

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Most accidents can be avoided by identifying the hazards present, assessing the associated risks and taking appropriate action to reduce risk to an acceptable level. This document sets out how to assess risk to ensure a safe working environment.

### Terminology

- Risk Assessment - An assessment of the hazards and risks associated with an activity, workplace or system of work that can be reasonably foreseen. The identification and implementation of safety precautions to reduce those risks if possible.
- Hazard - Something with potential to cause harm (injury, ill health) to people. Hazards can either be created by a work process (such as tree felling or moving furniture) or can be inherent in the site (e.g. a river or staircase).
- Risk - The likelihood that a hazard will result in harm, the severity of that harm and the number of people affected.
- Control Measures - These are the steps we need to put in place to reduce risk.

### Risk Level

Risk level can be calculated by using the table below. The higher the level of risk the greater the potential for harm and the greater the need to reduce it. When considering a task or activity, estimate the risk level for each hazard by assessing the probability of harm occurring, and the severity of the result.

Probability		Severity		Risk Level
1 Improbable	*	1 No harm	=	1-5 = Low
2 Infrequent		2 Minor injury to one or more persons		6-10 = Medium
3 Occasional		3 Major injury to one or more persons		11-25 = High
4 Common		4 Death to one person		
5 Certain		5 Death to several people		

If the calculated risk level for any hazard associated with a planned activity is higher than five control measures are required and the risk level should then be recalculated. If the risk level cannot be reduced to five or below after control measures are in place the activity cannot proceed.

### Completing the Assessment

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Ensure you are familiar with the Durham Wildlife Trust Risk Assessment Policy before completing a risk assessment. It is essential that a risk assessment is completed for each activity and that the person completing the assessment has it checked before the activity proceeds, usually by their line manager. Assessments should be completed 3 days before the activity to provide time for review by management. Many of the Trust's sites and activities have standard risk assessments on file, which you can use to help you. However, each activity is unique due to changes in site conditions, personnel etc. so it is important you produce a separate assessment for each activity you undertake. It is also essential that any incidents or 'near misses' are recorded and reported. Use the space provided below to record information on incidents and near misses and bring them to the attention of Trust management as soon as possible after the event.

- 1 Complete the risk assessment form on page 3.
- 2 Have the assessment checked by a colleague – in most cases this will be your line manager.
- 3 When the assessment is approved save a copy in SharePoint Durham Wildlife Trust>Documents>General>Health and Safety>Risk Assessment. Use the following file naming protocol Department/Project (2 letter code – see below) – Date (ddmmyy):
  - Operations and Development – all recruitment activities and office-based activities – OD
  - Links with Nature - LwN
  - Estates North – all activities on Northern reserves – EN
  - Estates South – all activities on Southern reserves – ES
  - Education and Engagement – all school and group visits and outreach activities - EE
  - Heart of Durham - all activities delivered as part of Oak and Iron – HD
  - Naturally Native - all activities delivered as part of Naturally Native – NN
  - Stronger Shores - all activities delivered as part of Stronger Shores – SS
- 4 Print off a copy of the form and take it with you – this risk assessment must be communicated to **ALL** task participants
- 5 If incidents or near misses occur, or the assessment needs amending due to changing circumstances or site conditions, add the additional information to the form by hand on site.
- 6 If additional information was added on site scan a copy of the amended form to Risk Assessment folder – use the same file name plus 'amended' e.g. OD010518amended
- 7 If information on a near miss or other incident has been added to the form email a copy to Trust management - [jcokill@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:jcokill@durhamwt.co.uk) [mdinning@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:mdinning@durhamwt.co.uk) [wselkridge@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:wselkridge@durhamwt.co.uk) [eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk](mailto:eroutledge@durhamwt.co.uk)



## Risk Assessment – Education General

<p><b>Activity date:</b> **/**/**</p>	<p><b>Activity location: Low Barns</b>          what3words.com - ///leads.tumblers.this          Low Barns Nature Reserve          Witton-le-Wear          DL14 0AG</p>
<p><b>Activity</b> – General Ed Site Hazards –  <b>Persons at Risk</b> (e.g. public, schools) – staff and pupils</p> <p><b>Named first aiders</b>          *****</p>	<p><b>DWT lead – responsible for health and safety</b>          ***** (name)          ***** (job title)</p> <p>First aid kit(s) checked prior to event/task? .....yes.....</p> <p>First aid kit(s) checked by who? (name) ..... ***** .....</p> <hr/> <p><b>DWT staff involved in activity</b>          (name)          ***** (name)          (name)</p>
<p><b>Pre-activity briefing completed</b></p> <p><b>Yes</b> .Y.....</p> <p><b>No</b> .....</p> <p>(completed by) ***** .....</p>	<p><b>Nearest accident &amp; emergency</b>          University Hospital, Durham          North Road,          Durham,          County Durham          DH1 5TW          0191 333 2333</p>

