

## Risk Assessment Policy

### INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to assist The Beeches Independent Special School in fulfilling their legal duties in assessing risks. Risk management is the consideration of the risks that arise in the workplace and then putting in place sensible health and safety measures to control them.

In accordance with our duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2000, the school is required to undertake regular risk assessments and take any necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety policy and elsewhere.

The Head of Education is responsible for making sure that risk assessments are completed, logged and effectively monitored. Reviews are conducted when there is any change to equipment or resources, any change to the school's premises, or when particular needs of a child or other visitor necessitate this.

The Head of Education is further responsible for conducting any necessary reviews or making changes to the school's policies or procedures in the light of any potential risks that they or other members of staff discover.

A visual inspection of both the equipment and the entire premises – both indoor and outdoor – will be carried out at the end of each day.

During the school day, staff will be vigilant and continuously aware of any potential risks to health and safety arising from:

- the School's environment, both indoors and outdoors;
- all surfaces, both indoors and outdoors;
- all equipment used by children or staff.

On discovering a hazard, staff will take all steps necessary to making themselves and any other people potentially affected safe. They will then notify the Head of Education and ensure that a record is made in the Incident Record Book.

The Head of Education is then responsible for ensuring that any necessary action is taken. As already stated, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 require that suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk arising out of work are carried out.

**Put simply, a risk assessment is finding out what could cause harm to people and deciding if you have done enough or need to do more to protect them.**

### Background Information

#### **The Process of Risk Assessment**

#### **WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines a risk assessment as “a careful examination of what in your work could cause harm to people so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm”. The assessment will help you to identify the likelihood of harm and whether you can reduce the risk to a reasonable level, through the introduction of control measures.

### **What can be risk assessed?**

A risk assessment can be undertaken on an object or substance, a process, a location, an activity, or a person. The Beeches use this five step process:

Step 1: Identify the hazards

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4: Record your findings and implement them

Step 5: Review your assessment and update if necessary

### **What is a hazard?**

A hazard is anything which can cause harm e.g. electricity, chemicals, etc

### **What is risk?**

Risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

## **DEFINITION OF A HAZARD AND A RISK**

**Hazard:** A hazard is anything that may cause harm such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, etc.

**Risk:** The risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

## **TYPES OF RISK ASSESSMENTS**

There are three different types of risk assessments. These are generic, specific and dynamic.

Generic activities are those which although they are carried out at different times and locations, the hazards and risks are largely the same and do not change. For this type of activity generic risk assessments can be produced as a model for guidance only.

A specific risk assessment may be applicable where the hazards and risks are only applicable to a certain activity and also where there is a requirement in legislation to undertake a specific assessment for example COSHH, new and expectant mothers.

A dynamic risk assessment is a continuous process of identifying the hazards that occur in for example an emergency situation, assessing the risks and taking immediate action to eliminate or reduce these to an acceptable level.

### **The Beeches risk assessments.**

The Beeches write risk assessments on the following:

Classrooms

Outside areas

Subjects

Activities

Trips

Work placements

Individual students

Car journeys

- Each member of staff is expected to adhere to these risk assessments.
- Student risk assessments are updated every 6 months, or when a situation or behaviour changes.
- Area risk assessments are updated annually.
- Each staff member is to carefully read each risk assessment and is to sign to confirm it has been read.

## **Evaluating the risk**

When evaluating a risk the staff at The Beeches will do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm.

Firstly we will try to remove the hazard however that may not be possible so we control the risks so that harm is unlikely? When controlling risks, we apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- try a less risky option (e.g. switch to using a less hazardous chemical);
- prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding);
- organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard
- issue personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc); and
- provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination).

## **The five step process is as follows:**

### **Step 1: Identify the hazards**

- Location
- Activities
- Equipment
- People

Identify the Hazards:

- Chemical – paint solvents/exhaust fumes
- Biological – bacteria
- Physical – noise/vibration/ sharp objects/ breakable objects/ hanging risks
- Psychological – occupational stress/ too many people in one area for students to feel comfortable

### **Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how**

For each hazard we need to be clear about who might be harmed, identify the groups of people such as: individual students, staff members or members of the public/pupils.

Identify how they might be harmed i.e. what type of damage, injury or ill health might occur.

### **Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions**

We consider how likely it is that each hazard will occur and what control measures we already have in place. Have the control measures in place got rid of the hazard altogether or reduced the risk so that harm is unlikely, if the task has not been adequately controlled what further actions are required. If any further actions are required the name of the person responsible for actioning the task should be recorded along with the projected completion date with the actual completion recorded in the completed column.

### **Step 4: Record your findings and implement them**

The results are written down in a formal risk assessment, and sharing them with the staff. Each staff member is expected to sign each document to state they are aware of the risk/hazard and are aware of how to reduce it.

### **Step 5: Review your assessment and update if necessary**

Risk assessments need to be reviewed and if necessary updated every 6 months or when a situation or behaviour changes. However a review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, or there are significant changes to the premises, staff or procedures.

**Access to risk assessments and policies.**

This policy and others are available to download from our website:[www.beechesuk.co.uk](http://www.beechesuk.co.uk) or on request to the Head of Education.

Risk assessments are available on request, however we are unable to give risk assessments regarding students to those who do not have parental responsibility for a young person who is named in the report.

This policy was written April 2018 by Kathryn Black. This policy will be updated annually.