

COGNITA  
TEACHING EXCELLENCE



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Duncombe  
School

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An Independent Preparatory  
School and Nursery

# **Risk Assessment: Welfare, Health & Safety**

## September 2015

Duncombe School

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**KEY FACTS:**

- ✦ **We are committed to the provision of a healthy and safe working environment that inspires and supports academic and pastoral achievement**
- ✦ **We use risk assessments to help us examine any potential for risk of harm as well as to help us to identify and put in place specific measures to minimise and manage such risks**
- ✦ **This is our risk assessment policy in relation to (a) the health and safety of staff, pupils, parents and visitors and (b) the safeguarding and welfare of our pupils. This policy sets out the areas in respect of which risk assessments are required – these include trips and pupil supervision during activities.**

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline how we use risk assessments in order to (a) promote the health and safety of pupils, staff, parents and visitors and (b) safeguard the welfare and pastoral care of all pupils.
- 1.2. Not only is it a legal requirement for schools to carry out risk assessments, but we believe that the effective use of risk assessments is the best way to identify and minimise risks and prevent harm. They cover our children, our buildings, our grounds, our staff, visitors and parents, as well as our daily routines and all school events and visits offsite.
- 1.3. Cognita schools are fully committed to promoting the welfare, health and safety of all those in our community so that high quality education can take place. Our highest priority lies in ensuring that everything within the school environment is delivered in a safe manner that complies both with the law and with best practice.
- 1.4. A risk assessment is a formal examination of the factors which may cause harm to people. It involves setting out the ways in which these factors can be minimised and managed and assessing the adequacy of current procedures.

## 2. The School's Duties

- 2.1. The School is under a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and health and safety of all children and young people in the School. Its main obligations in this regard are set out in Part 3 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/3283) ("ISS Regulations") and in Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015) and associated Department for Education guidance. The School's duties include (a) supporting children's physical and mental health and emotional well-being; (b) protecting children from harm and neglect; (c) ensuring that all forms of corporal punishment are prohibited; (d) encouraging children to contribute positively to society; (e) providing a safe and healthy environment; (f) improving the provision for disabled children; and (g) managing welfare concerns effectively.

- 2.2. The School is also under a duty to look after the health and safety of its staff, parents and visitors. Its main obligations in this regard are set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated statutory instruments, and Health and Safety Executive guidance.
- 2.3. This policy covers the School's duties set out in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (September 2014).
- 2.4. This policy is drawn up and implemented in accordance with (a) the ISS Regulations and in particular in relation to the Part 3 obligations of the proprietor to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the School by the implementation of a written risk assessment policy and the Part 8 obligations of those with leadership and management of the School to actively promote the wellbeing of pupils; and (b) the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 which requires schools to carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of all the significant risks to employees.

### 3. Policy

#### *What is a risk assessment and why do we need one?*

- 3.1. 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 assessment looks at both the likelihood of a risk occurring and the seriousness of the outcome should the risk occur (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).
- 3.2. Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Risk assessments are a fundamental part of any schools' procedures – they make good sense and they enable schools to focus on prevention rather than reacting when things go wrong. In many cases risk assessments enable schools to implement simple measures which are easy to implement and which are very effective
- 3.3. Our risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly.
- 3.4. All staff and pupils receive training to ensure they are competent and confident in assessing and managing risk.
- 3.5. A “library” of risk assessments is maintained by the school Health and Safety Co-ordinator and the Educational Visits Co-ordinator for staff to refer to and use for themselves.
- 3.6. Risk assessments will cover all matters considered of risk to the school community. . Examples of these are set out below.

