



WISHFORD SCHOOLS
RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

This policy applies to all Wishford Schools including all EYFS settings.

Date of Policy	April 2023
Member of staff responsible	Mr Andrew Webster
Role	Deputy Director of Education & Compliance
Review date	

Last Review	Significant changes (most recent are in red)
July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some additional clarification added to the 'Responsibility' section. • Note added to the end of the 'Risky Areas' section. The aim is to reduce the administrative burden for 'low-risk' activities to support staff in focussing their attention on any high-risk activities. • 'Educational Visits' section rewritten based on lesson learned across the group. • 'Assessing risk' section also updated in line with the above. • Additional detail added to the introduction of individual health care plans in line with KCSIE 2023 and F23.

1. Policy Scope

This content of this central policy represents the minimum standard for risk assessment across all Wishford schools. It lists the essential areas and activities requiring risk assessment and the fundamental elements of an effective risk assessment procedure and culture. All Wishford schools must adhere to this policy.

The aims of this policy are:

- To identify those in the school responsible for conducting risk assessment and monitoring its implementation
- To ensure that major risks are identified and managed as part of an overarching policy with a view to promoting children's welfare.
- To meet the ISSR requirement for a written risk assessment policy to be in place and to meet the requirement for leadership and management of schools.
- To ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for activities where there is likely to be significant risk, including school trips.
- To ensure that identified control measures are implemented to control risk so far as reasonably practicable.
- To ensure that those affected by school activities have received suitable information on what to do.
- To ensure that the risk management strategy and risk assessments are recorded and reviewed when appropriate.

This policy utilises the ISBA template and is updated once every three years or sooner in line with any ISBA updates. This policy pays due regard to the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), The Independent School Standards (2014), KCSIE (2022) and the National Minimum Standards for Boarding (2022). It applies to all areas of a school, including the Early Years. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid policy
- All Safeguarding related policies

2. Responsibility

- a. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for risk assessment but might delegate this oversight to the School Business Manager.
- b. The Head/SBM are responsible for overseeing an annual review of their 'risk register' which assesses the school's general levels of risk. The annual review should include an assessment of the school's risk assessment culture.
- c. The Head/SBM are responsible for delegating responsibility for each individual risk assessment to the most appropriate person.
- d. The Head/SBM are responsible for reviewing risk assessments ahead of any risky activity and recording risk assessments centrally.
- e. The Head/SBM are responsible for including risk assessment training in the induction programme for all new staff and to ensure all staff receive at least annual updates/training.
- f. The Trips coordinator/EVC oversees the trips process, including trips risk assessment.
- g. Any member of staff leading any risky school related activity is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment both beforehand, in writing, and dynamically during the activity.
- h. All staff are responsible for risk assessing their work spaces and equipment, reporting any H&S concerns immediately and following all H&S policies.
- i. The Wishford team will review risk assessment procedures and culture at least annually during the termly governance visits.
- j. All risk assessments will be reviewed/updated:
 - i. when there are changes to the activity
 - ii. after a near miss or accident
 - iii. when there are changes to the type of people involved in the activity
 - iv. when there are changes in good practice
 - v. when there are legislative changes
 - vi. annually if for no other reason

3. Risky Areas & Activities

The following list represents the minimum standard for risk assessment. However, the Head/SBM are responsible for ensuring any school specific risky areas and activities (not included on this list) are also assessed for risk. Areas and activities requiring risk assessment include:

- Fire Prevention
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- COSHH
- Site/Security
- Transport (cars/minibus/coach)
- External roads
- Vehicular movement
- Individuals (Health/Mental Health/Safeguarding)
- Play equipment/spaces
- Swimming/Sport/PE
- Forest School
- SVSH (Hotspots)
- Risky Clubs (e.g. DofE, CCF...)
- Art/DT/Food technology
- Science (CLEAPSS)
- Performing Arts
- EYFS
- Kitchen
- Site/maintenance buildings
- Other rooms (HSE*)
- Staff (SCR)
- Occupational Health
- EYFS Trips
- Risky Activity Trips (insurance)
- Residential Trips
- Online Safety & Prevent
- Financial/Data

* N.B. For 'low-risk' areas of the school (e.g. standard classrooms/offices/changing rooms/toilets) a full risk assessment is not required. Instead, the member of staff with the most frequent use of the room (or otherwise as delegated by the Head/SBM) only needs to complete the HSE Classroom Checklist (appendix 1) on, at least, an annual basis.

