



**WOODSIDE SCHOOL**

# **Risk assessment policy for Woodside School**

**Independent School Standards: paragraphs 16  
and 34.**

Policy content includes:

- when and how we assess risks
- our procedures for trips, off-site activities, work experience placements and alternative provision
- emergency procedures.

<b>Last external review</b>	September 2024
<b>Next external review</b>	September 2025
<b>Latest update</b>	September 2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Woodside School we formally risk assess the following:

- **individual pupils, particularly in light of their EHCP needs**
- **pupils' behaviour generally**
- **trips and activities**
- **work experience placements**
- **use of the buildings and facilities in general**
- **specific curriculum areas, such as catering and construction.**

All risk assessments are stored electronically on our shared

drive. Each risk assessment considers the following:

- **Risk or hazard** (e.g. general risk of pupil with behavioural challenges being on site)
- **Risk to pupil** (e.g. getting injured in any way, being upset/assaulted by other pupils)
- **Risk to others** (e.g. assaults on staff)
- **Magnitude (level) of risk** (a) (high, medium or low)
- **Likelihood of risk** (b) (high, medium or low)
- **Overall risk factor** (c) (e.g. if a) is high and b) is low, c) will be medium)
- **Preventative measures** (e.g. pupils to be briefed about appropriate behaviour; expectations and rules discussed; frequent therapeutic/discussion- centred activities such as social stories to remind and support appropriate behaviour; pupils supervised at all times; families regularly communicated with, etc.)

A **common-sense approach** to risk assessments is adopted and we do not ask staff to list every possible danger; only those that are significant or likely. We organise and develop appropriate preventative and protective measures in order to keep pupils and staff safe from harm, and we monitor and review arrangements to ensure required standards are achieved.

We recognise the intrinsic value of all pupils learning outside the classroom. Regular local walks and educational visits form an intrinsic part of the educational provision we offer and help to support the curriculum whilst also enhancing the social, emotional and behavioural development of our pupils.

## **INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Pupils all have an Individual Risk Assessment (IRA) which highlights known behaviours and associated risks, this information is obtained from pupil documents like the ECHP, information shared via the family at the parent interview and pupil observation. Staff make dynamic risk assessments and when appropriate a sanction is applied. The IRA is kept as a live document with any new or unknown triggers, behaviours and risks being added as and when they are displayed to ensure that the staff team are aware of current risks and how to support the behaviours.

## **TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

### **Regular and routine (Level 1)**

These include regular visits undertaken as part of the normal school timetable, for example:

- trips to local parks for break time
- trips to local sports facilities
- local walks
- trips to local shops and supermarkets
- trips within London or Chelmsford which do not require travel on local transport.

### **Single event, specific activities (Level 2)**

These are one-off activities that are, by nature, more complex than regular and routine off-site trips. They may involve travelling further afield, or by public or hired transport. For example:

- trips to visitor attractions, museums or galleries
- trips to forests or parks further away than the vicinity of our schools
- trips to sports facilities outside of the local area
- any trips involving access to bodies of water
- any trips which require travel on public or hired transport.

### **Adventurous or residential activities (Level 3)**

These are activities that involve or require delivery by accredited or qualified instructors, or are visits that include at least one overnight stay. For example:

- visits to the local climbing wall
- outdoor adventure activities such as canoeing, abseiling, archery or similar
- activities which are more complex or present a higher level of risk, e.g. go- karting

- residential trips in the UK or abroad, including those delivered by an approved provider.

## **TRIPS & ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE CONFINES OF THE SCHOOL PREMISES**

As per guidance, the executive principal takes ultimate responsibility for school trips and external-school activities. However, in practice the senior vice principal for safety and compliance takes day-to-day responsibility for such activities, and is readily available to give advice on the planning of educational visits and risk assessments. Risk assessments must be carried out well in advance of any visit (**at least two weeks prior to the date of the event**) and must be approved by an assistant principal. The person who signs the risk assessment off needs to be someone other than the person who completed the risk assessment.

It is the responsibility of an assistant principal to ensure staff and pupils are well prepared for the activity and that it is thoroughly discussed well in advance of the trip/activity. Risk assessment forms are available to all staff on the shared drive, where there are also exemplars.

Outline approval from an assistant principal should be requested before any other planning takes place. A full risk assessment for the whole visit, including each significant activity, must be made, and appropriate planning undertaken, as a result of this. The risk assessment must include first aid arrangements.

