EF Academy
INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

EF ACADEMY - OXFORD

Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures

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Document Purpose: **To state EF Academy Oxford's methods of, and commitment to controlling risk as part of Health and Safety within the school.**
Related Documents: **Health and Safety Policy,** **Safeguarding Policy** **Supervision of Students Policy** **Safer Recruitment Policy** **Activities, Trips and Outings Policy** **Equal Opportunities Policy and Accessibility Plan** **Supervision of Students Policy** **Missing Persons Policy**
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Risk Assessment Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction and Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to enable the School to meet its duty of care to students and staff (and others) by creating a culture of undertaking risk assessments to reduce the risks of all school operations, as far as is reasonably practical. The aim is to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff, visitors and others affected by our operations.

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 to ensure such obligations are met. The Independent School Regulatory requirements demand that the School ensures the welfare of students 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 students (and others) will be harmed through negligence and lack of foresight or proper planning.

The purpose of risk assessment

By focussing on prevention, as opposed to reacting when things go wrong, it is possible to prevent accidents and injuries that could ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Once a risk assessment has been completed the significant risks must be communicated to staff and others, to enable their co-operation and informed decisions. Such communication can be done verbally, for example through a faculty meeting, staff briefing or where appropriate more formally by providing a copy of the risk assessment and discussing the findings during a team or faculty meeting.

What is a risk assessment?

Risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people, particularly in the School's case to staff and students that could result from an activity or situation.

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm.
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard (harm) occurring.
- 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, actions and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unchecked risk (e.g. staff training, appropriate supervision, clear work procedures, pre-trip visits, warning signs and barriers). Risk assessments are used to identify the potential hazards to people from the School's activities (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 student rolls) and environmental (hazardous waste).

2. **Responsibilities For Risk Assessments**

The School's responsibility

It is the School's responsibility, through its management, to ensure risk assessments are completed and implemented. The work involved to meet this responsibility is delegated to key roles within the school by the Executive Committee, namely the Principal, Deputy Head (also Health & Safety Officer), Sports Activities and Event Coordinator, Boarding Lead and Heads of Faculty. This responsibility includes recognition of the particular nature of the School as a boarding school and the associated risks e.g. security of pupils. The Deputy Head, Sports Activities and Event Coordinator and School Administrator monitor and evaluate risk assessments, and reports on risk assessment to the Deputy Head.

EF Academy 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.

Role of the Senior Leadership Team (Governance)

The Executive Committee has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Deputy Head of School to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly
- responsibility for ensuring the policy is made available to parents on request
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Deputy Head of School (also Health & Safety Officer)

The Deputy Head of School will:

- Take delegated responsibility from the Principal to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy
- ensure all school personnel, students and parents are aware of and comply with this policy
- work closely with the Sports Activities and Event Coordinator (trips and activities) and the School Administrator (HR)
- ensure risk assessments are in place
- have in place a cycle for reviewing risk assessments
- seek specialist and professional advice when necessary
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with students and school personnel
- annually report to the Executive Committee on the success and development of this policy

The Deputy Head from January 2026 will also assume the responsibilities of The Facilities Manager (and Health and Safety Officer), and will:

- carry out regular inspections of school premises
- maintain a file of Risk Assessments of all EF Academy buildings and where needed specific rooms within the buildings on both the Cotuit campus buildings and all EF Academy occupied Cherwell buildings
- maintain a file of Risk Assessments of all external areas within the Cotuit campus and external areas of the all EF Academy Cherwell buildings
- maintain a file of Risk Assessments of all hazardous chemicals and substances within the all EF Academy buildings on both the Cotuit and Cherwell campuses
- investigate potential hazards, employee complaints, accidents and dangerous occurrences
- update staff on health and safety matters arising
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- provide information and guidance to school personnel
- lead the development of this policy throughout the school
- provide guidance and support to all staff
- provide training for staff on induction and additionally when the need arises
- review and monitor and annually report to the Deputy Head of School on the success and development of this policy

Role of the Sports Activities and Event Coordinator:

The Sports, Activities and Event Coordinator will:

