

Charlton House Independent School



'Love One Another'

Risk Assessment Policy

Reviewed and approved by the full governing body September 2024

To be reviewed by FGB November 2025

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1. Aims and objectives

The purpose of this policy is to enable the School to meet its duty of care to pupils, staff, parents and other visitors by creating a culture of undertaking risk assessments to reduce the risks of all School business operations, as far as is reasonably practical. The aim is to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of pupils, staff, parents, visitors and others affected by the School's operations. This includes the requirements of the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSR) the Independent Schools Inspectorate and the Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) statutory framework ("the ISSR").

This policy and associated procedures provides a framework for staff to follow in the completion of risk assessments. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 dictate that the School has an absolute duty to carry out risk assessments and record significant findings in writing. Risk assessments must be 'suitable and sufficient'. The Independent School Regulatory requirements demand that the School ensures the welfare of pupils is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks identified.

The School must take a proactive approach to managing risk, and thereby reduce the likelihood that pupils and others will be harmed through negligence and lack of foresight or proper planning. Our objectives are, therefore:

- To ensure that major risks are identified and managed as part of an overarching strategy with a view to promoting the welfare of our pupils, staff, parents and visitors;
- 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 all activities involving pupils where there is likely to be significant risk including educational visits and clubs;
- That identified control measures are implemented to control risk so far as reasonably practicable;
- That those participating in School activities have received suitable information on what to do and risks identified and explained;
- That the risk management strategy and risk assessments are recorded and reviewed when appropriate by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors; and
- To identify those in the School responsible for conducting risk assessments and monitoring their implementation

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following legislation and Department for Education (DfE) guidance:

- Paragraph 16 of part 3 of [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#) which requires proprietors to have a written risk assessment policy.
- The Independent Schools Standards: Guidance for independent schools https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800615/Independent_School_Standards- Guidance_070519.pdf
- Health & Safety Executive: controlling risk assessment <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm>

- Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>
- The Charity Commission: charities and risk management CC26
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-risk-management-cc26/charities-and-risk-management-cc26>
- Regulations 3 and 16 of [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#) require employers to assess risks to the health and safety of their employees, including new and expectant mothers
- Regulation 4 of [The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012](#) requires that employers carry out an asbestos risk assessment
- Employers must assess the risk to workers from substances hazardous to health under regulation 6 of [The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002](#)
- Under regulation 2 of [The Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations 1992](#), employers must assess the health and safety risks that display screen equipment pose to staff
- Regulation 9 of [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#) says that fire risks must be assessed
- Regulation 4 of [The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992](#) requires employers to conduct a risk assessment for manual handling operations
- [The Work at Height Regulations 2005](#) say that employers must conduct a risk assessment to help them identify the measures needed to ensure that work at height is carried out safely
- [DfE guidance on first aid in schools](#) says schools must carry out a risk assessment to determine what first aid provision is needed
- [DfE guidance on the prevent duty](#) states that schools are expected to assess the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism
- [The Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) say schools that manage their own pools must conduct a risk assessment

A table of all the risk assessments schools are required to have in place can be found in appendix 1 of this policy.

3. Definitions

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| Risk assessment | A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the hazards or potential harm to people, particularly in the School's case to pupils, staff and visitors that could result from a business activity or situation and to identify action needed to reduce the level of risk. |
|-----------------|--|

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| | <p>A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, injury or destruction of property) and what action needs to be taken to reduce the risks as low as is reasonably practicable.</p> <p>Risk assessments are used to identify the potential hazards to people from the School's activities, which will include (e.g. safeguarding related, site security, slipping, falling, poor health, equipment, sports, boarding, recreation), property (fire), strategic (reputation, loss of pupils, impact on development), financial (falling pupil rolls), compliance (data protection) and environmental (hazardous waste) risks.</p> |
| Hazard | Something with the potential to cause harm to people, such as chemicals, electricity or working from height |
| Risk | The risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be. |
| Control measure | Risk control measures are the measures, actions, and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. substituting harmful chemicals, staff training, appropriate supervision, clear work procedures, preliminary visits, warning signs and barriers). |

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Governing Board

Albeit risk assessments form an integral part of overall site safety, which in turn is a key component to safeguarding which is everybody's responsibility, the Governing Board has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the School, but will delegate day-to-day responsibility to the Headteacher, Matthew Robinson.

The Governing Board has a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, pupils and visitors are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This applies to activities on or off the school premises.

