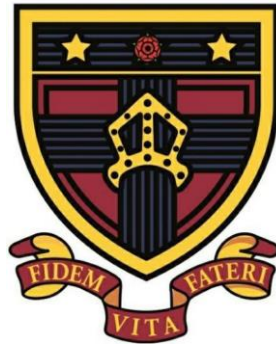


# St. Mary's College



## Risk Assessment Policy

College, Preparatory school and Early  
Years Department

All sites collectively referred to in  
this document as the 'College'

# 2024/2025

Reviewed by: T. Gogarty – September 2024

Date of Next Review: September 2025

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## Statement of intent

At St. Mary's College, we are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment that inspires and supports academic achievement. This policy sets out the procedures the College will follow in order to identify and manage the health and safety of staff members, pupils and visitors who may be affected by the College's activities.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to enable the College to determine what measures should be taken to comply with the duties under the relevant statutory provisions.

This policy will be adhered to by all staff members and the governing board at all times

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Chair of governors.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Education Act 2002
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- DfE (2022) 'Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'

1.2. This policy has been developed in accordance with, and will be implemented alongside, the following College policies and documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Educational Visits and College Trips Policy
- Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy

## 2. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- 2.1. **“Risk assessment”** is defined as a careful examination of what, in the College, could cause harm to people, so that the College can determine whether the necessary precautions are in place or whether more should be done to prevent harm.
- 2.2. **“Hazard”** is defined as anything that may cause harm, such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, an open drawer, etc.
- 2.3. **“Risk”** is defined as the chance, low to high, that someone could be harmed by it and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.
- 2.4. **“Dynamic risk assessment”** is defined as an assessment that takes into account unexpected or short, temporary changes that require immediate amendments to be made to control measures.
- 2.5. **“Generic risk assessment”** is defined as an individual assessment covering the common, significant hazards that staff and others face on a daily basis, such as low-risk activities or repeated activities that can be documented in another way.
- 2.6. **“Suitable and sufficient risk”** is defined as an assessment that is proportionate to the risk and ensures that all relevant hazards are addressed, complies with statutory requirements, ensures all groups who are affected are considered, takes account of existing control measures and identifies further measures as necessary.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The governing board is responsible for:

- The overall responsibility of risk management at the College.
- Overseeing the management of risk and health and safety
- Delegating strategic decisions for operational management of risk and health and safety to the Principal.
- Recording and reporting incidents involving:
  - Injuries and ill health of employees
  - Injuries involving pupils and other people not employed by the College
  - Dangerous occurrences

3.2. The Principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring potential hazards are identified and risk assessments are carried out as appropriate.
- Ensuring day-to-day risks are managed effectively, including health and safety matters.

- Ensuring that any individual tasked to carry out a risk assessment is suitably trained to do so.
- Allocating resources in response to risk assessments and determining a course of action, if it has been identified that a risk cannot be suitably controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Implementing frameworks for decision-making and corporate strategies which consider risk assessment principles.
- Implementing appropriate mechanisms to communicate safe systems of work identified as part of the risk assessment process.
- Communicating elements of risk and health and safety management to the Governing board.
- Developing a Health and Safety Policy, that should be subject to reviews based on thorough risk assessment to reflect on and reduce occurrences of newly established risks.
- Recording any significant findings from risk assessments.

3.3. Staff members are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of their own safety, as well as that of pupils, visitors and other staff members.
- Being aware of any established risks and understand the measures the College has put in place to manage these.
- Undertaking their work in accordance with training and instructions.
- Cooperating with the College on health and safety matters.
- Carrying out assigned risk assessments effectively, ensuring all risks are identified as well as suitable control measures.
- Reporting any risks or defects to the Health & Safety officer in order to create new, or update, risk assessments.
- Participating in risk management training delivered by the College.

## 4. Health and safety

- 4.1. In accordance with the College's Health and Safety Policy and requirements under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the College will assess the risks to the health and safety of staff, pupils and others affected by the College's activities.
- 4.2. The College will ensure that a common-sense and proportionate approach is applied to risk assessment management – the College understands that a separate written risk assessment is not required for every activity.
- 4.3. The Principal is responsible for ensuring potential hazards are identified and risk assessments are completed for all areas of risk in the College.
- 4.4. Risk assessments of high-risk areas, such as laboratories, will be reviewed termly.
- 4.5. Annual risk assessments will be conducted for all other areas of the College. The College uses the Peninsula platform together with their dedicated advisor when putting together many risk assessments associated with Health & Safety.

