

William Murdoch Primary School

Education Safety Services

Guidance Note Building Risk Assessment Toolkit



Approved by:

Mr Daniel Taylor

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1. BSS Duties Risk Assessment Toolkit

1.1 Introduction

This toolkit describes a simple generic process for schools to complete risk assessments capturing all their key premises and activity risks. The guiding principle of the Health & Safety Executive's (HSE) more simplified, sensible risk management approach of comparing your existing control measures with accepted good practice is followed (see quote below) rather than ranking risks (e.g. low, medium, high) or using other numerical risk rating methods:

“The law requires you to do everything ‘reasonably practicable’ to protect people from harm. You can work this out for yourself, but the easiest way is to compare what you are doing with good practice. So first, look at what you’re already doing, think about what controls you have in place and how the work is organised. Then compare this with the good practice and see if there’s more you should be doing to bring yourself up to standard”

A simple decision is then made as to whether the risk is being adequately controlled or whether more needs to be done. Remember, when deciding if more needs to be done that the law only requires you to take reasonable steps to deal with reasonably foreseeable risks – not to do everything possible to deal with every possible risk.

The completion of this toolkit should not be undertaken in isolation by one individual, but as collective by the School's Safety Advisory Groups (SAG) or other Safety Committees. Also ensure that staff are involved who are 'competent' and understand the risk assessment process.

1.2 Your existing Control Measures and Safe Systems of Work

It is recognised that your school will already be operating with a large number of control measures and safe ways of working in place to reduce the risks on site and for undertaking offsite visits.

Additionally, your facilities will likely have been designed or modified to ensure you can provide a safe working environment. It should therefore be relatively easy for you to record what you actually do to control risks and compare this with good practice. It follows that if you are adopting good practice you will already be controlling the risk adequately, so there is no need to go further and complete detailed risk assessments.

The use of this toolkit will enable you to take an overview of all your key facilities and activity risks, demonstrate in the form of a risk assessment whether these are being adequately controlled, and produce an action plan if necessary to record any improvements required. This document can be regarded as the overarching risk assessment for the school and where more detailed risk assessments are required for other risks such as fire then these can be linked or referenced to the appropriate section in this master assessment. The relationship/links between these other risk assessments and the School Assessment is shown below. Using this more co-ordinated and consistent approach will help you to simplify your risk assessments and reduce the amount of paperwork required.

Other one-off or individual RAs that may be required and are referred to in School Site RA. Some of these will be done by other experts e.g. fire, asbestos. Any actions arising from these can be added to the School Site RA Action Plan

- Offsite Visits
- Pregnant Staff
- SEN
- Events/PTA
- Asbestos
- Legionella
- Fire
- Stress

Overarching RA capturing all school site and activity risks in one place. Contains reference to other one-off or individual RAs where more detail is required

School RA (SRA)

1.3 Using the Toolkit to Record a Primary School Risk Assessment.

A three step Identify, Assess and Control process is followed to carry out and document your risk assessment. Appendix A refers.

- **Step 1 - IDENTIFY**

All activities or premises related aspects where there may be a significant risk. Think about who may be harmed and how using the Risk Inventory listing already created for you in Appendix B Sheet 1, and add to, or remove sections as appropriate.

- **Step 2 - ASSESS**

Compare your existing control measures against good practice, Appendix B Sheet 1 refers.
Modify the measures appropriately to reflect what you actually do. Decide whether any further actions are required to adequately control the risk

- **Step 3 - CONTROL**

Record the assessment and any further action required and monitor and review appropriately. Appendix C, Sheet 1 refers.

Involve your staff, safety representatives or others with expertise (e.g. Safety Adviser) as necessary in the process.

The checklist can also double as a self-audit tool you can use periodically to monitor the adequacy of your arrangements.

1.4 Will the use of the Toolkit cover all Situations where Risk Assessments are Required?

No. You may still need to carry out and record some additional specific risk assessments e.g. for the following:

- for pregnant staff members on an individual basis
- where a more comprehensive, detailed or specific risk assessment may be required.

