# A10: RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

## CONTENTS

Windermere School recognises and accepts its responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (H&SW) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to protect the health and safety of its employees, students and others affected by school activities.

Windermere School acknowledges the importance of risk assessment in terms of its overall management of health and safety. Arrangements will therefore be made to ensure that risk assessments are carried out throughout the range of the School's activities and premises.

In particular, risk assessments will:-

• Identify significant hazards
• Determine the level of risk
• Identify appropriate measures necessary to control or eliminate the risk
• Be recorded
• Be reviewed at least annually

All Heads of Department and Operational Managers are expected to have in place current and valid risk assessments covering their existing areas of activity/work, which address all significant hazards encountered by pupils their staff and others who may be affected by the School's activities and premises.

**What is risk assessment?**

Risk assessment is all about a pro-active approach to health and safety in the workplace, to develop good working practices that eliminate or control hazards. In essence, it is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that a judgement can be made as to whether enough precautions have been taken, or more should be done to prevent harm.

The aim is to identify *significant* risks, not to catalogue every trivial risk, or to anticipate unknown hazards. However, the risk assessment should be carried out with all reasonable care and diligence. The level of detail in the risk assessment and the action taken to control the risk should be broadly proportionate to the level of risk so more time and effort should be given to considering and controlling higher risks.

The law does not expect all risks to be eliminated, but does require the employer to reduce risks to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

It is important to appreciate that the completed risk assessment is only the first stage, and not the end, of the process of controlling risks. If the assessment shows that more should be done to control a risk then this forms an action point that needs to be addressed.

**Specific subject risk assessments**

This procedure details the steps that should be taken to complete 'general' risk assessments required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. Other regulations require more specific risk assessments for example: fire, school trips, manual handling, hazardous substances, personal protective equipment, young persons, new and expectant mothers, and display screen equipment. Details of the requirements of these regulations and forms for recording the specific assessments can be found in other procedures.

It is recognised that uniformity across the whole organization of Windermere School is not realistic or appropriate due to working with partner organisations and the inevitable transition from historical working practices. However all Hazards are expected to be effectively categorised into High, Medium or Low risk and Medium and High risks controlled.

Windermere School works closely with external partners for some specialist areas, for example: the science department with CLEAPS, (Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services) and as such adopts their model of risk assessment when applied to that specialism.

Where an assessment is being made for the first time, the general assessment outlined in this procedure is useful for identifying where a more detailed risk assessment is needed to comply with the requirements of other regulations.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Heads of Department and Managers are responsible for carrying out and reviewing risk assessments, and for the implementation of any necessary measures to control risks within their area of accountability. The School Operations Manager is responsible for the management of School premises and land and will ensure that assessments cover the suitability of the estate. Heads of Department and Managers must however risk assess the activities that they will undertake in these locations within the limitations of the estate.

Heads of Department and Managers should ensure that the significant findings of the risk assessment and any procedures that are introduced are passed on to employees and others as appropriate. Items that remain as a High or Medium risk after control measures are implemented must be passed to the Operations Manager as chair of the Health and Safety Committee for consideration and escalation to the Risk Management group if required.

The Health and Safety Committee will review the risk assessment process to ensure it remains effective, consistent and appropriate measures are taken to control risks, and to monitor progress in remedying any significant outstanding actions. Where control measures are not deemed adequate and the risk remains High the risk assessment will be passed to Risk Management group.

The School Operations Manager will provide Heads of Department and Managers with advice and assistance as required, audit risk assessments to ensure they have been carried out in a consistent and effective manner, and report outstanding significant risks to the Health & Safety Committee and Risk Management Group.

## CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT

Use the risk assessment recording blank form at the end of this document as your template for any risk assessment review after September 2016.

The five steps below detail the process of carrying out a risk assessment.
Steps 1 – 4 are completed on the risk assessment recording form unless following an accepted template from a partner organization.

### Step 1 – Description of hazard & persons affected

The definition of a hazard is "something that has the potential to cause harm" including ill health, injury, loss of product and/or damage to plant and property.

