



16a Risk Assessment Policy and Guidance

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Review by:	SMT, G(H&S), G (Board)
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Policies linked to:

- Health and Safety Policy

This document also appears on:

- School Website
- Staff Intranet

THIS POLICY ALSO APPLIES TO EARLY YEARS

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1. Scope

The Beacon School is committed to the provision of a healthy and safe working that inspires and supports academic achievement. The School is a compact site with multiple buildings as well as remote playing fields all of which are used to provide a wide range of activities for a large number of pupils of varying ages in school time, after school and during the school holidays. This policy sets out how the Beacon School will identify and manage risks, on and off site that may affect the health and safety of members of staff, students and others that may be affected by our activities.

2. Introduction

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 imposes a duty on employers to carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of all the significant risks to employees and those who may be affected arising out of or in connection with any work activity. The purpose of the risk assessment is to enable the School to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the duties under the relevant statutory provisions. This covers the general duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the more specific duties contained within subordinate Regulations. More specific requirement for risk assessment can be found in other legislation including the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002).

3. Definitions

- 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.
- A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer etc.
- **Risk** is the chance, high or low, that someone could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.
- A **dynamic risk assessment** is an assessment that takes into account unexpected or short temporary changes that require immediate amendments to be made to risk assessment control measures. Examples would include changes in weather conditions or breakdown of heating systems.

- A **suitable and sufficient risk assessment** is an assessment that is proportionate to the risk and ensures that all relevant hazards are addressed, complies with statutory requirements, ensures all groups who are affected are considered and takes account of existing control measures and identifies further measures as necessary.
- A **generic risk assessment** is an individual assessment covering the common significant hazards that staff and others who may be affected by School activities face on a day to day basis; these may include low risk activities such as general office activities or repeated activities that can be documented in another way such as safe systems of work or for example local laboratory rules.

4. Risk assessments in practice

There are no fixed rules about how a risk assessment should be carried out; it will depend on the nature of the work or business and the types of hazards and risks. This guidance sets out the general principles that should be followed and follows the Health and Safety Executive guidance Five Steps to Risk Assessment (INDG 163 rev 2). The risk assessment process needs to be practical and take account of the views of staff and any other employee who may have practical knowledge to contribute.

Heads of Sections or Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that arrangements for risk assessments are adequate for the School/Department and are communicated effectively. Key personnel responsible for disseminating information about the risk assessment to their department are named on each risk assessment

Senior Managers must ensure that all activities are formally identified and appropriate risk assessments undertaken by a competent person, which identify hazards, decide who might be harmed and how and then evaluate the risks and decide on what control measures are necessary to minimise those risks, as far as reasonably practicable. Also that risk assessments are recorded and any significant hazards are communicated to relevant persons including the arrangements in place for controlling those risks.

4.1 Principles of risk prevention

In deciding which preventative and protective measures to take, the following principals of prevention should be applied:

- If possible avoid a risk altogether, e.g. do the work in a different way, taking care not to introduce new hazards;
- Evaluate risks that cannot be avoided by carrying out a risk assessment;
- Combat risks at source. So, for example if the steps are slippery, treating or

- replacing them is better than displaying a warning sign;
- Adapt work to the requirements of the individual (consulting those who will be affected when designing workplaces, selecting work and personal protective equipment, drawing up safe working procedures and methods of production). Aim to alleviate monotonous work and increase the control individuals have over work they are responsible for;
 - Take advantage of technological and technical progress, which often offers opportunities for improving working methods and making them safer;
 - Implement risk prevention measures to form part of a coherent policy and approach. This will progressively reduce those risks that cannot be prevented or avoided altogether, and will take account of the way work is organised, the working conditions, the environment and any relevant social factors. Details should be contained within the school Health and Safety policy;
 - Give priority to those measures that protect the whole workplace and everyone who works there, and so give the greatest benefit (i.e. give collective protective measures priority over individual measures);
 - Ensure that staff, whether employees or self-employed and students understand what they must do. Staff and students must have read and understood any relevant risk assessments and be aware of the control measures that are in place for any work that they undertake and work in accordance with any safe systems of work. Cooperating with their line manager with regard to complying with any control measures that are in place, following any instructions provided and undertaking any necessary training;
 - A positive health and safety culture must exist within the school. This means the avoidance, prevention and reduction of risks at work must be accepted as part of the school/department's approach and attitude to all its activities. It must be recognised at all levels of the organisation.