4. Individual Health Care Plans

Health Care plans can include PEEPs and may also be related to a mental health or safeguarding issue. It is expected that our schools have a solid and up-to-date understanding of the most vulnerable individuals on-site.

Individuals with serious/life threatening health conditions/allergies must have their own personalised risk assessment in the form of an individual health care plan. All plans should be filed securely and each plan must:

- (a) Include a photograph of the child (or member of staff);
- (b) Include the date on which the plan was produced;
- (c) Detail the name and signature of the person who has produced the plan;
- (d) Detail the name and signature of the parents to evidence that parents have contributed to, seen and agreed to the final draft of the plan;
- (e) Be signed by all members of the team of staff who have a direct responsibility for the care and welfare of the child, to provide evidence that key staff are fully aware of the risks for the individual child and the procedures to follow;
- (f) Be distributed to all other relevant members of staff;
- (g) Include a regular review date;
- (h) Be signed off by a nominated member of the School's leadership to ensure that all of the above 2(a) to 2(f) has been completed.
- (i) Whenever possible, be signed off by the child's doctor or health care professional.

5. Educational Visits and Off-site activities

All schools must have the following in place to allow educational visits and off-site activities to take place:

- Appointment of an EVC/Trips Coordinator who has undergone appropriate training (this can be the Head or SBM. If delegated to another member of staff then Head or SBM oversight must be added to the trips procedure).
- Annual Risk assessment and Educational Trips training for all members of staff accompanying children off-site (Educare or another recognised provider).

- An educational visits/trips policy which outlines a step by step procedure and recognises all standards outlined within this policy. The EV/Trips policy should include a set of standard templates which staff need to complete before any trip takes place, i.e. a 'trip form' or 'trip pack'.

Schools are able to create their own EV/Trips & Off-site activities policy with their own set of specific procedures. However, the following represents a minimum standard which must be included in the process:

- An 'information sheet' where all of the key details of the trip can be found, including: location; year group; timings; staffing (including ratios); transport; key contact details.
- A 'trip checklist' which logs each stage of the trip from approval to planning to delivery to review. This should include key organisational details such as: EVC and/or SBM/Head approval; documentation/licenses from the external site; a pupil list; medical needs and first aid cover; catering booking; transport booking; parental permissions; necessary risk assessments, confirmation from the trip leader that a pre-visit team meeting has taken place and all staff attending are aware of the risks and their responsibilities.

Trip leaders **do not** need to create 'new' risk assessments for every element of their 'off-site event'. Over time, schools should carefully catalogue a bank of generic risk assessments which can be used as templates for trip leaders to personalise. This approach can be applied in two specific ways:

1. A 'brand new' off-site activity or trip does not need to start from a blank piece of paper. Particular generic risk assessments for specific elements of the trip (e.g. coach travel) can be used as starting points when building a whole trip risk assessment.
2. 'Repeated' activities/trips can utilise previous 'trip packs' and risk assessments which are then updated by the trip leader. Scenarios where this might apply include:
 - a) A year 4 trip that is run in exactly the same way every summer term and so the comprehensive 'trip pack' that is already in place just needs reviewing and updating.
 - b) Weekly sports activities like swimming where one umbrella risk assessment for the whole year/term and one meeting for the staff involved would suffice.