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Hazard	Likelihood (1 to 5)	Severity (1 to 5)	Risk Level (1 to 25)	Control Measures Required	Likelihood (1 to 5)	Severity (1 to 5)	Risk Level (1 to 25)
<b>General site hazards</b>							
Safeguarding concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For attendees, staff or volunteers</li> </ul>	2	5	10	<p>If staff feel that a vulnerable adult is at risk of immediate harm, they should call the Police on 999 without delay</p> <p>These and any other safeguarding concerns to be raised <b>with immediate effect</b> with the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).</p> <p>The DSO for adults is Mark Dinning – 07723 222023</p> <p>If staff feel that a child is at risk of immediate harm, they should call the Police on 999 without delay.</p> <p>These and any other safeguarding concerns to be raised <b>with immediate effect</b> with the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).</p> <p>The DSO for Children is John Hayton - 07795540987</p> <p>If neither are available contact Jim Cokill, Trust Director.</p>	1	5	5

## Risk Assessment – Education General

<p>Access to road and car parking</p> <p>Injury by vehicle coming along the drive</p>	3	4	12	<p>The group will be dropped off at RM carpark and will be met by an Ed Leader and taken straight to the Bellamy Room.</p> <p>H&amp;S briefing to cover expectations of behaviour throughout the day including care in the carparks and walking around the periphery as instructed.</p>	1	4	4
<p>Access to first aid resources</p>	2	4	8	<p>Ed Leader to hold valid first aid certification.</p> <p>Ed Leader to have a valid first aid kit to hand at all times.</p>	1	4	4
<p>Communication</p> <p>Session to be delivered by DWT staff</p>	2	3	6	<p>All adults and have phones with relevant numbers throughout the day.</p> <p>All members of the group are to be advised to stick together and talk to a member of staff if something is wrong.</p> <p>Office staff/line manager to be aware of session and location on the day.</p>	1	3	3
<p>Site hazards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trip, slip or bump injuries.</li> <li>● Thorns – Blackthorn, dog rose, bramble</li> </ul>	2	2	4	<p>Deliver H&amp;S talk on potential hazards – uneven paths, steps and surrounding environment.</p> <p>Discuss the site as a nature reserve with public access.</p> <p>Discuss habitats featuring uneven ground, multiple trip hazards – and therefore the need to walk – not run – around the site.</p>	1	2	2

## Risk Assessment – Education General

				Also discuss other obstacles around the site including trees with thorns, fences and gate posts.			
<p>Access to facilities in the centre</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interaction with public</li> </ul>	2	2	4	<p>Ed Leader to explain to group that the centre is open to members of the public and set expectations of behaviour.</p> <p>Show the groups handwashing facilities – and ensure access to towels and hand sanitiser.</p> <p>Ed Leader to clearly explain that all pupils are to remain with their class groups and not to go to any other groups – even if they claim to know them.</p> <p>Discuss cafeteria and shop – children to avoid these areas unless supervised by DWT staff or teaching staff.</p>	1	2	2
Lost pupils / attendees	2	4	8	<p>Ed Leaders to liaise with any school staff to establish numbers of pupils on site.</p> <p>Ed Leaders and school staff to count in and out children at the start and end of each session.</p>	1	4	4
Access to toilet facilities	2	2	4	Ed Leader to point out toilets to staff	1	2	2
<p>Avian flu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of spreading virus through contact with dead or sick</li> </ul>	2	4	8	Clearly brief all attendees not to touch any dead or sick creatures - esp birds. Report any suspected cases to line manager.	1	4	4

## Risk Assessment – Education General

birds.							
<p>Insect stings (e.g. bees, wasps) and biting insects. Rashes / reactions from plants (e.g. nettles), nuts in bird feeders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allergic reactions</li> <li>• Poisoning</li> <li>• Hay fever</li> </ul>	3	4	12	<p>Raise participant’s awareness by pointing out hazardous plants such as giant hogweed, nettles and fungi.</p> <p>Individuals are responsible for advising session leader of any person with allergies.</p> <p>Keep nut allergy people away from bird feeders and from touching any tree nuts (e.g. beech nuts).</p> <p>People with hay fever to be given any medication needed before arrival or by staff during visit.</p>	1	4	4
<p>Hazardous litter e.g. broken glass:</p> <p>Cuts</p>	2	2	4	<p>Leader to perform pre site check for hazardous litter.</p> <p>Advise participants not to pick up any hazardous objects.</p> <p>Pre-visit check to remove hazardous litter or identify areas where there is some and avoid using these areas.</p>	1	2	2
<p>Adverse weather:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor weather increases risk of accidents.</li> <li>• Sunburn</li> </ul> <p>Hypothermia</p>	2	4	8	<p>Session leader to assess weather forecast prior to event. If forecast is amber or if weather factors cause concern, cancel / end task.</p> <p>Session leader to assess location before the session looking for loose branches or areas of flooding and monitor conditions throughout.</p> <p>End session if concerns persist.</p>	1	4	4

