



IPSWICH SCHOOL

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY 2025

INTRODUCTION

A risk assessment is an important tool in protecting employees, parents, children and visitors by analysing hazards and identifying risk reduction measures. The law requires that everything 'reasonably practicable' is done to protect people from harm. It helps to focus on the risks that really matter in the workplace and on Educational Visits and Trips away from school – the ones with the potential to cause real harm. In many instances, straightforward measures can be effective in controlling risks.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To ensure that staff understand the process of risk assessment and how it can be integrated into effective management practices.

THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPLYING THE POLICY

Staff **will** ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out for all tasks, activities, locations and work activities that present a significant hazard in their area(s) of responsibility.

Staff must plan, coordinate and monitor how risk assessments will be managed locally. Actions must include the following:-

- Establishing the activities/tasks/locations/work equipment to be assessed;
- Identifying competent people to carry out the assessments;
- Defining the system to manage completed assessments, any associated actions, communication and review;
- Establish communication and information sharing for the outcomes of the risk assessment with all staff and others who may be affected by the risk, including volunteer and parent helpers on trips;
- To involve staff and their representatives in assessing the risks; and
- Refer risks to the appropriate senior manager or forum/committee where they cannot be managed locally.

Employees/Pupils are required to:-

- Be aware of risk assessment and control measures for their area of work;
- Cooperate with and engage in the risk assessment process;
- Use and comply with control measures implemented to ensure the health and safety of themselves or others; and

- Report any workplace hazards or concerns regarding health and safety of themselves or others.
- Complete a written risk assessment for their work area and update every 2 years, or when working arrangements and procedures change
- Complete a written risk assessment for places that the pupils will use at school and update every 2 years, or when working arrangements and procedures change
- Complete a written risk assessment for new activities with significant risk
- Complete a written risk assessment for educational visits
- Carry out “on the spot” (dynamic) risk assessments within the context of their own competencies and in consultation with others, as situations arise. (see Glossary of Terms)

PROCEDURES

Stages of Risk Assessment

The 5 Steps of Risk Assessment



Identify the hazards

Staff will identify all the hazards associated with their area of responsibility that could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Hazards can be identified by:

- Observing the task or area;
- Referring to available guidance and information about best practice;
- Looking at accident and ill-health records;
- Checking manufacturers' instructions or data sheets;
- Asking staff for their views.

Identify who might be harmed and how

For each hazard the groups of people who might be harmed and how they must be identified. The groups of people to be considered include:

- Pupils
- Staff with particular requirements e.g. new and young workers, people with disabilities, new or expectant mothers;
- Cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers who may not be in the workplace all the time;
- Members of the public, service users;
- Shared workplaces – how the work affects others and the risks to staff from those who share the workplace.

Evaluate/assess the risks and decide on the precautions to control the risks (Standard operating procedures or Control Measures)

For each hazard identified the level of risk must be evaluated (High/Medium/Low). This evaluation may include the level of harm presented by the hazard, the number of people involved, and the likelihood of the harm occurring.

Once the level of risk is established, managers must consider what control measures are already in place and what actions are already being taken to reduce the risk, consider whether these are suitable and sufficient and whether further control measures are required.

Controlling the Risk

When controlling risks the following principles should be applied, where possible in the following order:

- Eliminate the hazard altogether;
- Substitution by something less hazardous or risky;
- Prevent access to the hazard e.g. by guarding
- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard e.g. putting barriers between pedestrians and traffic
- Create safe methods of work and safe systems of work designed to reduce the risk
- Issue personal protective equipment e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc
- Provide welfare facilities e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination
- Provide suitable information, instruction and training to reduce/remove risk
- Ensure appropriate supervision.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

On rare occasions there may be a need for staff to undertake a Dynamic Risk Assessment. In these circumstances staff must work within the context of their own competencies and in consultation with others where possible. The need for a dynamic risk assessment may arise when an unforeseen event occurs and a previously unidentified risk becomes apparent.

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.

RECORDING RISK ASSESSMENTS

General risk assessments

Assessments of processes or areas rather than an individual person should be recorded on the General Risk Assessment Form or Educational Visits Risk Assessment Form.

Other Risk Assessments

This General Risk Assessment Form may not be suitable for use for recording risks to individuals, complex risk assessments or where there is agreed standard documentation for inter-agency working, such as for educational visits. Where this is the case, specific forms have been created, and are referenced in the Standard Documents section below.

The most appropriate form should be used to record the risk assessment; Educational Visits Coordinator and members of the Health and Safety Committee will be able to offer advice on suitable formats.

Risk assessments in other Health and Safety Policy areas

A number of risk assessment forms have been developed relating to specific policy areas e.g.