### 4. Procedure and Responsibilities

### *What areas require risk assessments?*

- 4.1. There are numerous activities carried out in our school, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:
  - Fire safety and associated procedures;
  - Educational visits and trips;
  - Early Years settings.
- 4.2. Risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including:
  - The care and welfare of vulnerable groups within our school community, including promoting the achievement of those with special educational needs or disabilities, and of minority ethnic groups;
  - Educational;
  - Duke of Edinburgh;
  - Science;
  - Each sport and PE activity;
  - Art (including any clay and print studios);
  - Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff);
  - Drama (including the theatre back stage, stage, props room and lighting box);
  - Dance;
  - Playground activities;
  - Supervision of children and staff/pupil ratios;
  - Staff, e.g. new/expectant mothers, return under 'fit for work' limitations issued by GP;
  - Maintenance and caretaking activities;
  - Safer recruitment of staff;
  - Traffic and transport;
  - Display screen equipment;
  - Catering and cleaning;
  - Caretaking and security; and
  - General maintenance and building improvements.
- 4.3. To help us carry out effective risk assessments, and assess all risks adequately we make use of model risk assessments for our educational activities and visits. All category C school trips ie those which are adventurous, water-based, or cover overnight stay or overseas trips will include a specific written risk assessment at all times. This is formally approved by the Proprietor via the online management system called Evolve.
- 4.4. We subscribe to the CLEAPSS Advisory Service which provides model risk assessments for our lessons in Science and Design Technology, as well as providing professional training courses for both teachers and technicians who work in Science and DT.
- 4.5. Before the start of each school year we seek parental permission for all school activities and regular trips which are part of the usual school day. Parent/Carer(s) are welcome to view any risk assessment on request. Specific school visit risk assessments will be shared with parents at all parent meetings in advance of any Category C trip, as a valuable contribution to our effective risk assessment policy.
- 4.6. All teaching staff and technicians receive regular induction and refresher training in both general risk assessments and in those risk assessments tailored to their specific

areas. Induction and refresher training also covers safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment.

- 4.7. We aim to provide a positive, supportive and secure environment in which children and young people can learn and develop, and become equipped with the skills to enable them to protect their own welfare and that of others.
- 4.8. Further information in relation to this is captured in our safeguarding policy.
- 4.9. **First aid and medical incidents:** the school has risk assessments for first aid and all other medical incidents. Accident forms are maintained and the first aid coordinator is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the school health and safety co-ordinator, and escalated as appropriate to the chair of the school compliance committee.
- 4.10. The school has a separate policy which explains the procedures that we would follow in the event of a medical emergency.
- 4.11. The Head is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR). This includes certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses).
- 4.12. We ensure that children do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas such as science laboratories, the art room, etc. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use. All flammables are kept securely locked. Children and young people do not have unsupervised access to the grounds, maintenance, catering and caretaking areas of the school.
- 4.13. **Our Safeguarding:** 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 unsuitable, barred or prohibited from working with children, and are not allowed to work in the UK.
- 4.14. [PSHE lessons will be used alongside [form periods] to teach pupils to understand and manage risks (including those associated with e-safety, substance misuse, sexual exploitation, terrorism, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, gang activity, water, fire, road and railway), resist pressure, make safer choices and seek help if necessary.]
- 4.15. **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.
- 4.16. **Security:** risk assessments cover every room, laboratory, stairs, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school (including boarding where applicable). Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising risks by adhering to good practice.
- 4.17. **Maintenance:** risk assessments and training are required for every tool and item of equipment, as well as for manual handling, working at height, , asbestos, control of contractors on site, electricity, gas, water and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH).
- 4.18. **Working Practices:** risk assessments are required for working at height and lone working.

- 4.19. **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.

