



United Learning – Health and Safety Topic Policy

Risk Management (H&S)

Avonwood Primary School



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United Learning

Health and Safety Topic Policy – Risk Management (H&S)

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1. Scope

- 1.1 This Policy forms part of the health and safety arrangements detailed in Part 3 of the ‘United Learning Group Health and Safety Management Policy’. It outlines the arrangements in place to achieve compliance with the duties contained within the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and specifically, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 1.2 It is applicable to all schools and central office locations, herein referred to as United Learning Sites.

2. Implementation

- 2.1 The requirements of this Policy must be implemented within 12 weeks of the date of publication.

3. Definitions

1. Hazard – anything with the potential to cause harm be it physical, ill-health, or property damage, e.g. spilt oil
2. Hazardous Event – the coming together of a hazard and a person e.g. a person slipping on the oil
3. Likelihood – the probability that the hazardous event will occur e.g. greater likelihood in a corridor than on the roof
4. Severity – the most probable outcome of the hazardous event occurring, e.g. injury requiring first aid. Note that while ‘death’ is feasible for any event, it is the most probable outcome that must be considered.
5. Risk – The overall product of Likelihood and Severity, sometimes expressed numerically.

4. Why Carry Out Risk Assessments?

- 4.1 The requirement for risk assessment is detailed in Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

‘Every Employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of:

- a) The risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work.*
- b) The risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him or his undertaking;*

- 4.2 The Regulations require risk assessment of all work related activities. All reasonably foreseeable risks must be assessed as must other specific risks which are identified by other regulations, e.g. the risk of fire. The significant findings of these assessments must be committed to writing.
- 4.3 Proper risk assessment can help all Sites in setting their action priorities. It also assists with decision making and balancing risk, benefit, and cost. ‘Risk’ as a term can be used to relate to a multitude of work areas, e.g. financial, educational, reputational, however, in this Policy it is used only in the context of health and safety.

5. The Risk Assessment Process

- 5.1 United Learning advocates the HSE process of ‘Five Steps to Risk Assessment’, which is as follows:

Step 1 - Identify the hazards

Step 2 - Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3 - Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4 - Record the findings and implement them



Step 5 - Review the risk assessment and update if necessary

- 5.2 However, to assist schools with this process and to ensure the nuances of the teaching and learning process are considered, a preceding and subsequent step may be beneficial.

Step 0 - Identify the activity to be assessed and consider if items can be grouped together, e.g. hand-tool use, running sports, low-level/weight manual handling operations, rather than writing a risk assessment for each individual piece of equipment or task.

Step 6 - For any activity involving students/pupils, ensure that the relevant risk assessment is reviewed, localised, and personalised, based on the additional dynamics the particular group of children presents. In some cases, e.g. science this can be as simple as annotating the lesson plan as the main risk assessment details will be on other materials such as CLEAPSS Hazcards, method statements.

- 5.3 All Sites must commit to a process of proactive risk assessment and use the information obtained from this process in the development of local risk registers, i.e. a log of activities for which the residual risk remains high.
- 5.4 All activities must be assessed by those who control them prior to the activity taking place. The principles of prevention detailed below must be considered in the development of each Site's approach to risk management.
- 5.5 Risk assessments and procedures must be kept up-to-date and therefore should be reviewed regularly and formally at least every two years.
- 5.6 The review and update process must not result in the preceding risk assessment being lost or overwritten. It is essential that an audit trail is preserved in line with the [Group Records Management and Retention Policy](#) so that in the event of an incident occurring, the historical approach to risk management can be demonstrated and evidenced.

Principles of Prevention (Schedule 1 to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999)

The general principles of prevention (detailed below) must be followed when implementing preventive and protective measures.

- a) avoiding risks
- b) evaluating the risks which cannot be avoided
- c) combating the risks at source
- d) adapting the work to the individual, especially as regards the design of workplaces, the choice of work equipment and the choice of working and production methods, with a view, in particular, to alleviating monotonous work and work at a predetermined work-rate and to reducing their effect on health
- e) adapting to technical progress
- f) replacing the dangerous by the non-dangerous or the less dangerous
- g) developing a coherent overall prevention policy which covers technology, organisation of work, working conditions, social relationships and the influence of factors relating to the working environment
- h) giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures, and
- i) giving appropriate instructions to employees

5.7 United Learning does not require risk assessments to be produced in a specific format and some departments have template assessments provided by third parties e.g. CLEAPSS for science and design and technology. It must be noted, however, that where generic/template assessments are used these need to be customised to make them specific to the ‘department(s)’ concerned. If customisation is not carried out the law says that there is no risk assessment in place.

