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Risk Assessment Policy

The British School of Gran Canaria

Contents

1. Rationale	3
2. Definitions	3
3. Scope	3
4. Legal and Regulatory Framework	4
(See Appendix 1).....	4
5. Responsibilities	4
5.1 Board of Governors	4
5.2 Head	4
5.3 Senior Leadership Team	4
5.4 Head of Maintenance / Health and Safety Coordinator	4
5.5 Line Managers/Trip Leaders	4
5.6 All Staff	4
6. Risk Assessment Process	4
7. Types of Risk Assessment	5
8. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities	5
9. Recording and Documentation	5
10. Review and Monitoring	5
11. Training and Communication	5
12. Monitoring Compliance	6
13. Policy Review	6
Appendix 1 - Policy Context and Reference Framework	7
Appendix 2 - HSE Guidance on Risk Assessment (UK)	9
Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment Template	11

1. Rationale

The British School of Gran Canaria is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all pupils, staff, visitors and contractors. Effective risk assessment is central to this commitment and underpins all aspects of school life, including teaching and learning, educational visits, co-curricular activities, premises management and day-to-day operations.

This policy sets out the school's approach to identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing control measures and reviewing practice in order to maintain a safe and secure environment in line with British Schools Overseas (BSO) standards, UK best practice and relevant Spanish legislation.

2. Definitions

All Staff – teaching and support employees of the school.

Board of Governors – the group that leads to school strategic direction, ensures financial stability and monitors compliance with Spanish and UK laws and educational directives.

British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards – standards set by the UK Government to ensure alignment and comparability for schools outside the UK, with expectations and standards for UK school.

Governors – members of the school's Board of Governors.

Head – head of the school

Head of Maintenance – person with responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the school facilities.

Health and Safety Coordinator – person responsible for recording incidents, organising training and liaising with the school's Work Safety consultants.

Health and Safety Committee – these committees comprise of senior leaders and teaching and support staff, which meets at least four-times-a-year to review school Health and Safety. There are separate committees on the Tafira and South sites.

HSE – UK based, government organisation, the Health and Safety Executive.

Line Managers– staff with responsibilities that includes health, safety and welfare of students and adults in different school sectors.

Senior Leadership Team – school leaders that includes senior and middle managers across the school.

Trip Leaders – staff with overall responsibility for a school trip, which can be a day trip or a residential activity.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils
- All staff, teaching and support
- Governors
- Volunteers, contractors and visitors
- All school activities, both on-site and off-site

4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

Risk assessment at BSGC is informed by:

- British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards
- UK Health and Safety at Work principles (as best practice)
- Spanish health and safety legislation
- The school's Health and Safety Policy

(See Appendix 1)

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Board of Governors

- Ensure that effective systems for risk assessment are in place
- Monitor compliance through reports and audits
- Ensure adequate resources are available to manage risk

5.2 Head

- Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy
- Ensure that risk assessments are completed, monitored and reviewed
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and guidance

5.3 Senior Leadership Team

- Support the Headteacher in overseeing risk assessment processes
- Ensure consistency of practice across all campuses and phases
- Act on identified risks and ensure appropriate control measures are implemented

5.4 Head of Maintenance / Health and Safety Coordinator

- Conduct and coordinate site-based risk assessments
- Maintain records of premises and equipment risk assessments
- Liaise with external contractors and specialist inspectors

5.5 Line Managers/Trip Leaders

- Ensure risk assessments are completed for activities within their area of responsibility
- Review and update assessments as required
- Ensure staff and pupils understand relevant safety procedures

5.6 All Staff

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others
- Follow risk control measures and safe working practices
- Report hazards, near misses or concerns promptly

6. Risk Assessment Process

Risk assessment at BSGC follows a structured process:

1. Identify hazards – anything with the potential to cause harm
2. Identify who may be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risk – considering likelihood and severity

4. Implement control measures to reduce risk to an acceptable level
 5. Record findings and communicate them clearly
 6. Review and update assessments regularly or when circumstances change
- (See Appendix 2 - HSE Guidance on Risk Assessment (UK), which highlights the HSE Five-Step Risk Assessment Model)

7. Types of Risk Assessment

The school undertakes risk assessments including, but not limited to:

- Premises and facilities (classrooms, playgrounds, laboratories, sports areas)
- Curriculum activities (science experiments, PE, DT, Art)
- Educational visits and residential trips
- Co-curricular activities and clubs
- Fire safety and emergency procedures
- Medical needs and first aid provision
- Manual handling and equipment use
- Contractor and visitor activities

8. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

All educational visits and off-site activities require a written risk assessment prior to approval.