1.5 Evidence

Ensure that throughout the process of adjusting the toolkit to reflect your school's environment and undertakings, evidence is sought and gathered when an appropriate control measure is included from the good practice control measures list. Examples of this could be cross referenced copies of annual inspections for internal and external play equipment; or if periodic training is required for cleaning staff, ensure records are kept.

1.6 Competence

An employer must appoint a 'competent person' to help the school meet their health and safety duties. Education Safety Services are employed by Birmingham City Council to provide schools with appropriate advice and support, but schools should also ensure that they have staff in-house to lead and be competent in health and safety.

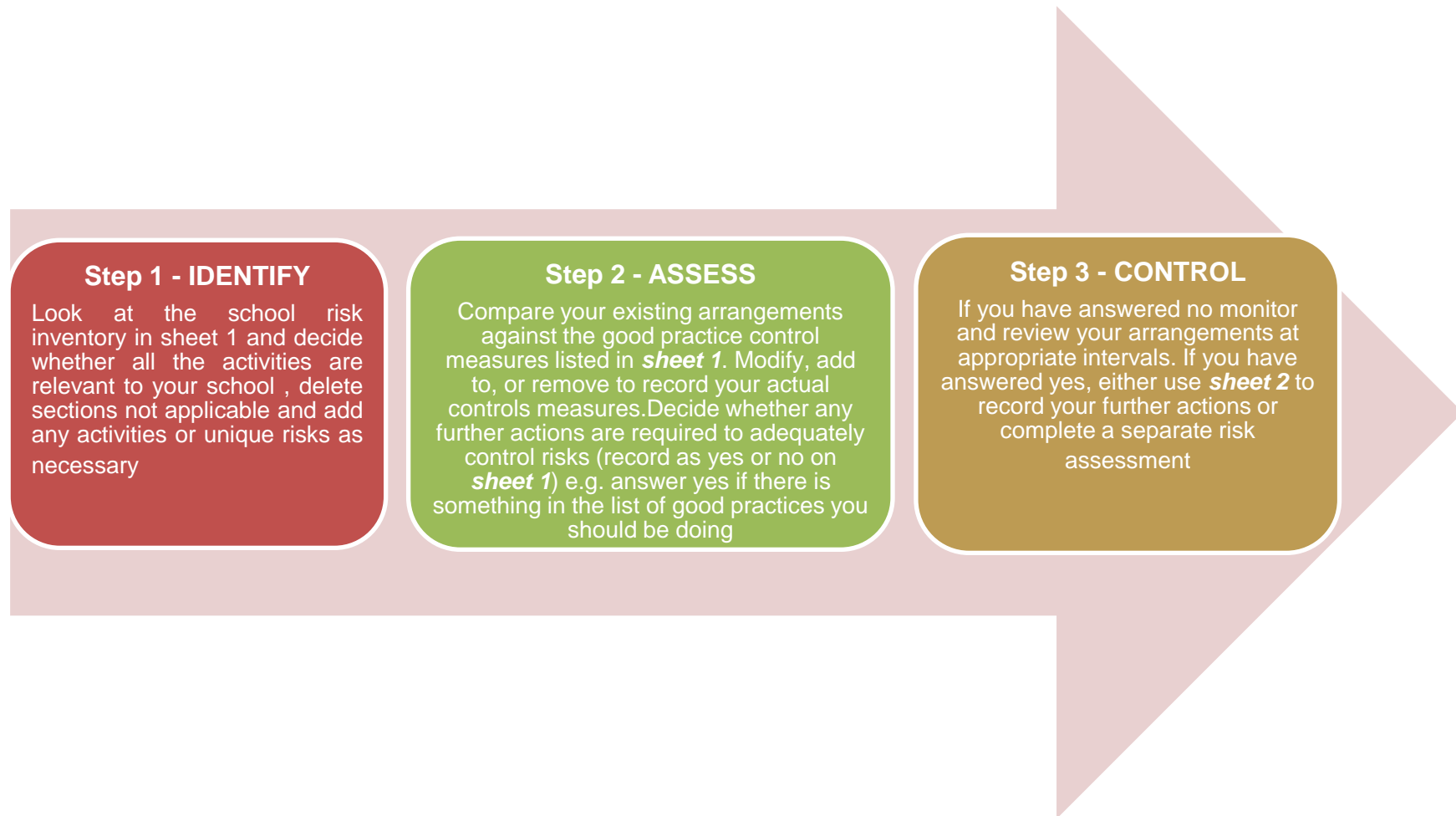
A competent person is not someone who simply has the competence to carry out a particular task safely. In general terms, the definition of a competent person is **someone who has the necessary skills, experience and knowledge to manage health and safety**. Therefore, ensure that the school involve staff that have attended appropriate risk assessment training.

