



EARTHQUAKE SAFETY POLICY

RPE-PL-02-03

POLICY OWNER	Education Quality and Accountability Office
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	Principal and Senior Leadership Team
APPROVED BY	School Board
APPROVAL DATE	
DATE POLICY CAME INTO EFFECT	
PERIOD OF REVIEW	2 years
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	

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1 RPE Mission and Vision

Mission

Richmond Park Education aims to provide an inclusive learning environment that **nurtures, inspires and empowers** the students to reach their full potential academically, socially, and emotionally. Through innovative teaching methods, engaging and challenging enrichment programmes, personalised attention, and collaboration with families and the community, we cultivate critical thinking, creativity, and a lifelong passion for learning.

Vision

Vision of Richmond Park Education is to prepare the students to become compassionate, confident, and responsible global citizens who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values to thrive in an ever-changing world.

2 Introduction

This policy was prepared by RPE Education Quality and Accountability Office.

The School Board has agreed and ratified this policy.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy, of which it is an extension.

3 Rationale

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sarajevo as its capital city are located in a relatively active seismic zone. This policy outlines the procedures for implementing and enhancing earthquake safety measures within the Richmond Park International School, Sarajevo (hereinafter: the School), to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of students, staff, and visitors within the school environment.

This policy provides clear guidelines and procedures for responding to earthquake emergencies on school premises or during school-related activities. Additionally, a comprehensive earthquake safety policy fosters a culture of preparedness, empowers staff members with essential lifesaving skills, and instils confidence among students, parents, and the school community in the school's commitment to providing a safe learning environment.

4 Aims

The aims of this policy are to:

- ensure the health and safety of all staff, students, and visitors,
- ensure that staff and School Board members/governors are aware of their responsibilities relating to earthquake safety,
- provide a framework for responding to an earthquake emergency.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

School Board

The School Board has devolved responsibility from the Richmond Park Education Board for approving this policy and ensuring it is implemented appropriately. The School Board has ultimate responsibility for health and safety matters in the school, but delegates operational matters and day-to-day tasks to the Principal and staff members.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for the implementation of this policy, including:

- ensuring that staff are familiar with earthquake safety procedures,
- ensuring that form tutors practise necessary procedures with their classes each term,
- ensuring appropriate risk assessments are completed and appropriate measures are put in place,
- ensuring that Secretaries have up-to-date class lists and green-red visual signal cards available at all times. These will be handed to form tutors after evacuation.

Staff

School staff are responsible for:

- ensuring they follow earthquake safety procedures,
- ensuring they know what evacuation procedures and evacuation plans are in place,
- informing the Health and Safety Officer of any shortcomings of the evacuation procedures and plans.

6 Initial Considerations and Seismic Risk

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sarajevo as its capital city are located in a relatively active seismic zone (see Figure 1).

Earthquakes happen with no warning; therefore, action must be taken at the first indication of ground shaking.

Even in the most severe earthquakes, buildings rarely collapse completely. Injury and even death are most often caused by the shattering and falling of non-structural elements such as window glass, ceiling plaster, lighting fixtures, chimneys, roof tiles, and signs.

There will be no time to think of what to do.

Each room in the school has a map posted by the door that clearly shows the recommended evacuation route. Staff members are encouraged to review these routes for each space that they occupy while at the School.

The steps outlined below are to be followed by all staff in the event that the school must be evacuated upon evidence of an earthquake.