These must:

- Identify travel, supervision, environmental and activity-specific risks
- Consider the needs of pupils with medical conditions, SEND or EAL
- Be approved by the relevant Head of Sector and/or Senior Leader
- Be shared with accompanying staff

Residential and higher-risk activities require additional scrutiny and senior leadership approval.

9. Recording and Documentation

- Risk assessments are recorded using agreed school templates (See Appendix 3)
- Documents are stored securely and made accessible to relevant staff

10. Review and Monitoring

Risk assessments are:

- Reviewed annually
- Updated following incidents, near misses or significant changes
- Monitored through learning walks, site inspections and Health and Safety Committee meetings

The Health and Safety Committee regularly reviews risk management practices and reports to senior leaders and governors.

11. Training and Communication

- Staff receive induction and refresher training in health and safety and risk assessment
- Guidance is provided for trip leaders and staff responsible for higher-risk activities
- Pupils are taught age-appropriate safety awareness as part of curriculum and pastoral provision

12. Monitoring Compliance

Compliance with this policy is monitored through:

- Internal audits and site inspections
- Health and Safety Committee reviews
- External inspections and specialist reports
- Incident and accident analysis

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if required due to changes in legislation, inspection feedback or significant incidents.

Appendix 1 - Policy Context and Reference Framework

This Risk Assessment Policy has been informed by, and is aligned with, the following statutory requirements, regulatory standards and recognised best practice guidance:

1. British Schools Overseas (BSO) Standards

This policy is written to ensure full compliance with the Standards for British Schools Overseas (DfE), with particular reference to:

- BSO Standard 11 – Health and Safety, which requires the proprietor to ensure that:
 - Health and safety laws are complied with
 - Effective arrangements are in place to safeguard the welfare of pupils and staff
 - Risks to health and safety are identified, assessed and controlled
- BSO Standard 3 – Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils, ensuring pupils are protected from harm and unnecessary risk during school activities, visits and daily operations.

The policy supports the school's wider safeguarding and welfare framework and provides evidence of systematic risk management, as required by BSO inspections.

2. UK Health and Safety at Work Principles (Best Practice)

As a British international school, BSGC aligns its procedures with UK health and safety best practice, including principles drawn from:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, particularly the duty to:
 - Carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments
 - Implement preventative and protective measures
 - Provide information, instruction and training
- HSE guidance on risk assessment, including the five-step risk assessment model.

While UK legislation does not apply directly in Spain, these principles provide a robust and widely recognised framework that underpins the school's approach to risk management and pupil welfare.

3. Spanish Health and Safety Legislation

The policy is also aligned with Spanish statutory requirements, including:

- Ley 31/1995 de Prevención de Riesgos Laborales (Law on the Prevention of Occupational Risks)
- Associated Royal Decrees governing workplace safety, risk prevention, training and employer responsibilities.

These regulations inform the school's duties as an employer in Spain and guide risk assessment processes relating to:

- Premises safety
- Staff working conditions
- Accident prevention
- Emergency planning and response.

Where appropriate, the school ensures that risk assessment procedures meet both Spanish legal requirements and British best practice standards.

4. The School's Health and Safety Policy

This Risk Assessment Policy operates as a supporting policy to the school's overarching Health and Safety Policy and should be read in conjunction with it.

The Health and Safety Policy:

- Sets out overall responsibilities and governance arrangements
- Defines procedures for incident reporting, first aid, fire safety and emergency response
- Establishes the role of the Health and Safety Committee.

The Risk Assessment Policy provides the operational framework through which hazards are identified, risks are evaluated and control measures are implemented in practice.

Appendix 2 - HSE Guidance on Risk Assessment (UK)

The UK Health and Safety Executive defines a risk assessment as:

“A careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.”

The purpose of a risk assessment is to:

- Identify hazards
- Evaluate who may be harmed and how
- Decide on appropriate control measures
- Record findings and implement actions
- Review and update as necessary

This guidance is set out in HSE publication “Risk assessment: A brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace (INDG163)”, which is commonly referenced by schools.