1.7 Safety Services Contacts

For further support, guidance or training contact one of the Safety Team:

- Education Safety Services
5-6 Ashted Lock Way
PO Box 15630
Birmingham
B2 2QF
- **Telephone:** 0121 303 3685
- **Email:** safetyservices@birmingham.gov.uk

Appendix A - BSS Duties Risk Assessment Toolkit - 3 Step Process Flowchart



Appendix B - BSS Duties Risk Assessment Checklist

	Risk Inventory (add or delete from the following list)		Good Practice Control Measures Adopted Follow Process Flow Chart in Appendix A (Steps 1-3)	Are any further control measures required to control the risk?
	Activity	Potential hazards		Yes/No
1.	Cleaning - general	Slips, falls; manual handling; exposure to substances hazardous to health; electricity; spillages; infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection and use of materials; • correct cleaning techniques; • manual handling assessment carried out for use of powered tools e.g. floor buffer; • moving/lifting aids available (trolley etc); • CoSHH assessments/safety data sheet available for any hazardous product that is used; • cleaning materials and equipment to be correctly labelled and securely stored; • personal protective equipment is used such as gloves and footwear where appropriate; • equipment subject to portable appliance testing (PAT) by a competent person on a risk-based frequency; • pre-use checks for damage e.g. to electrical leads, plugs, sockets; • RCD/circuit breaker on any equipment used externally or in wet areas; • staff aware of accident/near miss reporting system; • means of dealing with spills; • good personal hygiene; • cleaning done during quiet times/outside normal hours; • equipment disconnected and tidied away after use 	
2.	Cleaning laboratory areas	Exposure to substances hazardous to health; dust; skin irritation; manual handling; slips, falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection and use of materials; • correct cleaning techniques; • managing risk of sharps when emptying bins; • advice obtained from science technician before any contact with lab equipment, fume cupboards etc. • aware of any specific instructions for the laboratory 	
3.	Cleaning pottery areas	Crystalline silica dust; skin irritation; manual handling; slips, falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection and use of materials; • correct cleaning techniques; • cleaners adhere to guidance on cleaning pottery (ceramics) areas; • personal protective equipment is used where appropriate; • the levels of airborne pottery (ceramic) dust reduced; • wet vacuum cleaners used • vacuum cleaners fitted with a high-efficiency performance (HEPA) filter Guidance available from Support Services (01452 42) 5867 	
4.	Cleaning woodworking areas	Wood dust; skin irritation; manual handling; slips, falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection and use of materials; • correct cleaning techniques; tables and working areas should be wet-wiped not dry swept; • cleaners must adhere to guidance on cleaning woodworking areas; • personal protective equipment is used where appropriate; • wood dust cleaned using an industrial vacuum cleaner with suitable HEPA filters Guidance available from Support Services (01452 42) 5867 	

