

Risk Assessment Policy

Introduction

Risk assessment and risk management are the terms used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activity and taking steps to counter them.

Kneller Hall School is required under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations, and other legislation (COSHH, Manual Handling, Visual Display Screen Equipment) to manage the level of risk in all of its activities.

To create a safer environment at the school and to comply with HSE regulations, we are required to carry out Risk Assessments of any activity that involves a hazard. A hazard is defined as an activity that has the potential to cause harm to either pupils, staff, visitors or members of the public.

Staff and managers manage/reduce risk to reasonable levels by identifying what the basic level of risk is, and, if necessary, put in place controls to reduce risk.

The results of risk assessment and subsequent control measures will be made known to the staff, students and visitors concerned.

All staff will be alerted to changing circumstances and will take appropriate actions to reduce or stop an activity if the level of risk seems inappropriate.

Statement of Intent

The school assesses all activities and establishes written risk assessments for those areas which indicate the presence of risk.

The Director of Operations ensures that regular written risk assessments are undertaken of premises, methods of work and all school-sponsored activities whether on or off site. These are reviewed following changes in circumstances or personnel or in accordance with agreed timetables. A regular programme of planned assessments is completed. In high-risk areas, risk assessments should be reviewed regularly. Minimum annually, but more often if required. Following any near misses or change in personnel. In other activity areas, risk assessments are reviewed on an annual basis.

Written risk assessments identify all defects and deficiencies together with the necessary remedial action or risk control measures. The results of all risk assessments are reported by the Director of Operations to the Principal/Board of Governors, who will prioritise issues and assign resources to undertake remedial/control measures where required.

Appropriate training is given to ensure that risk assessment and risk management are effective (see below).

There is a specific Fire Risk (Prevention) Policy maintained by the Director of Operations.

Assessments

- Assessments are carried out using the school's risk assessment templates, by those persons having control and immediate responsibility for the activity.
- The assessor keeps a record of the assessment and ensures that all staff and pupils involved are aware of the requirements of the assessment.
- A copy of each assessment is kept in a central file on All Staff Teams for reference.

- For Educational Visits and learning taking place outside of the classroom, risk assessments should be completed by the Trip Leader, with oversight from the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator and final approval provided by the Head, through Evolve.

Process

The school's risk assessment process covers both adults and children and includes:

- checking for hazards and risks both indoors and outside and in all activities and procedures;
- deciding which areas need attention;
- developing an action plan which specifies the action required, the timescales for action and any funding required.

Certain activities are assessed on an on-going basis and risk assessments are updated as required. In some areas the assessments are carried out on an annual basis by external contractor, e.g. Fire Risk Assessment.

Risk Assessment Training

The Director of Operations, the Director of Compliance, relevant Heads of Department (Sports, Rowing, Art, Drama), the Premises Manager, the Science Technicians, the School Nurse and other relevant staff have received additional training in writing risk assessments and can provide guidance to other frontline staff who may be required to be involved in writing and maintaining risk assessments. Risk assessment will also form part of the overall Health and Safety training given to all staff on an annual basis.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a careful examination by someone of what could cause harm to them or others. The risk can be weighed up as to whether the Principal has taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

The Principal is legally required to assess the risks in the workplace and, in the process, the Principal will require the Director of Operations to:

- look for the hazards;
- decide who might be harmed and how;
- decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done;
- record the findings;
- review the assessment and if necessary, revise it.

Regular and systematic inspections and risk assessments of all potential hazardous substances and work activities will be made by, or under the authority of the Director of Operations and will take into account all the relevant regulations and codes of practice. Specialist advice will be obtained if necessary and the risk assessment will be reviewed periodically. The significant findings will be recorded and appropriate preventative and/or protective measures taken as necessary.

Looking for Hazards

Hazards will be identified by:

- consultation, and conducting inspections of the workplace;
- analysing jobs and activities undertaken by staff and pupils;
- listing all Acts and Regulations as they apply to the workplace
- using manufacturers' instructions, accident records, ill health records, which can all help to identify hazards.

Advice to all staff: staff will look for hazards which could reasonably be expected to result in significant harm under the conditions in the school and grounds workplace. The following examples are used as a guide:

- slipping / tripping hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs);
- fire (e.g. from flammable materials);

- chemicals (e.g. floor cleaner);
- working at height, (e.g. from ladders);
- pressure systems, (e.g. gas systems and bottles);
- electricity (e.g. poor wiring);
- dust fumes (e.g. welding);
- manual handling;
- noise;
- poor lighting;
- low temperature.

Who Might be at Risk, and How?

Individuals are not listed by name, just groups of staff conducting similar work, or why they may be affected, e.g. teaching and office staff, maintenance staff, contractors, parents and pupils. Particular attention is given to staff, pupils or parents with disabilities, inexperienced staff and lone workers.

Is Risk Adequately Controlled?

Staff will consider whether precautions have already been taken against the risks from the hazards identified, and whether they are sufficient. For example:

- has the school already provided adequate information, instruction, training, systems or procedures?
- do the precautions meet the standards set by a legal requirement?
- do the precautions comply with a recognised industry standard?
- do the precautions represent good practice?
- do the precautions reduce risk as far as reasonably practicable?

If so, then the risks are adequately controlled, but the precautions already in place should be identified and listed as part of the process. The following will be referred to: procedures, manuals and school rules regarding how to impart this information to relevant stakeholders.

If the risk is not adequately controlled, an 'action list' will be written.

What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?

The 'action list' details what more the school can reasonably do to reduce the risks identified, which were not adequately controlled at that point. Priority is given to those risks which affect large numbers of people and / or could result in serious harm.

Further action will be taken in the following order, wherever possible:

- remove the risk completely;
- try a less risky option;
- prevent access to the hazard, e.g. by guarding or fencing;
- re-organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard – e.g. increased staff supervision;
- issue personnel protective equipment or provide welfare facilities (e.g. washing facilities for removal of contamination and first aid), depending on the nature of the risk.

Recording the Findings

Risk assessments will be recorded in one or more of the following ways:

- school Risk Assessment Form – generic templates are available from the Director of Operations;
- specific Health & Safety risk assessment records e.g. COSHH, Manual Handling, Visual Display Screen Equipment, Personal Protective Equipment;
- part of an instruction manual or procedure document, e.g. staff manual;
- any other appropriate and approved record.

The risk assessment will be signed and dated by the person completing the form. The findings of the risk assessment will be made known to all staff and students affected by the activity assessed in person. For compliance purposes, the relevant staff member must sign to say they have read the required policies via BOB.

A copy of all completed risk assessments will be kept within the relevant department or service area and their location made known to all staff within that area, and on the All Staff Team. It is the responsibility of any trip/ activity / subject lead to ensure any changes or updates to a risk assessment are highlighted with all affected or relevant staff as soon as possible.

Review and Revision

If there is a significant change in working practices, e.g. purchase of new machinery or substances, employment of new staff, etc., this could present new hazards.

In line with best practice, risk assessments will be reviewed from time to time to ensure precautions are still working effectively.

SafetyMark external auditor is commissioned to carryout reviews of all risk assessments bi-annually.

All risk assessments will be:

- Reviewed annually where there is a generic risk assessment, and on each occasion when there is a specific activity or site assessment required.
- Reviewed at regular periods dependent of the level of risk of the activity; for example, immediately following an accident (or a near miss) or when new activities are introduced.

The review should be signed and dated by the person completing the form. A copy of the completed reviewed/updated risk assessment should be forwarded to the Director of Operations.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Cavilla', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Amy Cavilla
Principal
September 2026