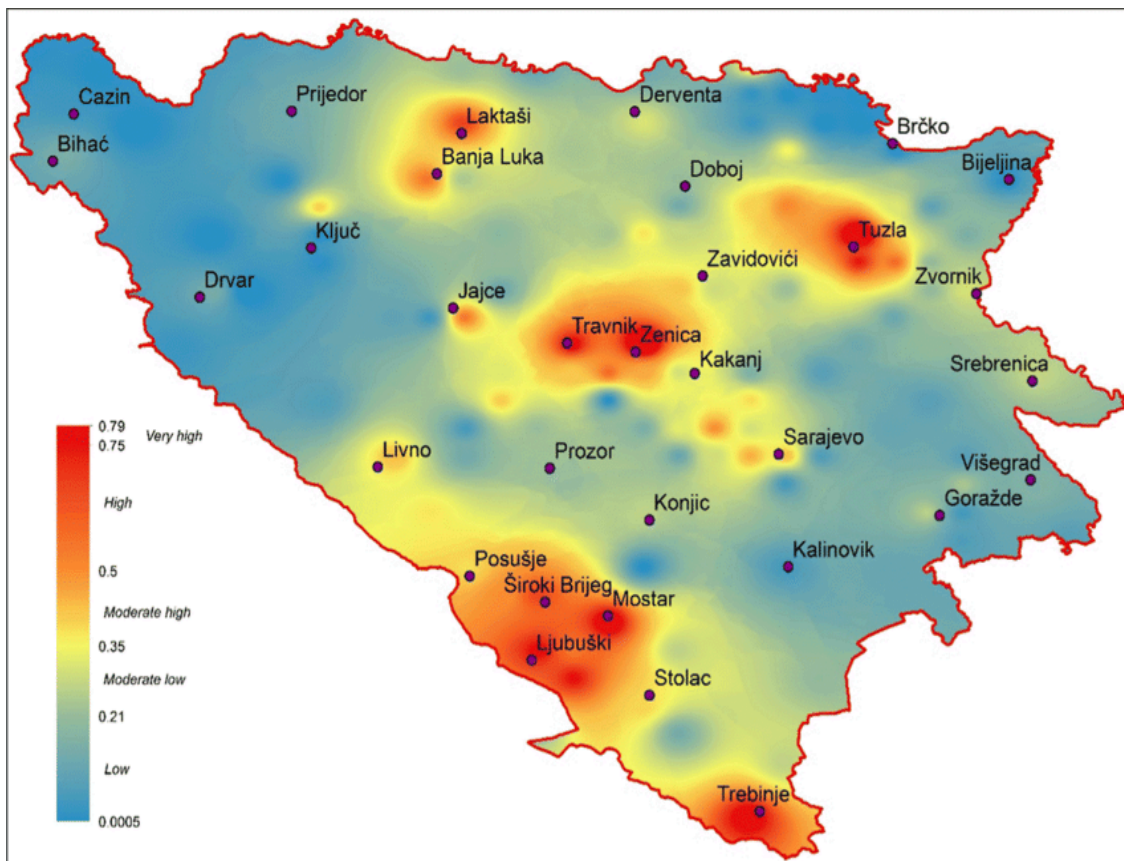


Figure 1: Distribution of relative seismic risk in Bosnia and Herzegovina (grid-based analysis).

7 Earthquake Emergency Procedures

Procedure During Instructional Time

In the event of an earthquake during lesson time, staff present with students will follow the **DROP-COVER-HOLD** procedure outlined below (stickers shown in Figure 2 must be displayed in every classroom to facilitate students' compliance with the command).

1. Issue **"Drop-Cover-Hold"** command. **Drop** down to the floor, take **cover** under a sturdy table or desk, and **hold** on until the shaking stops. **Remember:** Avoid danger spots near windows, hanging objects, mirrors, or tall furniture. If you take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture, hold on to it and be prepared to move with it. Hold the position until the ground stops shaking and it is safe to move.
2. **In science labs**, activate emergency shut-off for all power and extinguish all burners if possible, before taking cover; stay away from hazardous chemicals that may spill.
3. **In the library**, move away from where books and bookshelves may fall, take cover. Assume **"Crash"** position on knees, head down, one hand clasped over neck (or neck/head covered with book or jacket) and one hand holding on to furniture. Posture must be such that the most vulnerable areas (the neck and chest) are protected.
4. **Teachers must immediately take steps to protect themselves** and prevent personal injury during an earthquake. Teachers have an extremely important role to play in assisting students through the post earthquake recovery stage.
5. **Count aloud** for the duration of the earthquake. After the shaking stops, start counting

