WOLVERHAMPTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Importance of Risk Management

Risk is the threat that something (an event or action) will adversely affect a school's performance and its ability to successfully deliver its strategies. Risk management is the process by which such risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of the School's overall governance.

A key point is that Risk Management should not make a school totally 'risk adverse'. Rather it should make the school (its Directors and staff) 'risk aware' i.e. risk management should promote controlled risk taking. As such risk management is consistent with:

- Increasing rather than reducing innovation
- Creating a culture of risk awareness whereby staff and governors naturally consider risk issues as a part of day to day activities

The School's system of internal control is part of its Risk Management process and has a key role to play in the management of significant risks to the fulfilment of business objectives. It also helps to ensure the reliability of information used for internal and external reporting and assists with compliance with laws and regulations.

The Constituents of Good Risk Management

Risk Management is a continuous process and an integral part of good governance and is the process whereby

- There is a shared awareness and understanding within the School of the nature and extent of the risks it faces;
    - The extent and categories of risks regarded as acceptable, the likelihood and potential impacts of the risks materialising
    - Its ability to reduce the incidence and impact on the organisation of risks that do materialise
- There is a regular and ongoing monitoring and reporting of risk including early warning mechanisms.
- An appropriate assessment is made of the cost of operating particular controls relative to the benefit obtained in managing risk.
- The School conducts a regular review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control in place.
- The Risk Management Group reports to the Board of Directors on the risks identified, the controls in place and the effectiveness of those controls following the review above and any subsequent action being taken to address any significant concerns they have.

This process is ongoing, embedded in the culture of the School and has the potential to re-orient the whole organisation around performance improvement. It is not about eliminating risk but understanding risk and managing it more effectively.

Categorising Risk

There are two categories of risk, strategic and operational. Strategic risks are risks that need to be taken into account in judgements about medium and long term goals of the School. Operational risks are risks that managers and staff will encounter in the daily course of their work.

Strategic Risks

Strategic Risks may be as follows:
- **Political:** those associated with the decisions of current and future Governments on the place of Independent Schooling
- **Economic**: those affecting the ability of the School to meet its financial commitments. These include internal budgetary pressures, the consequences of investment decisions, the repayment of the loan to the bank
- **Social:** those relating to the effects of changes in demographic, residential or socio-economic trends on the School's ability to deliver its objectives.
- **Technological**: those associated with the capacity of the School to deal with the pace or scale of technological change, or to use technology to address change in demand. They may also include the consequences of internal technological failure on the School's ability to deliver it objectives.
- **Legislative**: Those associated with current or potential changes in national law or Charity Commission or ISI requirements, in particular in relation to pupil welfare and safeguarding.
- **Environmental**: those relating to the environmental consequences of progressing the School's strategic objectives e.g. in terms of energy efficiency, pollution, recycling etc
- **Competitive**: those affecting the organisation of the School in terms of cost and quality and its ability to deliver its Brand
- **Customer/Citizen**: those associated with the failure to meet the current and changing needs and expectation of pupil and parents.

Managing these strategic risks is a core responsibility of the Risk Management Group in close liaison with the Board of Directors. Strategic risk assessments are undertaken as part of the development planning process. Strategic risk assessment draws on techniques such as group assessment, brainstorming and SWOT analyses.

Operational Risks

Operational Risks should be assessed under each of the seven key Strategy themes and may be as follows:

- **Professional:** those associated with the particular nature of education in schools.
- **Financial**: those associated with financial planning and control.
- **Legal:** those risks associated to possible breaches of legislation
- **Physical**: those related to fire, security, accident prevention and health and safety.
- **Contractual:** those associated with the failure of contractors to deliver services or products to the agreed cost and specification/service level.
- **Technological**: those relating to a reliance on operational equipment e.g. IT systems or equipment.
- **Environmental**: those relating to pollution, noise or the energy efficiency of ongoing operations in schools.

The categories are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive; however, they provide a framework for identifying and categorising a broad range of risks facing the School. Each category cannot be considered in isolation.

Please also refer to the following policies:

Health & Safety Policy - Staff network and website	Fire Safety Policy - Staff network and website
Risk Assessment Policy - Staff network and website	First Aid Policy - Staff network and website
Staff Code of Conduct - Employment Manual	Safeguarding Policy - Staff network and website
EVC and the Management of Off Site Visits Policy - Staff network	

Monitoring and Evaluation of this policy

The school monitors and evaluates its Risk Management Policy through the following activities:
- Review of annual risk assessments by the Finance Director and Estates Manager to identify further actions to be taken to reduce risks
- Regular review and update of the Strategic Risk Register by SMT
- Review of all accident/incidents and near miss forms as a rolling termly summary by Health and Safety Committee to identify trends and take action as appropriate
- Annual review by the Board and its sub-committees of the Strategic Risk Register
- Review of concerns and complaints registers by SMT and Board of Directors

LXT
September 2025

Next Review:
September 2026