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Back pain	3	3	9	Lift appropriate weights only no more than 20kg.  Lift using correct posture. Leader to model  Use gloves and other appropriate PPE	1	3	3
Herbicide / chemical ingestion	3	3	9	PPE, Safety talk, wash hands before eating	1	3	3
Injury from thorns  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leptospirosis bacteria</li> <li>● Zoonosis</li> <li>● Eye injuries</li> <li>●</li> </ul>	3	4	12	Anyone with recent cuts to wear plastic gloves.  Attendees to avoid putting hands in their mouths, nose or ears. Alcohol gel or wipes to be used after collecting. All hands to be cleaned at end of session.  Warn against low branches and thorns.  Anyone with injuries to tell Ed Leader straight away.	2	4	8
Dog faeces:  Toxicara canis	2	2	4	Check education areas for dog faeces before a school visit. Warn people to watch for dog poo. Ask children to report it to an adult. DWT staff to remove.	1	2	2
Dogs being walked by members of the public:  Dog bite	2	4	8	Dogs should be kept on the lead when in the Nature Reserve. Ask dog owners to control their dogs.	1	4	4
Ticks (Lime disease)	2	3	6	Cover skin while working in areas where ticks may be present, particularly amongst tall vegetation.	1	3	3

## Risk Assessment – Education General

				<p>Use insect repellent, wear light coloured clothing where possible that makes ticks easier to spot on clothing.</p> <p>Check for ticks after working in tall vegetation, especially bracken and long grass.</p> <p>Remove ticks as quickly as possible, using a tick remover or fine-pointed tweezers (grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible and gently pull up).</p> <p>Crush the tick in between tissue and dispose of it once it has been removed. Clean the bite area with soap and water or antiseptic.</p>			
<p>Hazardous plants e.g. Giant hogweed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorns</li> <li>• Nut Allergies</li> </ul> <p>Poisoning</p>	3	4	12	<p>Safety talk to be delivered before the group activity to watch out for hazardous plants such as black thorn etc.</p> <p>Nut Allergies to be made aware of before activity and to avoid trees in fruit or bird feeders where possible.</p> <p>Discuss with the group not to touch or ingest any plant material unless instructed safely by a knowledgeable member of staff.</p> <p>Advise group to be aware of the potential for sharp thorns and splinters and to report issues to staff immediately.</p> <p>Staff to ensure constant access to First Aid provision.</p>	1	4	4

## Risk Assessment – Education General

				Safety talk on fungus ecology and not to ingest any fungus to delivered before the activity.			
<b>Pond Diping – water hazards</b>							
<p>Falling in water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drowning / water ingestion</li> <li>• Impact injury from fall</li> </ul> <p>Threat of hyperthermia from cold/wet clothing</p>	2	3	6	<p>Ed Leader to site check the dipping area and attend to any issues or report them. If the dipping area has potential site risks that can't be addressed either move the session to a different site or cancel activity (Ed leaders to have access to alternative indoor sessions).</p> <p>Linked to the above, Ed Leader to be on site 90 minutes prior to session to ensure suitable site checking time.</p> <p>No one to step on the platform / dipping area until invited to by the Ed Leader (following H&amp;S briefing)</p> <p>Ed Leader to have first aid kit and throw line.</p> <p>Ed Leader to provide full H&amp;S briefing explaining need for participants to adopt the 'respect' position (kneel) by the waters</p>	1	3	3

## Risk Assessment – Education General

				<p>edge – so that the railings can stop their fall.</p> <p>No one is to look over the railings.</p> <p>ED Leader to explain the depth of the water and what would happen IF anyone did fall in.</p> <p>Ed leader to monitor participants at all times and intervene if required.</p>			
<p>Injury from nets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact injury</li> </ul> <p>Wet nets on skin/eyes</p>	2	2	4	<p>Ed leader to clearly model correct use of nets during H&amp;S briefing including keeping nets low and not moving them around at head-height.</p> <p>Explain hazards of accidentally hitting people behind you with your net.</p> <p>Explain issues linked to multiple people on platform at same time.</p> <p>Ed Leaders to arrange sessions to avoid over-crowding on dipping sites.</p>	1	2	2
<p>Water ingestion by participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children putting hands in mouths while pond dipping</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<p>Ed Leader to have hand sanitiser on site at all times.</p> <p>Ed Leader to discuss the threat of ingestion of pond water and offer</p>	1	3	3

