

British Overseas School: Risk Assessment Policy



A. Policy Overview

- British Overseas School is committed to managing health and safety by controlling risks within the School and its workplaces.
- As an integral part of the Schools Health and Safety Management System, risk assessment will control the risks in the School and the workplace by considering what might cause harm to staff, pupils and others and deciding whether reasonable steps are being taken to prevent that harm.

B. Aims

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that risks to health and safety are controlled wherever possible through the use of risk assessments. These should be reviewed on a regular basis and cover all identified risks to our students, our staff, our buildings and our grounds, in our daily routine and at all school events.

C. Definitions

- A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people 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.
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are in place in order to minimise the consequences of identified risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, smoke/heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).

D. Roles and Responsibilities

Risk Assessments are conducted by the SLT, the Facilities Manager, all Primary and Secondary staff members for their classrooms, all teachers taking students on a trip whether local or overseas.

E. Risk Assessment Process

The risk assessment and associated control measures should be shared with all staff and voluntary helpers as appropriate to the activity or situation.

Risk assessments should be obtained and utilised from individuals, groups and organisations who visit the campus and relevant information about students should be shared with them, as appropriate, to ensure safety and welfare.

1. Types of Risk Assessment

There are two main types of risk assessment: generic and specific.

- a. Generic risk assessments should be completed for hazards or activities that are common throughout the school.
- b. Specific risk assessments should be completed for particular tasks, procedures, equipment, locations, and educational visits, which have specific or significant risks.

In some cases risk assessments for individual students may be established, as appropriate, and shared with staff and parents as appropriate.

2. Procedure and Protocols

The essential steps to comply with this policy are:

- a. Identify the hazards to health or safety arising from the activity, learning environment
- b. or setting.
- c. Decide who might be harmed and how.
- d. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing risk control measures are adequate.
- e. Record your findings.
- f. Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

Assessments identify significant risks and prescribe remedial action, i.e. risk control measures.

Thorough risk assessment involves answers to such questions as the following:

- With what hazards are we faced?
- Who might be affected?
- How can the risks be reduced to an acceptable level?
- Can effective measures be implemented now?
- If not, what contingency plans will serve us best for the time being?

Consider students, staff and those who may not be directly involved with the activity but who may still be affected by the process. This may include cleaning staff, contractors or parents. Or when beyond the School, members of the public.

Evaluate the risks (low/medium/high) to which individuals might be exposed. This will be a subjective evaluation but should be used to give an indication of the priority with which the risks need to be addressed. Where risks are already controlled, monitor the effectiveness of the control to decide whether they are sufficient. Where the risk to individuals is thought to be medium or high, additional control measures must be considered.

Decide what controls are necessary to reduce the risk to individuals.

The steps to controlling the risks are as follows:

- Avoid the hazard – whether the hazard can be avoided or altered to reduce the likelihood or risk
- Substitute or replace the hazard
- Procedural controls – whether the procedure can be altered to avoid or reduce the risk, the individual be removed/distanced from the risk or the activity be carried out at a time that would have a lesser impact on others
- Child management – make sure that the staff are aware of each child's needs
- Setting management – such as the monitoring of exits and entrances
- Additional equipment/staff – whether a lifting device or an additional person can be utilised to avoid or reduce the risk
- Personal Protective Equipment – consider the value of using such things as gloves, safety goggles etc
- Emergency procedures – have contingencies in the event of emergencies, eg drills etc.

F. Monitoring Arrangements

1. The SLT will monitor the control measures to ensure that they are effective and implemented correctly.
2. Teaching staff carry out risk assessments of their own working areas. These are to be completed on, at least, an annual basis, shared with the SLT and stored in the appropriate folder on the Common Site.
3. Staff responsible for taking children off site must carry out a risk assessment. Before it can take place the activity must be authorised (See Trips Policy).
4. The Building and Facilities Manager arranges for specialists to carry out risk assessments where appropriate and available. For example, fire safety and the safety of fumigation.
5. Staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of students and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the SLT.

Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the SLT or Facilities Manager.

G. Brief Guide to Risk Assessments

This is a brief guide, for staff, on the performance of General Area Risk Assessments at BOS.

Risk assessment is a legal requirement designed to protect the whole BOS community. The compilation of a Risk Assessment is a relatively straightforward process and not the onerous task that some may perceive it to be. Please do not hesitate to see your Head of School or Angela Victor for further guidance.

1. Definitions

A risk assessment is a systematic general examination of your work area that involves identifying the HAZARDS, and then evaluating the amount of RISK involved – taking into account whatever precautions are already in place.

- GENERAL AREAS are work areas that do not require specialist knowledge or skills

- A HAZARD is anything with the potential to cause harm including substances, equipment and work methods.
- A RISK is the likelihood that the harm will happen.

2. Guidance

To complete the General Area Risk Assessment the person responsible should:

- Identify the hazards i.e. any items, areas or aspects of activities that may cause harm, not forgetting things that may only happen once a term. Rate the hazard on a severity rating of High, Medium and Low as specified on the form.
- Assess the risk. Some risks may already be controlled in some way – the effectiveness of these controls will need to be taken in to account. Again, rate the probability on a scale of High, Medium and Low as per the form.
- If the risk score is High then you will need to complete a Detailed Risk Assessment form.
- If a Detailed Risk Assessment is required please ensure that you highlight any new controls that need to be put in place, whether they are new rules, maintenance, or if safety devices/equipment are needed. It would be beneficial if an indication of urgency could also be noted.
- For members of staff updating assessments, a completely new assessment is not required; simply make any updates/additions in the Risk assessment folder on the Apollo shared drive.
- Please make sure all forms are dated. Blank forms are also available in the file to fill in. Please copy and paste the blank form from the file; do not use the blank form directly.
- Please email your Head of School when you made the annual update to the file.

Reviewed: September 2025

Next Review: September 2026