Pathways School

Risk Assessment Policy

Policy Monitoring

Date policy last reviewed: June 2026

Signed by:

Neil Jones Headteacher Date: June 2026

Saima Ali Chair of governors Date: June 2026

Date of next review: June 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedure.

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedures the school will follow to identify and manage the health and safety of staff members, students and visitors who may be affected by the school's activities. The purpose of a risk assessment is to enable the school to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the duties under the relevant statutory provisions. This policy must be adhered to by all staff, volunteers, and governors at all times.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
DfE (2014) Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers
DfE (2021) Keeping children safe in education

3. Links to other school policies and practices

Health and Safety Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Fire Safety Policy
Educational Visits Policy
Fire Safety Risk Assessment
Pathways School Risk Assessment Toolkit
Pathways School Fire Safety Manual
Whistleblowing Policy

4. Definitions

Risk assessment is defined as a careful examination of what, in the school, could cause harm to people, so that the school can determine whether the necessary precautions are in place or whether more should be done to prevent harm.

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

Risk is defined as the chance, low to high, that someone could be harmed by it and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Dynamic risk assessment is defined as an assessment that considers unexpected or short, temporary changes that require immediate amendments to be made to control measures.

Generic risk assessment is defined as an individual assessment covering the common, significant hazards that staff and others face daily, such as low-risk activities or repeated activities that can be documented in another way.

Suitable and sufficient risk is defined as an assessment that is proportionate to the risk and ensures that all relevant hazards are addressed, complies with statutory requirements, ensures all groups who are affected are considered, takes account of existing control measures, and identifies further measures, as necessary.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The school governors are responsible for risk management at the school, delegating strategic decisions for operational management of risk and health and safety to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

Ensuring potential hazards are identified and risk assessments are carried out as appropriate.
Ensuring that any individual tasked to carry out a risk assessment is suitably trained to do so.
Allocating resources in response to risk assessments and determining a course of action, if it has been identified that a risk cannot be suitably controlled as far as is reasonably practicable.
Implementing frameworks for decision-making and corporate strategies which consider risk assessment principles.
Implementing appropriate mechanisms to communicate safe systems of work identified as part of the risk assessment process.
Communicating elements of risk and health and safety management to the governors.

Staff members are responsible for:

Taking reasonable care of their own safety, as well as that of students, visitors, and other staff members.
Undertaking their work in accordance with training and instructions.
Cooperating with the school on health and safety matters.
Carrying out assigned risk assessments effectively, ensuring all risks are identified as well as suitable control measures.
Reporting any risks or defects to the headteacher to create new, or update, existing risk assessments.
Participating in risk management training delivered by the school.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 Risk

In accordance with the school's Health and Safety Policy and requirements under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the school will assess the risks to the health and safety of staff, students and others affected by the

school's activities. The school will ensure that a common-sense and proportionate approach is applied to risk assessment management, the school understands that a separate written risk assessment is not required for every activity. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring potential hazards are identified and risk assessments are completed for all areas of risk in the school.

Where a new activity is taking place, a specific risk assessment of significant risks will be conducted. Where an activity usually forms part of a school day, e.g., students regularly undertaking swimming lessons at an alternative location, the school will not conduct separate risk assessments for each visit. Termly checks will be conducted to ensure the precautions implemented remain suitable and any changes will be made, as necessary. Risk assessments will identify all defects and potential risks along with necessary solutions or control measures.

6.2 Areas of risk

The school identifies key areas of school management that present risks to the school community. These include, but are not limited to:

Safeguarding
Student welfare
Health and safety
Security
Fire safety
Critical incidents
School trips
Staff recruitment

Specific risk assessments by professionals are also conducted under the following categories:

Asbestos
Legionella
Gas safety
Electrical safety
Fire safety

6.3 Principles of effective risk management and assessment

If possible, avoid a risk altogether
Avoid introducing new hazards
Evaluate unavoidable risks via a risk assessment
Combat risks at the source
Consult with those affected to adapt work to the requirements of the individual
Take advantage of technological and technical progress
Implement risk prevention measures within a policy
Give priority to protection measures that safeguard the whole school
Ensure that staff and students understand what they must do to minimise risk
Develop a positive approach to health and safety within school

6. Risk Assessment Procedure

The school uses a five-stage process to undertaking a risk assessment:

1. Identify the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks
4. Record the findings
5. Review

Step 1 – identify the hazards

When identifying hazards, Risk Assessor(s) will:

7. Walk around the area and assess what could be expected to cause harm.
8. Put themselves in the place of non-specialist staff and students to find the risks.
9. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people.