### 5. Activities

- 5.1. Our policy is not to carry out any high risk activity if children are not able to be kept safe. Activities involving children are normally low risk. Children and young people are always given a safety briefing before participating in risky activities, and are expected to wear appropriate protective equipment, such as mouth-guards, and to follow instructions.
- 5.2. We will always employ specialists to undertake high risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained. All members of staff are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.
- 5.3. **Specialist Areas:** the school Health and Safety Co-ordinator arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments in liaison with the Cognita Facilities Team and Cognita's Health and Safety Consultant:
- Fire safety;
  - Asbestos;
  - Legionella.
- 5.4. **Child protection:** where a concern about a child's welfare is identified, the risks will be assessed, appropriate action will be taken to reduce those risks, and this will be recorded and then regularly monitored and reviewed. The format of risk assessment may vary according to need but our approach will always been systematic and thorough. All staff who teach or support a child at risk will be kept well-informed of the strategies, approaches and risk assessment. Individual assessments will be kept on child files and will follow a standard process as follows:-
- What is the welfare issue?
  - Who might be harmed?
  - What measures are already in place?
  - What further action is necessary?
  - By whom?
  - By when?
  - Progress report (monitoring and review) Achieved/Not Achieved
- 5.5. Full details of our approach towards safeguarding and protecting children in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015) are provided in our separate policy and procedure, which is in keeping with LSCB policy. In addition, we have an anti-bullying and a written behaviour policy where further details of our approach can be seen in more detail. Any children and young people who display sexually harmful or problematic behaviour will have a risk assessment management plan in keeping with LSCB requirements, subject to regular review with the relevant external support agencies.
- 5.6. This should be approved by the Assistant Director of Education and authorised by the Chair of Safeguarding Governance Committee (SGC).

### 6. Responsibilities

- 6.1. As proprietor Cognita Schools Limited has overall responsibility for (a) safeguarding and promoting pupil welfare and well-being at the School; and (b) ensuring the health and safety of staff, pupils, parents and visitors.
- 6.2. At an operational level, the Head will:
  - 6.2.1. ensure that all staff are aware of, and adhere to, the School's policies and procedures on pupil health, safety and welfare;
  - 6.2.2. ensure that key staff have clearly established roles and responsibilities;
  - 6.2.3. ensure that staff are appropriately trained to effectively carry out risk assessments;
  - 6.2.4. ensure that where concerns about a pupil's welfare are identified, the risks are appropriately managed;
  - 6.2.5. ensure that staff, pupils, parents and others are consulted, where appropriate, to find practical solutions to welfare issues and health and safety;
  - 6.2.6. ensure that standards of pupil welfare and health and safety at the School are regularly monitored both at an individual level and globally to identify trends and issues of concern and to improve systems to manage these.
- 6.3. Those named in paragraph 8 are responsible for carrying out risk assessments in relation to the specific matters of pupil health, safety and welfare covered in the named policies.
- 6.4. This policy must be read and followed by all members of staff and particularly those with a specialist compliance role, such as Educational Visits Coordinator, Health and Safety Coordinator, Visit Leaders, and Designated Safeguarding Lead(s).
- 6.5. For compliance purposes, a signed copy of this policy should be retained for record-keeping purposes for anyone who is required to have read, understood and take accountability for the contents of this document.
- 6.6. All staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors.
- 6.7. All members of staff are responsible for reporting any facilities risks or defects to the school Business Manager.
- 6.8. The Assistant Director of Education is responsible for assessing the major risks to which the school is exposed and reviewing the systems in place for managing exposure to major risks.

### 7. Review of the risk assessments and Record keeping

- 7.1. All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded annually or when major structural work is planned or in the event of an accident or incident. 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.
- 7.2. Risk assessments in relation to safeguarding and welfare will be maintained by the [Designated Safeguarding Lead] and on the pupil's file where relevant. Risk assessments in relation to trips will be maintained in a risk assessment file by the



Educational Visits Co-ordinator. All other risk assessments will be held by the health and safety co-ordinator in a specific risk assessment folder.

### 8. Related Policies, Guidelines, Templates and Forms

- Child Protection
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Health and Safety
- First Aid Policy
- Administration of Medicines/Health Care
- Supervision
- Educational Visits
- Safeguarding: child protection policy and procedure
- Safer recruitment: policy and procedure
- Health and Safety
- Accidents and Incidents Recording and Reporting
- Learning Outside the Classroom/Educational Visits
- Risk assessment templates
- Serious Incident Report Form and associated Cognita guidance
- Dealing with Allegations Against Staff and Other Adults
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality and Diversity
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Administration of Medication
- Drug and Alcohol Misuse
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils (SMSC)
- Anti-bullying
- The Administration of First Aid
- School Behaviour and Discipline
- Supervision
- LSCB policies and procedures for safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children

## Welfare, Health & Safety

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