

Including our Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Risk Assessment Policy

Authorised by	Resolution of the Board of Governors
Reviewed	Versions prior to 2019 Archived September 2019 (1-0-1) October 2023 (1-0-2) June 2025 (1-0-3)

The Governors of St Gabriel's are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Their highest priority lies in ensuring that all the operations within the school environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully with not just with the law; but with best practice. Risks are inherent in everyday life. We need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. Our pupils need to be educated into how to cope safely with risk.

What Is A Risk Assessment?

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

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. fire).
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring (e.g. a chip pan will catch fire if left unattended).
- 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 and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).

Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focusing 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 by those responsible in each area of the school. Risk assessments are checked and maintained by the Bursar, the Head of Compliance, the HR Manager, the Operations Manager and the Heads of relevant departments. Risk assessments for areas and on-site activities are held centrally on the Health and Safety area of Staff Intranet for staff to refer to and use.

This policy should ensure that major risks are identified and managed as part of an overarching policy with a view to promoting children's welfare. It will;

- meet the ISSR requirement for a written risk assessment policy to be in place and meet the requirement for leadership in and management of schools.
- ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for activities where there is likely to be significant risk, including school trips.
- ensure that identified control measures are implemented to control risk so far as reasonably practicable.
- ensure those affected by school activities have received suitable information on what to do.
- ensure that the risk management strategy and risk assessments are recorded and reviewed when appropriate.
- Identify those in the school responsible for conducting risk assessment and monitoring its implementation.

The Principal and Governors will be responsible for the overarching risk management policy of the school. The overall strategy will be formally reviewed on a regular basis.

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What Areas Require Risk Assessments?

Risk assessments are needed for many areas and activities in school, including the following. These risk assessments are completed by the appropriate staff, held by the Head of Department and the Operations Manager, and reviewed annually.

Educational and Pupil Supervision

- Science laboratories and experiments
- Design and Technology rooms and activities
- Food Technology room and activities
- Each sport and PE activity
- Art (including the clay and print studios)
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Drama theatre (including the theatre backstage, stage, props room and lighting box)
- Dance studio
- Health and Safety risk assessments such as Fire Risk, Water and Legionella Risk, Access to Non-teaching areas, Vehicle Movements around the School and Pedestrian Safety, Asbestos etc.
- Pupil Welfare risk assessments such as Medical and First Aid Needs, SEND pupils and pupils with Mental Health Needs or where pupils pose a danger to themselves or others.

There are numerous other activities carried out in St Gabriel's, which fall outside of the scope of the routine standing risk assessments for areas and activities. The following activities always require a separate risk assessment to be conducted by the responsible person. Examples of these include;

- Educational visits and trips.
- Other activities on site that fall outside of the normal use of facilities, or that require the school to be responsible for the safety and management of visitors and those not normally present during the school day.
- Matters relating to Safeguarding such as the Prevent Duty risk assessment, child on child abuse, sexual violence between pupils and allegations.
- The suitability of staff and others (such as volunteers and contractors) to undertake designated roles and the checks carried out to ensure that they are suitable.
- Online Safety.
- Visiting speakers with regard to the school's Prevent duty.
- Risk assessment for actions and events related to third party hirers of the school's premises.

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At St Gabriel's we make use of our own model risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits. The Trips and Events Procedure available on the staff intranet details the process of organising a safe trip or event, in conjunction with the Educational Visits Coordinator. We subscribe to the CLEAPSS Advisory Service that provides model risk assessments for our lessons in Science and Design and Technology. Teaching staff and technicians receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas.

Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral activities is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping themselves safe. Our PSHE programmes and Assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupil develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the online worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken. Our Science lessons encourage students to conduct their own safety-related research into the potential hazards of chemicals, gas, electricity and flammable materials.