5.	Clearing snow and ice	Slips falls; low temperatures; manual handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate clothing and footwear worn; • priority routes cleared first; • appropriate warning notices positioned in any areas that cannot be cleared; • good manual handling techniques adopted when shovelling with appropriate breaks; • use aids available (trolley etc) for the transportation of loads of salt
6.	Clearing up bodily fluids Dealing with spillages	Infection; slips; falls, contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aiders/Cleaners to deal with this • disposable gloves worn; • avoid contact or splashing into eyes, mouth or any broken skin; • cuts or abrasions covered at all times with waterproof dressings; • clean up with hot, soapy water and disposed of carefully, with disposable cloths; • after the spillage has been cleaned up surface disinfected with 0.1% hypochlorite solution (e.g. Milton) by wiping over, then rinsing and drying; • spillages are dealt with immediately; • area segregated if required; • area signed to demarcate any wet areas
7.	Contractors	Contractors working unsafely Staff working unsafely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only competent contractors to be used; • contractors to be made aware of site rules; • contractors to sign in when on site; • school to request a method statement from contractors and liability insurance (for lengthy projects) before work starts; • school to monitor contractors to ensure they are working to the method statement/risk assessment
8.	Entry to boiler rooms and operation of boiler room plant, meter readings	Unsuitable access/egress; low light levels; high surface temperatures; fire, lone working; lack of competence; environmental hazards such as low lighting levels, low pipes, floor conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access/egress routes clear; • handrails secure/steps well lit; • suitable illumination; • hot surfaces insulated or warning signs used; • fire extinguishers available; • PPE (head protection) worn where required; • suitable footwear worn; • means of communication available; • area clear of stored material; • staff receive instruction and training on boiler operation
9.	Gardening and weed killing	Manual handling; exposure to substances harmful to health; infection; contact with sharps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection and use of chemicals; • use of correct tools (e.g. weed sprayers); • care with blades; • use of PPE as appropriate (gloves etc); • only competent staff use powered machinery; • safe storage of chemicals and tools
10.	Grounds maintenance	Slips/falls; adverse weather; exposure to sunlight; chemicals; manual handling; use of hand tools; allergies to plant; bacteria – tetanus, Weil's disease, Toxocariasis Toxoplasmosis; eye damage from plants and branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable clothing and PPE where appropriate; • protection from sun/cold/wet weather; • COSHH assessments undertaken for substances hazardous to health; • staff trained in manual handling; • tools suitable for the task, maintained and used in accordance with manufactures instructions; • substances and tools to be securely stored; • potentially poisonous plants identified; • removal and disposal of animal faeces; • personal hygiene – washing hands before eating, drinking; • cuts and grazes covered; • all workers have sufficient information to enable them to be aware of the risks and the need for the proper use of any control measures, including personal protective equipment (PPE); • tetanus immunisation; • larger scale weed spraying carried out by a competent contractor

11.	Illness	No access to medication; lone working; injury from tools or materials being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert line manager if able; access to 'phone; lone working avoided; job restrictions if risk deems this necessary
12.	Litter/debris collection	Sharps, hazardous substances; biological hazards; dead birds and vermin; sharp objects; glass (waste and broken); emptying bins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needles, syringes etc which could be contaminated with body fluids placed in a proprietary sharps container; use of a litter collecting grab or suitable gloves and appropriate disposal; urgently medical advice obtained if injury occurs; PPE (disposable protective gloves) when picking up and handling vermin; suitable plastic bag (leak proof); double bagging; gloves removed by turning them inside out and placing in second bag; hands washed thoroughly with soap and water; gloves worn at all times; use of litter collection stick where possible; careful investigation of litter and debris to ascertain its nature before collection; collection into an appropriate container; glass and other sharp objects placed in sharps bins or recycling box; broken glass in laboratories to be collected in specific broken glass containers; glass slides that contaminated by micro-organisms (i.e. in biology) disposed of in sharps containers identified as containing biological waste; correct manual handling; suitable PPE
13.	Locking/unlocking;	Slips falls; entry by unauthorised persons; theft; assault; violence, aggression; lack of response to incidents; fire; slips; falls; verbal abuse; arson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow footpaths; staying in lit areas; building locked down as soon as possible at end of day; controlled access to building e.g. through key fobs; on-site security system; use of visitor badges; challenging unknown visitors where safe to do so; access to 'phone to call for help; co-operation of building users; valuables locked up; post-incident support
14.	Lone or isolated work	Falls; fire; lack of response to accident; assault; theft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lone working arrangements (communications etc); fire precautions
15.	Maintenance work	Exposure to asbestos; exposure to live services; dust; manual handling; work at height; exposure to hazardous substances; use of tools and equipment by unauthorised persons; lack of safety awareness; injury to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific risk assessment carried out for the task and the identified control measures implemented; control of asbestos; correct cleaning methods used; specific manual handling assessment to be carried out for all tasks involving lifting or carrying and the identified control measures implemented; training given in correct lifting techniques; moving/lifting aids available (trolley etc.); CoSHH assessment completed for all hazardous substances and control measures implemented; appropriate PPE (e.g. gloves, goggles etc.) provided and worn where identified in risk assessments; materials and tools stored securely when not used; segregated work area; signs used to identify potential hazards; staff are competent i.e. provided with the appropriate information, instruction and training. Regular checks of the site is carried out for defects and any maintenance work is entered on the electronic system (Every Maintenance) and works are prioritised and dealt with accordingly. Site security is checked daily on perimeter walks. Alarms, emergency lighting, air conditioning units, fire alarm panels are in place and carried out by Acivico. Call point testing is carried out on a weekly basis. Intruder alarms are checked and serviced.