An exploratory visit should, as appropriate, be considered and carried out prior to the event, to better assess risks.

The aim of a risk assessment is to prevent risks or significantly reduce them. Pupils must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be mitigated, then the visit must not take place and all risk assessments should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What are the existing controls and where is the information kept?
- Does the venue have its own health and safety policy?
- Are there suitability (such as DBS) checks on all staff who have direct contact with the group?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

### **Types of risk assessment required for different levels of**

#### **activity Level 1 activities**

These are covered by blanket consent forms and follow generic risk

assessments for that activity (including for specific pupils within the group). Generic risk assessments can be found on the shared drive under *risk assessments > general off site*.

Every time a group leader takes a pupil/group of pupils off site for a level 1 activity, they must follow the following safety procedures:

- the relevant leader needs to be informed that the trip is taking place
- at least one first aid kit is to be taken
- mobile phones taken containing telephone numbers for the school, at least two members of the leadership team
- all pupils and staff to be signed out at the school office
- group leader to inform the office of their estimated time of return to school.

Generic risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly by senior leaders and class teachers to ensure that they reflect the current needs of pupils.

### **Level 2 activities**

These are covered by blanket consent forms but **must** be separately risk assessed. The risk assessment must include:

- details of the group leader in charge of the trip and other staff members involved
- ratio of staff to pupils which must reflect the specific needs of pupils in the group (for example, 1:1 support for children if required)
- the educational objectives of the trip
- the desired benefits of the trip
- an assessment of any **significant** risks
- an assessment of the **specific risks relating to each pupil** in the group (or reference to existing individual pupil risk assessments)

All risk assessments must be signed off by an assistant principal before the trip can take place.

### **Level 3 activities**

These require additional consent from parents/carers and must be carefully risk assessed.

In particular, the following need to be considered when risk assessing these activities:

- the programme of activities and their suitability for the group
- the level of supervision required
- the suitability and/or competency of staff to lead the activity/ies
- the suitability of providers

The planning documentation and risk assessments for any off-site adventurous activities or residential trips must be submitted to the DSL at

least 4 weeks before the date of the activity and approval must be given before the trip can take place.

For residential trips, the executive principal must also have sight of the approved risk assessment and give final approval for the trip's go-ahead. However, the senior vice principal for safety and compliance is readily available to give advice on the planning of residential trips and the risk assessments.

## **DESIGNATED GROUP LEADER**

For every educational visit, a group leader will be appointed and the composition of accompanying staff group planned to ensure an appropriate level of supervision and expertise. The group leader will be responsible for all aspects of the educational visit, although the group leader may delegate tasks to other members of staff accompanying the trip.

The staff-to-pupil ratio should not only reflect the nature of the trip but also the gender balance and ages of those pupils going. The head teacher can advise on appropriate staff-to-pupil ratios. All personnel to be included in these calculations must be authorised by leaders.

Before booking a visit, the group leader should obtain written or documented assurance that providers, such as tour operators, can provide copies of their own risk assessments and have appropriate safety measures in place. The following factors should also be taken into consideration:

- type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- location, routes and modes of transport
- competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- ratios of supervisory staff to pupils.

A school contact must be organised and all the accompanying staff must have their details. All those who need to, have names and contact details of everyone in the group, as well as full details of the arrangement. All the staff on the visit, the school contact and the relevant leader have a copy of the following details:

- the address and phone number of the visit's venue and a contact name
- the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group
- the contact details of parents/carers and the staff's next of kin
- risk assessment documents
- a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

Dates, times, costings and staffing arrangements of the proposed trip should be checked with the executive principal. Transport and other arrangements should then be made and confirmed in writing.

An assessment of individual pupils should also be made, taking into consideration the pupil's age, maturity, level of fitness, temperament and the suitability of the activity.



Whether the visit is to the local park, museum or swimming pool, or includes a residential stay in the UK or abroad, **it is essential that detailed, formal planning** takes place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. The planning of the visit will be led by the group leader in consultation with the accompanying staff team.

The person planning the visit is advised to keep the relevant leader updated once all stages of the assessment have been undertaken. For residential visits at home or abroad, or for potentially hazardous activities, the executive principal must be satisfied that the visit has been planned effectively and that risks are minimised.

