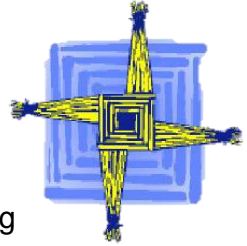


St. Bride's P.S.

Environmental Assessment Policy

1.0 Introduction



This policy is designed to assist our school in fulfilling our legal duties in assessing risks.

It is in keeping with our mission statement, “**Attainment for all within a happy, safe, caring, catholic environment.**”

Risk management is the consideration of the risks that arise in St. Bride's Primary School premises. As the school is on a split site this includes the assessment of risk on both sites (Derryvolgie and Ashleigh) and movement between sites.

It includes all other “off- site” environments which are used by the staff and pupils of St. Bride's for educational purposes during the school day or for after school activities.

The staff, on considering the risks that may arise, must then put in place sensible health and safety measures to control them.

In accordance with our duties, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2000, St. Bride's Primary School is required to undertake regular environmental assessments and take any necessary action arising from these according to provisions set out in the Health and Safety Policy and elsewhere.

The Principal, Mrs Quinn, is responsible for making sure that environmental assessments are completed, saved in the correct folder in the public folder and effectively monitored. Reviews are conducted when there is any change to equipment or resources, any change to the school's premises, changes to the venue of an educational visit or when the particular needs of a child or other visitor necessitate a review or amendment.

Mrs Quinn is further responsible for conducting any necessary reviews or making amendments to the school's other relevant policies or procedures in light of any potential risks that members of staff discover.

A visual inspection of both the equipment and the entire premises – both indoor and outdoor – will be carried out daily. This will be carried out by a designated member of staff (the building supervisor, Mr Shearer) on arrival at the school and will be completed before any children arrive.

During the school day, staff will be vigilant and continuously aware of any potential risks to health and safety arising from:

- the school's environment, both indoors and outdoors;
- all surfaces, both indoors and outdoors;
- all equipment used by children or staff.

On discovering a hazard, staff will take all steps necessary to making themselves and any other people potentially affected, safe. They will then notify the Principal, Mrs Quinn, and or Mr Shearer, who will ensure that a record is made in the Log Book.

Mrs Quinn is then responsible for ensuring that any necessary action is taken.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 require that suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk arising out of work are carried out.

Put simply, an environmental assessment is finding out what could cause harm to people and deciding if we have done enough or need to do more to protect them.

2.0. The Process of Environmental Assessment

2.1 What risks can be assessed?

An environmental assessment can be undertaken on an object or substance, a process, a location, an activity, or a person. It is a five step process:

Step 1: Identify the hazards

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Step 4: Record your findings on one of the templates and implement them

Step 5: Review your assessment and update if necessary

2.2 What is a hazard?

A hazard is anything which can cause harm e.g. electricity, chemicals, spillage in school canteen, wet floors in toilets etc.

2.3 What is risk?

Risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by the hazards outlined above, (this is not an exhaustive list) together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

2.4 Evaluating the risk

Having spotted the hazards, staff have to decide what to do about them. The law requires the school to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. St. Bride's staff will use common sense and compare what we do with good practice. Sources of good practice are HSENI's (Health and safety Executive N. Ireland) website (www.hseni.gov.uk), CLEAPSS, (Consortium of Local Education Authorities for the Provision of Science Services), EA website, etc.

First, we look at what we're already doing; thinking about what controls we have in place, and how the work is organised. Then we compare this with good practice and see if there is more we should be doing to bring our practice up to standard.

In asking this, we consider:

Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?

If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

When controlling risks, apply the principles set out below, if possible in the following order:

1. try a less risky option (e.g. do not allow children out on to the upper playground when it is too wet, use the rota for year groups to use the small yard);
2. prevent access to the hazard (e.g. 'close' the upper playground with tape when it is icy):
3. organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard (e.g. put barriers between pedestrians and traffic);
4. issue personal protective equipment (e.g. clothing, footwear, goggles etc.); and
5. provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid trolleys on both sites, defibrillators on both sites, washing facilities for removal of contamination etc.)

Involve staff, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice.

3.0 WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines a risk / environmental assessment as “a careful examination of what in your work could cause harm to people so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm”. The assessment will help you to identify the likelihood of harm and whether you can reduce the risk to a reasonable level, through the introduction of control measures.

