



SEVENOAKS
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Status and Review Cycle	Statutory / Annual
Policy reviewed and amended	February 2026
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Introduction

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
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring
- 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, preliminary visits, warning signs, barriers and insurance).

Risk assessments can be used to identify the potential hazards to people (slipping, falling), property (fire), strategic (reputation, loss of pupils, impact on development), financial (falling pupil rolls), compliance (child protection issues) and environmental (asbestos, Legionella).

Why have risk assessments?

Sevenoaks Preparatory School has Risk Assessments as it is possible to prevent accidents and injuries that could ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Preventative measures can often be surprisingly simple and cost-effective, such as the application of hazard warning tape to a trip hazard, or ensuring that chemicals are properly stored in locked containers.

What areas require risk assessments?

There are numerous activities carried out in Sevenoaks Preparatory School, each of which requires its own separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety, procedures and risk assessments
- Educational visits and trips

Separate policies cover each of the three areas mentioned above.

Educational

There are also risk assessments in the following areas:

- Science experiments
- Design and Technology
- Food Technology
- Each sport and PE activity
- Art
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Drama (including the theatre back stage, stage, props room and lighting box)

At Sevenoaks Preparatory School we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits.

Pastoral

Our pastoral aim is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young adult capable of keeping him/herself safe on the streets, in the home and in all situations. Our PSHEe 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 electronic 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 area has risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures. The accident forms are maintained in the surgery and the Medical Officer is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Bursar and the Head.

The School's **First Aid Policy** explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Our Child Protection policy and training for all staff form the core of our safeguarding 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 are 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 is required for every 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 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 assessments and training is managed by Gresham's consulting, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of

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 and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

Access by Pupils

Risk assessments of all areas of the school reinforce the policy of ensuring that our pupils do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas the science laboratories and the design technology suite. Doors to these areas are kept locked when not in use. Pupils are only allowed access when accompanied by a member of staff. Pupils do not have access to the Grounds, Maintenance, Catering and Caretaking working areas in the school.

Conducting a Risk Assessment

There are several possible techniques. One model that we use at Sevenoaks Preparatory School, known as the "Traffic Lights Model" is set out on the next two pages:

DATE	Reference No.	Company	Assessor	Job Title	Signature
TASK				Persons Exposed	

PART A – Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Ref	Hazard	Potential Harm	Existing Risk Control Measures	Level of Risk			Additional control measures	Person responsible	Target completion date
				Probability	Severity	Risk Score			

PART B – Communication

No	Method of communicating risk control measures	Date Completed	Responsible Person

PART C – Review

Review date	Carried out by	Action taken

PART D – Additional Comments

Section D - Additional Comments Add any other comments that are relevant to the risk assessment.

Probability	
5	Certain
4	Likely
3	Possible
2	Unlikely
1	Rare

Severity		
5	Fatal	Single or multiple fatalities.
4	Major harm	Resulting in major injuries and ill health that are reportable to the HSE.
3	Serious harm	Resulting in significant injuries and ill health including 7-day HSE reportable injuries.
2	Minor harm	Requiring first aid only
1	No Harm	Harm includes injury and ill health.

		Severity				
		1	2	3	4	5
Probability	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5

Risk Level	Action and timescale
High	Risk control measures must be implemented to reduce the risk as low as is reasonably practicable (ALARP). Action to reduce the risk should be given top priority with senior management involvement. If the risk cannot be reduced, work should be stopped.
Medium	Cost-effective risk control measures should be implemented to reduce the risk to a level that is ALARP within a reasonable time .
Low	The risk is considered acceptable and no additional risk control action is normally required. Cost-effective risk control measures may be implemented to further reduce the risk with lowest priority .

Definitions	
Hazard	A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm, which includes substances, equipment, methods of work, the work environment and other aspects of work organisation.
Risk	The risk is the chance, high medium or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.

Our policy at Sevenoaks Preparatory School is **never to** carry out any activity which has a **red rating** after the risk reduction measures have been put into effect.

