

THE MOUNT RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Version	1.7
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Approved by	Chris Sellers – Director / Proprietor
Applies to	The Mount School, including Nursery/EYFS and all school-controlled premises and activities

1. Aims

The Mount School aims to provide a safe and healthy environment for pupils, children in the Nursery/EYFS, staff, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by its activities.

Risk assessment is an essential part of the school's arrangements for managing health, safety and welfare. Its purpose is not to remove all risk from school life, but to identify foreseeable hazards, evaluate the associated risks and put proportionate control measures in place so that risks are reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.

The school recognises that appropriate challenge, play, physical activity, educational visits and practical learning are important to children's development. Risk assessment should enable worthwhile activity to take place safely rather than unnecessarily preventing it.

2. Legislation and Statutory Requirements

This policy supports compliance with paragraph 16 of Part 3 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, which requires the proprietor to ensure that a written risk assessment policy is drawn up and effectively implemented and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

The school's risk-management arrangements also take account of applicable health and safety legislation and guidance, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to employees and others affected by the employer's undertaking. Regulations 16–18 contain provisions relating to new or expectant mothers.

Other specific requirements may include the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012; Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH); Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992; Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005; Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992; Work at Height Regulations 2005; and other legislation applicable to particular activities, premises, equipment or persons.

The school also has regard to relevant Department for Education and Health and Safety Executive guidance, including guidance concerning first aid, educational visits, health and safety in schools, swimming/pools where applicable, and the Prevent duty.

For children in the EYFS, the school will also meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the current EYFS statutory framework, including taking reasonable steps to ensure that children are not exposed to risks and demonstrating how risks are being managed.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm, injury or ill health.
Risk	The combination of the likelihood that harm will occur and the severity of the possible harm.
Risk assessment	A systematic examination of hazards, who may be harmed and how, the adequacy of existing controls and any further action required.
Control measure	An action, precaution or arrangement used to eliminate a hazard or reduce risk.
Residual risk	The level of risk remaining after control measures have been applied.
Dynamic risk assessment	The continuing process of identifying and responding to changing or unexpected risks while an activity is taking place. It supplements, rather than replaces, appropriate written risk assessment.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Director/Proprietor

The Director has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters and for ensuring that the school's risk-assessment policy is effectively implemented. Day-to-day responsibilities may be delegated to the Headteacher, but overall accountability remains with the proprietor/employer.

The Director will take reasonable steps to ensure that staff, pupils and others are not exposed to unacceptable risks arising from school activities, whether on or off the premises, and that appropriate action is taken where risks are identified.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher, or an appropriately delegated senior leader in the Headteacher's absence, is responsible for ensuring that suitable risk-assessment arrangements operate across the school and Nursery. This includes ensuring assessments are completed by competent persons, significant findings are recorded, control measures are implemented, and assessments are reviewed when required.

Managers, Teachers and Other Staff

- Participate in risk-assessment processes where required and provide relevant practical knowledge.
- Read and understand risk assessments relevant to their work and implement the identified control measures.
- Remain alert to changing circumstances and undertake proportionate dynamic assessment where necessary.
- Stop or modify an activity where an immediate or unacceptable risk is identified.
- Report hazards, defects, accidents, near misses and changes that may require an assessment to be reviewed.
- Ensure that risk assessments are not treated as paperwork alone but are reflected in day-to-day practice.

Pupils, Parents and Carers

Pupils, parents and carers are expected to follow reasonable safety instructions and school procedures and to report hazards or relevant information that may affect safety. Responsibility for carrying out the school's statutory risk assessments remains with the school.

Contractors

Contractors are expected to provide suitable evidence that risks arising from their work have been assessed and controlled. The school will exchange relevant information with contractors, consider safeguarding and pupil-segregation arrangements, and ensure that contractor activity does not create unmanaged risks for pupils, staff or visitors. Specialist permits, competence requirements or other controls will be used where appropriate.

5. Risk Assessment Process

Step 1 – Identify hazards

Consider the activity, premises, equipment, substances, environment and foreseeable circumstances. Use information from staff, manufacturers, inspections, accident/near-miss records and relevant guidance where appropriate.

Step 2 – Decide who may be harmed and how

Identify groups who may be affected. Particular consideration will be given where circumstances increase vulnerability, including young children, pupils with SEND or disabilities, pupils with medical needs or allergies, pregnant/new mothers, lone workers, new or inexperienced staff and others whose individual circumstances materially alter the risk.