- Walk around your workplace and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm.
- Ask colleagues who work in that area what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious to you.
- Review all aspects of work – including non-routine activities, maintenance and emergencies.
- Visit the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk). HSE publishes practical guidance on where hazards occur and how to control them.
- Check information from the manufacturer/supplier and trade & professional associations as they can be very helpful in spelling out the hazards, putting them in their true perspective and issuing guidance.
- Have a look back at your accident and ill-health records – these often help to identify the less obvious hazards. These are provided by the school nurse and available in the minutes of the Health and Safety Committee.
- Consider long-term hazards to health (e.g. high levels of noise or exposure to harmful substances) as well as safety hazards.

| Examples of hazards (see appendix 1 for more details) | |
| --- | --- |
| Violence | Poor housekeeping |
| Moving parts of machinery | Noise |
| Work at height | Pressure systems |
| Falling objects | Vehicles |
| Electricity | Low or high temperatures |
| Poor lighting | Manual handling |

**Identifying people at risk of harm**

For each hazard you need to be clear about who and how many people might be harmed. It will help you identify the best way of managing the risk. That doesn't mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people (e.g. 'Students in that activity' or 'members of the public' if off site).

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| Examples of people at risk | |
|---|---|
| Teachers | Members of the public |
| Temporary workers | Visitors |
| Contactors | Volunteers |
| Children | Parents |
| Boarders | Cleaners |

Some people may have particular requirements or be at particular risk:

| Examples of vulnerable people (see appendix 2 for more details) | |
|---|---|
| New or expectant mothers | Young people |
| Lone workers | Inexperienced staff |
| Staff, Students or visitors with disabilities | Staff or Students with learning difficulties |
| Non-English speakers | |

Identify how people might be harmed? (e.g. back injury from repeated lifting or sitting at a desk for long periods of time)

| Examples of possible outcomes | |
|---|---|
| Cuts and abrasions | Drowning |
| Broken or dislocated bones | Infection/disease |
| Sprains and strains | Asphyxia |
| Unconsciousness | Noise injuries |
| Electrocution | Spinal injuries |
| Burns | Hit by flying or falling objects |
| Scalds | Crushing or trapping |

## Step 2 - List existing controls

All the measures in place to control the hazards should be identified and listed.

This step also provides a useful future checklist to ensure that all measures continue to be implemented.

## Step 3 - Calculate the risk rating and prioritise action

Risk is a measure of the likelihood that harm from a particular hazard will occur, taking into account the possible severity of such an occurrence.

**Risk = Likelihood x Severity**

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This is a subjective rather than scientific process, but it helps assessors and managers to prioritise and put in place additional control measures.

**Likelihood of the risk**

The likelihood of harm will depend on a range of factors including:

- Number of times the situation occurs
- Location of the hazard
- Duration of the exposure
- Environmental conditions
- Competence of the people involved
- The condition of equipment

Just because something can happen does not automatically mean that it will happen. Care should be taken to select the likelihood that reflects reality.

| Hazard likelihood | Definition | Points rating |
|---|---|---|
| **Almost always** | If the work continues as it is, then it is a case of 'an accident waiting to happen', for example:<br><br>• A broken stair or broken rung on a ladder<br>• Bare, exposed electrical conductors<br>• Unstable stacks of heavy boxes<br><br>You would expect this accident to happen. | **4** |
| **Likely** | Will happen more often than not. Additional factors could precipitate an incident but it is still likely to happen without this additional factor.<br><br>You would not be surprised if this accident occurred. | **3** |
| **Unlikely** | The accident may occur if additional factors precipitate it, but it is unlikely to happen without them.<br><br>You would be surprised if this accident occurred. | **1** |
| **Almost never** | This incident or illness might occur but the probability is very low.<br><br>You would not expect this accident to happen at all. | **0.5** |

**Severity of the hazard**

Factors affecting the severity of the effects include:

