



Risk Assessment Policy

Information for Parents: This policy is available on request.

This policy applies to all parts of the Ursuline Preparatory School.

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, the welfare of the children including their supervision 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.

1. Aims and Objectives

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

2. The Arrangements for Applying the Policy

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

2.2 Staff must plan, co-ordinate 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 parents helpers on trips;
- To involve staff in assessing the risks; and
- Refer risks to the Headteacher.

2.3 Employees are required to:-

- Be aware of risk assessment and control measures for their area of work;
- Complete a written risk assessment for work areas that require one (record and date when risk assessment is undertaken);
- Co-operate 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;
- Report any workplace hazards or concerns regarding health and safety of themselves or others;
- 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)

3. Procedures

3.1 Stages of Risk Assessment

a) Identify the hazards

Managers and 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.

- b) Decide who might be harmed and how
- For each hazard identify the groups of people who might be harmed and how they might be harmed 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, and;
 - Shared workplaces – how the work affects others and the risks to staff from those who share the workplace.
- c) Evaluate/assess the risks and decide on the precautions to control those risks
- 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 staff 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 risk;
- 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;
- 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 been taken place, a formal written risk assessment record must be made of this as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event.

3.2 Recording Risk Assessments

General Risk Assessments

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

Generic Risk Assessments

In some areas a generic risk assessment may be available to assist managers in the risk assessment process.

Other Risk Assessments

The 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.

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
- Educational Visits

Details of these risk assessment forms can be found in their corresponding Policy or advice may be sought from the Head Teacher or Site Manager.

4. Review

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.

5. Communication

Managers shall 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 should be issued to individual employees and appropriate training provided.

All helpers on trips should be aware of the trip risk assessment.

6. Training

Managers responsible for the planning, co-ordination and monitoring of risk assessments may wish to receive appropriate risk assessment training. Staff involved in the creation of risk assessments may receive training in the risk assessment process from the retained Health and Safety Consultant.

7. Monitoring

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

All staff shall report any defects in control measures, personal protective equipment, etc immediately to their manager.

All risk assessments are 'signed off' by the Headteacher

8. 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 managers should contact the Health and Safety Consultant through the Head Teacher or the Site Manager.

9. Legislative Framework

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

10. Further advice and Information

Further advice and information can be obtained from the 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 been taken place, a formal written risk assessment must be made of this as soon as is reasonably practicable after the event.