Medical and First Aid

The Medical Room has risk assessments for first aid and other treatments and procedures. The accident forms are maintained in the Medical Area and the School Nurse is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Bursar. The School's separate Illness and Medication policy explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency. The Bursar is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

Unsupervised Access by Pupils

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool, the science laboratories, the design technology rooms, etc. All flammables are kept securely locked. Pupils do not have access to the Grounds, Maintenance, Catering and Caretaking areas of the school.

Child Protection

Our Child Protection policies and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. Safer recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children and are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors and volunteers and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular child protection training, we manage this risk to an acceptable level.

Support Areas

- Catering and Cleaning: risk assessments and training is required for every item of catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Caretaking and Security: risk assessments cover every room, laboratory, stairs, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school. Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising the risk of both fire and to security by adhering to good practice. Risk assessments also cover manual handling, working at heights, and asbestos. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Maintenance: risk assessments and training are required for every major tool and item of equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, asbestos, control of contractors on site, electricity, gas, water (including legionella), swimming pool maintenance and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment.
- Grounds: risk assessment and training is required for every major tool and piece of machinery, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of

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flammables and COSHH. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.

- Office staff: risk assessments are required for the display screen equipment (DSE) and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

Conducting A Risk Assessment

Our policy at St Gabriel's is not to carry out any high-risk activity. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with pupils, such as riding, skiing and orienteering; but only using specialist/qualified instructors. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment, such as mouthguards, and to follow instructions.

We will always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.

The Head of Compliance will provide template risk assessments for trips and events on and off school premises and will be responsible for passing these risk assessments, completed by Trip and Event Leaders, to the Vice-Principal. The Head of Compliance will check the accreditation of external activity provided as appropriate and retain records of these risk assessments.

The Operations Manager will risk assess normal school areas and activities, as well as all maintenance related activities, involving workers responsible for those areas as necessary.

The School provides online risk assessment training for all staff via the SMARTLOG training portal. The Bursar, Head of Compliance and Operations Manager are also able to provide templates, training and one-to-one guidance as necessary for staff to fulfil their risk assessment duties.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The Bursar arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Legionella and water hygiene management

Reviews

Risk assessments will be reviewed:

- when there are changes to the activity
- after a near miss or accident
- when there are changes to the type of people involved in the activity
- when there are changes in good practice
- when there are legislative changes
- when major structural work is planned
- annually, if for no other reason as outlined above

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The School's separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for catering and cleaning and for water sampling.

Responsibilities of all Staff

All members of staff are given an induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety. 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 pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Principal, the Bursar and other members of the Leadership Team to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar or Operations Manager.

Audit Compliance Statements

An annual SORP/Company compliance risk assessment is presented by the Bursar to the Governors to approve as Trustees of the Charity/Company Directors at the same time that they review the audited accounts. This report analyses:

- The financial procedures and controls
- The major risks to the school, including:
 - Strategic risk
 - Loss of fee income
 - Damage to reputation
 - Failure to teach the correct syllabus
 - Risk of a child protection issue
 - Gaps in Governor skills
 - Conflicts of interest
 - Employment disputes
 - Major health and safety issues
 - Possible data loss
 - Risk of fire, flood and land slip
 - Poor cash flow management
 - Fraud
 - Loss through inappropriate investments
 - Areas of potential risk
- The measures taken to protect the school against such risks, including:
 - Safer recruitment of staff, Governors and volunteers
 - Measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff and Governors
 - Adequate Insurance
 - Strong financial controls
 - Use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc as needed

Governors are invited to approve the compliance risk assessment annually and to endorse the insertion of a statement along the following lines (or a more detailed version thereof) in the school's annual accounts:

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EITHER: "The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Trust, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks".

OR: "The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Company, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risk."

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Date	Version	Changes
September 2019	1-0-1	Policy reflects current risk assessment practice and procedures, including central storage of area risk assessments. Reference to Trips and Events procedure, activity provider accreditation
October 2023	1-0-2	Changes to role titles with responsibility under the policy Addition of risk assessment for third party hirers, child on child abuse, online safety
June 2025	1-0-3	General review and addition of risk assessment training via SMARTLOG.