- carry out regular inspections of off-site premises used in school activities and staff involved in activities
- assist in carrying out whole school risk assessments
- maintain a file of risk assessments for all trips and activities on OneDrive
- ensure all activity suppliers and venues have appropriate risk assessment and licencing
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- provide information and guidance to school personnel
- lead the development of this policy throughout the school
- provide guidance and support to all staff
- provide training for staff on induction and when the need arises regarding trips and activities

Role of the School Administrator

The School Administrator will:

- carry out regular scrutiny of the SCR and safer recruitment practice
- assist in carrying out HR DBS risk assessments
- maintain a file of pre-DBS risk assessments for staff starting work before DBS certificates are received
- ensure the all EF Academy safer recruitment policy is being fully adhered to in relation to all pre-DBS risk assessments.
- ensuring no member of teaching staff engages in regulated activity or member of non-teaching staff is unsupervised on campus at any time until a DBS certificate has been seen and the staff member has been added to the SCR, with the permission of the Deputy Head of School

- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- provide information and guidance to school personnel
- lead the development of this policy throughout the school
- provide guidance and support to all staff
- provide training for staff on induction and when the need arises regarding safer recruitment

Role of School All Staff

All School Staff will:

- comply with this policy
- report any identified hazards to the Deputy Head
- implement risk assessments
- comply with all risk assessments
- write or assist in the writing of risk assessments if required
- bring to the attention of volunteer helpers and other visitors risk assessments that they should be aware of
- be aware of all other linked policies
- maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour within and outside school
- attend appropriate training sessions as required
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school

The Heads of Faculty have control over the activities in their area and therefore need to ensure decisions made take into account safety requirements. A key way to achieve this is by completing a risk assessment and ensuring work activities within the department are carried out safely. Heads of Faculties with the Deputy Head is responsible for ensuring appropriate risk assessments are in place and reviewing them to ensure the risk assessment accurately reflects practice and activities in their faculty. Heads of Faculty and the Deputy Head should ensure these risk assessments are reviewed regularly, after an incident/accident or at least on an annual basis.

All new members of staff are given an induction into the School's health and safety arrangements. 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 students 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 Executive Committee to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks/defects or concerns to their line manager or directly to the Deputy Head.

3. **General Arrangements**

The Deputy Head and Sports Activities and Event Coordinator are responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place for work activities. They will work with all faculties to provide advice and support.

General risk assessments should consider the following generic hazards:

- Safeguarding of pupils
- Manual handling
- Working at height

- Slips and trips
- Hazards from equipment/machinery used
- Substances hazardous to health (COSHH)
- Access and egress
- Preventing unauthorised access to high risk areas

However, every faculty will have specific hazards that need to be assessed; for example practical experiments in Science, recruitment checks by HR, supervision levels in boarding houses by the Boarding Lead, site security by the Deputy Head. Risk assessments should aim to eliminate the hazard where reasonably practicable and then look to reduce the risks, protecting pupils, staff and others, identifying safe ways of working and reducing the likelihood of ill-health or injury.

SLT and Heads of Faculty are responsible for ensuring staff are briefed on risks specific to their area of responsibility and the control measures to be used to protect the health and safety of students and staff.

Educational areas

There are number of higher risk student focused activities which take place at EF Academy both onsite and off-site, each of which requires risk assessment of the activity, the venue and travelling to the venue if it is offsite:

- safeguarding, child protection, and Prevent
- outdoor adventurous activities
- CAS Activities
- science experiments
- sporting activities
- art activities
- each individual sports activity
- Duke of Edinburgh award
- drama activities

EF Academy subscribes to the CLEAPSS Advisory Service (www.cleapss.org.uk) that provides model risk assessments for activities in Science.

Classroom and office risks

The School uses a generic HSE Health and Safety Checklist and HSE guidance. The Health and Safety checklist will be provided to staff annually by The Deputy Head. Each teacher should complete the checklist for their room and return it to The Deputy Head. All responses will be collated and an action plan created with risk levels and priorities identified and added to the classroom specific risk assessment. These classroom risk assessments will be updated annually unless further amendments are required within the academic year due to accident/injury or circumstantial changes to the room.

Office staff will also be requested to complete the generic HSE's Health and Safety Checklist. Although these are lower risk work environments it's important to ensure safe access/egress, suitable lighting and ventilation for example. In addition, all office-based staff will be requested to complete a Digital Display Equipment risk assessment.

