



Risk Assessment Policy

1. Introduction & Aims

1.1. This Risk Assessment Policy outlines Hartmore School's approach to the management and minimisation of risk; and in particular the formal process through which specific risks can be identified, considered, evaluated and minimised. The key objective is the prevention of (or at worst the minimisation of) harm. Safety is a key priority for Hartmore School.

1.2. For practical purposes, we assess risk as falling largely into two categories:

- Risks inherent in a particular place or particular activity, which wholly or mainly are faced by everyone
- Risks particular to the needs and challenges of an individual pupil/small group of pupils

1.3. Risk Assessment and risk management are ongoing processes. It is our clear objective to ensure Risk Assessment is not be looked upon as a simply as a 'paper exercise' simply or to ensure regulatory compliance, but as an active tool which provides practical, useable steps that control and/or reduce risks to pupils and others.

1.3.1. Risk Assessments must not be not written and then forgotten on shelves or in files. They must be treated as 'live' documents; frequently read and referred to, and kept constantly updated following any significant occurrence, near miss, or when risks the nature or intensity of the risk changes or develops.

1.4. All Risks are documented separately on the form attached in Appendix 1.

2. Information Sharing & Transition Plans

2.1. The effectiveness of any Risk Assessment relies upon the quality and scope of the information that informs it. As we expect all stakeholders (including parents/carers, placing LEAs etc.to share all and any relevant information with us (and update that information as required), so we endeavour to ensure our knowledge and learning around Risk and Risk Management is shared with all stakeholders, as appropriate.

2.2. In particular we work hard with other stakeholders (professional agencies and others) to obtain as much information as we possibly can before any new pupil starts at Hartmore School, in order that comprehensive and effective Risk Assessment documentation is in place (and all staff briefed) prior to a new pupil arriving for their first day at Hartmore School.

2.2.1. All Risk Assessments are monitored and reviewed through-out the transition process to ensure it is based on the best, most accurate information and/or is adjusted in the light of new, first-hand information.

2.3. The Risk Assessment process is an open one. Within the bounds of confidentiality, we readily share our assessments and strategies with all key stakeholders (including both professional stakeholders/agencies and parents/carers `(as we would wish they share their information and insights with us). We hope to contribute to keeping our pupils safe inside and outside school, as far as we can influence matters.

3. What Risks are Assessed

3.1. Hartmore School have identified and defined **16** significant different aspects or areas most likely to effect our pupils. We have reviewed and refined these through experience, ensuring that all possible risks are covered under one of these aspects.

4. Areas of Responsibility

4.1. It is ultimately the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that every potentially harmful situation or environment has been effectively Risk Assessments; and that every has effective individual Risk Assessments in place.

4.2. However, more generally every single member of staff at Hartmore School has an individual responsibility to contribute as much as possible to the process. If Risk Assessments are to be effective they must be based on the best, most up-to-date information. It is often most effective if the person who knows are pupil best, leads on the process of writing and/or review a Risk Assessment. Class teachers, Teaching Assistants and others are expected not only to contribute, but take the lead in the Risk Assessment process, as appropriate. This includes disseminating Risk Assessment information to colleagues and others as appropriate.

4.3. Every single member of staff at Hartmore School has an individual responsibility to ensure they are familiar with all of the most up-to-date Risk Assessments relevant to their tasks and the individual pupils they are teaching.

4.3.1. All staff are expected to take appropriate individual initiative to ensure they are properly briefed themselves as to the full details of Risk Assessments relevant to their tasks and the individual pupils they are teaching.

4.3.2. If on investigation it is discovered a member of staff failed to take reasonable steps to ensure they are properly briefed themselves as to the full details of Risk Assessments, and that their ignorance contributed to resulting harm (or a near miss), that member of staff may face disciplinary action.

5. Identifying Risks

5.1. We use the best information available, along with our and experience and best judgment to identify any potential cause of harm to a child. We specify what behaviours they have exhibited in the past which suggest they are at risk. (Harm could include: personal safety, physical injury, criminality, damage to health, emotional distress). We identify risks they present to others as well as risks they present to themselves.

6. Control Measures & Strategies

6.1. Control Measures & Strategies are actions put in place intended to minimise risk and potential harm. Although there are some helpful generic control measures and strategies that work for most pupils in most situations, nevertheless the primary focus is on control measures and strategies most appropriate to meet individual conditions, needs and/or risk.

6.1.1. This can be a whole range of strategies/actions dependent on the risk and the individual pupil. What reduces a risk for one pupil might not help support another pupil and so whilst often the strategies we initially suggest on a risk assessment can be quite generic over time our risk assessments become an increasingly personalised tool' quite specific to that individual pupil.

6.2. To ensure all control measures and strategies effective and appropriate over time requires us to continually monitor our Risk Assessments.

7. Monitoring & Review

7.1. All risk assessments are regularly reviewed (according to specified timescale) to ensure they remain accurate and control measures remain appropriate regardless of whether anything has prompted a review.

7.2. If following any Significant Occurrence control measures and strategies have not proved not to be adequate or sufficiently effective, Risk Assessment are comprehensively reviewed. We consider what other strategies we might adopt to reduce the risk of the same occurrence. Staff involved in any significant occurrence must discuss and agree if they felt the measures were sufficient or if a review of the risk assessment is required.

8. Recording

8.1. Hartmore School had its own dedicated Risk Assessment Form on which all Risk Assessments are outlined. In all cases Risk Assessments must be completed using this form and no other. Third-party Risk Assessments or Risk Assessments detail in some other format aside from that of Hartmore School are not considered valid.

8.1.1. When participating in off-site activities, it is expected that staff and pupils adhere to locally produced Risk Assessments, as appropriate. It is also expected that as part of the planning and preparation process for any off-site visit, the trip leader obtains in advance the necessary locally produced Risk Assessments.

8.2. All Risk Assessments are kept in the pupil Risk Assessment file in the Main School Office. Every time a Risk Assessments is reviewed, changed or updated this information is shared with the staff team in the morning briefing. The new/updated Risk Assessment Form should replace the old one within the file (to ensure that there is a central source available that is always accurate and up-to-date).

8.3. Staff are expected to read all Risk Assessments, and know in some detail the risk assessments of the children they work with closely on a day-to-day basis.

9. Policy Review

7.1. This Risk Assessment Policy was last reviewed in October 2022. It will be reviewed again, on or before September 2024.