



## St Margaret's Preparatory School

### Risk Assessment Policy

*Sensible risk management is about practical steps to managing real risks, not bureaucratic back covering. Address the real risks, not only to pupils, but also to the health and well-being of your staff. And remember, risk assessment is just good planning – keep it fit for purpose and act on it.*

The Governors of St Margaret's Preparatory School are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Their highest priority lies in ensuring that all the operations within the school environment, both educational and support, are delivered in a safe manner that complies fully with not just with the law; but with best practice. Risks are inherent in everyday life. We need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. Our pupils need to be educated into how to cope safely with risk. Risk reduction and management is everyone's responsibility and it is always important to report and act to ensure safety is maintained across the whole school.

#### What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people (or an organisation) that could result from a particular activity or situation.

- A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm (e.g. fire).
- A risk is an evaluation of the probability (or likelihood) of the hazard occurring (e.g. a chip pan will catch fire if left unattended).
- A risk assessment is the resulting assessment of the severity of the outcome (e.g. loss of life, destruction of property).
- Risk control measures are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of unfettered risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).

Accidents and injuries can ruin lives, damage reputations and cost money. Apart from being a legal requirement, risk assessments therefore make good sense, focusing on prevention, rather than reacting when things go wrong. In many cases, simple measures are very effective and not costly.

Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly and at St Margaret's this takes place annually, or as and when particular issues arise. We are very aware that all staff and pupils need to receive training and this is provided in accordance with this policy and in light of any national learning or changes in legislation.

A 'library' of risk assessments is maintained by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator, Miss Cath Jones. The School Administrator sends a blank pro-forma document to staff as appropriate for them to complete in advance of trips and activities. The Deputy Head monitors records of staff training.

### **What areas require Risk Assessments?**

There are numerous activities carried out at St Margaret's, each of which requires a separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety, procedures and risk assessments
- Educational visits and trips
- EYFS children both onsite and for visits or activities outside of school

But risk assessments may also be needed for many other areas, including, but not exhaustively:

#### Educational

- Science experiments
- Design and Technology
- Each sport and PE activity
- Art
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Dance

At St Margaret's Preparatory School we make good use of model or generic risk assessments for our educational activities and visits, including our EYFS children. All staff receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas.

#### Pastoral

The focus of our pastoral policy is to ensure that every pupil leaves as a confident, articulate young person, capable of keeping him/herself safe on the streets, in the home and in all situations. Our PSHEE programmes and Assemblies are directed towards promoting an increasing understanding as the pupil develops, of the risks that exist in both the real and the electronic worlds, and on a range of sensible precautions that should be taken.

## Medical and First Aid

The Medical Centre has risk assessments for first aid and all other treatments and procedures. The accident forms are maintained in the Medical Centre and the School Nurse is responsible for ensuring that accident reports are passed to the Bursar and the Headmistress. The Bursar is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

## Unsupervised Access by Pupils

We ensure that pupils understand why they do not have unsupervised access to potentially dangerous areas, such as the swimming pool and the science laboratories etc. Doors to these areas are kept locked at all times when not in use. All flammables are kept securely locked. Pupils do not have access to the Grounds, Maintenance, Catering and Caretaking areas of the school.

## Child Protection

Our Child Protection policies and training for all staff form the core of our child protection risk management. Safer recruitment policies and procedures ensure that the school is not exposed to the risk of employing staff who are barred from working with children, and are not allowed to work in the UK. By extending this regime to Governors, volunteers and the adult members of the households of staff who are accommodated on site, and by ensuring that everyone in our community receives regular child protection training, we manage this risk to an acceptable level.

## Support Areas

- Catering and Cleaning: risk assessments and training is required for every item of catering and cleaning equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Caretaking and Security: risk assessments cover every room, laboratory, stairs, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school. Particular emphasis in training is given to minimising the risk of both fire and to security by adhering to good practice. Risk assessments also cover manual handling, working at heights, and asbestos. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Maintenance: risk assessments and training is required for every tool and item of equipment, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, asbestos, control of contractors on site, electricity, gas, water, swimming pool maintenance and the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH). Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, safe working practices, communication and health and safety notices and protective equipment.

- Grounds: risk assessments and training is required for every tool and piece of machinery, as well as for manual handling, slips and trips, working at height, lone working, use of pesticides, storage of flammables and COSHH. Induction and refresher training covers risk assessments, protective equipment and safety notices.
- Office staff: risk assessments are required for the display screen equipment and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend the majority of their working day in front of a screen.

### **Conducting a Risk Assessment**

Our policy at St Margaret's Preparatory School is not to carry out any high risk activity. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with our Year 4, 5 and 6 pupils, such as orienteering/sailing; but only using specialist, qualified instructors. Pupils are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities, and are expected to wear appropriate protective equipment, and to follow instructions provided by expert instructors.

We will always employ specialists to high risk tasks. Support staff may only carry out medium rated activities if they have been properly trained and work in pairs. All members of staff and pupils are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring such usage.

No activities which might constitute a risk will be allowed to take place without a comprehensive written assessment appropriately authorised by the Headmistress.

### Specialist Risk Assessments

The Estate Manager, Mr Angelo Harrison, arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety
- Traffic Management

### Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded annually, and when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident.

## Responsibilities of all Staff

All members of staff are given a thorough induction into the school's arrangements for risk assessments and health and safety. Specialist training is given to those whose work requires it. However, staff are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety, together with that of pupils and visitors. They are responsible for co-operating with the Headmistress, the Bursar and other members of the SLT in order to enable the Governors to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Bursar.

## Audit Compliance Statements

An annual Business Risk Assessment is prepared by the Headmistress, Bursar and Governors at the same time that they review the audited accounts. This report analyses:

- The financial procedures and controls
- The major risks to the school, including:
  - Strategic risk
  - Loss of fee income
  - Damage to reputation
  - Failure to teach the correct syllabus
  - Risk of a child protection issue
  - Gaps in Governor skills
  - Conflicts of interest
  - Employment disputes
  - Major health and safety issues
  - Possible data loss
  - Risk of fire, flood and land slip
  - Poor cash flow management
  - Fraud
  - Loss through inappropriate investments
  - Areas of potential risk
- The measures taken to protect the school against such risks, including:
  - Safer recruitment of staff, Governors and volunteers
  - Measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff and Governors
  - Insurance
  - Strong financial controls
  - Use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc as needed

## **Governance**

Governors approve the compliance risk assessment annually and also endorse the insertion of a statement along the following lines (or a more detailed version thereof) in the school's annual accounts:

*'The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Trust, and are satisfied that systems are in place to manage our exposure to the major risks.'*

## Review

**This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Senior Leadership Team.**

## Effective Date

**This policy was last reviewed in January 2017.**

## Approved by Governors

**February 2017**