Boarding residence risk assessments

A risk assessment is compiled by the Boarding Lead and Deputy Head, to cover items such as storage of chemicals, floor surfaces, electrical items, window openings. If a House Parent identifies any unsafe conditions, such as loose handrails, unsecured flooring, these should be communicated to the maintenance team on the maintenance communication QR code, for remedial action. For large projects or work requiring assistance from the external contractors, the Deputy Head will refer the work request to the VP Operations.

Educational visits, excursions and residential trips

The Sports Activities and Event Coordinator overseas all risk assessment arrangements for educational visits, excursions and residential trip. Please see the "Trips, Activities, Trips and Outings Policy".

Access by pupils to risky areas

Risk assessments of all areas of the school reinforce the policy of ensuring that students do not have unsupervised access to potentially hazardous areas, such as cleaners' cupboards or boiler rooms in boarding houses, Science Laboratories, Art Rooms, etc. Doors to these areas are kept locked when not in use. Pupils are only allowed access if risks are suitably controlled or accompanied by a member of staff.

Pupils do not have access to the operational areas of the school, such as Cleaning, Maintenance, and Catering areas.

Pastoral risk assessments

These are either written and recorded or completed orally in a group setting. Safeguarding risk assessments are confidential and prepared by the DSL (also the Deputy Head of School). These are stored on the relevant pupil's safeguarding file. Information is shared, where needed, to protect individuals. Supervision requirements for an activity or in boarding houses will most often be considered in a group session.

Recruitment

The Safer Recruitment Policy requires a risk assessment to be completed in cases where a member of staff commences employment prior to all DBS and vetting checks being in place:

Members of staff will not be permitted to start work until all the required vetting checks have been completed. Notwithstanding the above, a member of staff may be permitted to start work prior to receipt of an Enhanced DBS check, provided:

- their Enhanced DBS application has been completed and has been dispatched
- a separate check has been completed against the Barred List, before they start work
- all other recruitment checks have been completed, including a minimum of two references
- the member of staff is supervised at all times whilst on site by someone that has completed all the required vetting checks. Such arrangements will be reviewed weekly until such time as the Enhanced DBS check has been received
- a risk assessment has been signed off by the Principal or Deputy Head of School every two weeks.

Pupil Welfare and Supervision

When completing risk assessments, staff, particularly teaching staff should ensure safeguarding risks to students are considered and documented. One of the controls used to protect students will be adequate competent supervision. The 'Supervision of Students Policy" and "Missing Persons Policy" details the expectations of how students are supervised during various activities and times of the day and what to do should a student go missing.

Requirements for contractors engaged on behalf of EF Academy.

If a contractor is employed to undertake work on behalf of EF Academy the person engaging the contractor must ensure appropriate arrangements are in place before work starts. The requirements include:

- Suitable and sufficient risk assessment that covers the work must be provided by the contractor where reasonably practicable
- Public and Employers Liability Insurance – copies must be provided by the contractor (Min £5m)
- Safeguarding arrangements must be adhered to. The Deputy Head or other contracting member of staff must liaise with the HR department to ensure appropriate vetting checks are in place for the contractor staff or arrangements for suitable supervision of the contractor.

These requirements apply to contractors undertaking maintenance work. Such requirements are to be implemented at all times.

Events at EF Academy

Planning for significant events at EF Academy will also require a risk assessment. The event organiser should consider the following (please note this list is not exhaustive) with support from the Deputy Head, Sports Activities and Event Coordinator, DSL or School Nurses:

- safety of temporary structures
- sufficient lighting
- safe access and egress
- first aid provision and equipment
- recording of accidents/incidents
- fire safety arrangements and venue capacity limits
- Safeguarding requirements

4 Conducting a Risk Assessment

Guidance for the School is based on the HSE's Five Steps to risk assessment. A risk assessment should be carried out by 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 students. 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 your work activities increase the risk.

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
- 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. The School's arrangements for the management of health and safety, includes plans for regular health and safety audits of the of the school, its machinery and equipment. As each Faculty (teaching and support), review and develop their risk assessments it will be possible to maintain a "library" of risk assessments on OneDrive for staff to refer to and adapt for their own use.