



Risk Assessment Policy

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Risk Assessment Policy

Background

This Risk Management Policy aims to ensure that the Park High School complies with risk management best practice and sets out the current processes and responsibilities for risk management in the Academy.

The Academies Handbook requires that academies;

- Should have arrangements for managing and tracking opportunities and risks
- Should make a considered choice about its desired risk profile
- Must assess the risks arising from its operations
- Should maintain a register of these risks
- Must have a Business Continuity Plan (BCP)

To meet this minimum good practice, the school has the following in place:

- Risk Management Policy updated when necessary
- Risk Register reviewed and updated during the year
- BCP updated annually
- Risk Assessments are conducted and reviewed on a regular basis

Our Risk Management strategy

The level of risk that an organisation is prepared to accept, before action is deemed necessary to reduce it is called the “risk appetite” of the establishment. It represents a balance between the potential benefits of innovation and the threats that change inevitably brings.

Park High School aims to:

- Identify risk management processes to ensure that all risks are appropriately identified, controlled and monitored.
- Ensure appropriate levels of awareness throughout the Academy, especially with SLT and governors.

Roles and responsibilities

The Headteacher and Chief Financial Officer have lead responsibility for risk management processes and the Risk Register. This responsibility includes:

- Monitoring the performance of risk management processes
- Ensuring that appropriate controls are in place to manage identified risks
- Preparation of periodic reports to the Finance, Premises, Audit & Risk Committee

Key Risk Controls

The key controls used by the Governing body include:

- formal agendas and minutes for all meetings of the Governing body and committees
- terms of reference for all committees
- a thorough selection process for new and re-elected governors to ensure that the Governing body has a diverse and strong level of expertise to anticipate and identify risk
- comprehensive strategic planning, financial forecasting, budgeting and management accounting
- established and identifiable organisational structures and reporting lines
- comprehensive formal written policies
- clear authorisation limits
- construction and regular review of risk registers

- vetting procedures as required by law, for protection of the vulnerable
- use of extended assurance work to review risks in key processes

Risk Register

The Risk Register is a key document for managing risk.

The Risk Register will be used to inform the annual review of insurance, the programme of financial assurance work undertaken by audit and the level of contingencies and reserves set aside as part of budget preparation.

The Risk Register is prepared by the Headteacher/ Chief Financial Officer and reviewed annually by each governor committee. The structure and organisation of the Academy's Risk Register seeks to ensure that all significant objectives and activities have been identified and the risks associated with each area have been identified. As such, it has governor committees identified for each risk and this should be reviewed every year by the assigned committee.

The outcomes of the committee reviews are reported to SLT and the Finance, Premises, Audit & Risk Committee. The aim of reporting risk is to provide assurance to the Governors, the Senior Team and Auditors that the Academy is effectively managing its risks and has a robust system of internal controls. Aligned with this are the Extended Assurance reviews undertaken by the school's Auditors which provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the Academy's management of risk. This results in an action plan that details the management response to the assurance work, which is monitored and overseen by the governor's Audit Committee.

All risks that are assigned a lead governor committee to provide oversight as to how these risks are managed, they are reviewed annually.

Any significant changes in risk impact or probability, or the occurrence of an event which raises the profile of a risk will be recorded on the Risk Register as it occurs by the Headteacher/School Business Manager following information received from the governor committees. Any new or increased risks identified by SLT, Governors or raised by a member of staff will be evaluated and, if appropriate, also recorded in the Risk Register. Where significant changes occur in the school's risk profile this will be used to inform the following.

- The level and type of insurance cover
- The level of audit assurance work and the areas to be included in the audit plan
- The level of contingencies in the budget and the level of reserves held

Definitions

Risk assessment	A tool for examining the hazards linked to a particular activity or situation, and establishing whether enough precautions have been taken in order to prevent harm from them based on their likelihood and their potential to cause harm
Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm to people, such as chemicals or working from height
Risk	The chance (high or low) that people could be harmed by hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be
Control measure	Action taken to prevent people being harmed

School staff and volunteers

School staff are responsible for:

- Assisting with, and participating in, risk assessment processes, as required
- Familiarising themselves with risk assessments
- Implementing control measures identified in risk assessments
- Alerting the headteacher to any risks they find which need assessing

Students and parents

Students and parents are responsible for following the school's advice in relation to risks, on-site and off-site, and for reporting any hazards to a member of staff.

Contractors

Contractors are expected to provide evidence that they have adequately risk assessed all their planned work.

Risk assessment process

When assessing risks in the school, we will follow the process outlined below.

We will also involve staff, where appropriate, to ensure that all possible hazards have been identified and to discuss control measures, following a risk assessment.

Step 1: identify hazards – we will consider activities, processes and substances within the school and establish what associated-hazards could injure or harm the health of staff, students and visitors.

Step 2: decide who may be harmed and how – for each hazard, we will establish who might be harmed, listing groups rather than individuals. We will bear in mind that some people will have special requirements, for instance students with special educational needs and expectant mothers. We will then establish how these groups might be harmed.

Step 3: evaluate the risks and decide on control measures (reviewing existing ones as well) – we will establish the level of risk posed by each hazard and review existing control measures. We will balance the level of risk against the measures needed to control them and do everything that is reasonably practicable to protect people from harm.

Step 4: record significant findings – the findings from steps 1-3 will be written up and recorded in order to produce the risk assessment.

Step 5: review the assessment and update, as needed – we will review our risk assessments, as needed, and the following questions will be asked when doing so:

- Have there been any significant changes?
- Are there improvements that still need to be made?
- Have staff or students spotted a problem?

- Have we learnt anything from accidents or near misses?

Step 6: retaining risk assessments – risk assessments are retained for the 3 years after the length of time they apply. Risk assessments are securely disposed of.