

Author: SN
Editors: AC, JAR-C
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Chetham's Risk Assessment Policy

Introduction

At Chetham's, the health, safety, and welfare of our students, staff, and visitors are of paramount importance. Our commitment to excellence extends beyond our academic, Music and Engagement programmes to include a culture of proactive risk management. Chetham's Risk Assessment Policy is designed to be comprehensive, detailed, and practical.

By understanding the unique challenges of a vocational musical educational environment with boarding facilities, and public performance spaces, we have developed a system that not only meets regulatory requirements but also creates a safe and nurturing environment for all. This policy is designed to provide detailed guidance on identifying, assessing, and mitigating risks in every area of our operations, from the dynamic and sometimes unpredictable environments of the Yard, gym, concert halls, and rehearsal spaces to the boarding Houses. It explains not only what must be done but why these procedures are vital, ensuring that everyone from senior management to the newest member of staff understands their role in creating a safe educational and residential environment. Every member of our school community plays a role in this process, and together we strive to continuously improve our practices and safeguard our future.

Chetham's will carry out risk assessments to identify any significant health and safety hazards in relation to our activities (including health and wellbeing risks) and will implement control measures to manage these risks. Chetham's takes an active approach to managing risk to thereby reduce the likelihood that anyone will be harmed through negligence and lack of foresight or proper planning. Chetham's risk assessment policy is detailed to cover all reasonably foreseeable welfare issues relevant to the school and demonstrates that risk assessment is systematic with a view to promoting welfare for all. The School understands that risk assessment is not just a paper exercise but that actions must be understood and followed-through.

Rationale

Compliance with the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) as well as all relevant UK health and safety legislation, underpins every aspect of this document. Documented Risk Assessments are a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The School is required to assess the risks to the health and safety of workers and any others who may be affected by the work carried out for the purpose of identifying measures needing to be taken to comply with other legislation. Carrying out these written assessments will help to identify all the protective and preventive measures that must be taken to comply with the Regulations.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to creating a safe environment; safe working

practices; and to Safeguarding everyone at Chetham's.

Definition

A risk assessment is a technique used to identify hazards and their effects and the level of harm, injury, ill health, damage or loss which may occur, leading to control measures to eliminate or reduce the level of risk as far as is reasonably practicable.

Scope and Objectives

This policy applies comprehensively across all facets of Chetham's life, including our academic, vocational, and musical arts; our boarding facilities; off-site trips and events; and our estate and facilities management. Our objectives are to:

- Identify hazards specific to our school's unique environment.
- Assess the risks associated with these hazards using a structured approach.
- Implement practical and effective control measures.
- Provide clear procedures and training for all staff in developing and maintaining risk assessments.
- Ensure continuous quality assurance, monitoring, and improvement of our risk management processes.

The policy is intended not only as a compliance document but also as a practical guide that explains the reasoning behind our procedures and offers step-by-step guidance to staff responsible for risk management.

Governance and Roles

At the heart of our risk management strategy is a clear structure of accountability and oversight:

The Governing Body is responsible for the overall oversight of risk management, ensuring that our practices are both robust and continually challenged. The Governors regularly review the Minutes from subcommittee meetings and read the reports submitted from Chetham's responsible persons.

The Joint Principals devolve health safety and risk management to the Facilities and Site Manager. They facilitate this by giving resources to carry out the tasks associated with risk management:

- make risk assessment part of the catch-up meetings
- make Risk Management an agenda item in Governor meetings
- appoint a compliance lead to guide and manage information
- designation of resources to train relevant staff
- report any risk issues to stakeholders

The Facilities and Site Manager has the responsibility for ensuring that all stakeholder risk assessments are conducted, implemented and reviewed regularly. The Facilities and Site Manager has the responsibility to guide and govern each Chetham's department to carry out their own specific risk assessments in accordance with their expertise and knowledge.

The Facilities and Site Manager has responsibility for ensuring compliance with HSE regulations and oversees the day-to-day monitoring of safety practices. Additionally,

the Facilities and Site Manager is responsible for the effective monitoring and leadership of Health and Safety on site, and works closely with the Health and Safety Committee, for which Risk Assessment issues are a standing agenda item.

The Facilities and Site Manager meets the Joint Principals regularly to review and discuss Health and Safety concerns and prepare reports for the Governors and Feoffees; all associated policies are reviewed regularly.

The Facilities and Site manager is responsible for identifying any training needs and offering the relevant level of training for the role.

Department Specific Risk Assessments

Heads of Departments, the Facilities and estates team, and all teaching and boarding staff play critical roles in carrying out assessments and implementing safety measures. This structured, multi-layered approach ensures that risks are managed at every level of the school.