These are general principals rather than individual prescriptive requirements. They must, however, be applied wherever it is reasonable to do so. Experience suggests that, in the majority of cases, adopting good practice will be enough to ensure risks are reduced sufficiently. Authoritative sources of good practice are prescriptive legislation, Approved Codes of Practice and guidance produced by HSE and the Government. Other sources include standards produced by standard-making organisations and guidance agreed by a body representing an industrial or occupational sector, provided that the guidance has gained general acceptance. Where established industry practices result in high levels of health and safety, risk assessments should not be used to justify reducing current control measures.

4.2 Guide to undertaking a risk assessment

An assessment of risk is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people so that you can assess whether you have taken enough

precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill through the activities at work. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and affect your school/department in regard to damaged equipment, loss of staff, insurance cost increases, or criminal prosecutions under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions or controls so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. For instance, electricity can kill but the risk of it doing so in an office environment is remote, provided that electrical equipment is suitable for the task, bought from a reputable supplier and is maintained.

4.2.1 How to assess the risks in the workplace

In most areas of the school the hazards are easy to recognise. Checking them is common sense, but necessary. You may have already assessed some of them, for example, the use of toxic or dangerous chemicals should already have an assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH). If so, you can consider them 'checked' as there is no difference in a risk assessment completed under COSHH than other general risk assessments apart from COSHH assessments are looking at controlling the specific risks from work activities with hazardous substances such as chemicals and biological material. For other hazards, you probably already know whether you have machinery that could cause harm, or if there is an awkward entrance or stair where someone could be hurt. If so check that you have taken such reasonable precautions that injury can be avoided.

Step 1 – Look for the hazard

Walk around your area of responsibility and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people. Ask staff working in the area what their views are. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers' instructions or data sheets can also help spot hazards and put risks in their true perspective. So can accidents and ill health records.

Look only for hazards that could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace. Use the following examples as a guide:

- Slipping/tripping hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs).
- Fire (e.g. from flammable materials).
- Chemicals (laboratories etc) and how they are used and in what quantities.
- Moving parts of machinery (Faculty workshops).
- Work at height (scaffolding etc.).
- Ejection of material (workshops, experiments etc.).

- Vehicles (e.g. minibuses).
- Electricity (e.g. poor wiring, portable appliances, electrical experiments).
- Dust (e.g. metal grinding, cement etc.).
- Fume (e.g. welding, chemicals etc.).
- Manual handling.
- Noise (noisy machinery or process).
- Poor lighting, low temperature etc.
- Biological hazards (lab work, gardening, contact with body fluids etc.).

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed, and how

In addition to staff, think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time e.g. cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance personnel, etc. Include students, members of the public, or people that share your workplace, if there is a chance they could be hurt by your activities.

There is no need to list individuals by name – just think about groups of people doing similar work or who may be affected, e.g.:

- Office staff
- Operators
- Maintenance personnel
- Cleaners
- Contractors
- Members of the public

Pay particular attention to the following as they may be more vulnerable:

- Staff and pupils with disabilities
- Inexperienced staff
- Visitors
- Lone workers
- Pregnant workers
- Young people on work experience

Staff have a responsibility to report to their line manager any personal circumstances that would change the risk assessment for example any temporary or permanent disability or health condition that would mean that they are at greater risk.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.

Even after all precautions have been taken, usually some risk remains. First, ask whether you have done all the things that the law says you have got to do. For example, there are legal

requirements relating to fire safety, statutory inspection of plant and equipment, water systems to prevent legionella risks etc. Then, consider whether generally accepted industry standards are in place. But don't stop there –the law states that employers must do what is reasonably practicable to keep the workplace safe. The real aim is to make all risks small by adding to precautionary control measures as necessary.

