



Risk Assessment Policy (16a)

Introduction

At Avon House School, we take this aspect of school life seriously and will continue our yearly schedule of regular risk assessment updates and renewals. In addition, where there has been change, we will carry out new risk assessments.

The Governors of Avon House School, together with all the staff, are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Their highest priority lies in ensuring that all the operations within the school environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully, not just with the law, but with best practice.

Risks are inherent in everyday life and we need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. We also consider it important that our pupils are educated in how to cope safely with risk.

What is risk assessment?

The HSE (Health and Safety Executive) defines a risk assessment as a careful examination of what in your work could cause harm to people so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken sufficient precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

Elements of risk assessments:

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. fire).
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring.
- An assessment is needed of the potential severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property).
- Risk controls are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unregulated risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms).
- Review procedures are there to ensure that we learn from any mistakes and change risk assessments according to our own experiences.

Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focusing on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong.

Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly. We are very aware that all staff and pupils need to receive training. An annual update of health & safety training is carried out at the start of the school year by the Bursar and separate induction training for new staff occurs as and when needed. A 'library' of risk assessments is maintained on the school hard drive and monitored by the School Risk Assessor (SRA). In addition, aspects of coping with risks in everyday life are included in the School's PHSEE curriculum.



The School has an annual audit of all health and safety matters, carried out by BBi–Risk Solutions. The most important checks cover fire safety and procedures, educational visits, buildings and premises, legionella, asbestos and building works, all of which carry their own risk assessment in addition to their own policy document.

Risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including: educational/curriculum, science, EYFS, sport and PE activities, art, general classroom activities, activities in the hall and staff pregnancy.

To help us carry out effective risk assessments and assess all risks adequately, we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits.

The SRA provides Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services (CLEAPSS) information for the STEM Lead to pass on.

Medical and First Aid

The School has risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures. Accident forms are completed by staff who are responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed on to the School Nurse as appropriate. The School’s separate medical policy explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency. The Head Teacher/School Nurse are responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

Any incident where someone goes to hospital has a written report kept by the School Nurse. Where pupils have daily medical needs, Individual Health Care Plans are drawn up and shared with teachers and parents.

Site Security

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the kitchen or the classrooms at break etc.

The site is secure and checked daily. All chemicals and flammables are kept securely locked and there are separate COSHH risk assessments with data sheets. Pupils do not have access to maintenance or caretaking areas of the school.

Other areas of risk such as child protection are dealt with in the relevant Avon House School Policies. In addition to specific assessments a set of generic and general risk assessments are on the T-drive.

Support Areas

- Catering: risk assessments and training are required for every item of catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). All induction and refresher training is carried out by CH&Co and covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices. The



School's catering manager and the CH&Co Area Manager should liaise with the Head Teacher and Bursar as necessary and vice versa.

- Caretaking/Cleaning and Security: the caretaker liaises with the Bursar to cover weekly alarms testing, manual handling, working at heights, COSHH and asbestos. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, PPE and general safety issues.
- Maintenance: risk assessments and training are required for every tool and item of equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, asbestos, contractors on site, electricity, gas, water and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, safe working practices, Fire Warden training, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment. This is organised and carried out by the Bursar in conjunction with the Head Teacher.
- Grounds: the caretaker will liaise with the SRA to ensure that risk assessments and training are carried out for tools and pieces of machinery, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Office staff: risk assessments/self-evaluations are required for the display screen equipment and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

In addition, guidance notes are provided for the use of laptops and hand held devices.

Conducting a risk assessment

When carrying out a risk assessment staff should firstly look on the T-drive to check relevant existing risk assessments for guidance. If a specific new risk assessment is required, the following should be considered.

- Location
- Type of activity
- Equipment required
- Hazard identification
- Control measures in place
- Additional measures needed
- Review

All events and visits must be countersigned by the SRA.

Levels of risks

Our policy at Avon House School is not to carry out any high risk activity. Activities involving pupils normally carry an acceptable level of risk. Pupils are always given a safety



briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment when appropriate.

We always employ specialists to undertake high risk tasks such as on residential educational visits. Support staff may only carry out such activities if they have been properly trained.

All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its use.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The Bursar arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety reviews
- Pest control

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded annually or when major structural work is planned or in the event of an accident. There is a yearly plan for review for each risk assessment. A separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for catering and cleaning and for water sampling.

Responsibilities of all staff

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. However, 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 Head Teacher, the Bursar and members of the SLT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties.

Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar or the Head Teacher by daily, weekly, monthly or half-termly checks.

N.B. Many areas mentioned in this policy are already covered in detail under other Avon House School policies. This policy is aimed at highlighting the essential part that risk assessments play in the everyday running of the school.

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