RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

(This policy relates to the whole College including EYFS)

Responsible person:	Bursar
Last reviewed:	August 2026
Next review date:	June 2027
Approved by:	Governing Body

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

1. Scope

This policy applies to everyone with responsibility for identifying, assessing and managing risk at St Columba's College, and sets out the framework through which the College manages risks affecting pupils, staff, visitors, hirers and the wider College community. It meets the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards Regulations (ISSRs) 2016.

2. Objectives

1. Identify and manage major risks as part of an overarching strategy that prevents injury and promotes children's welfare;
2. Ensure legal compliance with the ISSR requirement for a written risk assessment policy;
3. Set out who is responsible for conducting and monitoring risk assessments;
4. Ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out for all significant activities, on and off site, including trips, lettings and Holiday Club;
5. Ensure risk assessments are recorded, reviewed and acted upon;
6. Ensure control measures are implemented so far as is reasonably practicable.

3. Key Risk Areas

The Head, Bursar and Governors are responsible for the College's overarching risk management strategy, which is formally reviewed annually. Day to day responsibility is delegated to the Bursar and Head of Estates. A risk assessment is required wherever an activity, area or piece of equipment carries a foreseeable risk of harm, including the following key risk areas:

1. The workplace generally, including fire safety, gas safety, asbestos, Legionella and ionising radiation;
2. Safeguarding and child protection, including site security, access control, supervision of visitors and contractors, lone working with pupils, and the physical and environmental safety of all spaces used by children (see also the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy);
3. EYFS; Science laboratories (chemicals, gas taps, heat sources and glassware); Design Technology workshops (power tools, machinery and adhesives); Food Technology (ovens, hobs, knives and allergen management); PE, Expressive Arts and Art;
4. The 4G AGP/MUGA, playground equipment and other sports and outdoor facilities, including use by external hirers;
5. Estates and maintenance activities, including manual handling, working at height and the use of power tools;
6. Minibus and transport operations, including driver training and vehicle safety checks;
7. School trips, off-site visits and educational activities;
8. Holiday Club and holiday activity weeks, where pupil groups, staffing ratios and site use differ from term time;
9. Events and large gatherings on the College site, such as open days, concerts and fixtures;
10. Lettings and community hire of College premises, and management of visitors and contractors generally;
11. Catering and cleaning operations (managed through the outsourced contractors' own risk assessments, reviewed by the Bursar);
12. Suitability checks on staff and others working with pupils, including those not directly employed by the College;
13. Lone working, particularly for cleaning, estates and out-of-hours staff;

14. New and expectant mothers, and young workers (pupils on work experience and staff under 18);
15. Use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) by office-based staff;
16. Cyber security and information systems (see the College's Cyber Risk Policy and Risk Assessment);
17. Major incidents, including lockdown/invacuation (see the Lockdown Policy and Critical Incident Policy);
18. Wider institutional risks, including financial, reputational, recruitment, site security, terrorism/extremism, pupil self-harm, and infection and disease.

4. What is a Risk Assessment?

Key definitions

Hazard – something with the potential to cause harm.

Risk – the likelihood of a hazard occurring, combined with the severity of the harm if it does.

Risk assessment – the recorded outcome of assessing likelihood and severity together.

Control measures – the steps taken to reduce risk (e.g. training, safe systems of work, signage, barriers, insurance).

Risk assessments can cover risks to people (e.g. slips, falls), property (e.g. fire), strategic risk (e.g. reputation, pupil numbers), financial risk, compliance risk (e.g. safeguarding) and environmental risk (e.g. asbestos, Legionella).

5. What Should a Risk Assessment Contain?

Every risk assessment should be completed by the process or activity owner, working through six steps:

1. What could go wrong;
2. Who might be harmed;
3. How likely is it to go wrong;
4. How serious would it be if it did;
5. What will be done to reduce the risk;
6. How will it be checked that the plan is working.

Likelihood and severity are each scored from 1 to 5 and multiplied together to give a risk score from 1 to 25 (see the scale at Appendix 1). The College template (Appendix 1) is held on the intranet, with a worked example at Appendix 2.

6. When Should a Risk Assessment Be Reviewed?

1. When a new risk is identified;
2. When there are changes to the activity, venue or equipment used;
3. After a near miss or accident;
4. When there are changes to the people involved in the activity;
5. When there are changes in good practice or legislation;
6. Annually, at the September INSET, or before each Holiday Club period for Holiday Club-specific assessments.

7. Who is Responsible for Risk Assessments?

Who	Responsible for
Bursar	• Overall implementation of this policy across the College. • Spot checks on organisational compliance, alongside the Head of Estates.
Head of Estates	• Day-to-day monitoring and oversight of risk assessment practice. • Support and guidance for staff completing assessments.
Heads of Department, trip leads, event organisers and the Lettings Team	• Completing, signing off and reviewing risk assessments for their own subject area, trip, event or letting. • Saving completed assessments in the departmental folder in Teams.
Holiday Club Manager	• Completing and reviewing risk assessments specific to each Holiday Club period, reflecting the pupil cohort, staffing and activities running that week.
All staff	• Taking reasonable care of their own safety and that of pupils and visitors. • Reporting risks to the Head of Estates or Bursar without delay. • Cooperating with the Head, Bursar and CLT so the Governors can meet their health and safety duties.

