

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Risk Assessment Policy/Procedures
September 2025



This policy should be read in light of our Mission Statement that states:

'At St. Joseph's, we live, love and learn by the example of Jesus.'

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Health and safety legislation requires every employer to carry out a “suitable and sufficient” risk assessment, but the way this is done must be appropriate and proportionate.
- 1.2 A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. It should identify **practical actions that protect people from harm and injury** and for most school assessments short bullet points work well.
- 1.3 A documented risk assessment is **not** required for every activity, neither does the law require that we eliminate all risk but to protect people as far as is ‘reasonably practicable’.
- 1.4 Therefore school arrangements for risk assessment should be proportionate to the level of risk involved with more consideration being given to **significant** risks (those with the potential to cause real harm) which need to be formally documented, rather than undertake excessive paper-based risk assessments of very low risk activities.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure risk assessments are conducted. The actual assessment process may be delegated to other members of staff and should be monitored annually by SLT / governors to ensure that significant risks are being adequately controlled.

2.0 FIVE STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1 *Step 1 – Identify the Hazards*

First you need to work out how people could be harmed.

In most cases these can simply be identified by observation of the task/workplace and consulting those staff involved in the activity. The focus should be on identifying **significant** hazards and not the trivial.

Potential areas which may require risk assessment within school settings are available as generic assessments for schools to consider adapting / adopting to their individual circumstances.

http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/healthandsafety/risk_assessment.shtml

2.2 **Step 2 – Identify who might be harmed and how.**

For each hazard be clear about who might be harmed e.g. staff, pupils, contractors, visitors etc. this will help identify the best way of managing the risk.

Remember that you may have a higher duty of care for some individuals with additional needs e.g. new and young workers, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities/medical conditions who may be at particular risk.

2.3 **Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions**

Risk is usually evaluated by considering the likelihood of the harm occurring

RISK RATING	ACTION REQUIRED
VERY HIGH (VH) Strong likelihood of fatality / serious injury occurring	The activity must not take place at all. You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
HIGH (H) Possibility of fatality/serious injury occurring	You must identify further controls to reduce the risk rating.
MEDIUM (M) Possibility of significant injury or over 3 day absence occurring	If it is not possible to lower risk further consider the risk against the benefit.
LOW (L) Possibility of minor injury only	No further action required.

and the

potential severity of the injury. This will help identify if the existing procedures and controls in place are adequate or if any additional actions need to be taken. i.e. whether you have done all that is reasonable to protect people from harm.

Involve staff in the writing of risk assessments, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice. It will also ensure they understand the risk assessment and aid ownership of responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others.

2.4 **Step 4 – Record and Implement the Findings.**

The level of detail in an assessment should be proportional to the risk. The purpose is not to detail each trivial hazard but to ensure that significant hazards are adequately assessed with the aim of informing safe working practices. In the majority of cases the use of simple bullet pointed controls would be sufficient.

Completed risk assessments should be signed off by the person completing the assessment and should be agreed by their line manager/ head of department / head teacher.

Copies of risk assessments should be stored in a central and accessible location (hard copy or electronic) and made available to all staff involved in the activity. (specific assessments relating to individual staff or pupils should be stored on the individuals file.)

2.5 ***Step 5 – Review your risk assessment and update if necessary.***

Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly i.e. annually or as soon as any significant changes have occurred.

You should review a risk assessment immediately after there has been an accident or incident in order to identify what went wrong and whether any additional controls are required.

Measuring performance in managing risk can be achieved in a number of proactive ways:

- Lesson observations
- 1-2-1 / performance management
- Staff / Departmental meetings (A regular item on meeting agenda provides a brief opportunity to review practice in relation to accidents, near misses etc.)
- Inspection / audit by head of department / governors (General checklists and curriculum specific checks for KS3-5 are available on the grid – www.thegrid.org.uk)

3.0 **RISK ASSESSMENT IN THE CURRICULUM**

3.1 Teaching staff should be aware of relevant generic / model risk assessments and consider any significant health and safety issues such as class size, pupil behaviour, maturity, limitations of space, layout, equipment etc. as part of their planning and preparation, risk assessment is just another name for that process.

See ‘Managing Risk in the Curriculum’ for a range of areas for consideration as part of planning / assessment of risk.

3.2 For most activities rather than create additional paper records, or a specific risk assessment this is generally best achieved by incorporating your assessment into materials normally used in teaching, annotating schemes of work, lesson plans, pupil worksheets etc.

