



RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

The safety and welfare of members of the Oporto British School (OBS) community is always the school's highest priority. Management recognises its responsibility to identify hazards in order reasonably to minimise risk and help to protect students, staff, visitors and contractors from harm. The aim of this policy is to set out a systematic approach for suitable and sufficient risk management throughout the OBS.

The Governing Body has delegated the overseeing of risk to the Business Manager for operational reasons. Within the school the Business Manager devolves health, safety and risk management to the Health and Safety Committee.

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

- **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 impact or possible outcomes
- **Control measures** are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise risk

Risk assessments focus on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong.

A record of risk assessments is maintained by the Health & Safety Officer and the Operations Manager.

Judging Level of Risk

Risks are judged to be High, Medium or Low and Hazards are also judged by the same 3 level approach. If risk and hazard both fall into the same high risk/hazard category then significant work needs to be done to put in place control measures to reduce the level of risk. If this cannot be done then the trip, event or activity will not go ahead.

The **purpose** of a risk assessment is to identify hazards and evaluate any associated risks. This includes such areas as:

- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Fire Safety
- Site Security
- School Trips (local, national/international, including CAS activities)
- Critical incidents
- Science experiments
- Hazardous substances
- Sport activities (local, national/international)
- Duke of Edinburgh award
- Technical Maintenance(internal/external)
- Social events (e.g. Speech Day, Halloween, Red Nose Day, Carnival, etc)
- Catering Department
- Cleaning Department
- Noise
- VDU Screens
- Manual Handling
- Electrical Equipment

Risk assessments do not have to be complicated. The level of detail contained in them should be relevant to the level of the risks involved with the activity. In many cases a risk assessment will lead to clarification and documenting of protocols and procedures that are often already in place.

Risk assessments can also assist in the identification of requirements for information, training and supervision that may be required for the activity.

Where relevant these risk assessments will be completed using standard OBS templates that fulfil our responsibilities as a British School Overseas. Or can also be obtained by a facilitating organization responsible for a trip. These must adhere to the British School Overseas standards.

All employees are responsible for:

- Reporting any risks or defects to the Health and Safety Officer and/or through the Health and Safety Committee
- Assisting with and participating in the process of risk assessment

Heads of Department (or equivalent line managers) are responsible for:

- Identifying and effectively communicating risks and hazards

SLT are responsible for:

- Allocating resources in response to risk assessments and determining a course of action
- Setting up strategies and procedures that take into account relevant risk factors
- Ensuring that those tasked with completing risk assessments are suitably trained to do so
- Making suitable representation to the Health & Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee

- This comprises the Health and Safety Officer, Heads of Section and the Operations Manager
- The committee monitors and reviews risks and hazards on a systematic basis

The 5 Steps

Risk assessment is a subjective but logical process which can be broken down into 5 steps:

1. Identify the hazard
2. Identify who and how and relation to potential harm
3. Evaluate the risk
4. Implement the control measures
5. Monitor and review regularly

When conducting a risk assessment, line managers should adopt a team approach whenever possible and involve staff members as they often have the best awareness and understanding of the hazards involved as it is actually carried out.

Types of Risk Assessment

There are 3 recognised methods of assessment

- In Situ- for all jobs within school
- Generic - an evaluation of risk that can be applied to common tasks
- Dynamic - an assessment of risk for use when any delay would increase the risk from harm

Training

As a responsible employer, the OBS provides appropriate risk assessment training for staff within the programme of Health and Safety training.

Communication

Relevant information regarding hazards, their associated risks and the appropriate control measures must be communicated and readily accessible to employees and others as appropriate.

Monitoring

Managers and the H&S Committee monitor the effectiveness of control measures, ensuring that physical control measures are used, installed correctly and suitably maintained where applicable.

Record Keeping

Risk Assessments and associated documents must be kept for a minimum period of three years in the event of a litigation claim for compensation (claims for compensation can, generally be made up to 3 years from the date of the incident occurring). Risk assessments which relate to the use of substances may need to be kept for many more years, in order to trace exposure to substances which are known to have ill health effects e.g. asbestos.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or at an earlier date if changes are required due to risk assessment review or changes in legislation.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Health and Safety Policy

Educational Visits Policy

First Aid Policy

Missing Child Policy

Fire Safety

Last reviewed February 2021