Introducing a hazard may affect other control measures that are in place for a work activity or in the building for example the fire safety precautions. Ensure that timely information is provided to the Building Fire Coordinator and/or the School Fire Safety Officer where the findings of any risk assessment requires that the Fire Risk Assessment will need to be updated whether temporarily or on a permanent basis.

Triggers for this will include a work activity being introduced into a building which is a fire risk and is not normally carried out in that building. For example if experiments with flammable substances are required to be made in areas where such work is not normally carried out such as offices. In such circumstances the occupier must ensure that the building fire risk assessment is reviewed. This would not apply if additional flammable work was being carried out in a laboratory based building where such work is already being undertaken elsewhere.

Another trigger would be if the fire precautions had to be temporarily disabled to allow the work activity to proceed. Further advice is contained within the School Fire Safety and Risk Assessment Policy.

If you find that something needs to be done, ask yourself:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks to ensure that harm is unlikely?

Only use personal protective equipment when there is nothing else that can be reasonably done.

If the work tends to vary a lot, or if staff move from one location to another, select those hazards which can be reasonably foreseen and assess the risks from them. After that, if you spot any unusual hazards when you get to a place get information from others on site and take what action seems necessary.

If you share a workplace, ensure that the risks your work could cause and what precautions you are taking is communicated to others including any other Heads of Section, Facilities Manager and Fire Officer. It is important that managers consider the risks to their staff from those who share the workplace.

Are existing precautions adequate against the risks from the hazards listed? For example, have you provided?

- Adequate information, instruction or training?
- Adequate systems or procedures?

Do the precautions:

- Meet the standards set by a legal requirement?
- Comply with the recognised industry standard?
- Represent good practice?
- Change existing precautions in place?

Reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable (a balance between the risk and the cost of preventative measures in time, money and effort i.e. it would not be reasonably practicable to invest substantial amounts of money and time where the risk and injury level are very low but it would be reasonably practicable to introduce all measures possible where the risk is high and the possible results are death or major injury). Improving health and safety need not cost a lot. For instance, putting some non-slip material on slippery steps is an inexpensive precaution considering the risks.

If so then the risks are adequately controlled. But it is necessary to indicate the precautions in place. Refer to procedures, manuals, local departmental rules etc. giving this information.

Step 4 – Record your findings

Make a judgement on what level you are assessing the risk at and use a number between 1 and 5 (where 1 is low level, 3 is medium level and 5 is high level) to indicate the seriousness of the injury which could occur.

Following the judgement on the potential seriousness of the risk, there needs to be an assessment of the likelihood of the accident actually happening. Again, a judgement of likelihood where 1 would indicate a low chance, 3 would indicate a medium chance and 5 a high chance of an accident occurring.

These two numbers should be multiplied together to get a residual risk assessment where the number will range from 1 – 25 (1 being highly unlikely that any significant harm will come to any individuals involved in the activity to 25 where it is highly likely that significant harm will occur if the activity progresses.)

This means (1) writing down the more significant hazards and (2) recording most important conclusions – for example, “Portable electrical equipment inspected and tested and found sound” or “Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked”. Staff must be informed about the risk assessment findings. It is good practice to get staff to sign that they have read and understood the findings of relevant risk assessments.

There is no need to show how the assessment was carried out provided that:

- a proper check was made;
- the assessment details who might be affected;
- all the obvious significant hazards are considered, taking into account the number of people who could be involved; and
- the precautions are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.

Assessments need to be suitable and sufficient, not perfect. The real points are:

- are the precautions reasonable?; and
- is there something to show that a proper check was made?

Keep the written document for future reference or use. It can help if an inspector questions your precautions, during a School health and safety audit and particularly if you become involved in any action for civil liability. It can also remind individuals and managers that a particular hazard and control measures require effective monitoring. This guidance contains a risk assessment template that may be helpful.

Step 5 – Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

Sooner or later the school/department will bring in new machines, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. If there is any significant change, produce an additional assessment to take account of the new hazard. It is good practice to review risk assessments from time to time, the Health and Safety Office recommend annually. Don't amend the assessment for every trivial change, or for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards of its own, you will want to consider them in their own right and do whatever you need to keep the risks as low as reasonably practicable. Staff are responsible for advising their line manager of any changes in activity which may affect the findings of the risk assessment. For example any activity that would require the fire risk assessment to be reviewed and updated.

