GARDENER SCHOOLS GROUP LIMITED

HEALTH & SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Introduction

1. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) require every employer to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to employees, and risks to other people who might be affected by the organisation, such as visiting contractors, members of the public and of course, in the case of Gardener Schools Group, our pupils.

2. A "suitable and sufficient" risk assessment takes the form of a systematic investigation of the risks in all areas and major operations, identification of the persons affected, a description of the controls in place and any further action required in order to reduce the risks to an acceptable level. MHSWR also requires that significant findings must be written down if there are five or more employees and that a risk assessment must be reviewed regularly if:

a. there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; or
b. there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates.

Purpose

3. The purpose of this policy is to state how Gardener Schools Group conducts, records and reviews risk assessments in order to comply with MHSWR and other relevant regulations, and to promote children's welfare.

Scope

4. This policy applies to the entire Gardener Schools Group community and should be read in conjunction with the Safety, Health, Environment and Fire (SHEF) Policy Statement and the SHEF Policy itself, both of which are available on the school website.

5. This policy is only concerned with SHEF risks (including those that affect child protection and safeguarding); a separate Risk Management Policy covers *business* risks that could affect the overall operation of the organisation.

6. Fire risk assessments are conducted by an outside agency, Complete Fire Protection. A separate Fire Policy is available on the individual school website.

Principles of risk assessment

7. Written risk assessments are prepared and maintained for all major buildings on site and all potentially hazardous events and operations that take place on a regular basis. These risk assessments are prepared by either, the head of department, the section manager concerned or, the Site Safety Officer (site manager). Risk Assessments are then co-ordinated by the SHEF Manager with assistance of the school. These risk assessments are made available to all members of staff via the Schools home drive and the Site Manager.

8. Temporary risk assessments, covering a school trip for example, are co-ordinated by the, Teacher in Charge (TiC) of the trip; these are not generally made available to all staff members but the same basic principles apply.

9. Heads of department, section and site managers are required to:

- identify the hazards (i.e. something that could cause harm) in the area or operation concerned;
- consider who might be at risk and how they might be harmed;
- evaluate the risks, by considering what is already done to control them and what the remaining level (high, medium or low) of the risk is;
- consider what additional action is necessary to reduce the level of risk to an acceptable level, and
- review the assessment on a regular basis.

10. When determining what additional action may be necessary, controls should be considered in the following order:

1. Hazard elimination (alternative work methods).
2. Substitution (e.g. replacement of a chemical with one less hazardous).
3. Use of barriers, such as:
    a. isolation (removes hazard from the person).
    b. segregation (removes person from the hazard).
4. Use of procedures (e.g. reduce the exposure time).
5. Use of warning systems (e.g. alarms, signs, instructions, labels etc.).
6. Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

11. Where the proposed additional action requires items such as new equipment, signs, PPE etc. to be purchased, or where minor works are required to improve the situation, this must be arranged by the head of department, section or site manager responsible. Advice is available from the SHEF Manager if required. Those conducting risk assessments are also responsible for ensuring that any follow up actions are completed satisfactorily and that risk assessments are amended accordingly.

12. Each risk assessment is recorded on the template at Annex A (note – some earlier versions of the risk assessment template may be in evidence for some time; these are acceptable for use).

13. Where appropriate, those conducting risk assessments are encouraged to involve pupils in the process as this helps to engender greater awareness of risks and effective controls.

Particular groups at risk

14. In the Gardener Schools Group environment, there are several groups of people who may be at particular risk and risk assessments must reflect them; they include:

- young people, especially pupils;
- elderly or disabled people – such as some of our visitors;
- new and expectant mothers;
- lone workers;
- those who regularly work from home and
- groups such as Science technicians, maintenance workers, porters and ground staff.

Specialist risk assessments

15. In the great majority of cases, heads of department, section and site managers know their areas and the likely risks better than anyone else and so they are best placed to conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks. However, in some areas specialist assistance may be sought to conduct, or provide assistance with carrying out the risk assessment. Risk assessments covering areas such as asbestos, legionella, major construction projects and fire safety may fall into this category.

Risk assessment training

16. Guidance including a blank template (Annex A) is available on the school's central drive along with many completed examples. Advice and assistance is also available from the Site Safety Officer and SHEF Manager.

Review of risk assessments

17. Risk assessments are reviewed by heads of department or section managers to reflect significant changes to tasks, processes, equipment or staff, to reflect new control measures introduced, in response to changes in relevant legislation or following an accident or incident in the area or operation concerned. All risk assessments are also reviewed on an annual basis; heads of department and line managers are prompted to carry out an annual review of their risk assessments.

18. Risk assessments are monitored on a termly basis by the Health and Safety Committee for compliance.

19. Risk assessments for relevant areas will also be checked by the Site Safety Officer/SHEF Manager as part of their termly programme of Safety Inspections.

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Date of last review: September 2025

Review Date: September 2026

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT		
School:	**Assessment by:**	**Date:**
Review Date:	**Approved by:** *Health & Safety Committee*	**Date:**

Hazard / Risk	**Who is at Risk? C.S.T.V**	**Initial Risk Rating (L/M/H)**	**Control Measures** *(Brief description and/or reference to source of information).*	**Are Control Measures**		**Additional Control Measures** *(to take account of local/individual circumstances).*	**Residual Risk Rating (L/M/H)**
				In Place (Y/N/NA)	**Adequate (Y/N/NA)**		

REVIEWS:		
DATE OF REVIEW:	**REVIEWED**	**COMMENTS:** *Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.*
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: June 2015	**REVIEWED BY:**	**COMMENTS:**

Child(ren) – **C** *Staff* - **S** *Teacher* – **T** *Visitor* - **V**