For some visits, especially residential trips, a parents/carers' meetings may be held as the planning of the trip progresses. Regardless of whether a meeting is held, families should be sent details of the proposed trip, which should include the following:

- dates, times and the proposed itinerary
- transport arrangements
- information to prepare pupils, including those with particular learning, behaviour and medical needs
- cost and payment arrangements, including the payment of refundable or non-refundable deposits and details of extra costs, guidance on pocket money etc.
- details of staffing and supervision ratios
- details of the code of conduct for pupils going on the trip
- details of any equipment, clothing etc. the pupils need to take
- emergency procedures including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if the parents/carers cannot be contacted
- a consent form which must be signed for the child to be allowed to go on the trip/partake in the activity.

Whilst we already have them, we will again ask parents/carers to provide their latest emergency contact numbers and any medical information detailing any known medical conditions or allergies their children have. Once these are known, if the group leader has any doubts as to whether or not a given pupil should attend, they should discuss this with the relevant leader.

A full list of members of the party along with the detailed arrangements, to include consent forms and risk assessments, must be provided to the relevant leader and an electronic copy kept on the schools' shared drive under TRIPS & ACTIVITIES.

During the school visit/activity it is essential that all pupils are supervised with the degree of care that would be expected from a responsible parent/carer in similar circumstances. The organiser should be prepared to modify plans in the light of circumstances and in the interests of the

party's welfare. It is the responsibility of the group leader to see that all staff accompanying the visit have copies of relevant documentation on pupils' medical conditions and emergency contact numbers. The group leader should ensure that all the staff are aware of the emergency procedures.

### **The group leader must ensure that:**

- risks are monitored throughout the visit and take appropriate action as and when necessary
- appropriate child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place
- appropriate risk assessments have been carried out
- pupils and staff understand the expectations of acceptable pupil behaviour
- all necessary actions have been completed **before** the visit begins
- training needs have been assessed and met and the needs of staff and pupils considered
- at least one member of staff is suitably competent to instruct the activity
- non-teaching supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children
- ratio of staff/adults to pupils is appropriate
- parents/carers have signed the consent forms
- arrangements have been made for the medical and educational needs of all pupils on the educational visit
- adequate first-aid provision will be available
- travel has been well organised and the plan is clear.

### **SUITABILITY OF STAFF**

- All staff who lead trips are competent and understand their responsibilities to assess and manage risk.
- Induction for new staff includes information on procedures for off site visits and activities.
- We provide appropriate training and information for staff responsible for educational visits.
- All staff who lead or accompany educational visits have been subject to Enhanced DBS checks.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Woodside School supports pupils to attend work experience placements. This exposure to work is a significant step in preparing young people for adult and working life by developing their personal and social skills, as well as key skills they will need for the world of work.
- It is important to recognise that work experience is not the same as a temporary job, as by definition it is a period of unpaid work. It is an arranged opportunity for a pupil to gain an insight into the variety of work carried out in a chosen organisation, to see the way the organisation is managed and ideally to participate in some aspects of the work.

- At Woodside School, London, the head teacher is responsible for planning and organising all work experience placements for pupils aged 14–16.
- Pupils will carry out meaningful work in accordance with the agreed duties for their placement. There will be a responsible named person who will plan the work and be designated for the welfare and supervision of the pupil during the period of the placement
- A DBS check is required where a pupil will have substantial unsupervised contact with an employee or supervisor on a 1:1 basis, particularly if located in an isolated environment, whilst travelling or where the placement has a residential element. We will ask for this to be confirmed in writing, including the DBS number and date. At the very least, we will ask the organisation to confirm in writing that the responsible named person who will be supervising the pupil has not been barred from working with children. The named person will also complete our self-disclosure form. These will be obtained before a placement starts and will be retained in a secure and restricted folder on Google Drive.
- There are certain legal requirements and recommended best practices that are in place to ensure the safety of all parties involved in a work experience placement. The Health and Safety (Training and Employment) Regulations 1990 state that all those receiving training or work experience from an employer in the workplace are deemed to be ‘employees’ for the purposes of health and safety legislation. This legislation imposes responsibilities on the employer but also on the pupil as an ‘employee’:
  - to take responsibility for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do or do not do
  - to co-operate with the employer and to follow instructions on health and safety
  - not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for their health, safety or welfare.
- The employer will be asked to confirm that they have a current health and safety policy and that they will go through the relevant sections with the pupil at the start of the placement. It is important that this is confirmed in writing and is clear in the risk assessment.
- The employer should be asked to confirm that a risk assessment has been completed for the duties that the pupil will undertake and in relation to the health and safety of the pupil while on the placement; taking into account the pupil’s inexperience, immaturity and lack of awareness of risks.
- At the start of the work placement, the employer will provide pupils with a health and safety induction, which will include workplace hazards and their control, fire, emergencies, first aid,

accident reporting and security arrangements.

