



# AVONDALE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## Risk Assessment Policy

### **Introduction**

Avondale Preparatory School clearly recognises that a failure to take reasonable safety precautions in relation to identified hazards would represent a serious risk to pupils, staff, visitors, the general public, and contractors, and expose the School to the possibility of prosecution. Documented Risk Assessments are a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Amended 2006). The School is required to assess the risks to the health and safety of workers and any others who may be affected by the work carried out for the purpose of identifying measures needing to be taken to comply with other legislation. Carrying out these written assessments will help to identify all the protective and preventive measures that must be taken to comply with the Regulations.

The aim of this Policy is to set out the systematic approach for suitable and sufficient risk management throughout Avondale Preparatory School. This policy has particular regard for ensuring the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted at all times and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks and potential risks that are identified.

### **Purpose of Risk Assessment**

The purpose of risk assessment is to identify hazards and evaluate any associated risks. Specific Risk Assessments, which the School must have in place under current regulations are:

- Fire Risk
- Young workers employed by the School/work experience
- New and expectant mothers
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- Lone working
- Display screen equipment
- Working at height
- Manual handling
- Asbestos (School house only. None in the main school building)

Risk assessments do not have to be complicated. The level of detail contained in them should be relevant to the level of the risks involved with the activity. In many cases, a risk assessment will lead to clarification and the documenting of protocols and procedures that are often already in place, following best practice and relevant standards where applicable.

## **Responsibilities**

Employees are responsible for:(a) Assisting with and participating in the process of risk assessment.

The Co-Headteachers and Teachers are responsible for:

Undertaking risk assessments, identifying and implementing control measures, and effectively communicating the outcomes to employees and others as appropriate.

The Co-Headteachers are responsible for:

- (a) Allocating resources in response to risk assessments completed and determining a course of action should it be identified that a risk cannot be suitably controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.
- (b) Setting up frameworks for decision-making and strategies which incorporate risk assessment principles. This will ensure that decisions made take into account relevant risk factors.
- (c) Ensuring that those who are tasked with completing risk assessments are suitably trained to do so.
- (d) Ensuring that a suitable mechanism exists to communicate the safe systems of work identified as part of the risk assessment procedures.
- (e) Making suitable representation to the Health & Safety Committee or the proprietor if risk assessments identify an outstanding need which cannot be resourced within existing resources.

## **Scope**

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- (a) Hazard: Something with the potential to cause harm.
- (b) Hazardous Outcome: A description of how someone could be hurt or damage could occur as a result of interacting with the hazard.
- (c) Risk Rating: The overall judgement of the level of risk which may arise from the hazard, based upon the likelihood of the event occurring and the potential severity of the consequence.
- (d) Control Measures: Methods used to reduce or control risks arising from identified hazards.
- (e) Residual Risk: The level of risk remaining once control measures have been applied to reduce risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

## **Legal Aspects of Risk Assessment**

There are clear duties for risk assessment under acts such as the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (Amended 2006). The following requirements are laid down in those regulations and can be applied to other areas of risk assessment:

The risk assessment shall be 'suitable and sufficient' and cover both employees and non-employees affected by the employer's undertaking (e.g., contractors, members of the public, pupils, etc.).

The term 'suitable and sufficient' is important as it defines the limits to the risk assessment process. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment should:

Identify the significant risks and ignore the trivial ones.

Identify and prioritise the measures required to comply with any relevant statutory provisions.

Remain appropriate to the nature of the work and valid over a reasonable period of time.

Identify the risk arising from or in connection with the work. The detail should be proportionate to the risk.

The significant findings that should be recorded include a detailed statement of the hazards and risks; the preventative, protective, or control measures in place; and any further measures to reduce the risks present.

## Risk Assessment Process

The School has a responsibility to ensure that the risk posed to staff, pupils, property, contractors, and the public is reduced, so far as reasonably practicable. Risk assessment is a subjective but logical process which can be broken down into 5 steps:

1. Identify the hazard.
2. Decide who or what might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.
4. Record significant findings and implement them.
5. Review the assessment and update if necessary.

When conducting a risk assessment, line managers should adopt a team approach to risk assessment whenever possible and involve staff members who have practical experience (as they often have the best awareness and understanding of the hazards involved with the activity and how the activity is actually carried out).

## Risk Level Definitions

Each Risk Assessment has a risk rating. The Risk Level Definition is as follows:

High: Urgent action required. Stop immediately until control measures are in place.

Medium: Medium-term action required within 3 months.

Low: Long-term action required within 6 months.

## Types of Risk Assessment

All significant risks shall be assessed. Although the principles of assessment remain the same, their application can differ.

There are 3 recognised methods of assessment:

- (a) Formal: A written method of evaluating the risk of harm.
- (b) Generic: An evaluation of risk that can be applied to common tasks.
- (c) Dynamic: A mental assessment of risk for use when any delay would increase the risk of harm.

## Training

Avondale Preparatory School, as a responsible employer, will provide appropriate risk assessment training for staff as necessary. Those who have a responsibility for the completion of risk assessments will initially be provided with basic (online and/or internally coached) risk assessment training. This foundation training covers the processes and key stages of risk assessment including the rationale behind the risk assessment; application of suitable and sufficient control measures to mitigate risk; communication of the risk assessment; record-keeping and incident management.

Specialised risk assessment training will be provided to staff as required, ensuring appropriate expertise, monitoring, and supervision.

## Communication

Relevant information identified in the risk assessment regarding the hazards, their associated risks to the school, and the appropriate control measures must be effectively communicated and be readily accessible to employees and others as appropriate.

## Record Keeping

Accidents logs, investigation reports, and associated documents must be kept for a minimum period of three years for any adverse incidents involving adults. In the case of an adverse incident involving

a child, records should be kept until the child reaches the age of 21, as they may be required in the event of a litigation claim for compensation (note that claims for compensation can generally be made up to three years from the date of the incident occurring). It should be noted that risk assessments that relate to the use of substances may need to be kept for 40 years, in order to trace exposure to substances which are known to have ill health effects (e.g., asbestos).

### **Monitoring**

The Co-Headteachers will monitor the effectiveness of control measures and ensure that physical control measures are used, installed correctly, and suitably maintained where applicable. Checks will be made to ensure that agreed control measures and safe systems of work are being followed correctly.

### **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually or at an earlier date if changes are required due to risk assessment review or changes in legislation and/or guidance.

Reviewed: October 2024

Signed as read: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_