- again and **count aloud to sixty (60)**.
6. If the teacher is injured, **two student monitors** should have designated authority to give instructions.
 7. Sixty seconds after the shaking has stopped, students should be instructed to check carefully for injuries and dangerous objects such as broken glass before moving and standing up. Students should be instructed to be silent during this time.
 8. Apply life saving first aid interventions only. **Do not delay the evacuation** of uninjured students.
 9. Survivors and walking wounded should be evacuated first. The seriously injured must be left for the school's designated search and the rescue team.
 10. Teachers lead the students, where possible, out of the building using the appropriate evacuation route.
 - 11. Leave any belongings in the classroom.**
 12. Each floor will be checked (classrooms, student and staff toilets, windows) by an assigned staff member from the maintenance department.
 13. Once out of the building, classes will be led to the **emergency assembly area**. Avoid overhead wires that may have broken during the earthquake. Lead students directly away from the building and into an open space.
 14. **If a secondary earthquake or "aftershock" occurs**, students/staff should **"Squat and Cover"** (Place head close to knees, clasp hands behind neck, cover side of the head with arms - if cover is available use it - or place back against an interior wall.) The "Drop-Cover-Hold" procedure is not advised as the ground may be littered with debris from the initial shock.
 15. Repeat the above earthquake instructions and continue evacuation procedures.
 16. The Secretary will **deliver printed registers** to the form tutors at the assembly point, together with a **green-red visual signal card**.
 17. The form tutors will check that all children are accounted for, continuously signalling the status to the **emergency coordinators** using the green-red visual cards.
 18. Teachers report any seriously injured person that was left in the school for the rescue team.
 19. Students should stand still and quiet, waiting for further instructions.
 20. The emergency coordinators wearing distinctive equipment, will lead each class and members of staff back to the building.
 21. Form tutors will hand the green-red signal cards and the registers to the emergency coordinators while returning to the building.



Figure 2: Drop-Cover-Hold stickers should be displayed in every classroom.

Procedure During Non-Instructional Time

In the event of an earthquake during breaktime, transitions, breakfast, lunch, before or after school, staff present with students will follow the **DROP-COVER-HOLD** procedure. Additional actions listed below must be observed as needed.

- **Anywhere in the building**, move away from windows, shelves and heavy objects that may fall. Take cover under a table or desk, in a corner or doorway.
- **In halls, stairways and other areas where no cover is available**, move to an interior wall, kneel, clasp hands behind the neck, and cover the side of head with arms.
- **In the library**, move away from where books and bookshelves may fall, take cover.
- **In the theatre**, get below the level of the back of your seat and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- **In the canteen**, move away from the windows, towards the centre of the room and take cover under the tables.
- **In science labs**, activate emergency shut-off for all power and extinguish all burners if possible, before taking cover; stay away from hazardous chemicals that may spill.
- **Stay inside for 60 seconds after shaking stops**. Usually the most dangerous place during a quake is just outside of the building where debris may fall; exit only after the shaking has stopped.
- **Staff and students are to proceed to the emergency assembly area** as quickly and efficiently as possible using the emergency exit routes, leaving all belongings in the building.
- At the emergency assembly areas teachers are to:
 - take attendance,
 - remain with class at all times,
 - students and staff will remain on the playground until instructed to do so.

8 Training and Drills

All school staff must have an annual refresher training for earthquake safety procedures as part of the induction.

All form tutors must practise the **“Drop-Cover-Hold”, “Crash” and “Squat and Cover”** commands and actions with their class during a Character Education lesson by the end of the second week of each term.

Evacuation drills are conducted as part of fire drills. Staff and students must know that the same procedures apply for evacuation in case of an earthquake.

9 Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

SLT reviews the information in the policy biannually and makes adjustments as appropriate.

Amendments or additions to this policy require approval by the School Board, following the established adoption procedure.