4.0 The five step process is as follows:

4.1 Identify the hazards

Divide your work into manageable categories considering:

- **Location** E.g. Derryvolgie Site, Ashleigh Site, Dining Hall, Outdoor Play Ground, Mary Peter's Track, YMCA, cleaners stores, canteen, cloakrooms, toilets etc.
- **Activities** E.g. Play in the outdoor playground, swimming in the PEC, walking to the church, polishing the corridors, serving dinners etc.
- **Equipment** E.g. Electrical equipment, PE equipment, outdoor play equipment,
- **People** E.g. pupils, cleaning staff, kitchen staff, visitors, teachers etc.

Identify the Hazards:

- **Chemical** – paint solvents/exhaust fumes/ water spillage/
- **Biological** – bacteria, viruses etc.
- **Physical** – noise/vibration, slide in the outdoor play area, car parks particularly the church car park and staff car parks which are used for drop off, ice in the playground
- **Psychological** – occupational stress

4.2 Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard you need to be clear about **who** might be harmed, identify the groups of people – such as staff members or members of the public/pupils.

Identify **how** they might be harmed i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur.

4.3 Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Consider how likely it is that each hazard will occur and what control measures you already have in place. Have the control measures in place removed the hazard altogether or reduced the risk so that harm is unlikely? If the task has not been adequately controlled, what further actions are required? If any further actions are required, the name of the person responsible for actioning the task should be recorded along with the projected completion date with the actual completion recorded in the Completed Column.

4.4 Record your findings and implement them

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after staff, pupils etc.

Writing down the results of your risk assessment, and sharing them with the staff, encourages you to do this.

4.5 Review your assessment and update if necessary

Environmental **assessments** need to be reviewed, and if necessary, updated every year. However, a review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, or there are significant changes to the premises, staff or procedures.

In some instances in St. Bride's, particularly in relation to educational visits, when the staff return from a new venue, they will review and edit the environmental assessments so that if we visit the venue year on year the environmental assessment will be more accurate. This is good practice. All environmental assessments relating to educational visits are saved in the public folder in teachers/ policies/ educational visits, environmental assessments. A hard copy must be printed off, signed by all teachers who are going on the trip and given to the KS1 Coordinator, Mrs O'Prey (Derryvolgie Site) and Miss Joyce (Ashleigh Site). Mrs O 'Prey has a folder in the main office where they can be sent. Miss Joyce has a red folder on the board in her office. Miss Joyce, will read, sign and file the hard copies in the Environmental Assessment File.

5.0 TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

There are three different types of environmental assessments. **These are generic, specific and dynamic.**

Generic environmental assessments are those which, although they are carried out at different times and locations, the hazards and risks are largely the same and do not change. For this type of activity generic environmental assessments can be produced as a model for guidance only. E.g. Environmental assessment for cleaning from the EA.

A **specific** environmental assessment may be applicable where the hazards and risks are only applicable to a certain activity and where there is a requirement in legislation to undertake a specific assessment. E.g. Environmental assessments of educational activities off site

A **dynamic** environmental assessment is a continuous process of identifying the hazards that occur in, for example, an emergency situation, assessing the risks and taking immediate action to eliminate or reduce these to an acceptable level. E.g. in case of a fire.

5.1 GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

This policy contains St. Bride's Primary School's environmental assessment templates. Having reviewed our environmental assessment procedures we have amended the environmental assessment template for generic environmental assessments and the personalised environmental plan which is used for individual children.

Figure 1 is the environmental assessment template.

Figure 2 is a personalised environmental plan which has been adopted by the SEN department in St. Bride's Primary School for children with special educational needs.

These have been produced to assist our school with the environmental assessment process and should form a good foundation for identifying hazards, assessing risks and implementing controls.

The environmental assessment templates are completed using the "Five steps to risk assessment".

The templates should list the hazards identified in the school environment/ "off-site" environment and their associated risks and also a range of control measures that should be in place to eliminate or reduce the risks.

The forms are completed by a competent person, who can complete the rest of the form having considered the generic hazards, risks and control measures listed on the form and adding any site specific items identified.

