

EDSTART SCHOOLS

Risk Assessment Policy

CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT & OUTCOMES

Policy owner	EdStart Specialist Education Ltd
Applies to	EdStart Schools – All Sites
Category	Curriculum, assessment & outcomes
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Review trigger	Annual review, or earlier following statutory, regulatory or operational change

Status: This 2026 version supersedes all previous versions.

1. WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people and the environment, so that can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting staff, pupils, visitors, contractors, the environment and EdStart as a whole.

It helps staff focus on the risks within their setting and activities they undertake. In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks; for example ensuring staff have sufficient information when they are off site, spillages are cleaned up promptly so people do not slip and good housekeeping is maintained to ensure people do not trip.

Printable risk assessment forms can be found in the Shared Drive – Health & Safety – Risk Assessments – Risk Assessment COPY.

2. WHEN SHOULD A RISK ASSESSEMENT BE COMPLETED

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires an assessment to be made of the risks arising out of the activities that EdStart undertakes.

All staff have a responsibility for ensuring risk assessments are completed for their area of work, and the Centre Manager should check and monitor assessments.

This may be by one assessment, a number of assessments linked together or by individual assessments or different tasks/activities, off site visits, use of chemicals, experiments or processes within the department

3. STORING ASSESSEMENTS

Once the completed assessments have been shared with the appropriate staff and pupils they need to be stored in the "Risk Assessments" file in reception.

Sharing of assessments and best practice will ensure that the assessments are improved, and that staff have good, reliable information.

4. HOW TO CARRY OUT A RISK ASSESSEMENT

Step 1 – What are the hazards:

Consider how someone may be harmed, this will help to identify the hazards, disregard the inconsequential or trivial.

- Walk around your classroom, office; think through your task or activity; ask the staff doing the task, consider the location, duration, purpose of your visit, are there long term health hazards associated with the task?
- Consult the manufacturer's instructions, safety data sheets, trade associations, associated websites etc.

Step 2 – Who may be harmed and how:

Consider each hazard and who may be harmed and how they may be harmed.

- Who may be? Pupils, teaching, office, cleaning, maintenance staff and visitors. Identify groups, which are more vulnerable such as young persons, the disabled, lone working staff, contractor's members of the public etc.
- How? May be from tripping on a bog left on the floor, accessing a box from a high shelf, putting up displays from a step ladder, sporting activity, noise, machinery, off site trips etc.

Step 3 – What are you already doing:

Having spotted the hazards consider what is already in place to control them. Compare your list to good practice, is there more that could be done.

When controlling risks, apply the following principals, if possible, in the following order:

- Can I remove the hazard all together
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely
- Try a less risky option (e.g. switch to a less hazardous chemical)
- Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding)
- Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard (e.g. put barriers between pupils/staff and the works)
- Issue personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, foot ware, goggles etc.)
- Provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid and removal of contamination)

What further action is needed:

Have the risks been reduced as far as possible or is there a need for more, for instance;

- You may consider that staff require refresher training on the machinery/task/activity
- You may feel that before the trip goes ahead the ratio of staff to pupils should be increased. Without the increase in staff you could not go ahead with the trip
- There may have been a change of legislation or best practice and therefore new equipment or additional equipment is required

Step 4 – How will you put the assessment into action:

The completed risk assessment must be shared with the appropriate staff and where necessary pupils.

You may have outstanding issues. If so prioritise; say what needs to be done, by when and whom. Remember the assessment demonstrates how the event, task, activity etc. is to be managed.

Step 5 – Monitor and review:

Monitor – there are a number of occasions, such as off-site activities, an event, a project etc. where it is recommended that a “wash up” be carried out, once the wash up has occurred use this section to make comments/action points for when the situation is carried out again. This will assist staff to improve the situation in the future.

Review – Few activities, classrooms etc. stay the same. Sooner or later a piece of new equipment, substance procedure etc. is brought in; this can lead to new hazards and therefore the assessment will need to be reviewed.

Should no changes occur that you are aware of there will still be a need to review the assessment and it is suggested that the assessment be reviewed on an annual basis.

Step 6 – Signature and sharing with staff:

The last section of the form asks how and who the assessment will be shared with. For example, naming the staff on the trip, activity or doing the task, via a staff meeting or via email to all staff.

The person who has completed the assessment should enter their name and the Centre Managers name. Once the content is agreed by the Centre Manager it should be filed in the “Risk Assessments” file in reception.