- 4.6. In accordance with 4.4 and 4.5, the Principal will ensure that any individual assigned to carrying out a risk assessment understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned.
- 4.7. At the College the Principal in conjunction with the External trips coordinator for the College will ensure suitable risk assessments are completed by staff leading day trips or residential stays. The Head of the Prep school will ensure risk assessments are completed by staff likewise, for the Prep school and the Head of Early years will ensure risk assessments are completed by the EYD staff.
- 4.8. For activities that are higher risk, if these are annual or infrequent activities, a review of an existing risk assessment will take place, rather than a newly written risk assessment.
- 4.9. Where a new activity is taking place, a specific risk assessment of significant risks will be conducted.
- 4.10. Where an activity usually forms part of a College day, e.g. pupils regularly undertaking swimming lessons at an alternative location, the College will not conduct separate risk assessments for each visit – termly checks will be conducted to ensure the precautions implemented remain suitable and any changes will be made as necessary.
- 4.11. Risk assessments will be updated in line with section 15 of this policy.
- 4.12. Risk assessments will identify all defects and potential risks along with necessary solutions or control measures.
- 4.13. The College has developed a number of different risk assessments or procedures, which may include the following:

**NB.** The below are also covered in the College's **Health and Safety Policy**.

- Training of staff in health and safety, including risk assessment
- Recording and reporting accidents to staff, pupils and visitors – including those reportable under RIDDOR
- Procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any College-led adventure activities
- Responding to health and safety emergencies, including procedures and contacts
- First aid and supporting those with medical needs
- Occupational health services and managing work-related stress
- Workplace safety for teachers, pupils and visitors
- College security
- Violence to staff
- Manual handling
- Slips and trips
- On-site vehicle movements
- Management of asbestos
- COSHH

- Working at height
- Selecting and managing contractors
- Maintaining plant and equipment, such as electrical equipment, local exhaust ventilation, pressure systems, gas appliances, lifting equipment and glazing safety
- Fire safety, including test of alarms and evacuation procedures

## **5. Safeguarding – refer also to Safeguarding and Child protection policy**

5.1. In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE), the College recognises its specific safeguarding duties with regards to risk assessments.

5.2. The Principal will undertake a risk assessment when deciding whether to obtain an enhanced DBS certificate for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. (See appendix 3). The following will be considered:

- The nature of the volunteer's work with pupils
- What the College knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information provided by staff, parents and other volunteers
- Whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability
- Whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check

5.3. All details of the risk assessment conducted in line with 5.2 will be recorded.

5.4. Where there is a possible suspension of a staff member, the College will conduct a risk assessment to determine their decision.

5.5. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will undertake an immediate risk assessment. If there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the DSL.

5.6. In line with 5.5, the risk assessment will address the following:

- The victim – particularly their protection and support
- The alleged perpetrator
- All other pupils (and adult students or staff if appropriate) at the College, especially any actions required to protect them

5.7. The risk assessment conducted under provisions 5.5 and 5.6 will be recorded and kept under review by the DSL.

5.8. Any risk assessments conducted by professionals following an incident in line with 5.5 will be used by the DSL to inform the College's risk assessment. The College's risk assessment does not act as a replacement to risk assessments conducted by professionals.

- 5.9. Where a pupil is convicted or receives a caution for a sexual offence, the DSL will update the risk assessment to ensure relevant protections are in place for all pupils at the College and consider any suitable action in light of the College's Behaviour Policy.
- 5.10. The DSL will engage with children's social care services and specialist services as required. In cases of reports of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers or sexual violence specialists will be required. Any such assessments will be used to inform the College's approach to supporting and protecting pupils and updating risk assessments.
- 5.11. The College will not wait for the outcome of investigations by children's social care services or the police before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other pupils, as outlined within risk assessments.
- 5.12. As required by section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, the College will conduct a risk assessment to determine the appropriateness of any filters and monitoring systems needed to control the risk of pupils being drawn into terrorism.

## **6. College security and emergency preparation**

- 6.1. The College has plans in place to manage and respond to risks related to College security.
- 6.2. The College also has procedures for controlling access and barring individuals from the premises.
- 6.3. The College considers emergency procedures including:
- Serious injury to a pupil or staff member, e.g. a transport accident.
  - Significant damage to College property, e.g. a fire.
  - Criminal activity, e.g. a bomb threat.
  - Severe weather, e.g. flooding.
  - Public health incidents, e.g. a flu pandemic.
  - The effects of a disaster in the local community.

