

# RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

August 2023

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**This policy applies to all areas of Shrewsbury High School.**

## Statement

This policy reflects the commitment to Health & Safety by Shrewsbury High School. All reasonably practicable steps will be taken to secure the health, safety and welfare of everyone legally on school premises and those attending school activities off-site.

Shrewsbury High School adheres to the GDST Risk Assessment Policy.

## Risk Assessment Policy Statement

The GDST recognises that Risk Assessment is one of the keystones of good health and safety management. It can make a significant contribution to promoting welfare and reducing health and safety risks to employees, pupils, visitors and others who may be affected by the way in which the school operates.

All GDST schools, academies and Trust Office must complete comprehensive risk assessments for all potentially hazardous activities, environments and situations, using the “5 steps to risk assessment” approach, regularly review them, and implement the controls necessary to reduce the risks to an acceptable level following the principles of prevention: eliminate the hazard at source, reduce the hazard, prevent contact with the hazard, implement safe systems of work, employ personal protective equipment.

All GDST schools and Trust Office will provide training and comprehensive guidance for employees on how to complete risk assessments.

## What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a systematic method of looking at the school environment and activities to identify things that could happen or go wrong and cause injury or ill health, and deciding on the actions needed to prevent this. If it is not possible to remove all the risks, they should be reduced or minimised to an acceptable level. It helps to protect:

- pupils, employees, visitors, contractors and members of the public
- the school and its reputation
- the GDST and its reputation.

## Legal Requirements

Risk assessments are required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. They must be 'suitable and sufficient', ie they should show that:

- A proper check was made
- All the people who could be affected were considered
- All the obvious, significant hazards and risks were considered
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low
- The relevant staff were included in the process.

Risk assessments must be written down if the organisation has more than 5 employees.

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## Guiding Principles

- All activities with any potential hazard must have a risk assessment conducted which details the likelihood of the hazard occurring, the applicable risk caused by the hazard, the possible severity of the hazard, the likelihood of the risk occurring and the actions that are in place to minimise the hazard. This includes activities conducted on and outside school premises
- The standard risk template is to be used (see Appendix I)
- The risk assessment is to document who has completed it, the date of completion and the review date
- Where possible, investigation should be made to the possibility of actually completely removing the hazard
- All risk assessments are to be stored on the shared drive so that they are accessible to all staff. The only exception to this are Risk Assessments for school trips which are stored on the Evolve database
- Heads of Departments/Faculties are responsible for ensuring that the risk assessments for their department/faculty are completed, reviewed on an annual basis and that all staff who may work in their area are familiar with the applicable risk assessments
- It is good practice for all the relevant staff in the department to be involved with completing and reviewing the risk assessments as they will have useful information about how the tasks or activities happen in practice, what can (and sometimes does) go wrong, and they are the people who will implement the controls
- Staff are to receive training in the 5 principles of risk assessments each year in the annual H&S update and those responsible for completing risk assessments can access training through the H&S e-learning system or by referring to the HSE Risk assessment booklet available on the shared drive at T:\Admin\Health & Safety\Risk Assessment.

In the event of an incident or near miss the applicable risk assessment is to be reviewed.

## Key Risk Assessment Areas:

Schools are complex places and a significant number of risks exist. These can be broken down into seven groups:

- The site
- Curricular and pupil activities including school trips and educational visits
- Employee activities
- Foreseeable emergencies
- Equipment chemicals and substances
- People who need extra care
- Events.

A Risk Assessment Index is completed by Departments/faculties where there are multiple risk assessments required for their areas/activities. This ensures that risk assessments are listed in a comprehensive and logical order to make access to them easier. The Index should include the following information:

- Name of the risk assessment
- Date of completion/last review date
- Name of the person who completed/last reviewed the risk assessment
- Date the risk assessment will next be updated
- Where the risk assessment is stored if not held on the shared drive.

## Non H&S Risk Areas:

The following the areas are identified as risks for the school although not related directly to health and safety:

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- Business continuity
- Flooding
- Recruitment procedures
- Reputational
- Terrorism
- Security.

The above lists are not comprehensive and can be added to at any time.

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator is responsible for applying the Risk Assessment policy.

## **Review**

Risk assessments are to be subject to review:

- When a change has been made to the activity
- After an accident, incident or significant near miss occurs
- When there is a change in the task or activity
- When there are changes to the type of people or new people involved in the activity
- When the activity involves new or altered equipment or is in a new or altered environment
- When there are changes to good practice
- When there are legislative changes
- Annually if for no other reason.

## **Record Retention**

There are no official requirements for the length of time records relating to risk assessments should be kept. However it is recommended that records should be kept for three years at the very least, since this is the period in which a civil claim can be made by an employee following an incident. If health risks are involved, then the length of time may have to be much longer e.g. 40 years, as claims can be made within three years of the disease or ill health being diagnosed.

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**August 2023**