The Proprietary Body, as the employer, acting through the Headteacher, Safeguarding and Site-Management staff also has a duty to:

- Assess the risks to staff and others affected by school activities in order to identify and introduce the health and safety measures necessary to manage the risks; and
- Inform employees about risks and the measures in place to manage them.

4.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher, or in the Head Teacher's absence the SENDCo, is responsible for ensuring that all risk assessments are completed and reviewed within the timescales identified at Schedule 1 below.

4.3 School staff and volunteers

The School will provide suitable and sufficient training for staff required to complete risk assessments to ensure staff have the knowledge and understanding to fulfil this responsibility and undertake effective risk assessments, as a minimum all teaching staff will undertake online training in risk assessment. Key staff in support departments with a responsibility for completing risk assessments will also undertake the online training or obtain the required knowledge and skills via other training methods.

School staff are responsible for:

- Class teachers and specialist teachers are responsible for conducting risk assessments on their classrooms and lesson-delivery;
- Assisting with, and participating in, risk assessment processes, as required;
- Familiarising themselves with risk assessments and completing relevant training;
- Implementing control measures identified in risk assessments; and
- Alerting the Headteacher to any risks they find which need assessing.

All staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the health and safety policy and arrangements (including risk assessments) and members of the SLT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties.

All staff are expected to participate in the completion of risk assessments when requested to do so, follow safety related instructions and safe systems of work identified in risk assessments. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks/defects or concerns to their line manager, in order assist with reducing risks.

4.4 Pupils and parents

Pupils and parents are responsible for following the school's advice in relation to risks, on-site and off-site, and for reporting any hazards to a member of staff.

4.5 Contractors

Contractors are responsible for undertaking their own risk assessment(s), in order to protect the health and safety of their staff, our pupils, staff and visitors. The contractor “owns” the risk involved with their work activities. However, the School has an obligation to ensure competent contractors are used, sufficient time for planning is allowed and risk assessment forms part of the planning and work processes.

If a contractor is employed to undertake work on behalf of the School, the person engaging the contractor (Site Manager) must ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place to cover the work, prior to work starting, in addition to the necessary insurance documentation, DBS certification and that all PPE equipment is held by Contractor. The Site Manager will need to review and discuss the contractor’s risk assessments and provide supervision of the contractor to ensure risk assessments are being adhered to.

5. Risk assessment process

When assessing risks in the school, we will follow the process outlined below.

We will also involve staff, where appropriate, to ensure that risks within their areas of responsibility or arising out of the work of their department are identified, and, so far as is reasonably practicable, removed or adequately reduced and controlled. Risk assessments will enable suitable controls, helping establish safe systems of work and H&S training needs of staff.

Step 1: identify hazards – we will consider activities, processes and substances within the school and establish what associated-hazards could injure or harm the health of staff, pupils and visitors.

Step 2: decide who may be harmed and how – for each hazard, we will establish who might be harmed, listing groups rather than individuals. We will bear in mind that some people will have special requirements, for instance pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and expectant mothers. We will then establish how these groups might be harmed.

Step 3: evaluate the risks and decide on control measures (reviewing existing ones as well) – we will establish the level of risk posed by each hazard and review existing control measures. We will balance the level of risk against the measures needed to control them and do everything that is reasonably practicable to protect people from harm.

Step 4: record significant findings – the findings from steps 1-3 will be written up and recorded in order to produce the risk assessment. A risk assessment template can be found in appendix 2 of this policy.

Step 5: review the assessment and update, as needed – we will review our risk assessments, as needed, and the following questions will be asked when doing so:

- Have there been any significant changes?
- Are there improvements that still need to be made?
- Have staff or pupils spotted a problem?
- Have we learnt anything from accidents or near misses?

Step 6: retaining risk assessments – risk assessments are retained for the 3 years after the length of time they apply. Risk assessments are securely disposed of

6. Key risk areas

We consider that our key risk areas are:

- o Safeguarding, including:
 - appointment and training of a suitable Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy Designating Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) ;
 - bullying
 - child-on-child abuse
 - allegations
 - risk of radicalisation (Prevent)

- o Pupil welfare, including:
 - supervision
 - educational visits (including residential visits)
 - medical needs
 - pupil self-harming/eating disorders

- o Recruitment-related matters, including:
 - the suitability of staff to undertake designated roles including staff not employed by the School but who work with pupils in School;
 - the implementation of appropriate and timely checks (e.g. DBS checks) to ensure suitability

- o Management of visitors on School premises

- o Health and safety considerations, including:
 - fire and emergencies
 - traffic and pedestrian interaction on site and in the immediate vicinity of the School
 - third party access easement
 - management of hazardous substances
 - use of hazardous equipment e.g. in DT, art etc.