## **7. Assessing pupils' welfare – see also Special needs and disability policy**

- 7.1. Where any of the following criteria are met, the College will conduct a risk assessment regarding pupils' welfare by following steps 1-5 identified in 10.2:
- A pupil with a historical tendency towards behavioural, social or emotional difficulties.



- A pupil either returning to the College after a fixed-term exclusion or joining from another College after a permanent exclusion.
  - A pupil with either a clinical tendency or historical tendency towards behavioural, social or emotional difficulties and participating in any off-site College visits/trips.
- 7.2. All risk assessments regarding pupils' welfare will take into account previous behaviour, and outline specific measures, including both punitive sanctions and pastoral support, to ensure the risk of behaviour being repeated is minimised and managed.
- 7.3. Care will be taken to ensure that pupils with SEND are not excluded from College activities as a result of behavioural difficulties, unless it is sufficiently severe as to directly interfere with the education of other pupils.
- 7.4. The College will liaise with the College's **SENCO** when undertaking an assessment of risks to pupils' welfare.
- 7.5. The College will refer to 1 when making risk assessment decisions about pupils' welfare or pastoral needs.

## 8. Areas of risk

- 8.1. The College identifies key areas of College management that present risks to the College community – these include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Safeguarding (as outlined in section 5)
  - Pupil welfare
  - Health and safety (as outlined in section 4)
  - Security (as outlined in section 6)
  - Fire safety
  - Critical incidents
  - College trips
  - Lessons and activities
  - Pupils with onerous demands
  - Staff recruitment
- 8.2. Specific risk assessments or mandatory checks by professionals are also conducted under the following categories:
- Asbestos
  - Legionella
  - Gas & Electrical safety
  - Fire safety.

## **9. Risk ratings**

9.1. The College adopts risk ratings according to the risk calculated on the Peninsular Portal for Health & Safety risk assessments.

## 10. Principles of effective risk management and assessment

10.1. The College adopts the following key principles of risk prevention:

- If possible, avoid a risk altogether
- Avoid introducing new hazards
- Evaluate unavoidable risks via a risk assessment
- Combat risks at the source
- Consult with those affected to adapt work to the requirements of the individual
- Take advantage of technological and technical progress
- Implement risk prevention measures within policies
- Give priority to protection measures that safeguard the whole College
- Ensure that staff and pupils understand what they must do to minimise risk
- Develop a positive approach to health and safety within College

10.2. The College identifies a five-stage process to undertaking a risk assessment:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks
- Record the findings
- Review

10.3. The College understands that most hazards are easy to recognise, e.g. in the science department, the use of toxic or dangerous chemicals, should already have an assessment under the COSHH.

10.4. Hazards that are already covered under other risk assessment will be ticked as 'checked' in the general risk assessment. There is no need to conduct a separate risk assessment. The College uses the Peninsula platform together with their dedicated advisor when putting together many risk assessments associated with Health & Safety.

## 11. Step 1 – identify the hazards

11.1. When identifying hazards,(see Appendix 1) staff members will:

- Walk around the area and assess what could reasonably be expected to cause harm – this could include anything related to the College premises or the delivery of its curriculum, whether on or off site.
- Put themselves in the place of non-specialist staff and pupils to find the risks.
- Ignore anything trivial and concentrate only on significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people.

11.2. To identify hazards, staff members will have regard to the following:

- The classroom environment
- Slipping and tripping hazards, e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs
- Fire, e.g. from flammable materials
- Chemicals and how they are used, and in what quantities, e.g. cleaning chemicals
- Moving parts of machinery, e.g. within faculty workshops
- On-site vehicle movements
- Asbestos on College premises
- Selection and management of contractors
- Work at height, e.g. scaffolding around buildings
- Ejection of materials, e.g. workshops and experiments
- Pressure systems, e.g. within laboratories
- Electricity, e.g. poor wiring, portable appliances, electrical experiments
- Dust, e.g. metal grinding and cement
- Fumes, e.g. welding and chemicals
- Manual handling
- Noise
- General environment, e.g. poor lighting or low/high temperature
- College building design and maintenance
- Biological hazards, e.g. gardening or contact with bodily fluids
- Management of work-related stress
- Behaviour management, e.g. kicking, hitting, verbal abuse, running away, vandalism, bullying or stealing
- Prior exclusion

## **12. Step 2 – decide who might be harmed and how**

12.1. In addition to staff and pupils, those conducting a risk assessment will also consider people who may not be in the workplace consistently.

