

Bruern Abbey School

Risk Assessment Policy

This Policy Applies to Bruern Abbey School



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Contents

What Is A Risk Assessment?	3
What Areas Require Risk Assessments?	3
Educational	3
Pastoral	4
Medical and First Aid	4
Unsupervised Access by Pupils	4
Safeguarding	4
Support Areas	4
Conducting a Risk Assessment	5
Specialist Risk Assessments	5
Reviews	5
Responsibilities of all Staff	5

Bruern Abbey Risk Assessment Policy

“Sensible risk management is about practical steps to managing real risks, not bureaucratic back covering. Address the real risks, not only to pupils, but also to the health and well-being of your staff. And remember, risk assessment is just good planning – keep it fit for purpose and act on it.” Sir Bill Callaghan, former Chairman, HSC

Bruern Abbey is 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, 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).
- The risk assessment also considers the severity of the possible 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).

Risk levels are graded High, Medium or Low by considering both the likelihood of a hazard becoming a reality and the severity of a possible injury. The residual risk is assessed on the same basis and should normally be lower once the control measures are in place.

Where a more detailed calculation is required, the severity and likelihood can each be scored from 1 to 5 and multiplied to produce a risk factor between 1 and 25. A threshold should be set above which an activity cannot take place, and the residual risk should be below the acceptable threshold after controls are implemented.

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. At Bruern Abbey we are very aware that all staff and pupils need to receive training in risk. A “library” of risk assessments is maintained by the Bursar, Paula Rolfe, and the Head, Hilary Phillips (also the Educational Visits Coordinator), for staff to refer to and use for themselves. The Compliance Manager, Fiona Walton, is responsible for keeping records of staff training.

What Areas Require Risk Assessments?

This policy covers the school site and the activities associated with education, including activities that directly provide education and activities that support education. There are numerous activities carried out at Bruern Abbey, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. Risks may be associated with an activity, a location, an event or a potential hazard. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety and procedures
- Educational visits and trips

But risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including:

Educational

- Science
- Each sport and PE activity

- Art
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Drama when a play is put on (including the theatre back stage, stage, props room and lighting box)
- Dance when done as an activity
- Staff, eg pregnancy, return under 'fit for work' limitations issued by GP
- IT and use of generative AI
- Any other situations that may arise

To help us carry out effective risk assessments, and assess all risks adequately, we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits.

Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral care policy is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young person capable of keeping themselves safe. Our PSHE programme and assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupils develop, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on sensible precautions that should be taken.

Ongoing Pastoral Care: Discussion of individual pupils forms a core of staff meetings; this information is minuted and shared with staff.

Safeguarding issues: Records of concern are in place to identify children at risk beyond the environs of school.

Anti-Bullying: The school follows a clear Anti-bullying policy, of which all staff are made aware. The school keeps a central record of alleged bullying and actions taken.

Medical and First Aid

The Medical Lead, Hetta Nicholson, maintains risk assessments for the medical room, first aid and all other treatments and procedures. Accident forms are maintained and the Medical Lead is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Health and Safety Coordinator.

The school's separate first aid policy explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency. The Medical Lead, Hetta Nicholson, and the Head, Hilary Phillips, are responsible for ensuring that any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor is reported to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

Unsupervised Access by Pupils

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, notably specialist teaching areas such as Science and Art. Effective supervision by staff is key to minimising risks and hazards for children. Staff responsible for supervision are appropriately trained, appropriate levels of supervision are maintained for school activities, break times and trips, and suitable filtering and monitoring processes are in place for online activity.

All flammables are kept securely locked. Pupils are not allowed access to the Maintenance and Catering areas of the school unless supervised in exceptional circumstances.

Safeguarding

Our Safeguarding policies 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.

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.

Site Maintenance and Security: Risk assessments cover rooms with a greater level of hazard; risk assessments are in place 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). Training is given to minimise the risk of both fire and security by adhering to good practice.

Conducting a Risk Assessment

Our policy at Bruern Abbey is to reduce the risk in all activities to an acceptable level. In order to assure this we ensure that

When completing a risk assessment, staff should record the activity or location and date, the hazards, who might be harmed and how, the control measures already in place, any further actions required, who is responsible and by when, the residual risk and whether the actions are complete.

- Staff delivering the activity or instruction are appropriately trained
- Children receive instructions on safety and behaviour prior to the activity
- Children are appropriately equipped for the activity, including any necessary protective equipment for tasks identified as requiring its usage.

Specialist Risk Assessments

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

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety

Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded annually or when major structural work is planned or in the event of an accident. A 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.

Prior to an off-site visit, the trip risk assessment must be evaluated and approved by the Head or a designated senior member of staff to whom the Head has delegated responsibility. Following the visit, the risk assessment must be evaluated by the trip leader with a particular focus on preparing for a future similar visit.

A checklist of regular risk assessments is kept by Fiona Walton, the Compliance Manager, who has oversight of the regular checks required on site.

Responsibilities of all Staff

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. Risk and hazards can arise unexpectedly, so 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, Bursar, SMT and Education Committee responsible for the governance of the school to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar.

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