

Introduction

It is not only a legal requirement, but also Bigland Green believes that risks to health and safety should be controlled wherever possible through risk assessments. These are therefore conducted in this school on a regular basis and cover all identified risks to our pupils, our staff, our buildings, our grounds, in our daily routines and at all school events.

Conduct of risk assessments

Assessments are conducted by a member of staff or an external person who is competent for the particular assessment. Assessment are not delegated to staff who are uncomfortable about carrying out the task, or who do not have the influence to ensure that their recommendations are implemented.

Assessments identify significant risks, such as defects and deficiencies, and prescribe remedial action, i.e. risk control measures. Thorough risk assessment involves answers to such questions as the following:

- What hazards are we faced with?
- 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?

Each assessment is written up on a standard proforma, for the convenience of all concerned.

Frequency of risk assessments

There is a separate assessment for each of the visit/trips. However, for consecutive or regular trips e.g. swimming, half-termly ice-skating and alike there is one assessment.

Most risk assessment related to the school premises/building are annual, but more frequent checks may be required in some risk areas.

Annual risk assessments are carried out on a rolling basis as follows:

- Autumn Term – inside the building and on equipment in and outside the classroom
 - By the Premises Manager, Classteachers and Team Leaders
- Spring Term /Summer Term – outside the school building
 - By the Premises Manager, Governors, and SLT
- On-going - This includes the PE equipment and portable appliances tests (PAT)
 - Premises Manager

Some risk areas take longer to review than others, and the inside assessments (being the most numerous) will sometimes continue into the spring term. However, it makes good sense to leave the outside until the better weather (responsibility of Resources Committee).

Risk assessments for taking pupils off site

Class teachers are responsible for doing assessments for trips/visits or special events related to the class. Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the assessment is adequate, and the headteacher is responsible for approving the assessments. All staff members are required to read the school's guidance on risk assessments contained within the Staff Handbook, Safeguarding Updates, and other school guidance documents and relevant policies. Staff taking pupils off site must read the policy on educational visits and residential trips.

Copies of all completed risk assessments are kept in a file in the school office.

Risk assessments for home visits

There are times when staff members may have to visit a pupil's home. For example, all children who are new to Bigland Green Nursery Class are usually visited at home before they start school. Some pupils who are absent from school may have a home visit for their emotional well-being and/or safety. The school often organises home visits following a close family bereavement. There may also be other reasons for which a home visit is necessary. Staff must have the headteacher's consent before they organise/arrange a home visit.

Whatever the reason for the visit, all visits must be conducted by at least two members of staff. Before the visit the staff members must inform the school office (by putting the visit in the school diary) so that the school office is aware of the visit in advance.

Staff members should also think about the risks involved and, if necessary, complete a risk assessment in the usual manner.

Risk assessments for lone working

There are times when some staff members may be working alone in the school building. For example, the premises manager, the headteacher or the head cleaner may be in the building during hours when no other staff members are present. It may also be that a key-holder is called out to the school building during out-of-hours or at night. In these situations, the staff members have a responsibility for their own safety.

The headteacher must be informed of any lone working which is planned in advance and it should also be in the school diary. All lone worker must do the following:

- a. Not allow anyone to enter the building unless it is safe to be alone with them;
- b. The back gates to the building should be closed when working alone in the building;
- c. The first person to enter the building in the morning must ensure that it is safe to do so. If there are signs that forced entry or intrusion, then the staff member must wait until another staff member is available or call the police as they see fit;
- d. Anyone working alone must inform a family member of their whereabouts;
- e. Be aware of the risks associated with working with machinery, electrical equipment, hazardous substances and, where possible, keep this to the minimum;
- f. Not use ladders or work at height when alone in the building;
- g. Key holders called out at night should aim to be accompanied by another person, and;
- h. Staff should not work alone if they have medical conditions that might cause incapacity or unconsciousness.

A risk assessment for home-visits and lone working is included in appendix A of this policy.

Reporting procedures

The results of periodic risk assessment are reported initially to the Resources Committee, and then to the full Governing Body. The main report is made towards the end of the school year, when the rolling annual survey has been completed. The reviews are then incorporated into staff handbook in time for the following autumn term.

All staff are aware of the need to report major new hazards as soon as they are identified. All staff in turn are notified immediately any major new hazard is reported.

Whenever a major new hazard is identified, it is highlighted on the corresponding assessment form and displayed on the main notice board. Assessments for specific places, such as the boiler room or the medical room, are displayed where they apply.

Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the governor's Resources Committee. The headteacher will take remedial steps in emergency situation as appropriate. The policy will be reviewed on a needs basis.

| Date | Signature | Review |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| October 2023 | B. A. Pailola | As required |

Appendix A: Risk assessment for home visits and lone working in the school building

| Assessment by: Headteacher, Premises Manager & Finance Manager | | | Date of assessment: October 2023 | Review date: October 2025 or as needed | |
|--|------------------------|--|---|--|----------|
| Risk/Hazard | Who is at risk? | How can the risk cause harm? | Normal control measures | Are normal control measures | |
| | | | | In place | Adequate |
| Home visits | Staff members involved | Physical assault/ verbal abuse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Obtain consent from the headteacher and put the visit in the school diary. b. Always ensure two members of staff are involved in conducting home-visits. c. Staff members to check background information on the family beforehand, a specific risk assessment d. conducted where necessary. e. Where higher risk identified visits not to be conducted without minimising the risks. | Y | Y |
| Lone working in the school building | Staff members involved | Accident / injury, delayed assistance in emergency Physical assault / verbal abuse Cuts / abrasions, muscular skeletal and other physical injuries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reduce time spent working alone so far as is reasonably practicable. b. All staff to be familiar with lone working procedures. c. Mobile phone available, charged and switched on. d. Agreed schedule – times and location of visits to be known to a family member or a friend. e. Response procedure in event of overdue contact. f. Know the location of the emergency contact point available in the school (panic buttons). g. Staff own experience and training in recognising signs of aggression and avoiding/de-escalating such situation. h. Always prioritising safety over convenience. | Y | Y |