3.3 For those curricular activities in areas of higher risk (DT, science, PE etc.) guidance and generic risk assessments are produced by advisory bodies such as CLEAPSS and AfPE.

Heads of department / subject leaders should review courses against these and

- **check any new practical activities against the model risk assessments.**

- satisfy themselves that the ‘model’ risk assessment is appropriate to their work; and
- adapt the model to their own actual work situations.

3.4 Simply referring to model assessments or other published schemes is insufficient, there must be some evidence that these assessments have been consulted and adapted if necessary to suit the school.

3.5 Where lessons / activities are not adequately covered by model assessments or are beyond the scheme of work then a specific and more detailed assessment must be conducted but this would be an exceptional circumstance.

3.6 Therefore a school’s approach to risk assessment within the curriculum could be evidenced by a range of documents highlighting any specific precautions or warnings from model risk assessments and demonstrating that risks have been adequately considered.

For example:

- Scheme of work;
- Lesson plans;
- Daily use texts such as pupil worksheets;
- Attendance registers (evidencing progression);
- Minutes of meetings;
- Medical information;
- CPD / professional records showing specific competency requirements;

3.7 When revising / reviewing your scheme of work check practical activities against model risk assessments, in particular be aware of any changes in advice from advisory bodies e.g. CLEAPSS (CD Rom for DT and science re-issued annually, newsletters / website highlight updates), AfPE (Safe Practice in school sport is reissued every 3 years) etc.

3.8 Risk assessments for Science ,DT any other subjects should be sent to Subject leads 48 hours before activity. Then to Head at least 24 hours for approval – Template can be Plymouth science, Kapow DT or school template.

4.0 FURTHER GUIDANCE

If you require any further assistance with completing risk assessments contact the Health and Safety Team, CHO 031, County hall, Hertford, SG13 8DE

Telephone: 01992 556478

Fax: 01992 555962

Evidencing risk assessment through existing documents

Straightforward / routine activities

There may well be no significant risks which require documenting. e.g. cutting paper with scissors, food test tasting etc..

Any specific risks / controls would be considered as part of the normal lesson planning process and documented as short bullet points if significant.

E.g. Relevant pupil information (SEN, medical etc.), a need to recap on safety issues etc.

Relevant links / information sources

HCC is a member of CLEAPSS, information is available on the CD-Rom which should have been received in school (annually), updates are available from their website. <http://www.cleapss.org.uk/> (The CD-Rom provides the login information)

Design & Technology

- DATA risk assessment in secondary schools <http://www.data.org.uk/>
- [CLEAPSS](#)
- BS 4163:2007 Health and Safety for Design and Technology in Schools and Similar Establishments
- Be Safe! Health and Safety in primary science and technology 3rd Edition ASE, 2001.

Science

- [CLEAPSS](#) Laboratory Handbook
- CLEAPSS Hazcards
- CLEAPSS L196 managing risk assessment in science
- Safeguards in the school laboratory 11th edition, ASE 2006
<http://www.ase.org.uk/>
- Be Safe! Health and Safety in primary science and technology 3rd Edition ASE, 2001.
- Topics in safety, 3rd Edition ASE 2001

Art and design

- [CLEAPSS](#)
- National Society for Education in Art & Design (NSEAD)
<http://www.nsead.org/hsg/index.aspx>

Physical Education

- Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport' BAALPE / AfPE
<http://www.afpe.org.uk/>
- Specific national Governing body advice e.g. British Gymnastics
[Safe Practice in School Swimming](#)

Offsite visits

[Hertfordshire County Council Offsite Visits Manual](#)

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.htm>

<http://www.oeap.info/>

Review Date: September 2026

RISK ASSESSMENT OF	<i>brief outline of the task/activity.</i>	
Establishment:	Assessment by:	Date:
Review Date : <i>usually annually or earlier if conditions change</i>	Manager Approval:	Date:



Hazard / Risk	Who is at Risk?	How can the hazards cause harm?	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures	Action by who	Action by when	Date Action completed
<i>List the significant hazards you have identified</i>	<i>Staff, pupils visitors</i>	<i>E.g. electrocution, poisoning, etc.</i>	<i>Brief description of what you are already doing to reduce risk and/or reference to source information</i>	<i>Detail any further actions necessary</i>			

DATE OF REVIEW:	COMMENTS: <i>Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.</i>
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