- o Curriculum-related matters, including:
 - activities
 - sports

- o Other risk areas, including but not limited to:
 - financial
 - recruitment of Governors
 - computing
 - data
 - reputational
 - terrorism
 - security, specifically EYFS areas

This guidance is applicable to general risk assessment. Where specialist skills are required, e.g. asbestos, fire, water quality and hazardous substances, there is separate policy guidance in place. Teaching area risk assessment checklists are also in place for guidance.

7. Monitoring arrangements

Risk assessments are written as needed and reviewed by the Headteacher and teaching staff / Governor sub-committee's as appropriate. This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher annually, and approved by the FGB.

8. General Arrangements

Each department is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place for all work activities, the Site Manager, Headteacher and SENDCo will work with all departments to provide advice and support where required.

Risk assessments should consider the following general hazards/situations:

- Safeguarding of pupils
- Supervision arrangements
- Manual handling
- Working at height
- Slips and trips
- Hazards from equipment/machinery used
- Lone working
- Substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- Noise
- Access and egress
- Preventing unauthorised access to high risk areas
- New and expectant mothers.

Risk assessments should be undertaken using the school risk assessment template to enable a consistent judgement of risk and easy identification of the high priority risks, see appendix 2.

Completed risk assessments should be made available on the shared drive and/or stored appropriately in the School Office and further, the Site Manager should be notified.

A variety of generic risk assessments have been created covering some of the above generic risks. However generic risk assessments should be treated with caution, whilst these can be a useful starting point for departments, assessments need to be specific to the actual situation and it is important that we are able to operate all the control measures listed.

A number of site-wide risk assessments have been completed and are available, with associated procedures, from the Estates Department and/or Health and Safety manager, these are listed at appendix 1 below.

9. Dynamic Risk Assessment

Although many risk assessments have been completed, it is possible that some tasks still need assessing or reassessing, therefore if any member of staff has a role which they think has uncontrolled risks, they must inform the Headteacher or Site Manager.

Levels of risk can change from day to day, and tasks that have been assessed and suitably controlled may have a higher level of risk on some occasions (e.g. due to weather conditions or poor housekeeping), and it is essential that every member of staff takes a moment to assess risk associated with every job before they start it. This is known as a 'dynamic risk assessment' and is simply taking a moment to think before acting. It is the same principle as looking both ways before crossing the road – you have to do it every time before you cross the road. Staff must still take the time to assess the risks before undertaking a task, even if there is an up to date risk assessment.

Staff must never undertake a task where they have identified a risk that means they cannot do the task safely at that point in time, or that creates uncontrolled risk to others, especially pupils at the school.

10. Training

All new members of staff are given an induction into the School's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it.

All staff responsible for completing risk assessments will be provided with training to provide them with the knowledge and understanding of the risk assessment process and the skills required to undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

All teaching staff and technicians receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas. Risk assessments should be used to identify further staff training needs to enable them to work safely.

11. Classroom and Office Risks

In recognition of the limited risks involved in classroom teaching, the School will use a Health and Safety Checklist for classrooms. The Health and Safety checklist ("the H&S Checklist") will be provided to teachers annually, each teacher should complete the checklist and return it to the Site Manager. All responses will be collated and an action plan created with risk levels and priorities identified in order to implement the necessary remedial measures.

All class teachers will be asked to complete the H&S checklist to assist with providing a safe environment for teaching and learning to take place.

Office staff will also be requested to complete a simple health and safety checklist, although these are low risk work environments it's important to ensure safe access/egress, suitable lighting and ventilation for example.

12. New and Expectant Mothers

New or expectant mother, means an employee who is pregnant; who has given birth within the previous six months; or who is breastfeeding. The School should take account of women of child-bearing age when carrying out all risk assessments and identify the preventive and protective measures that are required.

The Headteacher and/or Site Manager should ensure that departmental risk assessments adequately cover risks to new and expectant mothers. If this has not been covered or is felt to be insufficient a specific risk assessment should be completed by the line manager.

Where the risk assessment identifies risks to new and expectant mothers and these risks cannot be avoided by the preventive and protective measures taken, the School will need to do one of the following:

- a. Alter her working conditions or hours of work if it is reasonable to do so and would avoid the risks or, if these conditions cannot be met;
- b. Identify and offer her suitable alternative work that is available; or
- c. Suspend her from work. The Employment Rights Act 1996 (which is the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry) requires that this suspension should be on full pay. Employment rights are enforced through the employment tribunals.

