

Risk Management Policy 2025

EKC Schools Trust

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1. Policy Statement

The following key principles outline the EKC School Trust approach to risk management and internal control:

- The Trust Board has responsibility for overseeing risk management within EKC Schools Trust (the Trust) as a whole.
- An open and receptive approach to solving risk problems is adopted by the Trust Board.
- More detailed arrangements for the management of risk fall within the terms of reference of the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee.
- The Local Governing Bodies have delegated responsibility from the Trust Board for oversight of risk management in each Academy.
- The Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee has overall responsibility for the administration and implementation of the risk management process and is responsible for providing adequate information to the Trust Board on the status of risks and controls.
- EKC Schools Trust leadership team supports, advises and implements policies approved by the Trust Board.
- Headteachers are responsible for encouraging good risk management practice within their schools.
- Key high risks will be identified, mitigated and closely monitored on a regular basis.

2. Procedures

2.1. Role of the Trust Board

The Trust Board's role in the management of risk is to:

- Set the tone and influence the culture of risk management within the Trust, including:
 - Determining the degree to which the Trust is 'Risk Taking' or 'Risk Averse' as a whole or on any relevant individual issue.
 - Determining what types of risk are acceptable and which are not and setting the standards and expectations of staff with respect to conduct and probity.
 - Approve major decisions affecting the Trust's risk profile or exposure.
 - Monitor the management of significant risks to reduce the likelihood of unwelcome surprises or impact.
 - Satisfy itself that the less significant risks are being actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively.
 - Annually review the Trust approach to risk management and approve changes or improvements to key elements of its processes and procedures.

2.2. Role of the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee

The role of the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee in the management of risk is to:

- Use the Trust's risk register to review in detail the Trust approach and progress in the management of risk and to make appropriate recommendations to the Trust Board.
- Receive reports from external parties on the Trust control systems and how they can be improved and developed to minimise the effect of risks to East Kent Colleges Group, e.g. internal and external consultancy/auditors reports.

2.3. Role of the Local Governing Body

The role of the Local Governing Body in the management of risk is to:

- Monitor and review risks at the local Academy level to help reduce the likelihood of problems occurring and their potential impact.
- Support the Trustees in discharging their responsibilities by flagging any major concerns and/or emerging risks that could potentially lead to a new Trust risk to the CEO.
- Promote a culture of openness and good risk management practice within their Academy.

2.4. Role of the EKC Schools Trust Leadership Team

Key roles of the Trust Leadership Team are to:

- Ensure that the high-level risks are monitored effectively.
- Put in place additional actions to address risks where indicators and data suggest that further treatment of the risk is necessary.
- Ensure that the business plans are adequate in mitigating against all of the risks identified on the risk register.
- Be responsible for ensuring that risk management is embedded throughout the Trust.
- Be responsible for communicating performance against mitigating the high-level risks.

2.5. Role of All Staff (as part of internal control)

All Trust staff are responsible for:

- Reporting any activities or incidents (to a Headteacher or CEO) that could potentially impact on the Trust's performance against mitigating the high-level risks.

3. Review and Evaluation Process

The Trust Board is responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of internal control of the Trust, based on information provided by the Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee. Its approach is outlined below:

- Review the previous year and examine the Trust's track record on risk management and internal control.
- Consider the internal and external risk profile of the coming year and consider if current internal control arrangements are likely to be effective.

In making its decision the Trust Board will also consider the following aspects:

- Control environment.
- Trust objectives and its financial and non-financial targets.
- Organisational structure and calibre of the Leadership Team.
- Delegation of authority and public reporting.
- On-going identification and evaluation of significant risks.
- Timely identification and assessment of significant risks; and prioritisation of risks and the allocation of resources to address areas of high exposure.
- Information and communication.
- Quality and timeliness of information on significant risks and time it takes for control breakdowns to be recognised or new risk to be identified.
- Monitoring and corrective action.
- Ability of the Trust to learn from any challenges, and its commitment and responsiveness with which corrective actions taken are implemented.

4. Associated Policies

- Finance Policy
- Health & Safety Policy

5. Associated Procedures, Plans and Indicators

- Business Continuity Plans
- Strategic Plan