

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Company Operations

ADO Services C.I.C.

Incorporating ADO River Valley

Version 2.5 ©2024

2023-2026

Last Ratification By Management Committee	March 2023
Next Review By Management Committee	March 2026
Latest Update by ADO River Valley	March 2024

1. Risk Assessment Policy Overview

It is the policy of ADO River Valley, all its brands and services to address the use and importance of 'risk assessments' within our settings. This policy also outlines how risk assessments are conducted.

At ADO River Valley we ensure that the following elements are risk assessed:

- Individual Students
- Full site risk assessments, which ensures the risks on site are highlighted and shared with individuals who enter (we are an outdoor setting, and have purposeful risks associated with the space)
- Indoor risk assessments (ie classrooms)
- Generic school and therapeutic risk assessments
- Individual curricular/ lesson risk assessments which includes Equine, Adventure Sport, Bushcraft, Animal Studies and many more
- Trips and outings
- Weather
- External educational spaces off site

All of our risk assessments are stored electronically on our shared drive, any generic risk assessments are shared on request. All student risk assessments are shared with relevant professionals and caregivers (where appropriate).

This policy is linked very closely to the [Fire Risk Assessment](#), and the [Behaviour Modification Policy](#).

The Policy is valid for the following services: ADO River Valley.

2. Who and What Is This Policy For?

ADO River Valley is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students who use our services. It is also important that teaching and learning can be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary hazards and risks.

Therefore, this policy is for any individual who has an interest in how and why we conduct risk assessments in order to students from harm.

3. What is Considered Within Each Risk Assessment?

- Hazards and risks (hazard being the factor, risks being the likelihood of them becoming an issue)

- Risks to students (to ensure that any injuries on site are limited, however not limiting all risks which ultimately will not help the students. Furthermore, the risk may be in other areas such as self-harm/ suicide ideation/ risk of online damage and therefore we work to provide robust and supportive procedures of every eventuality).
- Risk of abuse (avoiding students and staff becoming upset or assaulted by students)
- Risks to others (this includes safeguarding our animals, and wider stakeholders)
- Level of risk (graded from a 1-3 scale which highlights the severity, likelihood and risk rating)
- Preventative measures (what we have in place to reduce risks as much as possible, or educate service users on how to keep themselves safe whilst with us)

Each of our risk assessments are conducted with the most highly skilled staff member, relevant risk assessment requests are signposted to staff with the equivalent qualifications. For practical based risk assessments, we ensure that a 'three level' assessment is conducted. A three-level risk assessment ensures that the allocated staff member checks the setting with a:

- Birds eye view
- Eye line view
- Footing view

Due to the nature of our setting, we are unable to list every possible danger, our staff focus on the risks that are likely, or would cause significant harm if they did occur. We feel it is of paramount importance to expose our students to appropriate risks, in order to help them in society and growing up within Modern Britain. Our mission is to educate students about hazards in order to reduce the risks they may be exposed to as they evolve into adulthood. We ensure that daily risk assessments are conducted, in order to keep students and staff safe from harm.

4. Types of Offsite Experiences (trips and placements)

We feel it is of paramount importance to take our students out of the setting. Many have been victims of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and have not had access to the basic experiences that help to mould our childhood, providing positive memories and helping a huge Social and Emotional benefit.

Some of the visits that we undertake are:

- Trips to the local park
- Trips to the local high street
- Workshops at local adventure sport settings such as water sports and climbing
- Educational placements at local horse-riding centres
- Educational/therapeutic visits to a local wood sculpturer and willow weaver workshop
- Trips to London on the train
- Residential trips

Every external setting we visit is a registered provider and upholds the relevant insurances in order to conduct sessions with students, they also hold all of their own risk assessments and allow us to conduct our own before any student visits the spaces.

We recognise that in exceptional circumstances a mobile phone or smart device may be needed to stay within easy reach of a student for medical reasons. Some students may require access to an installed App on their device for medical reasons, to monitor a condition or illness they have. They may also have a speed dial to a doctor or specialist at a hospital in case of severe allergic reactions for example.

In these exceptional cases the exact procedure of operating this App or calling an emergency service should be explained by the parent-carer, before the students start of their journey at our school, in writing or in a meeting to a member of the SLT. The device can then be operated by a staff member in an emergency in the correct manner and any accompanying procedures can be carried out accordingly.

5. Guidelines For Post 16, Adults, Staff, and Visitors

ADO River Valley recognises that individuals in some instances will bring their mobile phones and smart devices to school, work and when visiting and that they will be used within the parameters of this policy.

For staff, the use of personal devices is restricted to break and lunchtime and only within the Staff Only Area – Zone F at the Education and Healthcare Centre, Poets Corner or the Main Office. At all other times of the day staff mobile phones will be switched to silent and stored within the safe box of the Staff Only Area.

An ADO River Valley secure mobile phone will be kept on site with staff for Health and Safety and security purposes. This mobile phone should be used according to the principles of this policy.

- Under no circumstances should personal mobile phones be used in a space where students are present e.g. classrooms, playgrounds etc.
- Except in urgent or exceptional situations, personal mobile phone use is not permitted in the Staff Zone during teaching time.

- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take photographs or videos of children from within the Staff Zone.
- Staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting young people and their families within or outside of the setting. Staff must use the allocated devices if a phone is needed for use.
 - All visitors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones or smart devices within the customer reception area only at Poets Corner. Should phone calls and or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas described which are not accessed by students in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.
 - All students phones are to be locked away in the student phone box and given back to them at the end of the day.

6. Inappropriate Use

The following examples will be considered inappropriate use and may result in serious action taken.