12.2. Staff will have regard to the following groups of people:

- Staff members
- Operators
- Maintenance personnel
- Cleaners
- Contractors
- Members of the public
- Parents

12.3. Staff will also have due regard to the following vulnerable groups:

- Staff and pupils with SEND
- Inexperienced staff
- Visitors

- Lone workers
- Pregnant workers

### **13. Step 3 – evaluate the risks**

- 13.1. Staff will evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate, or more should be done in line with section 9 of this policy.
- 13.2. For each significant hazard, staff will decide whether the residual risk is high, moderate or low.
- 13.3. Staff will consider whether industry standards are in place and whether all has been done that is reasonably practicable to keep the workplace safe.
- 13.4. Staff will ensure that managing additional hazards does not interfere with other control measures, such as fire safety.
- 13.5. Staff will ensure that the following are in place:
  - Adequate information, instruction or training
  - Adequate systems or procedures
- 13.6. When implementing control measures, staff will have due regard to whether the precautions:
  - Meet the standards set by a legal requirement.
  - Comply with the recognised industry standard.
  - Represent good practice.
  - Change existing precautions in place.
- 13.7. To reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable, staff will aim to eradicate the hazard completely, or control the risk significantly to ensure that harm is unlikely or the likelihood of it occurring is minimised.

### **14. Step 4 – record the findings**

- 14.1. Staff will ensure that the most significant hazards are recorded, as well as the control measures in place to mitigate those hazards.
- 14.2. Copies of general risk assessments will be stored on the T drive- Health and Safety file – Risk assessments. Confidential risk assessments, for example, pregnancy related, should be kept by the line manager and H & S officer in a confidential file.
- 14.3. Staff do not need to show how the assessment was carried out, provided that:
  - A proper check was made.
  - The assessment details who might be affected.
  - All the obvious, significant hazards are considered, taking into account the number of people who could be involved.
  - The precautions are reasonable and the remaining risks are low.

14.4. All findings will be reported to the Principal.

14.5. Where the impact or likelihood of major risks cannot be minimised, the Principal will decide whether the activity will still take place.

## 15. Step 5 – review

15.1. Risk assessments will be reviewed in line with the College appointed expert Peninsula, for Health & Safety and by the Leadership Team for other risk assessments.

15.2. There are no set statutory guidelines for the review of risk assessments. The College implements the following requirements for when risk assessments will be reviewed:

- When there are changes to an activity
- After a near-miss or accident
- When there are changes to the type of people involved in the activity
- When there are changes to good practice
- When there are changes to related legislation
- Annually, if for no other reason

15.3. Reviews of risk assessments will be dynamic – changes will be made immediately to the existing risk assessment. A new risk assessment will not be conducted unless there are significant changes, such as more than **one** of the criteria outlined in 14.3.

15.4. The individual who created the risk assessment and the Principal will review risk assessments developed for high-risk activities on a termly basis.

15.5. All reviews for general Health & Safety will be recorded on the Peninsula system dashboard. Changes will be communicated to all relevant individuals immediately.

15.6. Risk assessments will be stored for the duration of the risk assessment, plus three years, in line with the College's Data Protection Policy.

15.7. Staff members can use the Risk Assessment Review Template in the appendices of this policy for an urgent risk assessment, otherwise please liaise with the Health & safety officer or consult the Peninsula portal.

## 16. Training

16.1. All teaching staff members and key support staff will receive training on risk management procedures. This training will be via the Peninsula training platform.

16.2. All new teaching staff members and key support staff will receive training on risk management as part of their Health & Safety induction training.

16.3. Staff whose work involves a greater element of risk will have extra or specific training, including:

- Using industrial machinery.

- Managing asbestos.
- Having responsibility for the storage of, and accountability for, potentially hazardous materials in their buildings.