- The number of people who may be affected
- Any individuals particularly at risk because of disabilities, medical conditions, lack of experience etc.
- The properties of materials, speeds, heights and weights etc.
- The amount and type of energy involved

*Care should be taken to select the severity that reflects reality – do not treat every outcome automatically as worst case scenario.*

| Hazard severity | Definition | Points rating |
|---|---|---|
| **Death or permanent disability** | Death, amputations, ill health or other major injuries with serious life long effects.<br><br>Major destruction/collapse of building/structure rendering it totally or long term unusable.<br><br>Long term interruption to/stoppage of work flow. | **4** |
| **Serious injury** | Fractures, medium term back injuries and ill health etc that could be capable of keeping an individual off work for three days or more.<br><br>Major damage to building/structure that may render it unusable.<br><br>Serious interruption to work flow. | **3** |
| **Lost time injury** | Injuries that may result in time off work or the individual may be able to continue work after first aid treatment on site or at a local surgery.<br><br>Damage to building/structure requiring repair but can be still occupied/used.<br><br>No serious interruption to work flow. | **2** |
| **Minor injury – no lost time** | Bumps, small cuts, abrasions that may require first aid attention but would not lead to lost time.<br>Minor damage to building/structure.<br><br>Work flow hardly interrupted. | **1** |

**Risk rating**

To help analyse the risk, the School uses a simple rating system where numerical scores are given to the likelihood and severity, and these are then multiplied to get a risk rating – see the table below.

_When working out the risk rating, consider the hazard with the existing controls in place._

For example: electricity is a hazard. The severity of any injury is 'death or permanent disability' - it can kill. The likelihood of it doing so in an office environment is 'almost never' providing the components are insulated, the metal casing is properly earthed and appliances are used correctly and tested. This will mean that the risk rating = 0.5 x 4 = 2. This equates to a 'LOW' overall risk.

In this way the urgency of actions can be determined as low, medium or high and prioritised.

**Risk rating table**

| Likelihood of injury | | | Severity of injury | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost always | **4** | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 |
| Likely | **3** | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 |
| Unlikely | **1** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Almost never | **0.5** | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 2 |
| | | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| | | Minor injury – no lost time | Lost time injury | Serious injury | Permanent disability & death |

**Severity of injury**

| Risk rating score | Action |
|---|---|
| 0-3 = LOW | Broadly acceptable - reduce risks further if reasonable |
| 4-9 = MEDIUM | Priority action to be undertaken |
| 10-16 = HIGH | Unacceptable -action must be taken IMMEDIATELY |

**Step 4 – Put measures in place to reduce and control the risks**

Measures to control risks should be fully integrated into procedures, equipment and design of work – to make good health and safety a part of normal work practice.

The law requires you to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. Even if the risk rating has been assessed as LOW if there is something that can be reasonably carried out to reduce the risk it should be done.

When considering controls that are already in place and judging whether or not they are adequate consider whether they meet legal requirements, apply best practice or recognised industry and apply up–to-date technology. The School Operations manager can direct you to relevant guidance notes if required.

When considering controls, apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- If possible avoid the risk altogether (e.g. requesting a delivery service to an office instead of reception to prevent staff from manual handling.)
- Try a less risky option (e.g. switch to using a less hazardous chemical);
- Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding)
- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard (e.g. put barriers between pedestrians and traffic)
- Provide written instructions for work
- Provide training, information, instruction and supervision to ensure that employees understand what they must do
- Provide personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc);
- Provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination)

## Step 5 - Communicating the findings

Information on risks and control measures should be communicated to employees and others as appropriate. The completed risk assessment should form the basis for providing clear information about hazards, risks and control measures relevant to the work.

This communication must be understandable by the audience. You could use the information in the following ways:
- Induction training
- Safe systems of work
- Written procedures
- Hand books
- Team briefings and tool box talks
- Supervision meetings or other management meetings
- Specific or general instruction or training sessions
- Hands on training


Information provided to employees and others involved in the work should include:
- The nature and extent of risks, including factors that may influence or may increase risk.
- The control measures to be adopted, including reasons for the measures, how to use them properly and what to do and who to contact if things go wrong or change significantly.