- Harassment - Inappropriate use of mobile phones will include any individual using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer systems available on the device.
- Photographic– Video graphic use of mobile phones - If anyone uses a mobile phone to take photographs or video footage of either other students or members of staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and the management should decide on appropriate disciplinary action. If images of other students or members of staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the person until the images have been removed either by the owner in the presence of a member of staff leading or by their parent-carer. Only designated ADO River Valley technical equipment and devices can be used.
- Criminal Action - It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile device or smart device to menace, harass or offend another person. In such circumstances the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

7. Liabilities

Any student bringing a mobile phone or smart devices onto the ADO River Valley site will be fully responsible of their own devices, will not be held liable in any circumstances for the loss or damage to these devices. We emphasise that phones are not permitted to be on a

student's person throughout the day. ADO River Valley is not responsible for devices, and will not be liable for the reasons not limited to:

- Lost on site
- Stolen
- Physical damage through dropping a device, for example
- Water ingress
- Wear and tear
- Cosmetic damage
- Device failure or faults
- Any repairs to broken screens or headphones for example

As our site is an outdoor provision this increases the probability that such devices may be lost or damaged. We insist that any claims on lost or damaged devices are made with the owner's insurance. ADO River Valley is not insured for service users' personal belongings.

With this in mind, we recommend that screens or devices are protected with screen covers, protectors or screen wallets if they are brought to school for safety reasons (independent travel for example).

In addition, we suggest that all devices that have a geographic locating feature, have this enabled in the case the device is lost onsite and needs locating.

8- Working in Parallel with Health and Safety Policy

Across our company, our ultimate focus is to identify hazards that could cause injury or illness, gauge the likelihood of the potential issue causing harm and the level of risk it poses, and implement a solution to remove the problem or a plan to control and manage the issue from causing harm. We have accident reporting books on site, we ensure all staff undergo relevant training on how to conduct risk assessments, health and safety and other important factors. We visualise who are trained first aiders, and we ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all areas of our bespoke service- including a site risk assessment/ activity risk assessments/ fire risk assessments/ individual student risk assessments and much more. We conduct daily risk assessments around the site each morning, and our Land Support Supervisor updates his findings online. Monthly checks are also carried out for wider hazards and documented within our CORS system. We have a culture of openness and ensure that staff all take responsibility for risk assessing, and also work with our SLT to make our site as safe as it can be.

9. Working with ADO Therapy

We at ADO River Valley have a fantastic relationship with our sister company, ADO Therapy. We are very aware that not all young people who are assessed by ADO River Valley will be able to join the school. In instances where we do not feel we can meet the needs of an individual, or we feel the individual could have a significant impact on other students, the ADO Therapy Day Service which is maximum three days per week can be an excellent offer to support that young person. This concept is all subject to robust risk assessments on the individual.

We have worked with ADO Therapy many times before, when a young person may have a long term aim to join ADO River Valley, however due to reasons such as resilience, reactivity attendance, associated risk, and anxiety we may recommend that an individual carries out a period of time with ADO Therapy working on the specific aspects required and if the targets are achieved then a place at ADO River Valley can be offered. This robust pathway has been very successful since it was created, and we are very pleased that we can offer something that is accessible to those who may not be ready to manage a full-time position within our outdoor school environment.

In some cases, a young person who has utilised ADO Therapy as a transition pathway may still feel that they need their input when they start at ADO River Valley. In cases like this, we absolutely work with the young person and their family to focus on attending ADO River Valley for a set number of days, and then for the remaining days they can stay at ADO Therapy developing more of the skills required for a full-time setting. Each few weeks that follow, students then reduce their time at ADO Therapy and access ADO River Valley more (this is a CBT Exposure Therapy Approach). We operate this system for a maximum of a term to allow that young person to feel it is achievable and provides them with the steps for success with their school placement. We feel confident that students who are accessing the Therapy Day Service will be effectively cared for and all their needs met, our SLT along with the Governance Committee feel that this offer is incredibly beneficial to the young people. We formalised this professional relationship with a Letter of Assurance from ADO Therapy to ADO River Valley, and by carrying out an in-depth quality assurance process which includes effective safeguarding across the company.

ADO Therapy staff are also involved in our students' therapeutic offerings, with many of them working with the ADO River Valley students each week for their 1:1 Equine Facilitated Interactions.

In times of staff absence, ADO Therapy staff are utilised to benefit the young people in the way that a supply staff worker would. We have worked with agencies for supply teaching previously and felt that our students had heightened anxieties about the new faces, which had a wider impact on the day-to-day running of the school. ADO Therapy staff are based on the same site as us in a separate location, they are familiar faces to our students, they also have completed the same in-depth safer recruitment processes that we have and follow the same methodologies. With this in mind, ADO Therapy is utilised as an agency back up for

ADO River Valley, and ADO River Valley staff would act as an agency worker for ADO Therapy if this was possible dependent on the staffing requirements of the school on that specific day.

10- Review

All ADO River Valley policies and procedures follow ITIL guidelines to ensure version control, change control and release management of any documents. As a matter of policy, documents can be updated at any time to reflect changes to ADO River Valley procedures, legal changes, OFSTED directives or any other reason to ensure the policies and procedures are accurate and correct. This involves consultation with stakeholders and approval from the directors and the ADO River Valley Governance Committee. All policies and procedures are reviewed at the very least on an annual basis. Regular communication through newsletters, social media, text systems and through our website within the ADO River Valley Library is part of our Release Management.

11 - Contact

This document was produced by the ADO River Valley Operations team. This version supersedes any previous versions and will be reviewed annually.

All correspondence with regard to this policy, or any other operational policy and procedure should be directed to the ADO River Valley by e-mailing education@adorivervalley.co.uk or calling 0208 855 6778, requesting to speak to the School Business Manager or in writing c/o School Business Manager, ADO River Valley School, 126 Upper Wickham Lane, Welling, Kent, DA16 3DP.