Step 3 – Evaluate the risk and existing controls

Consider likelihood and severity, taking account of existing precautions. Decide whether additional controls are required and prioritise measures that remove or reduce risk at source where reasonably practicable.

Step 4 – Record significant findings and actions

Record the hazards, people at risk, existing controls, further actions, responsible person and completion/review arrangements. Where useful, record both initial and residual risk.

Step 5 – Implement controls

A risk assessment is only effective if the controls identified are put into practice. Actions will be allocated and followed through.

Step 6 – Review and update

Assessments will be reviewed when circumstances indicate that they may no longer be valid and at any scheduled review point.

6. Risk-Rating Methodology

Where a numerical risk rating is useful, The Mount may use the following 1–5 likelihood and severity scales. Professional judgement remains essential and a numerical score must not replace consideration of the actual circumstances.

Score	Likelihood	Severity
1	Rare	Insignificant – no injury or very minor impact
2	Unlikely	Minor – minor injury/limited impact
3	Possible	Moderate – injury or impact requiring meaningful intervention
4	Likely	Major – serious injury or significant impact

5	Almost certain	Severe/Catastrophic – fatality, life-changing injury or exceptionally serious impact
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Risk score = Likelihood × Severity.

Score	Indicative level	Expected response
1–4	Low	Maintain controls and monitor.
5–9	Moderate	Consider further controls and ensure actions are proportionate and completed.
10–16	High	Further control is normally required before proceeding; senior oversight may be necessary.
17–25	Very high	Activity should not normally proceed until risk has been reduced to an acceptable level.

The rating bands are an internal decision-making aid. A low numerical score does not justify ignoring a legal requirement or a foreseeable serious hazard.

7. Dynamic Risk Assessment

School and Nursery activities can change quickly. Staff are expected to use professional judgement to respond to new or changing hazards such as weather, damaged equipment, unexpected behaviour, illness, changing pupil numbers, environmental conditions or circumstances encountered on a visit.

Dynamic assessment may involve pausing, modifying, relocating or stopping an activity and seeking additional support. Significant new information should be recorded afterwards where it affects future planning or indicates that a written risk assessment needs amendment.

8. Individual Pupil and Child-Specific Risk Assessment

An individual risk assessment may be appropriate where a child's particular needs or circumstances create risks that are not adequately managed through general school arrangements. The decision will be needs-led and proportionate; a child will not require an individual risk assessment solely because they have SEND, a disability or a medical condition.

Examples may include significant medical needs, seizures, severe allergies, mobility needs, behaviour that presents a foreseeable risk of harm, risk of leaving supervision/going missing, intimate-care arrangements, particular activities or visits, or other individual circumstances.

Where appropriate, the school will involve parents/carers, the pupil, relevant staff and professionals. Assessments will seek to enable participation and reasonable adjustment while protecting the child and others. They will be reviewed when needs, provision or circumstances change.

9. EYFS and Nursery Risk Management

Risk assessment in the EYFS is embedded in everyday safeguarding and welfare practice. Staff will consider the age and developmental stage of children, supervision, premises, equipment, outdoor play, sleep arrangements, food/allergens, outings, intimate care and other relevant hazards.

The school recognises that children learn through exploration and appropriately managed challenge. Controls should be proportionate and should not unnecessarily remove beneficial opportunities for play, independence and development.

10. Educational Visits, Sport and Off-Site Activities

Educational visits and off-site activities will be planned and risk managed in accordance with the school's School Journeys/Educational Visits arrangements. Existing generic or venue assessments may inform planning, but staff must consider the particular group, journey, activity and circumstances.

PE, swimming and sporting activities will be risk managed by competent staff/providers, taking account of supervision, facilities, equipment, pupil needs, emergency arrangements and any specialist guidance.

11. Review Triggers

Risk assessments will be reviewed when appropriate. Review does not mean that every assessment must automatically be rewritten annually if nothing material has changed; however, the school must be able to demonstrate that assessments remain suitable and sufficient.

- Following an accident, incident or significant near miss.
- Where a control measure is found to be ineffective or not reasonably practicable.
- Following significant changes to premises, equipment, substances, staffing, activities or working practices.
- Where a pupil's or employee's individual circumstances materially change.
- Before or following a new activity where existing assessment does not adequately cover the risk.
- Following relevant changes in legislation, statutory guidance or professional advice.
- Where staff, pupils, parents, contractors or inspections identify a new or changed hazard.
- At any scheduled review date specified within the assessment or local control system.