Don't forget to initial and date the assessment when it is reviewed and ensure that it is brought to the attention of all relevant members of staff and others who may be affected.

4.3 Training

Those tasked with carrying out risk assessments are required to be competent and should undertake training.

4.4 Specific risk assessments

As well as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, other regulations require assessments to be carried out. It should be noted that if, for example, a COSHH risk

assessment has been carried out on a particular substance, and if that assessment is applicable to the risk assessment being carried out, it need not be repeated and vice-versa.

The following is a selection of Regulations that require a specific formal assessment.

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- Control of Vibration at Work 2005
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002)
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Working at Height Regulations 2005
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005
- Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2000

Links

The following is a link to the HSE website and specifically the latest up to date information on Risk Assessment

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm>

Appendix 1

EXAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT – CLASSROOM SAFETY

Risk assessment - topic/area covered	
Location(s):	All classrooms
Department/staff:	
Tasks/activities:	
Other information:	

Risk assessment sign off					
Prepared by:	Jim Sanderson	Signature:		Date:	
Reviewed by:	James Skea	Signature:		Date:	
Date for review:					

Information Sharing Process	
Once the Risk Assessment is approved it will be shared with the following members of staff who will have the responsibility of ensuring that their teams are aware of the Risk Assessment.	
Role	Name

Risk matrix								
Risk rating guidance	Likelihood (L)	5	5	10	15	20	25	Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) = Risk rating (RR).
		4	4	8	12	16	20	
		3	3	6	9	12	15	
		2	2	4	6	8	10	
		1	1	2	3	4	5	
			1	2	3	4	5	
		Severity (S)						
	Consequence of hazardous event should it occur				Likelihood that the hazardous event will occur			
1	Insignificant – no injury				Very Unlikely			
2	Minor – minor injury requiring first aid				Unlikely			
3	Moderate – up to 3 days absence				Fairly Unlikely			
4	Moderate – more than 7 days absence				Likely			
5	Catastrophic – Death or life changing injury				Very Likely			
Acceptability of risk guidance	High risk: 15-25				High-risk activities should cease immediately. Further effective control measures to mitigate risks must be introduced.			
	Medium risk: 8-12				Medium risks should only be tolerated for the short term and only whilst further control measures to mitigate the risks are being planned and introduced.			
	Low risk: 1-6				Low risks are largely acceptable. Where it is reasonable to do so, efforts should be made to reduce risks further.			
Guidance. When completing a risk assessment, you should:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the persons at risk and the significant hazards. 2. Calculate an initial RR for the activity. 3. Identify risk control measures that reduce the risks to an acceptable level. 4. Calculate a revised RR - you should consider how much safer the task will be if the control measures are followed. Here, you should consider changing both the likelihood (L) and the severity (S) ratings. 							
Note. Ideally, you should look to reduce the risks so that the task can be classified as “low risk”.								