When completing environmental assessments for Educational Visits, if staff are being accompanied by parents or volunteers, parents or volunteers must be given a copy of St. Bride's Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers. Parents will sign the confirmation of compliance register to indicate they have received this code of conduct. It should be noted in environmental assessment that the code of conduct form was given and the compliance register signed.

It is important to note that for all educational visits which require a bus, St. Bride's P.S will only use bus companies from the Education Authority Schedule with appropriate, up to date Public Liability Insurance and which have seat belts. In each environmental assessment, it must be recorded that the bus company have public liability insurance and that children will wear seat belts.

5.2 Figure 1

Adopted by BOG: 6th June 2017

<u>School</u>		<u>Activity</u>			
<u>Assessment carried out by</u>		<u>Date</u>		<u>Date of review</u>	

<u>What are the hazards ?</u>	<u>Who might be harmed and how?</u>	<u>Existing control measures</u>	<u>What further action is necessary?</u>	<u>Action by whom?</u>	<u>Action by when?</u>	<u>Completed</u>

5.3 HOW TO COMPLETE AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (Fig. 1)

The member of St. Bride’s staff carrying out the assessment takes the following steps:

1. Review the list of hazards within the “what are the hazards” box and decide if these are applicable to the task/activity. E.g. broken window in yard, water spillage,
2. Review the list of people and the consequences of the identified hazards in the “Who might be harmed and how” box and amend to suit individual school circumstances.
3. Review the list of control measures in place in the “Existing Control Measures” box and amend the list to reflect those procedures, safe working practices that have been implemented within the school.
4. A decision should then be made to determine whether the task/activity is adequately controlled. If additional control measures are identified these should be listed in the “What further action is necessary” box. If controls in place are deemed to be adequate then this box would remain empty.
5. When the “What further action is necessary” box is completed the name of the person assigned responsibility for ensuring that the control is put in place should be inserted in the “Action by who” box with a projected completion date added to the “Action by when” box.
6. The actual completion date for any additional recommended measures should be recorded in the “Completed” box.
7. When actions/controls have been completed, the assessment form will need to be signed off by the person completing the assessment, saved in the appropriate folder and a copy forwarded to the Principal.
8. Any action that cannot be closed off by the person carrying out the assessment should be brought to the attention of the appropriate person/s, e.g. building supervisor, Principal and a plan put in place to close out such actions.
9. Actions may be on-going and this should be indicated in the “Action by when” box. It is good practice that any action plan arising out of the environmental assessment process is presented to the Board of Governors for their information, approval and action if required.

5.4 Figure 2

Personalised Action Plan

Adopted by BOG: 6th June 2017

Name:	Date of Birth:	Date :
Professionals Involved : Class Teacher Support Teacher SENCO Vice Principal Principal	Reason for Action Plan:	
Action to Be Taken:		

Environmental Assessment: Personalised Plan

Individualised and relevant environmental assessments are devised to address the needs of specific children with SEN and/or challenging behaviours when required.

A team will be involved in the production of these assessments and will include SENCO, class teacher, parents and (age appropriate) child.

An environmental assessment will be carried out for each statemented P7 child attending the Share Centre.

Reasonable adjustments will be made in agreement with parents in particular.

If appropriate, behaviour contract will be developed and agreed by all parties before participation in the educational visit.

There are a number of examples of said environmental assessments on the public folder.

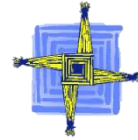
5.5 Children with Complex Needs

For children with very complex physical needs the school liaises with the Education Authority and Mitchell House to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made and all areas of the school and the curriculum are fully assessable to those children.

6.0 The environmental assessment process will be reviewed on an on-going basis and if necessary updated. A review will be required sooner if an incident or accident occurs, if there are changes in policy guidelines from the Educational Authority or there are significant changes to the premises (E.g. Ashleigh Hall) , staff or procedures.

This policy was drawn up using guidance from the Education Authority (EA) Southern Region – Generic Risk Assessment Guidance and Safe Guarding and Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools EA May 2017.

Appendix 1 Generic Risk Assessment



St. Bride's P.S. Environmental Assessment

St. Bride's PS		Activity:			
Assessment carried out by:		Date		Date of review	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Existing Control Measure. What are they doing already?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action when?	Completed

Appendix 2

Personal Action Plan

Name:	Date of Birth:	Date :
Professionals Involved :	Reason for Action Plan:	
Action to Be Taken:		