16.	Manual handling - general	Manual handling, sprains, strains; slips, trips; foot injury; slips/falls; incorrect handling techniques; excessive loads; unsecured grip; sharp edges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise manual handling occurrences; • break down loads; • manual handling risk assessments are carried out; • knowing capability of individual; • staff are given appropriate lifting and handling training • suitable moving/lifting aids are available where required e.g. trolleys and sack trucks • the environment in which lifting and handling activities take place is suitable • appropriate protective footwear is provided and worn
17.	Responding to intruder alarm during holiday periods/ out of hours	Intruder, violence and aggression; theft of property, arson; lack of response to incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry 'phone to call for help; • before entering the grounds, notify someone of the situation, and the intention to investigate; • maintain communications with second person; • if a break-in has occurred do not attempt to enter the premises until the security/police arrive; • if confronted by intruder(s) do not attempt to tackle or restrain them; check CCTV on the phone prior to entering.
18.	Supervising lettings	Theft; assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone working practices in place; • 'phone communications; • known users; • use of lights if dark
19.	Testing for Legionella	Respiratory disorders; scalds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of water system; • removal of tanks and dead-legs; • competent staff; correct testing techniques; • cleaning regime – this is carried out by Acivico monthly and IWS 12 monthly
20.	Use of electrical equipment	Burns; electrocution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct selection, use, storage and maintenance of tools; • competent staff; • use of RCD; • PAT testing; • low voltage equipment used where possible
21.	Use of hand/power tools	Use of inappropriate equipment; contact with ejected material and or moving parts; vibration; impact/sharp tools; noise; electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools only used for the intended purpose; • suitable protective equipment worn e.g. to protect the eyes, face, body, hearing and breathing; • no loose clothing, long hair tied back, removal of jewellery and ties; • machinery adequately guarded; • low vibration tools selected; • the time staff use high-vibration tools is limited; • frequent and prolonged use of high-vibration tools risk assessed; • hand tools adequately maintained; • blades, drill bits kept sharp; • hand tools kept locked away when not in use; • time staff use noisy equipment limited; • hearing protection to be worn where required; • noise impact to others in local environment assessed; • power to tools isolated (e.g. unplugged) before any adjustments are undertaken; • the operating switch checked so it is not in the 'on' position before connecting equipment to the power supply; • all powered tools operate at 110 volts or less (e.g. cordless drills); • electrical equipment has portable appliance testing (PAT) by a competent person; this is carried out annually • equipment visually checked for damage e.g. to electrical leads, plugs, sockets etc; • RCD/circuit breaker used for equipment used externally or in an area which is wet; • arrangements in place to ensure that trailing leads do not pose a trip hazard