Personal protective equipment (PPE) assessment. In many instances, you will be able to reduce risks further by asking staff/others to wear/use PPE. You should identify which items are required for the task here:								
Type of PPE:								
	Head	Foot	Eye	Hand	Hearing	High-visibility vest	RPE	Fall arrest
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Risk assessment									
Activity	Persons at risk	Significant hazards	Initial			Risk control measures	Residual		
			L	S	RR		L	S	RR
Movement around the classroom	Staff, pupils, others	Slips, trips and falls; blocked escape routes	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff responsible for reporting any hazards which will be dealt with immediately. Cables and trip hazards inspected annually during Fire Risk Assessment. Flooring to be in good condition. Gangways between desks etc. to be kept clear. All spillages to be cleaned up as soon as is reasonably practicable. 	2	3	6
Electrical appliances	Staff, pupils, others	Electrical shocks, burns and possibly death	3	5	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to spot and report any defective plugs, discoloured sockets or damaged cables/equipment. All equipment to be subject to regular electrical safety checks. These will include portable appliance tests (PAT) and visual inspections. Test frequency to reflect current HSE guidance. 	1	5	5
Fire	Staff, pupils, others	Trapped staff, pupils and visitors may suffer from smoke inhalation, burns and possibly death	3	5	15	<p>Action in the event of fire to be communicated to all staff.</p> <p>Fire drills to be carried out termly.</p> <p>Fire extinguishers provided and tested annually</p> <p>Fire alarms, smoke detectors, heat detectors and emergency lighting checked annually.</p> <p>Fire exits to be kept clear of obstructions.</p> <p>Rubbish removed daily.</p>	1	5	5
Personal safety	Staff, pupils, others	Inappropriate behaviour in the classroom	2	4	8	Vision panels fitted to all classrooms and offices that children visit.	1	4	4
Furniture and fittings	Staff, pupils, others	Injury related to furniture and fittings	2	4	8	<p>Condition of classroom furniture checked regularly.</p> <p>High bookcases fixed securely to walls.</p> <p>No glass panels used.</p>	1	4	4
Lighting	Staff, pupils, others	Long term damage to eyesight or injury from light failure/falling light or glass	2	3	6	<p>Lighting levels measured and have achieved correct lux levels.</p> <p>Diffusers fitted to all lights.</p>	1	3	3
Windows	Staff, pupils, others	Injury or possibly death from falling out of window	2	5	10	<p>All high level windows have appropriate closers to prevent anyone falling out of windows.</p> <p>Low level windows have appropriate safety film coverage and most open without risk to passers by.</p>	1	5	5

Note. PPE must only be considered as, when other control measures, such as guarding, local exhaust extraction, preventing noise at source, eliminating the need to work at height etc. are not possible. PPE should always be considered as a last resort option. PPE should only be worn when there is reasonable justification for doing so.

The Beacon School

Assessment conducted by: James Skea	Job title: Senior Master	Covered by this assessment: Staff, Pupils, Parents and Visitors
Date of assessment:18/8/2020	Review interval: Weekly	Date of Last Review: 22/10/2020
Related documents		
Coronavirus (COVID-19) Reopening Plan, Social Distancing Policy Statement, Infection Control Policy, Ill Health and Infectious Disease Risk Assessment, First Aid Policy, Fire Safety Policy, Fire Safety Risk Assessment, COSHH Risk Assessment, Administering Medication Policy, Child		

Risk rating		Likelihood of occurrence		
		Probable	Possible	Remote
Likely impact	Major Causes major physical injury, harm or ill health.	High (H)	H	Medium (M)
	Severe Causes physical injury or illness requiring first aid.	H	M	Low (L)
	Minor Causes physical or emotional discomfort.	M	L	L

Prior to Opening

Identified Risk	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	Date Completed	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
<p>Policies and procedures – failure of school to update and share relevant information to staff, visitors and contractors. Failure of staff to read and understand the policies and procedures for re-opening after lockdown.</p>	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff are aware of all relevant policies and procedures including, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety Policy - Infection Control Policy - First Aid and Medicines Policy - Social Distancing Policy Statement - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Full Opening Plan • All staff have regard to all relevant guidance and legislation including, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 - The Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 - Public Health England (PHE) (2017) ‘Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities’ - DfE (2020) ‘Guidance for schools: coronavirus (COVID-19)’ - DfE (2020) ‘Actions for early years and childcare settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak’ • Staff receive any necessary training on measures that have been implemented that are relevant to their role, e.g. infection control and pupil wellbeing. • The school keeps up-to-date with advice issued by, but not limited to, the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DfE 	21/8/2020	Senior Master	21/8/2020	L

Identified Risk	Risk rating prior to action H/M/L	Recommended controls	Date Completed	By whom?	Deadline	Risk rating following action H/M/L
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHS - PHE - Department of Health and Social Care - The school's local health protection team (HPT) - Contact Details – PHE Thames Valley Protection Team (South East), Chilton, OX110RQ 03442253861 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff, volunteers, parents, pupils, visitors and contractors are made aware of relevant infection control procedures and social distancing arrangements via email. 				