Each department has the responsibility to complete their own risk assessments. Any person undertaking risk assessments would need to complete any training offered and seek the guidance and governance of the Facilities and Site Manager if unsure. Departments need to share the documents with the Facilities and Site Manager and any staff affected by the Risk Assessment.

Departments that require Department Specific Risk Assessments include:

- Boarding
- Housekeeping
- IT, including suite ventilation, trip hazards.
- Maintenance
- Premises
- Grounds
- Catering
- Security
- Chetham's Library
- Stoller Hall
- Academic Teaching
- PE
- Leisure activities on site
- Art
- Drama
- Music Department, including trip hazards
- Contractors
- Lettings
- Offsite trips, bespoke Risk Assessments
- Medical and First Aid including Mental First Aid
- Science, including CLEAPSS Advisory Service, COSHH, Emergency cut offs, Fume

cupboards, Chemical and Radioactive storage.

- Child Protection e.g. Recruitment
- Digital Safety: filtering, monitoring, cyber attack
- Office Staff: display screen equipment and cables
- Public performances
- Data Loss
- Financial, including fraud, loss of fees; cash flow
- HR e.g. employment disputes.

Types of Risk Assessments

In our approach, we recognise three key types of risk assessments:

- **Generic Risk Assessments** are standardised evaluations that cover common hazards such as fire safety, manual handling, and general first aid. These assessments form the foundation of our overall risk management framework and apply to all areas of the school.
- **Specific Risk Assessments** are tailored to address the unique hazards associated with particular activities. For instance, assessments for dance rehearsals will consider issues such as: stage safety; the quality of dance flooring; and proper warm-up techniques. For music classes we address safe: use of equipment; sound levels; and hearing protection.
- **Dynamic Risk Assessments** are conducted in real time to address unforeseen or emerging hazards. Staff are trained to quickly evaluate situations, whether during an off-site trip or an unscheduled event, and implement immediate controls to mitigate risks.

Each type is an integral part of our overall risk management strategy, ensuring that our assessments are both comprehensive and responsive to the unique challenges of a vocational performing arts school.

As part of the measures for the control of contractors, on site risk assessments and, where applicable, method statements must be obtained and in place before the contracted task is undertaken. It is the responsibility of the Facilities and Site Manager and Deputy Estates Manager to obtain these.

Specific Dangers in a Performing Arts Environment

Musical activities have inherent specific hazards:

- high decibel levels, necessitating measures to protect hearing
- the use of electrical equipment, sound systems, and pyrotechnic effects on stage demands rigorous checks and maintenance routines
- the dynamic nature of our environment, where creative expression and physical activity intersect.

Our risk assessments are designed to consider these specific dangers, and staff receive detailed training to identify and manage these hazards effectively.

Boarding Facilities

Ensuring a safe living environment for our students is a top priority. The inherent risk of residential care include:

- fire safety

- safeguarding
- health and hygiene
- student well-being during non-school hours

Regular inspections are conducted in boarding areas, and specific risk assessments are maintained to cover issues such as:

- emergency egress
- night-time supervision
- safe storage and use of personal and communal items.

In addition, boarding staff are provided with specialised training to handle both routine and emergency situations, ensuring that the residential environment remains secure and nurturing.

Procedures for Writing and Maintaining Risk Assessments

Creating a robust risk assessment is a detailed process that requires careful thought and a proactive approach. Staff members responsible for drafting risk assessments follow a structured procedure that includes:

- **Identifying Hazards:** Begin with a thorough walkthrough of the area or activity in question. This might involve consulting with subject experts, such as instrumental tutors or stage managers, to understand the nuances of the activity. It is important to consider obvious hazards and those that might be less apparent, such as the cumulative effects of repetitive strain, noise or the impact of poorly maintained equipment.
- **Assessing Risks:** Once hazards are identified, each is evaluated for likelihood, and potential severity. Staff are provided with guidance documents that help classify risks as low, medium, or high. This assessment informs which control measures need to be implemented and prioritised.
- **Implementing Controls:** This step involves developing and enacting measures that either eliminate the risk entirely or reduce its impact to an acceptable level. Examples might include investing in specialised safety equipment, providing additional supervision, or instituting mandatory breaks during intensive physical activities. The rationale for each control measure is clearly documented to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Recording and Reviewing:** All departmental risk assessments are recorded in a central database and are subject to regular review. Educational Visits are kept separately. Following any incident or significant change in an activity, a review is mandated. Staff receive training not only on the initial drafting of risk assessments but also on how to review and update them as needed. This process is designed to be iterative, reflecting the evolving nature of the risks in our dynamic environment.