5.8 To assist with the risk assessment process, a list of typical risk assessments likely to be required is available in the [A-Z Section](#) of United Hub.

6. Risk Assessment – a ‘verb’ not a ‘noun’

6.1 While the term risk assessment is commonplace, it is helpful to remember that it is a process, not a product.

Risk Assessment as a Process	Risk assessment as a Product
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb • Systematic thinking process • Research, conclusions, decisions • An ongoing process • Involves those to whom it relates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noun • Mountain of paper • Tick box exercises • Done once • Carried out in isolation

6.2 It is for these reasons that template risk assessments have not been produced centrally as doing so reinforces the error of risk assessments being a product rather than a process and their use can result in risk assessments not meeting the requirements of a suitable and sufficient assessment (refer to Section 11 of this policy for further information).

7. Who should carry out Risk Assessments?

7.1 Risk assessments are the responsibility of whoever is in control of the work activity in question; normally the line manager or head of department. This may be delegated locally and where this is the case it must be detailed in the department’s local management arrangements.

8. Classroom Risk Assessments

8.1 Also known as ‘space surveys’, these need to be carried out at least annually and should be carried out by the member of teaching staff that most frequently uses this space. A template is available in [the A-Z section](#) of United Hub.

8.2 Classroom risk assessments are not required for laboratories or workshops where these departments utilise the periodic check documentation produced by CLEAPSS.

9. Priority Risk Areas in Education

9.1 HSE have identified the following priority risk areas in the education sector. That is, these are the activities that give rise to the most significant adverse events. Sites should prioritise their efforts into these topic areas and reducing the risks as far as reasonably practicable.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work at height 2. Slips and trips | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. On-site vehicle movements 4. Asbestos management |
|---|--|

5. Construction and maintenance
6. Manual handling
7. Legionella
8. Stress
9. Educational visits

10. Qualitative vs. Quantitative Risk Assessments

- 10.1 Qualitative Risk Assessment is a straightforward process based on judgement and requiring no specialist skills or complicated techniques. A subjective assessment is made on whether the residual risk, once all controls are applied, is acceptable.
- 10.2 Quantitative Risk Assessment involves a numerical estimate being made of the likelihood (L) and severity (S) of a hazardous event occurring. The resulting product ($L*S=R$) is the probability that a defined harm will result from the occurrence of a particular event. This approach facilitates the ranking of risks to support a programmed risk improvement programme.
- 10.3 There are pros and cons for the use of either approach and Sites are free to utilise whichever approach works best for them, which could involve a combination of both approaches across all Site operations.

11. Defining 'Suitable and Sufficient'

- 11.1 To meet the regulatory requirements, all risk assessments must be suitable and sufficient. Whilst this is a complex legal concept, a risk assessment that is suitable and sufficient should broadly be able to show that:
 1. a proper check was made
 2. those to whom to assessment applies were consulted during its development
 3. all the obvious significant risks have been dealt with
 4. the precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low
- 11.2 The level of detail in a risk assessment should be proportionate to the risks and appropriate to the nature of the work. Insignificant risks can usually be ignored, as can risks arising from routine activities associated with life in general, e.g. making a hot drink, unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks in some way.

12. Manual Handling and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

- 12.1 Manual handling and COSHH assessments have their own approaches and requirements for risk assessment. Refer to their respective topic policies for further information.

13. Educational Visits

- 13.1 Risk assessments are required for all educational visits, however, the typical approach detailed above can often overlook the *benefits* of the educational visit itself; only identifying the hazards. For this reason, United Learning advocates the OEAP approach of Risk-Benefit assessment for educational visits. Further details are provided in the [Group Educational Visits Policy](#).

14. Summary of Requirements

1. All foreseeable risks to be assessed by the person(s) in control of the activity
2. Records of all risk assessments to be made and retained



15. Local Management Arrangements

Use this space to explain the arrangements for risk assessment and management at your school. The text below is an example only. Replace this paragraph with your local arrangements.

At [insert name of school] both qualitative and quantitative methods of risk assessment are employed. Model risk assessments produced by CLEAPSS have been utilised in Science and Technology in developing their local risk assessments.

Premises related risk assessments are managed by the Facilities Manager and are stored [insert location]

Support staff related risk assessments are managed by the Business Manager and are stored [insert location]

Teaching staff related risk assessments are managed by the Head of Inclusion and are stored [insert location]

16. Declaration of Adoption

This Policy has been reviewed by the senior leadership team and has been formally adopted.

**Head
Teacher**

.....Name.....

.....Signature.....

.....Date.....

**Governor for
Health and Safety**

.....Name.....

.....Signature.....

.....Date.....