The HSE Five-Step Risk Assessment Model

Step 1: Identify the Hazards

Consider what could cause harm. Hazards may include:

- Slips, trips and falls
- Manual handling
- Use of equipment or chemicals
- Fire risks
- Online safety risks
- Activities, trips and off-site visits
- Behavioural or safeguarding-related risks

In schools, this includes hazards arising from:

- Premises and facilities
- Teaching activities
- Educational visits
- Sporting and practical activities
- Special educational or medical needs

Step 2: Decide Who Might Be Harmed and How

Identify groups and individuals who may be affected, such as:

- Pupils (including those with SEND or medical needs)
- Staff
- Visitors
- Contractors

Consider how they might be harmed (e.g. injury, illness, emotional harm).

Step 3: Evaluate the Risks and Decide on Precautions

Assess:

- The likelihood of harm occurring
- The severity of potential harm

Then decide what control measures are needed to reduce risk, following the hierarchy of control, for example:

- Elimination of the hazard
- Substitution
- Physical controls or safeguards

- Safe systems of work
- Training, supervision and instructions

The aim is to reduce risk to a low and acceptable level, not to eliminate all risk.

Step 4: Record Your Findings and Implement Them

If you have five or more employees (which schools do), you must:

- Record significant findings
- Identify control measures
- Assign responsibility for actions
- Implement the agreed precautions

In schools, this includes:

- Written risk assessments for activities, trips and events
- Shared awareness among staff
- Adjustments for individual pupils where necessary

Step 5: Review the Risk Assessment and Update if Necessary

Risk assessments must be reviewed:

- Regularly
- After an incident or near miss
- When activities, staffing or circumstances change
- When new hazards are identified

This ensures risk management remains effective and proportionate.

How Schools Use HSE Guidance

In schools, the HSE model is applied to:

- Day-to-day site safety
- Educational visits and residentials
- Practical subjects (Science, PE, Art, DT)
- SEND and medical needs planning
- Events, performances and trips
- Emergency planning

Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment Template



The British School of Gran Canaria

Risk Assessment Record Sheet

This risk assessment template reflects the school's commitment to maintaining a safe environment and follows the HSE Five-Step Risk Assessment Model, ensuring compliance with British Schools Overseas Standard 11 and the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Section 1: General Information

Item	Details
Risk Assessment Title / Activity	
Location (On-site / Off-site)	
Date of Assessment	
Assessor Name & Role	
Staff Involved / Supervising	
Group / Year Group	
Number of Pupils	
Date Activity Takes Place	
Review Date	

Section 2: Step 1 – Identify Hazards

List the hazards associated with the activity, environment, or equipment. (Add additional lines if necessary)

Hazard Identified	Potential Harm / Risk
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

Section 3: Step 2 – Who Might Be Harmed and How?

Identify those at risk.

- Pupils
- Staff
- Visitors
- Contractors
- Vulnerable individuals (SEND/Medical needs)

Other: _____ **How might they be harmed?**
 (Example: injury, illness, emotional distress, safeguarding risk)

Section 4: Step 3 – Evaluate Risk and Control Measures

Use the table below to identify precautions already in place and any further actions required.
 (Add additional lines if necessary)

Hazard	Existing Control Measures	Risk Level (L/M/H)	Further Action Needed?	Person Responsible	Deadline
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					

Risk Rating Guidance

- **Low (L):** Risk adequately controlled
- **Medium (M):** Additional controls may be needed
- **High (H):** Activity must not proceed until controls are implemented

Deadline: The date by which the identified action must be completed to ensure risks are controlled adequately before the activity takes place.

Section 5: Step 4 – Recording and Implementation

Have all control measures been communicated to relevant staff?

Yes No

Are any staff training or briefings required?

Yes No

Details: _____

Emergency arrangements in place?

- First Aid available
- Emergency contact list prepared
- Fire/evacuation procedure known
- Off-site trip procedures followed

Section 6: SEND / Medical / Individual Adjustments

Are any pupils involved who require additional provision?

Yes No

If yes, specify adjustments:

Pupil Needs/Condition	Required Support or Adjustment	Staff Responsible

Section 7: Step 5 – Review and Approval

Is the risk assessment suitable and sufficient?

Yes No

Review Required If:

- Incident or near miss occurs

- Activity changes
- New hazard identified
- Annual review date reached

Signatures

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Completed by			
Checked by (HOS/Line Manager)			
Approved by (Head/SLT if required)			