seriously injured by current equipment and a relatively small amount of money would reduce the risk, this should be changed. However, a large amount of money required to change a low-risk piece of equipment would be much less likely to be deemed necessary. The risk assessment will assist you in justifying your decisions on working practice and arrangements.

If the risk is acceptable or can be reduced sufficiently with your suggested additional control measures, record all of your findings on the risk assessment and ensure that your staff are

aware of the safe working methods and arrangements for the task or area. The risk assessments should be filed in your department records both online and as paper versions and also sent to the Health and Safety Advisor.

If the risk is not acceptable and cannot be reduced to an acceptable level without significant cost implications, you should contact the Health and Safety Advisor for more advice and assistance for alternatives to reduce the risk at lower cost. If the costs can still not be reduced, consideration may need to be made by the final budget holder.

- Record all of your findings.
- Ensure that the measures identified are carried out within a suitable timeframe, bearing in mind the initial level of risk identified.
- Record all of your completed actions.

Review

Risk assessments should be reviewed periodically, whenever a significant change is made or where there is a reason to suspect that it is no longer valid. Our risk assessments should be reviewed annually, as we regularly change staff, our pupils, our equipment, etc. The review does not need to take a long time, and it is entirely valid to read through the assessment to consider whether it is still suitable, sufficient and addresses all risks. If it does, it can simply be reprinted with new assessment date, review date and signature. If it does not, any additional risks or controls should be added.

Resources

Other risk assessment resources can be found on the Tdrive:/Health and Safety/Staff Resources/Risk Assessment.