



Signed..... *C.H. Knight*

Date 24.11.20.....

Review...November 2022.....

Woodford Valley C.E Primary Academy

This School is committed to creating the ethos in which children can grow towards Christian life, love and learning.

'And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples.'
John 34-35

Risk Assessment Policy

It is already well established under the general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 that a duty of care is owed to employees, pupils and other third parties alike.

That is to say that those responsible for the day-to-day running of the school must ensure as far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of any person put at risk through the school activities.

Risk Assessment is a process for people with these responsibilities to check that they are fulfilling all of their legal obligations but is, in itself, also a statutory duty under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

All schools should use the forms provided over the next few pages to conduct and record a systematic assessment of all of its premises and activities.

The process will:

- identify hazards – what could foreseeably cause injuries or harm;
- consider the existing precautionary measures that are in place;
- assess the level of residual risk - gauge the likelihood of it happening and the severity of the harm;
- make a judgement about whether this level of risk is acceptable;
- lead you to identify any additional precautions necessary to reduce the risk to a level that is as low as is reasonably practicable.

This quantification of risk, albeit a subjective one, is the key to determining whether or not a school is currently meeting its duty of care. By definition, any situation or activity which is assessed as having an unacceptably high residual risk after having taken account of existing levels of precautions will mean that further

additional control measures are necessary to reduce the risk to a level where we can say that the health and safety of those involved is being ensured 'as far as is reasonably practicable'.

The process of risk assessment will also enable the school to prioritise resources where they are most needed, i.e. to safeguard against the greatest risks.

Risk Assessment

What needs to be assessed?

Only the significant and foreseeable risks to the health, safety or welfare of employees and others that the LA is responsible for have to be formally assessed.

"Significant risks" should be judged on the criteria of the seriousness of the potential outcome. Any injury likely to require first aid or worse is significant. Note though that this concept of 'first aid' does not fit comfortably with the emotional distress or work-related stress that some employees may face through school activities. In these instances, "significant risks" should be taken to mean anything that a reasonable person would judge to be above and beyond that which normal everyday life might throw up.

"Foreseeable risks" are those which a reasonable person might accept as being predictable and credible in the circumstances. Unfortunately hindsight often skews what is deemed to be foreseeable. Suffice to say though that it is entirely predictable and credible that, for example, on occasions and in certain circumstances, children will engage in horseplay, vehicles will breakdown, windows will get smashed and some parents will behave aggressively. Schools should not waste effort assessing risks from the unpredictable and incredible events that could conceivably occur.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of typical risk assessments that schools would be expected to have considered and undertaken and be able to produce.

- risk of falling a distance likely to cause injury;
- risk of using dangerous equipment/tools;
- risk of contact with excessively hot substances or surfaces;
- risk of contact with electricity;
- risk from moving heavy or awkward loads;
- risk of pupils moving heavy items around school
- risk of exposure to hazardous substances;
- risk from lone working and violent or aggressive behaviour;
- risk from driving or vehicle/pedestrian collisions;
- risk from asbestos disturbance;
- risks from the work of contractors;
- risk of fire;
- risks associated with outdoor education events;
- risks associated with delivery of the curriculum
- risk of visitors into school who may be working with children eg readers
- risk of a pandemic eg COVID 19

PLUS

- any other circumstances in which the health, safety or welfare of employees or pupils could foreseeably, credibly and significantly be at risk from any school activity or situation

Risk Assessment

How to carry out risk assessments

This version of the Health and Safety Manual for Schools introduces a refined version of previous risk assessment procedures. There are 3 broad types of risk assessment that schools should do.

Copies of all of the risk assessment forms to use can be found at the end of this section. The forms have been devised to provide a simple system for risk assessment but to be effective they must be diligently completed and have their findings acted upon. Some schools may prefer to use other formats to assess and record risks. This is entirely acceptable provided the approach is in line with this general advice.

General Risks

The General Risk Assessment Form (RA1) should be used to assess the risks to employees, pupils or others from specific activities or situations. Examples of these are:

- The use of a specific piece of equipment such as a kiln, a deep fat fryer in the kitchen or outdoor play equipment etc.
- Routine functions of the school such as lesson break / lunch times, mealtimes, vehicle movements on site, visiting the pond, school plays, etc.
- Individual scenarios and issues such as violence to staff, simple outdoor education events, PTA fund raising events etc.

The LA has produced a series of generic on-line risk assessments for many of these common and other more complex risks. The risk assessments can be found at www.wcc.emanate.co.uk

Risk Assessment

Premises Risks

The Preliminary Risk Assessment Forms (RA2-7) and the Risk Assessment Record Form (RA0), available on WISEnet, should be used to assess the risks to employees, pupils or others from the potential dangers inherent in particular parts of the building and grounds.

Form RA2 is for identifying risks in teaching rooms□;

Form RA3 is for identifying risks in circulation and common areas;

Form RA4 is for identifying risks in toilets, showers, cloakrooms and changing rooms;

Form RA5 is for identifying risks in offices and general rooms;

Form RA6 is for identifying risks in kitchens;

Form RA7 is for identifying risks in playgrounds, playing fields and car-parks;

Form RA0 is to record the assessment of any identified risk.

The majority user of the teaching room can complete the assessment of that area. By doing this, the administrative process is shared among the staff and 'ownership' of issues is promoted.

The Forms are simple to use. For each hazard 'ticked' on any of the Preliminary Risk Assessment Forms (RA2-7), a Risk Assessment Record Form (RA0) must be completed to assess the risk. Each Risk Assessment Record Form is then kept attached to the relevant Preliminary Risk Assessment Form.

Remember that the total elimination of risk is not always possible and that the actual aim is to introduce or reinforce measures that will reduce any risk as far as is reasonably practicable.

Special Risks

These are done using the individual and specific risk assessment processes designed for the purpose and include:

- Outdoor education trips – see section on Outdoor Education;
- Lifting and handling of pupils or of heavy or awkward loads – see section on Manual Handling;
- Fire – see Fire Safety Manual on Right Choice;
- Prolonged use of computer workstations – see section on Display Screen Equipment;
- Risks specific to new and expectant mothers – see section on Pregnancy;
- Exposure to hazardous substances – see section on Hazardous Substances;
- Risks specific to Science and Design Technology curriculum – see sections on Science and Design Technology.

Risk Assessment

Managing the System

A senior person will need to co-ordinate the risk assessment process. This will involve distribution of the forms, making sure they are completed diligently and then making sure that any actions identified within them are agreed and prioritised according to risk. A risk register (available on Right Choice) should be developed to show all your risk assessments, the date

they were carried out, the review date, the person responsible and finally signed off by the Headteacher or nominated senior member of staff.

It is important that the Headteacher and Governors are aware of the findings of risk assessments as it is they who are locally responsible for maintaining health and safety standards within the school.

Risk Assessment is an ongoing process and all assessment should be regularly reviewed as a matter of course and as soon as there is any reason to suspect that circumstances have changed. It is a legal requirement that all significant risk assessments are recorded and so completed assessments are to be kept at the school to be produced if requested.

Training

It is important that those undertaking complex or detailed assessments have a sound understanding of the principles and legal standing of risk assessments and that all schools have someone who has been trained in general risk assessment. The LA provides regular training courses on risk assessment.

Useful HSE Guidance

Five steps to Risk Assessment - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>

