

WALTHAMSTOW MONTESSORI SCHOOL (WMS)

Risk Assessment Policy

To be considered in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Left Child Policy
First Aid Policy
Medicine Policy
Intimacy Policy

At WMS we are fully committed to promoting the safety and welfare of all in our community so that effective education can take place. Risks are inherent in everyday life. We need to identify them and to adopt systems for minimising them. Our children need to be educated in how to cope safely with risk.

In accordance with our duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2000, the school is required to undertake regular risk assessments and take any necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety policy and elsewhere.

What is a Risk Assessment?

A risk assessment is a tool for conducting a formal examination of the harm or hazard to people 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. injury, destruction of property).
- Risk Control Measures or Safe Operating Systems are the measures and procedures that are put in place in order to minimise the consequences of uncontrolled risk (e.g. staff training, clear work procedures, heat detectors, fire alarms, fire practices, gas and electrical shut down points and insurance).
- Risk Assessments focus on prevention, rather than reaction when things go wrong. In many cases simple measures are very effective and not costly.
- Risk assessments need reviewing and updating regularly. Training in relation to risk assessments is delivered annually.

What areas require Risk Assessments?

A wide variety of activities are carried out at WMS, each of which will require a separate risk assessment.

The most important of these cover:

- Fire safety and procedures
- Educational visits and trips
- Site usage e.g. the playground area & communal areas

But risk assessments are also needed for many other areas, including:

Educational

- Some science activities
- PE and sport activities
- Staff, e.g. pregnancy, return under 'fit for work' limitations issued by a GP

To help us carry out effective risk assessments, and assess all risks adequately, we make use of model or generic risk assessments, for our educational activities and visits.

Child Protection and Pastoral Care

Our Safeguarding Policy outlines the procedures in place to identify children at risk outside of school.

Medical and First Aid

Our Medicine and First Aid Policies outline the procedures for managing children's medication. The Principal is responsible for reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on school premises to a pupil, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor to the HSE in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

Unsafe areas

Pupils do not have access to catering, maintenance and cleaning stores of the school.

CONDUCTING A RISK ASSESSMENT

WMS' policy is not to carry out any high-risk activity. Activities involving pupils are normally low risk. Children are always spoken to about how to keep safe when undertaking any activity that has been risk assessed.

Procedure:

- State the parameters of the activity
- Note the key safety measures in place for the activity
- Note which HAZARDS have been identified

- Evaluate whether this are LOW, MEDIUM or HIGH risk
- If there are any HIGH-risk areas, the activity must not take place
- For other risks, identify the safe operating systems you will put in place
- Send to your Risk Assessment Leader (Head of school) for review and authorisation. The activity may only take place once it has been authorised.

Specialist Risk Assessments

The Head of School together with the Principal arranges for specialists to carry out the following risk assessments where necessary:

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

Reviews

All risk assessments are reviewed and recorded annually or when major structural work is planned or in the event of an accident. A separate policy on the management of health and safety describes the arrangements for regular health and safety audits of the fabric of the school and its 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 pupils and visitors. They are responsible for cooperating with the Head of School and the Principal to enable compliance with their health and Safety duties

Finally, all members of staff are responsible for reporting any risks or defects to the Head of School.

Date Last Reviewed: 12th September 2025

Date to be Reviewed: 12th September 2026