Have regard to the following:

10. Slipping and tripping hazards, e.g., poorly maintained floors or stairs
11. Fire, e.g., from flammable materials
12. Chemicals and how they are used, and in what quantities, e.g., cleaning chemicals
13. Moving parts of machinery, e.g., within faculty workshops · Ejection of materials, e.g., workshops and experiments
14. Electricity, e.g., poor wiring, portable appliances, electrical experiments
15. Fumes, e.g., welding and chemicals
16. Manual handling
17. Noise
18. General environment, e.g., poor lighting or low/high temperature
19. Biological hazards, e.g., gardening or contact with bodily fluids
20. Behaviour Support, e.g., kicking, hitting, or scratching self or others; spitting, running away.

Step 2 – decide who might be harmed and how

In addition to students and staff, those conducting a risk assessment will also consider people who may not be in the workplace consistently, e.g., cleaners, visitors, parents, or maintenance personnel. Assessor(s) will also have due regard to the following vulnerable groups:

• staff/students with disabilities • inexperienced staff • visitors • lone workers • pregnant workers.

Step 3 – evaluate the risks

Risk Assessor(s) will evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done. For each significant

hazard, the Assessor(s) will decide whether the residual risk is high, moderate, or low. The Assessor(s) will ensure that managing additional hazards does not interfere with other control measures, such as fire safety.

Risk Assessor(s) will ensure that the following are in place:

Adequate information, instruction, or training
Adequate systems or procedures to reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable, the Risk Assessor(s) will aim to eradicate the hazard completely or control the risk significantly to ensure that harm is unlikely or the likelihood of it occurring is minimised.

Step 4 – record the findings

Risk Assessor(s) will ensure that the most significant hazards are recorded, as well as the control measures in place to mitigate those hazards. They do not need to show how the assessment was carried out provided that:

A proper check was made.
The assessment details who might be affected.
All the obvious, significant hazards are considered, considering the number of people who could be involved.
The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risks are low.

All findings will be reported to the Headteacher. Where the impact or likelihood of major risks cannot be minimised, the Headteacher will decide whether the activity will still take place.

Step 5 – review

Risk assessments will be reviewed annually except in the following circumstances.

When there are changes to an activity
After a near-miss or accident
When there are changes to the type of people involved in the activity
When there are changes to good practice
When there are changes to related legislation

Reviews of risk assessments will be dynamic, and changes will be made immediately to the existing risk assessment. Changes will be communicated to all relevant individuals immediately.

21. Training

All staff members will receive training on basic risk management procedures. Staff members with a responsibility of creating and completing risk assessments, such as school trip leaders, will receive in-depth training on risk management in addition to the basic risk management training. All staff have access to the Pathways School Risk Assessment templates.

22. Quantifying Risk

For this process, we are using the following combination of severity and likelihood to give an indication of the risk involved for each hazard.

(Risk = Severity x Likelihood)

Severity (consequences)	**Likelihood**
1. No injury	1. Very Unlikely
2. Minor Injury/minor damage to property	2. Unlikely
3. Major Injury/ serious damage to Property	3. Possible
4. Fatality.	4. Very Likely
5. Multiple fatality	5.Certain

A score of five or above requires control measures to reduce the risk to one that is reasonably practicable. Ten and above require immediate attention.

Likelihood

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

Severity

Unacceptable = Unacceptable Level of Risk requiring immediate action

Control Measures = Unacceptable Level of Risk requiring control measures and subsequent reassessment

Acceptable Risk = Acceptable Level of Risk

When completing risk assessments, staff members will grade severity and likelihood using the above scale systems and respond appropriately.