Staff use the College's model or generic risk assessment templates, with induction and INSET refresher training tailored to their area. Specialist training is given where required, such as to Science and Technology technicians. This policy is reviewed annually by the Health & Safety Committee before being referred to the CLT and Governors.

8. Accident and Near Miss Reporting

Staff have a duty to report accidents to the College. Anyone witnessing an accident or near miss must record the details in an incident report, available in Teams.

The School Nurse ensures the injured person receives medical attention and is responsible for reviewing and reporting on incidents, investigations and trends at each Health & Safety Committee meeting.

The School Nurse is responsible for identifying any notifiable accident (a serious workplace event affecting a pupil, staff member, parent, visitor, hirer or contractor) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). Any such injury, disease or dangerous occurrence must be reported to the Bursar immediately, by phone or in person, and the Bursar must submit the report via the Health and Safety Executive's online form without delay.

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Template

Use this template for any new activity, area or piece of equipment requiring assessment. Guidance notes are shown in italics; delete before use.

Risk Assessment Title	
Department / Area	
Assessor	
Date of assessment	
Next review date	
Who is at risk?	

Likelihood × Severity Scale

Score each hazard for likelihood and severity on a scale of 1 to 5, then multiply the two together to give a risk score out of 25.

Score	Likelihood	Severity
1	Rare – very unlikely to occur	Negligible – no injury, or first aid only
2	Unlikely – could occur, but not expected	Minor – minor injury, no time off
3	Possible – could occur at some point	Moderate – injury requiring medical treatment or time off

Score	Likelihood	Severity
4	Likely – expected to occur at some point	Major – serious injury, RIDDOR-reportable
5	Almost certain – expected to occur frequently	Catastrophic – death or life-changing injury

Hazards, Controls and Actions

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing controls	Likelihood (1–5)	Severity (1–5)	Existing risk score	Further controls	Residual risk score	Owner

Overall Risk Rating

Rating bands (Likelihood × Severity)

Low (score 1–6) – existing controls are adequate; monitor as part of routine review.

Medium (score 7–14) – additional controls should be put in place within an agreed timescale.

High (score 15–25) – the activity must not proceed, or must stop immediately, until the risk is reduced.

Sign-Off

Assessor name		**Signature**		**Date**	
Reviewed / accepted by (Head of Estates or Bursar)		**Signature**		**Date**	

Reminder

This risk assessment must be reviewed annually, or sooner if there is a change to the activity, venue, equipment or people involved, or following a near miss or accident.

Appendix 2: Worked Example – Use of the 4G AGP/MUGA

This worked example shows how a completed risk assessment should look, using the likelihood × severity scale set out in Appendix 1. It is provided for guidance and training purposes.

Risk Assessment Title	Use of the 4G Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) / MUGA for PE, fixtures and lettings
Department / Area	PE Department / Sports Facilities
Assessor	Head of Sport
Date of assessment	[date]
Who is at risk?	Pupils, staff, coaches, visiting teams, lettings hirers and members of the public using the facility

Hazards, Controls and Actions

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing controls	Likelihood (1–5)	Severity (1–5)	Existing risk score	Further controls	Residual risk score	Owner
Uneven or worn playing surface causing trips or falls	Pupils and players – sprains, fractures	Annual World Rugby Regulation 22 field test; visual pitch inspection before each use by duty staff	**2**	**3**	**6 (Low)**	None required – existing inspection regime keeps risk adequately controlled	**6 (Low)**	Head of Estates
Collision with fencing, goalposts or floodlight columns	Pupils, players, spectators – head or body injury	Padded goalposts; run-off zones maintained to guidance; floodlight columns outside playing area	**2**	**3**	**6 (Low)**	None required – padding and run-off zones considered adequate	**6 (Low)**	PE Dept

Hazard	Who might be harmed & how	Existing controls	Likelihood (1–5)	Severity (1–5)	Existing risk score	Further controls	Residual risk score	Owner
Use of the pitch after dark / poor lighting during lettings	Hirers, members of public – slips, collisions	Floodlighting tested and maintained; lettings bookings outside lit hours require written approval	**3**	**3**	**9 (Medium)**	Install dusk-to-dawn photocell sensors on floodlights; Lettings Team to sign off lighting checks before any evening booking	**6 (Low)**	Lettings Team / Head of Estates
Unauthorised access / unsupervised use out of hours	Members of public, particularly children – falls, injury from equipment left out	Perimeter fencing and locked gates outside booked hours; equipment stored after use	**2**	**2**	**4 (Low)**	None required – fencing and locked gates considered adequate	**4 (Low)**	Estates
Adverse weather (ice, lightning, extreme heat)	All users – slips, lightning strike, heat-related illness	Pitch inspected before use in cold conditions; lightning protocol suspends play; heat risk assessment referenced for hot weather	**3**	**3**	**9 (Medium)**	Install lightning detection system with automatic alert to duty staff mobile devices	**6 (Low)**	Duty staff / Head of Estates

Overall Risk Rating

As shown in the table above, existing risk scores range from 4 to 9 (Low–Medium) with current controls in place. Where further controls are identified, applying them is expected to bring every hazard to a residual score of 6 or below (Low), provided the existing controls also remain in place and current – in particular the Regulation 22 field test and floodlighting checks.

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