



THE LAURELS SCHOOL

Risk Assessment Policy

Introduction

The Governors of The Laurels School 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 with not just the law but with best practice. Risks are inherent in everyday life. We need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. Our pupils need to be educated on how to cope safely with risk.

The 2014 DfE guidance *Health & Safety: Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, School Leaders, School Staff and Governing Bodies* covers any health & safety issues not specific to other Regulations. It is therefore concerned with the need for risk assessments and this policy reflects the guidance given.

A risk assessment can be defined as a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation defined thus:

- 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 (e.g. a chip pan will catch fire if left unattended).
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property).
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of the unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, fire alarms, fire practices and insurance).

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.

Areas of risk

There are numerous activities carried out at The Laurels School, many of which require a separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety and procedures.
- Educational visits and trips.
- Certain educational areas (e.g. science during experiments, using DT and art equipment, PE & sports activities).

We make use of model risk assessments for the school premises and adapt them to our own needs. The Health & Safety Officer, Malgorzata Dziobon, is responsible for implementing and then updating all risk

assessments on an annual basis and ensuring that all areas are covered. The Educational Visits Coordinator (Laura Sardina) is responsible for risk assessments involving trips.

Pastoral

Our Character Education programme, assemblies and talks are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken by our pupils. This also includes internet access.

Medical and First Aid

This area covers first aid, allergies, administering medicines and all related procedures. Various procedures are in place with regard to medical and first aid risks. Accident forms are used and the first aider on duty ensures that a copy is sent home to parents where the injury is deemed to be significant. Details about allergies are requested upon entry to the school and records are updated regularly. The Head and/or Health & Safety Officer is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parents, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

Unsupervised Access & Security

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the kitchen during any cooking activity or areas which are deemed out of bounds. The doors to the science laboratories are always kept locked when unoccupied and flammables or hazardous substances are kept securely locked. A risk assessment also exists for security and intruders.

Child Protection & Safeguarding

Our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. A Safer Recruitment Policy and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children, or are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to include Governors, volunteers and peripatetic teachers, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives appropriate training according to their role in school, we manage this risk to an acceptable level.

Curriculum and Extra-curricular

Separate risk assessments exist for specific departments for example Science, Art and PE. They may also apply to classrooms, after school clubs, etc. Risk assessments for outside school include the arrival & departure of pupils, use of recreational areas & equipment.

Written risk assessments are always carried out for higher-risk activities such as those involving water or heights and mountaineering for example, as well as staying overnight or travelling abroad. For trips and activities not necessarily requiring a written risk assessment, staff will nevertheless take all necessary precautions and consider any possible risks beforehand (e.g. first aid arrangements, medications, transport, staff : pupil ratios etc). A generic risk assessment is provided for guidance.

Conducting a risk assessment

At The Laurels School we use the model recommended by the HSE in its publication “Five Steps to Risk Assessment”. 1 – Identify the hazards; 2 – Decide who might be harmed and how; 3 – Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions; 4 – Record your findings and implement them; 5 – Review your assessment and update if necessary.

Our pupils do not carry out many high risk activities; they are mostly low risk. Any medium risk activities will be undertaken with particular specialists, and providing safety briefings are given and protective equipment is worn.

We will always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.

Specialists carry out risk assessments in asbestos, legionella, gas safety, electrical safety and fire safety (also see Fire Safety Policy).

All risk assessments are reviewed (and recorded) annually, when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident or major incident.

All members of staff are given an induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health & 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.

Role of the governing body

The PACT governing body keeps under review any major risks to the school, including (amongst other things) strategic risk, loss of fee income, damage to reputation, risk of a child protection issue, gaps in governor skills, employment disputes, major health and safety issues (including risk of fire), poor cash flow management and fraud.

The measures taken to protect the school against such risks include safer recruitment of staff (as well as governors, volunteers and peripatetic teachers), measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff and governors, insurance, strong financial controls and use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects etc. as needed.

They are responsible for co-operating with the Head and members of the SMT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties. All members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Head or Health and Safety Officer.

Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the Head to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy. This policy will be reviewed at least once every two years.

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