

Godstowe

School Policy

Risk Assessment Policy

Reviewed
Sept 2025

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and not as a standalone policy, in particular the Health and Safety Policy, Trips Policy, Fire Safety Policy and Fire Risk Assessment and Medical Policies.

Introduction

The Governing Body of Godstowe is fully committed to the safety and welfare of all in their community.

The responsibility of ensuring comprehensive and systematic risk assessment procedures are in place and carried out is delegated to the Director of Finance and Operations.

The highest priority lies in ensuring that all operations within the school environment and beyond are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully, not just with the law, but with best practice.

Risks are inherent in everyday life and so we need to identify them and adopt systems for minimising them. Key areas of risk for school life are supervision and trips.

Our pupils need to be educated into how to cope safely with risk and we assess risk in a systematic way to promote the pupils' wellbeing.

What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or organisation) that **could** result from a particular activity or situation.

A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. We number these 1-5 depending on the severity of the damage/danger that would take place with 1 being negligible and 5 being fatal.

A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring. We number these 1-5 with 1 meaning that the likelihood of the hazard occurring is rare and 5 meaning that the likelihood of it occurring is almost certain.

A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome. When the hazard score is multiplied by the likelihood score and the answer is 10 or greater we must have considerable and very clear risk control measures in place.

Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (eg staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, gas and electrical shut down points, and insurance, wearing safety belts on a coach). Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focussing on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong. In many cases simple measures are very effective and not costly. Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly if they are already in existence and writing for new situations. At Godstowe we are very aware that all the staff and pupils need to receive training. All staff have completed the Educare Health and Safety for Schools course which contains a module on Risk Assessment and are also trained in this policy and the policy about Trips.

What areas require risk assessments?

There are numerous activities carried out at Godstowe, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover the different areas of the school premises, potentially harmful substances, supervision of pupils, regular off site activities such as swimming, school trips and equipment. There is a separate fire risk assessment document.

Areas of the school – the Health and Safety consultant carries out a bi-annual audit for particular areas of the school. This is circulated to relevant staff who will ensure that all staff and pupils are made aware of those aspects relevant to them, and relevant risk assessments are updated.

Supervision of pupils - Godstowe has a separate policy for the supervision of pupils but this is constantly under review and procedures changed when considered appropriate.

School trips and visits - There is a separate policy for school trips and visits and those staff required have been given training in the policy. Children with special medical needs are included in these risk assessments.

Sharing information with staff and pupils

The information on risk assessments must be shared with relevant staff and pupils. Before a trip the lead member of staff will always go over the risk assessment with pupils to ensure that they know of possible dangers and what to do if these occur. The lead member of staff will also ensure that all accompanying staff and parent helpers also have a copy and understand the risks. Pupils should feel safe in the knowledge that they are being looked after and that hazards that they may encounter have been well considered.

When thinking about Risk Assessment remember:

- a hazard is anything that may cause harm, e.g. a physical condition which can make the school or environment unsafe, such as a slippery floor, unsafe acts e.g. rushing, taking shortcuts, traffic
- the risk is the chance, 1-5 where 1 is rare and 5 is almost certain, that somebody could be harmed by these together

Who May Be Affected:

Consider pupils, students, trainees, expectant mothers and also those who may not be directly involved with the activity but who may still be affected by the process. This may include cleaning or office staff, contractors or parents. Outside the school, it may include members of the public. What information should be made available and how will this be communicated to those at risk?

What training or supervision will be required?

Risk Evaluation:

Evaluate the hazards and risks to which individuals might be exposed. This will be a subjective evaluation but should be used to give an indication of the priority with which the risks need to be addressed. Where risks are already controlled, monitor the effectiveness of the control to decide whether they are sufficient. Where the risk to individuals is thought to be considerable and the risk multiplied by the likelihood is greater than ten, additional control measures must be considered, and/or very careful thought should be given to the possibility that perhaps it is not safe to go ahead with the planned activity.

Risk Control:

Decide what controls are necessary to reduce the risk to individuals.

The steps to controlling the risks are as follows:

- Avoid the hazard - can the hazard be avoided or altered to reduce the likelihood or risk?
- Substitute or replace the hazard
- Procedural controls – can the procedure be altered to avoid or reduce the risk? Can the individual be removed / distanced from the risk? Can the activity be carried out at a time that would have a lesser impact on others?
- Child management – make sure you and your staff are aware of each child's needs
- Setting management – such as the monitoring of exits and entrances.
- Additional staff – can an additional person be utilised to avoid or reduce the risk?
- Personal Protective Equipment - consider the value of using such things as gloves, over garments or a hat.
- Training- are staff trained appropriately to manage different situations safely?
- Emergency procedures – have contingencies in the event of things going wrong such as an accident, incident or fire
- Health surveillance – are your staff or pupils physically able or sufficiently fit to engage in the planned activity.
- Monitor the control measures you have instigated to ensure that they are effective and implemented correctly.

Record Your Findings

Record the significant hazards and conclusions using the appropriate risk assessment form.

Risk Assessment Review

The assessment must be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant and effective. In addition, the assessment must be reviewed if there are any significant changes to the

activity such as different children or staff, new procedures substances or equipment.

Risk Assessment Training for Staff

Staff are regularly trained in risk assessment when all staff completed a Health and Safety course which included a module on risk assessment and also reviewed this policy in a staff meeting.

EYFS Risk Assessments

Risk assessments for activities in the EYFS will especially take into account staff to pupil ratios and also the need for regular review and checking of equipment, and reminders given to pupils.

Risk assessments are conducted by our external Health and Safety Advisor in conjunction with staff at the start of each academic year and reviewed annually.