- The employer will be informed of any medical conditions the pupil has, which could result in an increased risk to the pupil or an employee's health and safety during the placement. The employer will then be able to identify any significant risk and the necessary control measures put in place to ensure the safety of the pupil.
- Pupils will not do work prohibited by law, operate dangerous machinery, carry out any manual handling tasks identified as being a risk to the pupil's health and safety, or be exposed to dangerous substances, radiation, extreme heat or cold, noise or vibration or any other work environment that may endanger their health and safety.
- Where appropriate, pupils will be provided with and instructed on the correct use of personal protective clothing and equipment (PPE) and its use will be enforced.
- Under the Working Time Regulations 1998 there are stringent daily and weekly working time limits for young workers (those that are over compulsory school age but under 18). Young workers may not work for more than 8 hours in any one day and 40 hours in any one week. Young workers are also entitled to a daily rest of 12 consecutive hours, a weekly rest of 48 hours and a rest break of 30 minutes where daily work time is more than 4½ hours. The employer should comply with the Working Time Regulations and should not require the pupil to work in excess of the limits set out above.
- Pupils will not receive any payment for this work and they will not be allowed to work hours which are considered unreasonable. In any event the employer confirms they will comply with the relevant provisions of the Working Time Regulations. The employer will consider any relevant information relating to the pupil's medical condition or any special educational needs, in formulating appropriate risk controls to protect both pupils and/or employees.
- All tasks asked of the pupil will conform to the laws governing the Employment of Young Persons and Work Experience (as defined in the Education Act 1996) and any other statutory obligations to the pupil will be observed.
- The employer recognises that a pupil on work placement is to be regarded as an employee for the purposes of Health and Safety legislation and the associated duty of care. A current health and safety policy will be maintained and there will be compliance with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its relevant statutory provisions.
- The employer will arrange for Employer's Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance and Motor Vehicle Insurance (where applicable) and will confirm that the pupil is covered by each policy. The employer will accept, or insure against liability for loss, damage or

injury caused to or by the pupil, whilst on work placement, to the employer's property (material damage), other employees or third parties, in the same way as for paid employees.

- The employer will notify their insurer of pupil participation in work experience. If the employer does not confirm that these insurances are in place, pupils should not attend such establishments. It should be noted that Sole Traders have no requirement for Employers' Liability Insurance and a pupil would not have the protection available under such insurance. Placements with Sole Traders should therefore be avoided, unless such insurance was confirmed as being in place.
- If the pupil will travel with an employee or their supervisor during the placement, it is essential that the vehicle is insured appropriately to cover the work experience pupil for business travel.
- The employer is responsible for the welfare of the pupil during a work placement and is aware of child protection issues, particularly responsibility under the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000 to disclose the names of individuals who are disqualified from working with children, where known to them.
- The employer will notify the parents/carers and school, by telephone and as soon as practicable, of any accident, of any case of ill health or any other incident which relates to the pupil's work placement. When appropriate, the employer will comply with the provisions of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995. The employer will have access to adequate first aid facilities as required under the Health and Safety (First Aid Regulations 1981).
- Pupils carrying out their placement at one of our school sites, e.g. working with our premises manager or within one of the school's catering kitchens, are the responsibility of Woodside Schools, and the pupil will follow the schools' procedures.
- Assistant principals, with oversight from the senior vice principal for safety and compliance, will monitor the pupil's progress on their placement.

### **ALTERNATIVE PROVISION ('AP')**

- Whilst we make no use of any alternative provision (AP), we know that if this were to ever change, the schools remain responsible for the safeguarding of pupils attending any AP. This would include responsibility for risk assessment, site visits and securing written confirmation from the AP that they have completed all the required vetting and barring checks on their staff.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**



- Risk assessment proformas contain clear guidance on emergency procedures for off-site activities/trips.

- The schools have an emergency response plan detailing the actions to be taken by senior leaders in the event of a major incident or emergency concerning an off-site activity or trip.
- All accidents are reported and recorded via our accident procedure.

### **REPORTING TO THE HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE (HSE)**

- Woodside Schools are legally required under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (SI 1995/3163) (RIDDOR) to report certain accidents, injuries and fatalities involving pupils, staff and visitors. Further detail is available in our health and safety policy, and full details are available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/>.