## Review the risk assessment

Risk assessments are not a once-and-for-all activity. They must be reviewed at least once every 12 months or more often if, for example, the nature of work changes or appreciation of hazards develops e.g. new equipment or new staff. Accidents or near misses may reveal deficiencies in risk assessments.

**Hazard checklist**

| Type of harm | Example of hazard |
|---|---|
| Contact with machinery, equipment or material | Unguarded moving parts<br>Sudden release of pressure or ejection of material<br>Crushing by or entrapment in moving parts<br>Hot, cold, sharp or abrasive surfaces<br>Stored energy in springs or cables under tension<br>Sustained use of power tools – vibration<br>Non-ionising radiation |
| Trips, slips and falls on the same level | Damaged floors, loose coverings<br>Poor housekeeping<br>Trailing cables<br>Liquid/debris spills<br>Wet grass<br>Sloping surface<br>Uneven steps<br>Changes in floor level<br>Obstructions and stored materials<br>Exposed to weather – rain, ice, moss growth |
| Falls from a height | Work on roof – especially fragile roof<br>Work on ladder/scaffold or unprotected edge<br>Window cleaning<br>Falls from open windows<br>Excavations and pits |
| Hit something fixed or stationary | Low headroom<br>Projections<br>Awkward access<br>Large glazing panels that are difficult to see<br>Doors without vision panels |
| Hit by a moving, flying or falling object | High and/or insecure stacks<br>Inadequate racking<br>Unloading vehicles<br>Items falling from work carried out at height<br>Collapse of building, scaffolding or equipment<br>Automatic and revolving doors |
| Hit by a moving vehicle | Reversing vehicles<br>Poor vision<br>Poor access/congestion<br>Poor separation of pedestrians and vehicles<br>Work next to a highway |
| Injury whilst handling lifting or carrying | Repetitive movements<br>Poor posture<br>Work above head height or at floor level<br>Insufficient space<br>Awkward or heavy loads<br>Sustained heavy work – insufficient recovery periods |

| | |
|---|---|
| Drowning or asphyxiation | Work near/on water<br>Work in any unventilated or confined area<br>Work in area where fumes or gases may be present e.g. tank/sump etc<br>Poorly maintained gas appliances – carbon monoxide |
| Exposed to fire | Uncontrolled sources of ignition<br>Locked or obstructed exits<br>Long exit route<br>Inadequate fire fighting equipment<br>Inadequate evacuation procedures<br>Defective alarms/emergency lighting/signs<br>Storage of flammable substances<br>Hot work by contractors |
| Exposed to, or in contact with, a harmful substance | Toxic, harmful, corrosive and irritant substances<br>Contaminated land sites<br>Asbestos<br>Legionella<br>Sewage or water-borne diseases<br>Human infectious disease<br>Bird droppings<br>Dust and fibres<br>Substances at extreme temperatures – steam, hot water, dry ice |
| Explosion | Dust generation<br>Gas pipes and appliances<br>Compressed gasses<br>Lead/acid batteries |
| Electricity | Poorly maintained equipment or installation<br>Excavations/digging underground cables<br>Outdoor use<br>Drilling through walls |
| Violence | Assault<br>Angry customer<br>Drunk or drug abuser |
| Injured by an animal | Dogs<br>Pest control target: wasps, rats, fleas<br>Farm/zoo/abattoir visit |
| Environmental | Extremes of temperature – outdoor work<br>Ventilation<br>Poor lighting<br>Noise levels<br>Work station and seating |
| Stress | Increased workload<br>Work relationships<br>Non-work relationships |