13. Monitoring and Review of Risk Assessments

All risk assessments should be regularly reviewed:

- If there is significant change in the circumstances (e.g. new equipment/ways of working);
- After an accident or incident;
- If the original assessment is no longer valid (e.g. change in legislation or changes in technology/science) or

- In all other cases regularly (annually)

Risk assessments should also be reviewed and recorded, when major structural work is planned, if work practices change or in the event of an accident. As each department (teaching and support), review and develop their risk assessments it will be possible to maintain a "library" of risk assessments on a shared secure drive and/or stored in the School Office securely for staff to refer to and adapt for their own use.

The Site Manager will carry out a health and safety review of all classes and departments with a focus on risk assessments, to ensure they are kept up to date, reviewed at least annually and of a quality to be deemed 'suitable and sufficient'. Such reviews will take place annually but may be more frequent if there are significant improvements required.

The Site Manager will periodically provide an overview of school-wide risk assessments, focussing on high level risks, to the Site/Facilities Management sub-committee of the Resources Committee for review, to action where necessary through planned improvements to reduce risk.

14. Links with other policies

This risk assessment policy links to the following (non-exhaustive) policies:

- Health & Safety policy
- First aid policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy
- Code of Conduct – Safe Working Practice
- Covid Risk Assessment
- ICT & Internet Acceptable Use policy
- NQT Induction policy

Appendix 1: statutory risk assessments checklist

The following table lists the risk assessments that schools are required to have in place.

| Statutory or mandatory risk assessment | x | Completed by | Date of review |
|---|----------|---|-----------------------|
| Workers under the age of 18 | X | Head Teacher | Sept 2025 |
| Asbestos | X | External provider | July2025 |
| Substances hazardous to health | X | Rapid Clean (QR code on cleaning cupboard door) | Sept 2025 |
| Display screen equipment | X | Site manager | Sept 2025 |
| Fire | X | External provider | July 2025 |
| Manual handling | X | Site Manager | Sept 2025 |
| Working at height | X | Site manager | Sept 2025 |
| Children being drawn into terrorism | X | Head Teacher | Sept 2025 |
| Lone Working | X | Site Manager | Sept 2025 |
| Stress | X | Head Teacher | Sept 2025 |

Appendix 2 - How to Conduct A Risk Assessment

This appendix contains guidance on how to undertake a risk assessment. The template at Appendix 2 is based on the HSE's Five Steps to risk assessment. A risk assessment should be carried out by anyone who is trained and competent to do so; someone who understands the circumstances, the potential harm and the deviations.

To do a risk assessment, consider what, in the activities, might cause harm to people and decide whether you are doing enough to prevent that harm. Once you have decided that, you need to identify and prioritise putting in place, appropriate and sensible control measures.

It's crucial that the risk assessment contents, particularly the control measures actually reflect activities and arrangements that are in place. If a control measure is identified as being required in the recorded risk assessment this must be implemented. Staff involved in the activities/operations should be consulted and involved with the risk assessment process and the results must be effectively communicated to staff and pupils. The written document should help with communicating and managing the risks.

When completing a risk assessment, the focus should be on significant risks associated with the activity, you do not need to include insignificant risks. In other words, you do not need to include risks from everyday life unless school/work activities increase the risk.

Risks should be reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level by taking preventative measures, in order of priority. This is what is meant by a hierarchy of control. The list below sets out the order to follow when planning to reduce identified risks. Consider the headings in the order shown, do not simply jump to the easiest control measure to implement.

1. **Elimination** - Redesign the job or substitute a substance so that the hazard is removed or eliminated.
2. **Substitution** - Replace the material or process with a less hazardous one.
3. **Engineering controls** - for example use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where you cannot avoid working at height, install or use additional machinery to control risks from dust or fume or separate the hazard from operators by methods such as enclosing or guarding dangerous items of machinery/equipment. Give priority to measures which protect collectively over individual measures.
4. **Administrative Controls** - These are all about identifying and implementing the procedures you need to work safely. For example: reducing the time workers are exposed to hazards (e.g. by job rotation); prohibiting use of mobile phones in hazardous areas; increasing safety signage, and performing risk assessments.
5. **Personal protective clothes and equipment** - Only after all the previous measures have been tried and found ineffective in controlling risks to a reasonably practicable level, must personal protective equipment (PPE) be used. For example, where you cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall (should one occur). If chosen, PPE should be selected and fitted by

the person who uses it. Workers must be trained in the function and limitation of each item of PPE.