12. Recording, Retention and Confidentiality

Significant findings will be recorded in a form proportionate to the risk. Records should normally identify the activity/location, hazards, people who may be harmed, existing controls, further action required, responsible person, date, assessor and review arrangements.

Risk assessments will be retained in accordance with the school's record-retention arrangements and any applicable legal, insurance or safeguarding requirements. The previous policy's blanket statement that all assessments are retained for three years after they cease to apply is replaced by this risk-based approach because different records may require different retention periods.

Child-specific or staff-specific assessments may contain personal or special-category information and will be stored and shared only with those who need the information to manage the risk, in accordance with data-protection requirements.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

The Headteacher will oversee the school's risk-assessment system and ensure that responsibility for individual assessments is allocated appropriately. Leaders will monitor whether assessments are current, controls are actually implemented, actions are completed and lessons from accidents, near misses or operational experience are incorporated.

The Director will receive appropriate assurance that the policy is being implemented. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and approved by the Director.

14. Related Policies

- Health and Safety
- Child Protection and Safeguarding

- Safer Recruitment
- Supervision
- School Journeys/Educational Visits
- First Aid
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Missing Child
- Fire Safety/Fire Risk Assessment
- Accessibility Plan
- Online Safety
- Intimate Care
- SEND
- Administration of Medicines/Medical Needs
- Any child-specific risk assessments and care plans

Appendix 1 – Risk Assessment Register

This register identifies principal areas in which a risk assessment or other formal risk-control process may be required. It is a management checklist, not a statement that a separate standalone assessment must exist for every item in every circumstance.

Area	Examples / scope	Typical review trigger
General premises	Buildings, access, stairs, glazing, grounds, gates, play areas	Change, defect, incident, scheduled premises review
Fire	Fire risk assessment and emergency arrangements	As required by fire-safety arrangements and following material change
Asbestos	Asbestos management where applicable	Building work, survey findings, change in condition
COSHH	Cleaning products, chemicals and hazardous substances	New product/process, SDS change, incident
Manual handling	People, equipment, deliveries and repetitive handling	Task/equipment/person change
Work at height	Ladders, access equipment, maintenance	Task/equipment change or incident
Display screen equipment	Relevant staff workstation use	User/workstation change or reported issue
First aid	Needs assessment, provision and equipment	Changes in numbers, activities, incidents or needs
Educational visits	Travel, venues, activities and group-specific factors	Each visit/type of visit as appropriate
PE / sport / swimming	Facilities, supervision, equipment, pupil needs	Activity/provider/facility or group change
Playgrounds / outdoor learning	Surfaces, equipment, supervision, weather	Seasonal/change/defect/incident
EYFS / Nursery	Play, sleep, equipment, food, supervision, outings	Developmental, environmental or operational change
Food and allergens	Preparation/service, allergies and dietary needs	New child/need/menu/process or incident
Individual pupils	Medical, SEND/disability, behaviour, missing-child risk, intimate care	Change in child's needs or provision
New/expectant mothers	Workplace risks and individual circumstances	Notification and changes during/after pregnancy

Lone working	Staff working alone or outside normal occupation	Role/location/time arrangements change
Contractors / building works	Construction, maintenance, segregation and safeguarding	Each significant project/work activity
Events / performances	Visitors, temporary layouts, equipment, crowd management	Each event/type as appropriate
Transport / vehicles	School-arranged transport, loading, movement on site	Vehicle/provider/site arrangements change
Adverse weather	Heat, snow/ice, storms, flooding or other severe conditions	Forecast/conditions and site impact
Prevent	Risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism, considered within safeguarding arrangements	Safeguarding review or changed local/national context

Appendix 2 – Minimum Risk Assessment Record

Field	Information to record
Activity / location	What is being assessed and where.
Assessor and date	Name/role of competent assessor and date completed.
Hazard	What could cause harm.
Who may be harmed and how	Relevant groups and nature of potential harm.
Existing controls	Measures already in place.
Initial risk	Likelihood/severity/rating where numerical scoring is used.
Further action required	Additional controls, responsible person and target date.
Residual risk	Remaining risk after controls, where scoring is used.
Review arrangements	Review date and/or event-based triggers.
Completion / sign-off	Evidence that required actions have been completed.