22.	Use of hazardous materials	inadequate ventilation; skin contact; exposure to substances hazardous to health; dust; manual handling;; falls from height; slips, falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoSHH assessments; • competent staff; • use of PPE; • use of asbestos register; • correct use of tools and material
23.	Use of strimmer/leaf blower	Machinery in motion (moving parts, flying objects); vibration, noise, use of fuel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained operators; • pre-use checks carried out to ensure all guards secured in place; • pre-use inspection of area to remove loose debris, wire or other items that may get caught in blades/cords; • not operated in populated area or close to traffic; • correct PPE - safety boots, face visor, gloves, long trousers, hi-vis; • all operators to observe maximum daily operation time; • correct maintenance of equipment; • regular breaks taken and regular job rotation; • refuel with engine switched off; • fuel container labelled; • container away from sources of ignition and sunlight and not left unattended; • CoSHH assessment observed; • fuel stored in flammables cabinet; • limited amount of fuel stored; • hazards signs displayed; • suitable fire extinguisher available; • spillages cleaned up promptly, including spills on clothing
24.	Work at height – including: access to the roof; changing light tubes/lamps; clearing gutters; work on flat roofs	Falls, attack by birds; use of unsuitable access equipment; environmental hazards e.g. poor ground conditions; broken tubes; glass fragments; electricity; shock burns; weather; falling tools/equipment; manual handling; use of unsuitable equipment; contact with waste material; incorrect use of equipment;	<p>Roofs/exteriors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • competent staff; • knowledge of roof condition; • access the roof avoided where possible; • correct selection and use of access equipment; • isolation of power lines in vicinity; • nesting sites avoided; • all work to be risk assessed, planned and controlled; • suitable access equipment to be used correctly; • segregated and signed working area; • arrange work times to reduce the number of those passing work area; • protect tubes and bulbs (e.g. with cardboard sleeves); • handle with caution; • not leaving in places where they may be broken; • ensure correct disposal (light tubes are hazardous waste); • use of eye protection; • isolate the electricity supply before starting work; • check for electrical hazards and asbestos; • no lone working at height on flat roofs; • refer to HSG 33 <i>Health and Safety in Roof Work</i>; • provision of edge protection; • work undertaken within 2m of gaps in roofs such gaps should be covered or safety netting installed below; • strength of roof material to be ascertained prior to work commencing; • fragile roofs to be identified with warning signs; • correct use of crawling boards etc; • material should be lowered from the roof or dropped down an enclosed chute; • access to the area below and adjacent to the roof should be prohibited; • good housekeeping to prevent the build-up of material; • persons working on roofs are to be physically fit; • provided with appropriate PPE; • minimise need for manual handling by provision of hoists; • provide workers with information on weight of materials; • correct selection and use of access equipment; • competent staff; • secure working area <p>https://www.hse.gov.uk/cleaning/falls.htm</p>

25.	Work at height – use of access equipment		<p>Access equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ladders only used for short duration work <30 minutes and where three points of contact can be maintained whilst climbing the ladder ● pre-use checks are carried out of all ladders and step ladders ● a register of step ladders and ladders is maintained and periodic checks are carried out and recorded ● faulty ladders or step ladders are taken out of use ● appropriate staff are trained in the use of ladders ● ladder used at correct angle i.e. one metre out for four metres up ● floors suitable for ladder use ● lone working avoided when using ladders ● area where ladder being used is fenced off or coned appropriately ● tools and equipment carried in tool belt ● work not undertaken in adverse weather conditions e.g. high wind/rain etc ● staff trained in the erection and use of other access equipment e.g. scaffold tower ● scaffold tower to be included in register and subject to checks in line with manufacturers requirements ● wheel brakes applied when towers in use ● outriggers used appropriately and in line with manufacturer's instructions ● exclusion zone created under work area with warning signs/barriers etc 	
26.	Work at height – displays etc		<p>Classrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Displays restricted to head height wherever practicable ● kick stools/steps are available and used to access higher displays ● staff are instructed not to use tables/chairs etc as make shift steps ● floor surfaces suitable for use of steps ● staff wear appropriate footwear when using kick stools or step ladders ● kick stools and step ladders used appropriately to access high level storage ● long handle poles or mechanical openers are used to open high level windows or blinds 	

Appendix C – BSS Duties Risk Assessment Action Sheet

Ref No.	Risk or Activity	Additional Controls and Actions required (transferred if necessary from sheet one)	Action Owner	Target Date	Completion Date
	<i>Add further risks or activities which require additional controls as necessary</i>				

Assessment Completed By	Position/Role	Date	Review Date