Training, Scenarios, and Awareness

We place strong emphasis on the importance of training and regular practice. All senior leaders and key events staff should undergo initial risk assessment training. These staff are then able to train, advise and challenge other colleagues when completing risk assessments. The training provides a certificate of completion and includes practical scenarios and role-playing exercises that help staff practice dynamic risk assessments in real time. In addition, new students receive a comprehensive induction that includes safety briefings and explanations of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Staff are supplied with policies during their induction on joining the school, and the policies are also made available on SharePoint. All staff in school are instructed to read updated policies.

INSET training days are provided and include subjects such as Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Fundamental British Values and Prevent, and Behaviour Management. Staff are reminded of the appropriate risk assessment procedures and awareness in various meetings including the minuted 'weekly briefing' chaired by the Joint Principals.

Work related specific training e.g. 'Working at heights Awareness Training' is conducted by external providers for school staff and will be arranged through Department Leads, HR, and the Facilities and Site Manager through the National College.

Quality Assurance and Monitoring

Maintaining high standards in risk management is an ongoing process. Our quality assurance measures include termly audits conducted by Department Leads and the responsible persons. These audits evaluate the effectiveness of existing risk assessments and identify areas for improvement. The Governors play a crucial role by reviewing audit reports, incident analyses, and corrective actions. When an incident occurs, a detailed investigation is launched to understand the root cause, and a comprehensive report is submitted to the Governors. This process ensures that lessons are learned, and that corrective actions are implemented swiftly. In cases where standards are not met, the Governors are empowered to demand immediate changes and, if necessary, to reassign responsibilities to ensure that safety is never compromised.

Risk assessments are reviewed and revised as follows:

- Annually
- When there is reason to suspect the assessment is no longer valid. This may become apparent through accidents and near misses, safety complaints, ill-health trends, or if the employer becomes aware that a relevant piece of legislation has been updated.
- When there has been a significant change in the matters to which the assessment relates, such as the introduction of new work equipment etc.
- Meetings: Departmental; Leadership Group; Health and Safety
- Estates Staff monitor building control risks; health and safety; fire prevention; site; minibus and van; accompany contractors
- Reception monitor visitors.

All significant findings are recorded and brought to the attention of relevant personnel (line managers, Facilities and Site Manager, Joint Principals, Vice Principal).

Reporting, Incident Response, and Continuous Improvement

It is imperative that all incidents, near misses, and potential hazards are reported promptly to Departmental Leads initially and then to the Facilities and Site Manager if there is a remaining risk. Near misses are logged on the School's accident form if an injury has been sustained. This system ensures that every incident is logged, investigated, and used as a learning opportunity. When something goes wrong, the immediate priority is to secure the area and help where needed. An incident investigation team is then activated to carry out a thorough analysis, with findings and recommendations documented in detail. These reports are reviewed by the Governing Body, and any necessary changes to procedures or additional training are implemented immediately. Our commitment to continuous improvement means that every incident, no matter how minor, contributes to a safer environment for all. The Facilities and Site Manager is responsible for recording and reporting any notifiable accident that occurs on School premises to a student, member of staff, parent, visitor or contractor, to the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

Policy Review and Governor Oversight

This Risk Assessment Policy is a living document. It is reviewed by the Facilities and Site Manager at least once annually, or in response to changes in legislation or practice as they arise. Department leads, Leadership Group and the Compliance Officer contribute to the review to ensure that it remains compliant with ISI and DFE regulations as well as current best practices. The Governing Body oversees the overall strategy but also actively challenges and contributes to refining our risk management procedures. Their role ensures that we remain vigilant, responsive, and proactive in addressing the evolving risks within our school environment.

Risk assessments are carried out as required and reviewed following any accident, incident, or change to premises, process or circumstances of the activity.

Context

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies contained in the Risk, Health and Safety Policy folder on Sharepoint.

Appendix 1

Specific Risk Assessments

CSOM has in place the following risk assessments:

- Fire Risk
- Legionella
- Asbestos
- Young workers employed by the school/work experience
- New and expectant mothers
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- Gas and Electricity safety
- Lone working
- Workplace equipment (including Personal

Appendix 2

Standard Procedures Undertaken to Minimise Risk

- All staff undergo an Enhanced DBS check (which includes a check of the Children's Barred List). This happens during the recruitment process. If a DBS check is not received prior to start date, but after a Children's Barred List check is received, a risk assessment is undertaken by the Director of Finance and HR, Joint Principal and HR Manager which always includes supervision of the member of staff.
- The school community complies and is protected by a detailed *Health and Safety Policy* and a safety management system.
- Detailed risk assessments are completed prior to any school trip or activity.
- CPOMS is used for managing and recording Safeguarding incidents.
- Regular detailed pastoral meetings take place.
- Termly Health and Safety Committee Meetings attended by Joint principals take place.
- Department meetings are held regularly (including boarding staff).
- Regular training takes place for all staff on necessary health and safety areas. Regular contact with the Boarding School's Association (BSA) is maintained. Training of boarding staff takes place through the BSA.
- General Site Risk Assessment is in place and reviewed.
- School estates team carry out building and grounds checks on a regular basis.
- Contractors supply Risk Assessments for specific works as requested. Permits to work, for example hot working, requires additional certification and a signed Permit to Work, supplied by the Deputy Estates manager prior to commencing the job and signed-off on work completion.