In line with the section below on how to assess risk. The approach for educational visits and off-site activities needs to be dynamic and proportionate, e.g. a walk to the local library within a village setting should require far less planning than a residential skiing trip. **In all cases, the key is early and continuous dialogue between the trip leader and the EVC or Head/SBM so that the level of detail needed within the trip pack is agreed and developed from the outset. There should be a collaborative culture where all relevant staff contribute and the burden of responsibility does not lie solely with the trip leader.**

As further guidance, early meetings and discussions are particularly important whenever a trip/activity is deemed to be high risk. The following list is not exhaustive but 'high-risk' activities and trips would include:

- EYFS trips
- Residential trips (including private hosting)
- Foreign trips
- Sports activities
- Adventure Activities (venues must carry and share their AA license)
- Outdoor learning (venues should carry a LOCQ badge)

The Head is ultimately responsible for ensuring that due process has been followed. If they have any ongoing and proportionate concerns about any child's welfare then they should cancel the trip/activity.

6. Assessing Risk

All members of staff completing a risk assessment should use the same template (appendix 2) and the same process. Each potential hazard needs to receive a risk rating which is a multiplication of the severity level (1-5) by the likelihood level (1-5). A risk rating score can therefore range from 1-25 and the aim of any risk assessment process should be to mitigate risk as far as is reasonable and keep risk ratings as low as possible.

It is important to note here that removing risk entirely is not the purpose of a risk assessment as this approach might completely undermine the original educational aims of the activity, for example, opting to stay safe on land during a water sports activity.

Nevertheless, those assessing risk need to make an honest assessment of the severity and likelihood of each risk. Assessors should carefully consider the following questions for each hazard:

- what could go wrong?
- who might be harmed?
- how likely is it to go wrong?
- how serious would it be if it did?
- what am I going to do to stop it?
- how am I going to check that my plans are working?

It is worth noting the following:

- Many attractions and museums provide their own risk assessments, which should be appended to the school's own assessment of the risks of the trip.
- When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the trip leader must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 and have sight of such licences.
- For visits involving EYFS children, the assessment must take account of the nature of the outing, and consider whether it is appropriate to exceed the normal supervision ratio.
- Staff should be aware of their responsibility to dynamically risk assess on a daily basis, considering changes in individual or contextual circumstances. Circumstances which fall outside of existing policies/risk assessments should be risk assessed dynamically in the moment, e.g. asking more staff to come out on break duty due to a risky situation.
- A risk assessment must be completed on outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture, equipment and toys used by EYFS children. This risk assessment will be reviewed at least once a year or more frequently when the need arises. The risk assessment must identify aspects of the environment that need to be checked on a regular basis and a record of these aspects and when and by whom they have been checked must be kept. The regularity of these checks will be determined according to the assessment of the significance of individual risks.

Finally, it is vital that every risk assessment process is:

- **Dynamic:** Risk Assessments cannot just be pieces of paper that sit in a folder. Staff leading an activity or trip must be continuously assessing risk throughout and adapting their risk assessment and necessary control factors in the moment. Moreover, it is everyone's responsibility to assess risk continuously, not just during risky activities but on a day to day basis, e.g. acting if you see a blocked fire exit.
- **Proportionate:** each school's culture should develop an awareness of 'high-risk' activities and expect a proportionate response from staff. Senior leadership teams should review the overall administrative burden on staff to ensure there is no risk of 'risk assessment blindness', i.e. by asking staff to complete unnecessary paperwork, they lose sight of the difference between 'low-risk' and 'high-risk' activities.
- **Specific:** It is impossible to write an effective risk assessment without specific knowledge of the activity/event being planned. Whenever possible, staff should visit trip locations ahead of the trip and staff with the most relevant expertise and or experience should be the person responsible for leading the trip and writing the risk assessment. As a point of balance to the need for 'proportionality' SLTs must also guard against staff regurgitating the same risk assessment every year for the same activity. The review process needs to be thorough and consider all and any new and specific factors affecting the update. For example, every time an annual trip is run, there will be numerous variations to consider such as:
 - The weather
 - The age groups
 - The individuals (SEND, Safeguarding, EAL pupils or the experience of the staff)
 - Any conflicting events, local or national

EVCs/Heads/SBMs should analyse the specific nature of each risk assessment before they sign it off.

