

# WHAT IS OUR RISK?

FIRST OF ALL, LET'S REMIND OURSELVES WHAT HAZARD RISK MEANS. PEOPLE BECOME AT RISK OF BEING HARMED BY A NATURAL EVENT - SUCH AS FLOODING OR A STORM - WHEN THEY DECIDE TO LIVE IN AN AREA WHERE SUCH THINGS OCCUR. MOVING THERE MAKES THEM VULNERABLE. THE MORE PEOPLE WHO MOVE TO THE COAST, FOR INSTANCE, THE GREATER THE RISK BECOMES OF STORMS AND HIGH TIDES DAMAGING PROPERTY AND TAKING LIVES.



IF WE WANT TO WORK OUT HOW GREAT THE HAZARD RISK FOR A PLACE IS, WE NEED TO THINK ABOUT TWO SETS OF THINGS:

1. How many people live in this place? What things do they own? How many homes are there?

2. How often is this place affected by severe events such as earthquakes or storms? How big are they?

THIS LESSON, THE AIM IS TO ATTEMPT TO MAKE A 'RISK ASSESSMENT' EITHER FOR OUR TOWN OR CITY, OR FOR OUR ACTUAL SCHOOL (ESPECIALLY THE GROUND FLOOR CLASSROOMS) IN THE EVENT OF A FLOOD OR MAJOR STORM TAKING PLACE.



## Are you flood ready?

### Guidelines

You will need to collect information from different sources, some of which your teachers should be able to provide you with, if you ask, such as:

- Ordnance Survey maps of the school and its surroundings
- Aerial photographs of the school or other photographs
- Census data showing facts about people living in the local neighbourhood
- Facts about the numbers of students at the school or the value that the school and its contents have been insured for
- Facts about parts of the school that would be damaged in the event of water pipes bursting or sinks over-flowing

The **internet** can also be used to find out local information. For instance, local newspapers may be read online and past stories will tell you about the history of storms or floods in the area - how big they have been in the past and how often they have occurred.

A '**Google**' internet search could also help. For instance, if you live in Leeds, type  in the *Search* field at [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

The **local council** may also have a website that can help you find out what kinds of threats have existed in the past.

Once you have collected enough information, fill in the boxes over the page and write your final risk assessment.

## What physical (or human) threats exist here in our place?

### Physical site factors

Is the school directly sited in a place where there is a possibility of flooding, low-level earthquakes or any other problem? The OS map may help you find this out.

### Physical Situation factors

Is the school directly situated near to a source of potential danger, such a river? The OS map may help you find this out.

### Human factors

Are there any possible human causes of danger? Might the school's water pipes burst? Does the school lie under a flight path for planes?

## What people and what property are at risk in this place?

### People

How many people attend the school? How many people live in nearby areas? What are their characteristics? (older people are more vulnerable to flooding, for instance)

### Property

How much valuable property is stored on the ground floor (or even underground!) in our school and would be easily damaged by flooding? Would the buildings themselves recover?

## **Summary**

In your own words, summarise the **hazard risk** the school or your local area as a whole faces from the natural environment or from human factors (include an overall comment in your answer about whether you think it is **high, medium** or **low**).

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