Appendix 3


Guidelines for Written Risk Assessment

Hazard: Something with the potential to cause harm

Risk: The likelihood of harm being realised and its severity

- Identify and record an activity, process or operation, using the risk assessment template below, where there is potential for injury or damage.
- Consider whether it is essential for the activity to continue, given that without the hazard there is no risk.
- Identify the hazards within the activity, e.g. using machinery, confined spaces, working at height, electricity, manual handling, lone working etc.
- Determine the risks involved and what type of incident is anticipated, e.g. contact with moving/sharp equipment, asphyxiation, falls, electrocution, back injury, violence/abuse. Consider who and how many people will be affected, e.g. employees, visitors, customers, contractors.
- Estimate the risk level without the benefit of any control measures using the risk matrix evaluating likelihood against severity below.
- High and medium risk levels will require control measures to reduce the risk level to as low as is reasonably practicable. This could be achieved by guarding, safety procedures/working practices, training, mechanical assistance, contracting out etc. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) should only be considered as the last resort if alternative control measures cannot achieve a lower risk level.
- Re-assess (quantify) the risk level with existing control measures in place to ensure that the risk is reduced. If it is not then further controls will be needed, see below.
- Some additional control measures may be required to reduce the risk level further. Share and discuss with all persons involved in the activity/process/operation and obtain signatures to confirm their understanding and involvement.

Appendix 4

	<h1>Risk Assessment</h1>	Form Reviewed: 14/11/25
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Task/Activity:	Date assessment completed: 04/01/2025	Review Date: 04/01/2025
Brief Details of Task/Activity	Assessment completed by:	Signature:

What are the hazards? e.g. slip/trip hazards, electricity, manual handling, work equipment	Who might be harmed and how? e.g. staff, service users, visitors etc... and likely injury e.g. bruises, muscle strain, fracture, poisoning etc...	What are you already doing to control the hazard?	What further action or additional controls are required (if necessary)	Risk rating (after control measures)	Action by who	Action by when	Date completed
		•	•				
		•	•				
		•	•				

What are the hazards? e.g. slip/trip hazards, electricity, manual handling, work equipment	Who might be harmed and how? e.g. staff, service users, visitors etc... and likely injury e.g. bruises, muscle strain, fracture, poisoning etc...	What are you already doing to control the hazard?	What further action or additional controls are required (if necessary)	Risk rating (after control measures)	Action by who	Action by when	Date completed
		•	•				
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CATEGORIES OF LIKELIHOOD	
Highly Likely	Expected to happen/reoccur, possibly frequently.
Possible	Might happen/reoccur at some time depends on circumstances.
Unlikely	Not expected to happen/reoccur but possible in certain circumstances.
Very Unlikely	Would only occur in very exceptional circumstances.

CATEGORIES OF CONSEQUENCE SEVERITY	
Catastrophic	Incident could result in <u>one or more fatalities</u> .
Major	Major injury resulting in incapacity, hospitalisation >24 hours.
Significant	Injury requires attention of a Doctor or Hospital treatment or hospitalisation <24 hours.
Minor	Small cut, bruise, abrasion, basic first aid treatment provided.
Negligible	Some discomfort, self help. No treatment required.

RISK RATING				
	Highly Likely	Possible	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Catastrophic	A	A	B	E
Major	A	B	C	E
Significant	B	C	D	E
Minor	C	D	E	E
Negligible	E	E	E	E

RISK CLASSIFICATIONS	
A	Unacceptable risk , requires immediate attention. Work <u>should not be started or continued</u> until the level of risk has been reduced.
B	High risk , requires immediate attention. Control measures must be identified and put into place as soon as possible.
C	Medium risk , requires attention as soon as possible. The risk should be only be tolerated in the short term and only when further control measures are being planned and introduced, Timescales must be short.
D	Low risks , confirm that there are no low/no cost solutions which may eliminate/ reduce the risk further.
E	Trivial risk , no further action required but review at regular intervals to ensure controls remain effective.

Resources

[CLEAPPSS](#)

[RIDDOR](#)

[Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)