## 17. **Monitoring and review**

- 17.1. The Principal will review this policy on an annual basis. The next scheduled review date for this policy is March 2025.
- 17.2. The Principal will communicate any changes made to this policy to all staff members.
- 17.3. All staff members are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

## Appendix 1

### Identifying Risks in the College

Identified as a risk?	Yes	No
<b>Toilets</b>		
Is the location of the toilets a concern?		
Are they shared by more than one class?		
Are they unisex?		
When visiting the toilet, are pupils out-of-sight of College staff?		
Is it possible to manage use of the toilets better?		
Are staff allocated to monitor the toilets in an unobtrusive manner?		
<b>Classrooms</b>		
Can pupils and staff be seen at all times?		
Are there any unnecessary blind spots?		
Are there areas where pupils can be observed but continue to remain creative?		
Are you able to be flexible regarding the seating plan and layout of the classroom?		
Are there procedures in place for pupils and staff leaving the classroom?		
Have pupils been taught about personal safety?		
<b>Hallways and walkways</b>		
Are pupils supervised or able to be seen at all times (e.g. through windows)?		
Are there any cupboards or empty rooms which could be accessible to pupils?		
<b>Outside areas</b>		
Are pupils supervised or able to be seen at all times (e.g. through windows) from all areas of the outside area/playground?		
Do certain areas need to be designated as 'out of bounds' either for the time being or permanently?		
Are staffing levels adequate?		
Do staff engage pupils in structured play, rather than leaving them open to inappropriate play?		
<b>Changing for PE and swimming (onsite and off)</b>		
Does the PE changing area pose risks?		
Does the swimming changing area pose risks?		
Are staff able to supervise changing appropriately and according to the needs and age of the pupils concerned?		
<b>Pupils</b>		
Have all pupils been taught personal safety?		
Are all pupils aware of who to talk to if they have concerns?		



Do all pupils feel that they are listened to and are confident that appropriate action will be taken if necessary?		
Have pupils been taught about e-safety?		
If there have been safeguarding concerns, including notification of domestic violence, have pupils been appropriately supported within College?		
<b>Staff</b>		
Are all staff aware of who the DSL is?		
Are all staff aware of who to go to if the DSL is not available?		
Are all staff aware of the need to record concerns and pass them on to the DSL?		
Are all staff (including volunteers and governors) familiar with the contents of the <b>Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy</b> ?		
Have all staff, teaching and non-teaching, received safeguarding training in the last year?		
Have staff received training in safer working practice and the protective ethos?		
Are all staff aware of, and feel confident in using, the <b>Whistleblowing Policy</b> ?		
Have all staff signed to say that they have read and understood part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education?		
Is there an <b>Anti-bullying Policy</b> that effectively deals with bullying?		
Are College computers monitored to ensure that pupils and staff are following the College's <b>E-Safety Policy</b> ?		

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**Appendix 2**  
**Risk Assessment Review Template**

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### Appendix 3

#### Starting paid or voluntary work prior to DBS certificate being seen

This should be completed when considering whether to allow a new member of staff to start work before a new DBS certificate has been seen by the school.

**Name of person**.....

**Role**.....

**Proposed start date**.....

**DBS check application date**..... **Barred list check date if appropriate** .....

*(The person must not start without an application being made)*

Is the person in 'regulated activity? Yes      No

#### **Reasons for starting without seeing a new DBS check**

- Continuity of the school provision
- Other- please state.....

#### **Please check that all of the following has been completed, if applicable-**

- Essential - Identity check (photographic)
- Essential - Verification of current address
- Essential – Barred check list if legally appropriate
- Essential – Prohibition checklist (for teachers)
- Essential – Right to work in the UK
- Essential – Confirmation of relevant qualifications
- Essential – two references
- Where relevant - Overseas checks
- Any other relevant information (please state).....

.....  
.....

**Previous DBS certificate**

If the person has a previous DBS, on what date was it issued?.....

If the person previously worked in a school or college, what was the date of their last day there?

*If the persons proposed start date and their last day at their previous school or college are less than three months apart then a new Enhanced DBS is not required in law.*

**Decision**

- **High risk-** the person should not be allowed to start without a new enhanced DBS certificate as there has been a break in service of more than three months (or they do not have an enhanced DBS certificate) and/ or there is insufficient information about the person in the 'Known information'- see above.
- **Medium risk –** the person may start work although there is a gap of three months or more since their last school employment and/or does not have an Enhanced DBS certificate. The person must be supervised at all times and should not take 1:1 work under any circumstances. The unchecked person must be with someone who has an enhanced DBS check
- **Low risk -** The person may start work, without additional supervision, as they already hold an enhanced DBS check from a school or college and there is no break in service of three months or more and all other checks have been satisfactorily completed.

**Authorisation**

Principal (Name).....

Principal (Signature) .....

Date.....