- Hazardous Substances
- Manual Handling
- Display Screen Equipment
- Fire
- Work Equipment or Machinery
- Stress
- Educational Visits

REVIEW

Heads of Department and Line Managers should review assessments:

- At regular intervals not exceeding two years
- Following a significant change and/or if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid e.g. after an accident, ill-health incident, violent incidence or malfunction has occurred.
- The risk assessment must remain up to date and valid and available at 'point of use'.
- Once a risk assessment is obsolete it must be archived for a minimum of 5 years.

Generic Risk Assessments

In some areas of school life, generic risk assessments are available to assist you in the risk assessment process. These assessments must be:-

- Amended to reflect the workplace arrangements and any additional identified risks;

- Signed by the person taking ownership of the event
- Effectively communicated to all relevant parties;
- Monitored and reviewed at appropriate intervals.

Communication

Heads of Department and Line Managers are to ensure that the persons at risk are provided with comprehensive and relevant information on the identified risks and the preventive and protective control measures. Everyone should understand what they must do and why.

Where necessary, job safety instructions, standard operating procedures, should be issued to employees and appropriate training provided. All staff on trips should be aware of the trip risk assessment.

Training

Heads of Department and Line Managers that are responsible for the planning, coordination and monitoring or risk assessments may wish to receive appropriate risk assessment training.

Training can be provided by the Compliance Officer. (mrr@ipswich.school)

Monitoring

Managers will monitor the effectiveness of control measures and ensure that physical control measures are used, installed correctly and suitably maintained.

Employees shall report any defects in control measures, personal protective equipment, etc immediately to their Head of Department and/or Line Manager.

All risk assessments are 'signed off' by the person taking "Ownership" of the event and the Health and Safety Officer.

Specialist Advice

It is important when completing risk assessments to be aware of individual limitations in terms of knowledge and competence. If further support is required you should contact the Health and Safety Officer.

Legislative Framework

- The Health and Safety at Work Act
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Further advice and Information

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE): www.hse.gov.uk/

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Risk Assessment

A careful examination of what, in the workplace (either staff or pupils), could cause harm to people so that a decision can be made as to whether there are enough precautions in place or more should be done to prevent harm.

Hazard

Anything that has the potential to cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, getting lost etc.

Risk

Is the chance, 'high, medium or low' that somebody could be harmed by the hazard, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Harm

Is the actual injury or ill-health suffered by those exposed to the hazard.

Dynamic Risk Assessments

A risk assessment which takes place during work or an activity in progress as a need arises ("on the spot"). In these circumstances a previously prepared risk assessment may not be in place as the situation has not been previously foreseeable. Once the dynamic risk assessment has taken place, a formal written risk assessment must be made of this as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event.

Author: MRR Compliance Officer

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Attachments:

Staff Risk Assessment Flyer (To be reviewed annually and shared with All Staff)

Risk Assessments

It is every employer's responsibility to manage Health and Safety in their workplace. Part of the process of managing Health & Safety is to ensure we are aware of the hazards, the level of risk and have taken action to minimise the risk. This process is called Risk Assessment.

“What is a risk assessment?”

Hopefully this will help you to answer basic questions on risk assessments such as “a definition of risk assessment”, “why do risk assessments?”, “when to do a risk assessment?” and “how to do a risk assessment?”.

What is a risk assessment? The HSE's definition of a risk assessment is:

“...a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm...”

Why do a risk assessment?

A risk assessment will protect you, your colleagues, your pupils and anyone else in School, as well as complying with law. As for when to do a risk assessment it should simply be conducted before you or any others conduct an Activity which presents a risk of injury or ill-health.

Our Compliance team has created a shared folder of Departmental and Generic Risk Assessments that can be adapted to fit your activity/trip/task. They are on hand to help and offer advice.

compliance@ipswich.school

Remember though, an unsigned RA is just a piece of paper, you MUST take ownership.

[Link: generic RA](#)

How to do a risk assessment

The Five steps to risk assessment can be followed to ensure that your risk assessment is carried out correctly, these five steps are:

- Identify the hazards - A hazard is 'something with the potential to cause harm' and a risk is 'the likelihood of that potential harm being realised'
- Decide who might be harmed and how - eg. Players, coaches, Ref etc. - Stick injury in a Hockey Fixture
- Evaluate the risks and decide on control measures - After 'identifying the hazards' and 'deciding who might be harmed and how' you then decide on your “Control Measures” The hazards can either be removed or the risks controlled so that the likelihood is minimal.
- Record your findings and implement them - It's a legal requirement where there are 5 or more employees to record your Risk Assessment. It shows that you have taken ownership and identified the hazards, decided who could be harmed and how, and what you plan to do to eliminate the risks/hazards.
- Review your assessment and update if necessary - Normally Annually

“If you require a Risk Assessment, email mrr@ipswich.school”