Appendix 1: HSE Classroom Risk Assessment Checklist (www.hse.gov.uk/services/education)

Questions you should ask:		Yes	Further action needed	N/A
Movement around the classroom (slips and trips)	Is the internal flooring in a good condition?			
	Are there any changes in floor level or type of flooring that need to be highlighted?			
	Are gangways between desks kept clear?			
	Are trailing electrical leads/cables prevented wherever possible?			
	Is lighting bright enough to allow safe access and exit?			
	Are procedures in place to deal with spillages, eg water, blood from cuts?			
	For stand-alone classrooms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Are access steps or ramps properly maintained? ■ Are access stairs or ramps provided with handrails? 			
Work at height (falls)	Do you have an 'elephant-foot' stepstool or stepladder available for use where necessary?			
	Is a window-opener provided for opening high-level windows?			
Furniture and fixtures	Are permanent fixtures in good condition and securely fastened, eg cupboards, display boards, shelving?			
	Is furniture in good repair and suitable for the size of the user, whether adult or child?			
	Is portable equipment stable, eg a TV set on a suitable trolley?			
	Where window restrictors are fitted to upper-floor windows, are they in good working order?			
	Are hot surfaces of radiators etc protected where necessary to prevent the risk of burns to vulnerable young people?			
Manual handling	Have trolleys been provided for moving heavy objects, eg computers?			
Computers and similar equipment	If you use computers as part of your job, has a workstation assessment been completed?			
	Have pupils been advised about good practice when using computers?			
Electrical equipment and services	Are fixed electrical switches and plug sockets in good repair?			
	Are all plugs and cables in good repair?			
	Has portable electrical equipment, eg laminators, been visually checked and, where necessary, tested at suitable intervals to ensure that it's safe to use? (There may be a sticker to show it has been tested.)			
	Has any damaged electrical equipment been taken out of service or replaced?			
Asbestos	If the school contains asbestos, have details of the location and its condition in the classroom been provided and explained to you?			
	Have you been provided with guidance on securing pieces of work to walls/ceilings that may contain asbestos?			

Fire	If there are fire exit doors in the classroom, are they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ unobstructed; ■ kept unlocked; and ■ easy to open from the inside? 			
	Is fire-fighting equipment in place in the classroom?			
	Are fire evacuation procedures clearly displayed?			
	Are you aware of the evacuation drill, including arrangements for any vulnerable adults or children?			
Workplace (ventilation and heating)	Does the room have natural ventilation?			
	Can a reasonable room temperature be maintained during use of the classroom?			
	Are measures in place, for example blinds, to protect from glare and heat from the sun?			
Additional issues		Yes	Further action needed	N/A
Hazards noted:		Action taken and when:		
Name (and position):		Signature:	Date:	
Location/name of classroom:				

Appendix 3: Legal References

A: Handbook for the Inspection of Schools - The Regulatory Requirements, Part 3
(<http://www.isi.net/>)

B: Health & Safety Executive, Five steps to risk assessment
(<http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm>)

C: Health and Safety Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (2014), DfE website.

D: Health and Safety at Work" Section H of the ISBA Model Staff Handbook,

E: "Health and Safety and Welfare at Work" Chapter N of the ISBA Bursar's Guide

F: "Insurance" Chapter K of the Bursar's Guide by HSBC Insurance Brokers Ltd

G: Early Years Foundation Stage: Statutory Framework

H: Charities and Risk Management, The Charities Commission (www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

I: Risk Management framework: A Ten Point plan and What is Risk Management by the NCVO
(www.ncvo-vol.org.uk)

J: Home Office guidance on duties under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015
(www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance)

K: National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools April 2015

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