Green activities can be:

- **A hazard that is highly likely but is of low residual rating.** For example
The likelihood of a coach in a city being stuck in traffic would be rated as 6

The severity of leaving teachers, teaching assistants and children waiting outside in hot sun/wet weather for an unknown period of time would be rated as 2.

The initial risk rating would be 12 (Amber).

But putting all of the following measures in place reduces its severity to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 6 (Green):

- Teacher in Charge and Driver are in mobile phone contact
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and discovered where the party can wait out of the rain/sun
- Bottled water is carried
- All staff carry visit packs, and can phone the school to advise that there will be a delayed return
- All parents' emergency contact details are available to the School Office, who phones them and explains that the coach has been stuck in traffic; but there is nothing to worry about
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand

- **A hazard may be fairly likely and have a low residual rating.** For example:
The likelihood of a child falling over and grazing a knee on a walk in the countryside would be rated as 4.

The initial severity would be 3.

The initial risk rating would be 12 (Amber)

But putting the following measures into place reduces the severity to 2, leaving a residual risk rating of 8 (Green):

- Teacher in Charge has First Aid kit
- One member of staff is qualified in Paediatric First Aid
- Teacher in Charge has mobile phone
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment beforehand

- **A hazard may be very unlikely; but have a high severity rating.** For example:
The likelihood of a child going missing on an organised school outing headed by a qualified Teacher, who has been trained in leading visits, and was appropriately staffed would initially be rated as 3.

The severity would be 6.

The initial risk rating would be 18 (Amber).

But putting the following measures into place reduces the likelihood to 1, leaving a residual risk rating of 6 (Green):

- All children have been briefed about the purpose of the visit and the expectations of behaviour
- All children understand where they should go if they accidentally become separated from the rest of the group
- Teacher in Charge and other staff and volunteers carry mobile phones
- Staffing ratio is 1: 4 (instead of the normal 1: 6) and supplemented further by parent volunteers
- Teacher in Charge has made a reconnaissance visit, and planned the route inside the location (e.g. museum) in advance
- Children are divided into groups of 4 each supervised by one member of staff, assisted by a volunteer
- All members of staff had held a meeting to discuss the outing and the risk assessment and the Missing Child Policy beforehand
- All members of staff know what to do in an emergency
- All volunteers have been briefed thoroughly on their respective roles.
- All children are wearing school uniform and are readily identifiable
- Head counts are taken on leaving the classroom, on sitting in the coach, on leaving the activity and on returning to the coach. The coach does not leave until everyone is accounted for.

The three examples quoted above are intended to illustrate that everyday risk assessment for school outings are no more than practical tools that are designed to assist teachers who are in charge of an outing. The issues can arise, and need to be anticipated in advance:

- What if the coach is delayed?
- What if a child falls over and injures him/herself?
- What if a child goes missing?

Medium Risk Activities

We undertake a few medium risk activities with older pupils. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear protective equipment, such as mouth-guards, and to follow instructions.

Support staff may 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.

Specialist Risk Assessments and High Risk Activities

We will always employ specialists to carry out high risk tasks at the school. The Bursar arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety of buildings
- Work at high levels
- Work with lead

Review of Risk Assessments

All risk assessments are regularly reviewed.

Risk assessments should also be reviewed (and recorded), when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident. The school's arrangements for the management of health and safety should describe the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for auditing the catering and cleaning functions and for water sampling.

At Sevenoaks Preparatory School, we maintain a "library" of risk assessments on our staff shared drive for staff to refer to and adapt for their own use.

Responsibilities of staff

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety (which is recorded). 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 Head Master, the Bursar and members of the SMT in order 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.

Accident reporting

The Bursar is responsible for reporting and recording any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** in accordance with the **Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR)**. All notifiable accidents and near misses are reviewed by the school's Health and Safety Committee with a view to assessing whether any measures need to be taken to prevent recurrence.

Audit compliance statements

An annual **Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)** compliance risk assessment is presented by the Head and the Bursar to the Governors to approve as Trustees of the Charity 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
 - Insurance
 - Strong financial controls that are regularly reviewed
 - Financial reserves policy
 - Use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc as needed
 - Formal review of compliance with the school's charitable objectives

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:

"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".