**Vulnerable person checklist**

| Vulnerable group | Issues |
|---|---|
| New and expectant mothers | Susceptible to extremes of temperature, heavy weights, night or shift work, hazardous substances, general fatigue, cramped working conditions. |
| Visitors, contractors,  members of the public and temporary employees | Normally unaware of the dangers associated with the workplace and its layout. May disregard safety instructions. Possible vandalism. |
| Young persons | Immaturity can lead to carelessness. No previous work experience means that they are often unaware of dangers. |
| Lone workers | May be unable to summon help in an emergency. Susceptible to violence and other injuries. |
| Disabled persons | Visual or hearing impairment may result in hazards not being noticed. Physical impairment may make the operation of equipment difficult, and access and egress from workstations and workplace may be a problem. |
| People with learning difficulties | May not understand or react to verbal or written information or warnings. May not notice hazards. |
| Non-English speakers | May not understand or react to verbal or written information or warnings. |
| Employees with certain illnesses | Certain illnesses such as epilepsy may put the sufferer and others at increased risk from activities such as operating equipment & vehicles, work at height and lone working. |
| Peripatetic workers | No supervision or monitoring. Varying work locations may contain varying hazards. |
| Maintenance workers | Often work alone, sometimes with dangerous machinery. Possibility of machines being inadvertently switched on. |

# APPENDIX 3

**EXAMPLE RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD**

DEPARTMENT: Works Team        ASSESSOR(S): R. Hennah        DATE: 30/06/19

ACTIVITY: Clearing Gutters

| DESCRIPTION OF HAZARD & PERSONS AFFECTED | LIST EXISTING CONTROLS | CALCULATE RISK RATING (likelihood x severity) & RISK LEVEL | LIST FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Working at height & falls** <br> Works Staff and contractors could fall and suffer serious injuries based on the height and environment which can include uneven ground. | • Suitable Ladders are provided for work up to 2m. <br> • A Zippy Scaffold tower is provided on site for work up to 6m high and staff are trained in its assembly and use. <br> • For work over 6m a suitable mobile working platform is ordered. Staff are trained on its safe use and wear the fall arrest harnesses provided. <br> • Work requiring a scaffold is provided by external suppliers who must then keep the displayed 'scaff' tag up to date. <br> • Fragile roof surfaces are clearly labelled. | 3 x 3 = 9 <br> MEDIUM | Further information on safe use of ladders should be provided on the works team notice board. <br> Individual jobs are to be risk assessed to agree two person working tasks to enable footing of ladders and lifting work tools / equipment to the working height. <br> Some ceiling voids require boarding if access is to be continued. |
| **Falling Debris** | • Pedestrian walkways beneath the working area are barriered off with barrier tape and signage to ensure no-one is below. <br> • Debris cleared from the gutter is to be put into a black bin bag rather than dropped from height. | 0.5 x 4 = 2 <br> LOW | Clear list of work tools required to allow the works team to clean the gutter while having one hand free to hold on for stability. |

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGER: R. Hennah        DATE: 30/06/19

**WINDERMERE SCHOOL ASSESSMENT RECORD**

DEPARTMENT:                    ASSESSOR(S):                    DATE:

ACTIVITY:

| DESCRIPTION OF HAZARD AND PERSONS AFFECTED | LIST EXISTING CONTROLS | CALCULATE RISK RATING (likelihood x severity) & RISK LEVEL | LIST FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

DEPARTMENTAL MANAGER:                                        DATE:

| Likelihood | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost always | **4** | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 |
| Likely | **3** | 3 | 6 | 9 | 12 |
| Unlikely | **1** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Almost never | **0.5** | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 2 |
| | | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| | | Minor injury – no lost time | Lost time injury | Serious injury | Permanent disability & death |

| Risk rating score | Action |
|---|---|
| **0-3 = LOW** | Broadly acceptable - reduce risks further if reasonable |
| **4-9 = MEDIUM** | Priority action to be undertaken |
| **10-16 = HIGH** | Unacceptable -action must be taken IMMEDIATELY |

**Severity**

| Current status | |
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| Author: | R. Hennah, Operations Manager |
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| | |
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| Version no. | Approved | Reasons/comments |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | RH | New procedure |