



RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Review date:	June 2024
Reviewed by:	Head of Centre
Next review date:	June 2025

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 learners, but also to the health and well-being of all staff. Risk assessment is just good planning – keep it fit for purpose and act on it.” Sir Bill Callaghan, former Chairman, HSC.

Alternative Centre of Education is fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Our highest priority lies in ensuring that all the operations within the school environments, 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 learners need to be educated into how to cope safely with risk.

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. Many cases simple measures are very effective and not costly.

Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly (annually). At Alternative Centre of Education, we are very aware that all staff and learners need to receive training.

What Areas Require Risk Assessments?

There are various activities carried out each of which requires a separate risk assessment. The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety, procedures and risk assessments
- Educational visits and trips
- Science experiments
- Design and Technology
- Each sport and PE activity
- Art
- Music (including minimising the risk of hearing loss to staff)
- Drama
- Dance
- The acceptance of pregnant learners (teenage mothers)
- Issue relating to sexual exploitation

At Alternative Centre of Education all staff receive regular induction and refresher training in risk assessments tailored to their specific areas.

Medical and First Aid

The accident book is available in the reception office. All staff are responsible for ensuring that accidents are reported and passed to admin first aider for recording. All staff are responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, and visitor.

Unsupervised Access by Learners

We ensure that learners understand why they do not have unsupervised access to any areas.

All flammables are kept securely locked. Learners do not have access to the Maintenance, Catering and Caretaking areas of the school.

Child Protection/ Safeguarding

- Our Child Protection/Safeguarding 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.

Caretaking and Security: risk assessments cover every classroom, corridor and emergency exit in the entire school. Emphasis in training is given to minimising the risk of both fire and to security by adhering to good practice.

Fire: risk assessments cover the whole school area and training is given to minimise risk.

Office staff: risk assessments are required for the display screen equipment and cables used by those staff (primarily office-based) who spend most of their working day in front of a screen.

Conducting Risk Assessment

Our policy at Alternative Centre of Education is not to carry out any high risk activity. This is clearly outlined in a very comprehensive guide to organising educational visits. Activities involving learners are normally low risk. We undertake a few medium risk activities with learners, such as horse riding, cycling, skiing, canoeing skiing and orienteering; but only using specialist/qualified instructors.

Learners are always given a safety briefing before participating in these activities and are expected to wear protective equipment and to follow instructions.

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 learners are expected to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) for tasks that have been assessed as requiring its usage.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The Head of Centre arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments:

- Fire safety
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Gas safety
- Electrical safety

Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded, when major structural work is planned, or in the event of an accident. The separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school, its plant, machinery and equipment, together with its arrangements for catering and cleaning and for water sampling.

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 learners and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head of Centre in order to enable them to comply with their health and safety duties. Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Head of Centre or Business manager.

Areas of potential risk

The measures taken to protect the school against such risks, including:

- Safer recruitment of staff
- Measures to ensure the selection, training and appraisal of appropriately qualified staff
- Insurance
- Strong financial controls
- Use of professional advice from lawyers, accountants, architects, etc as needed.