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Pond water getting into open cuts on hands				<p>sanitiser to participants as required.</p> <p>Have polythene gloves on hand for participants with open cuts on hands – Ed leader to check hands prior to activity commencing.</p>			
Hazardous litter in water	2	2	4	<p>Leader to perform pre site check for hazardous litter and remove / report.</p> <p>If hazards persist and pose a threat to staff and participants' health, revise the event to a safe site or cancel the activity.</p>	1	2	2
<p>Pollution of pond area with dipping equipment – threat to habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants dropping jars / nets in the water.</li> </ul> <p>Participants dropping other litter in the water</p>	2	2	4	<p>Session leader to explain to group to inform them of anything being dropped in the water.</p> <p>Session Leader to have a longer pole net on hand throughout session to allow them to fish out any dropped items.</p>	1	2	2
<b>Minibeast Hunt Hazards</b>							
<p>Participants standing on and falling off logs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threat of rolling ankle</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<p>Ed Leader to site check the area and attend to any issues or report them. If the area has potential site risks that can't be addressed either move the session to a different site or cancel activity (Ed</p>	1	3	3

## Risk Assessment – Education General

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threat to wildlife of being squashed</li> </ul>				<p>leaders to have access to alternative indoor sessions).</p> <p>No one to enter the area until invited to by the Ed Leader (following H&amp;S briefing)</p> <p>Ed Leader to hold in-date first aid certification have a valid first aid kit to hand at all times.</p> <p>Ed Leader to provide full H&amp;S briefing explaining need for participants to avoid balancing on logs, not to kick branches and logs.</p> <p>Ed leader to monitor participants at all times and intervene if required.</p>			
<p>Injury from branches in woodland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact injury – scratches and impalements</li> <li>Leptospirosis bacteria</li> <li>Zoonosis</li> <li>Eye injuries</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<p>Ed leader to clearly model correct behaviour during H&amp;S briefing (walk don't run), avoid trip and stumble hazards and discuss the hazards of the woodland environment.</p> <p>Explain hazards linked to running in woodland and explain the walk only rule.</p> <p>Ed Leader to explain the need for vigilance and care linked to branches and potential thorns at body and head height.</p>	1	3	3
<p>Injury from turning heavy logs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crush to fingers/hands</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<p>H&amp;S briefing to explain safe handling of larger branches and logs.</p> <p>Ed Leader to model appropriate rolling of logs.</p>	1	3	3

## Risk Assessment – Education General

				<p>Explain that participant are not to attempt to lift heaving logs or branches. These should be rolled only.</p> <p>Offer gloves to participants.</p>			
<p>Soil ingestion by participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children putting dirty hands in mouths</li> <li>• Soil/dirt getting into open cuts on hands</li> </ul>	2	3	6	<p>Ed Leader to have hand sanitiser on site at all times.</p> <p>Ed Leader to discuss the threat of ingestion of soil/dirt and offer sanitiser to participants as required.</p> <p>Have polythene gloves on hand for participants with open cuts on hands – Ed leader to check hands prior to activity commencing.</p>	1	3	3
<p>Unsafe trees / threat of tree falling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	2	2	4	<p>Session leader to check site prior to activity and assess for unsafe trees. If a hazard is identified either cordon off the drop area or move the activity to a different site.</p> <p>Inform Reserves Officer of hazard asap.</p> <p>Ed Leader to check weather forecast prior to activity.</p> <p>Do not run activities in woodland if amber weather warning is in place.</p> <p>Do not run activities in woodland if wind speed is greater than 30mph</p>	1	2	2
<p>Injury from falling branches</p>	2	3	6	<p>Ed Leader to check weather forecast prior to activity.</p> <p>Do not run activities in woodland if amber weather warning is in place.</p>	1	3	3



## Risk Assessment – Education General

				<p>Do not run activities in woodland if wind speed is greater than 30mph</p> <p>During site visit, Ed Leader to check for fallen branches still in the lower canopy and assess for risk of branches being dislodged and falling during session.</p> <p>Remove any hazards that can easily be reached.</p> <p>Point out the issue to participants.</p> <p>Cordon off any area under branches that are of concern.</p>			
Assessment completed by: ***** ..... Date: 05-02-26.....				Assessment approved by: ***** ..... Date: 05-02-26.....			



## Risk Assessment – Education General

### Incident or 'near miss' report

Date: .....  
Time: .....  
Location: .....  
Injured party: .....  
Witness: .....

### Description of incident

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.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Incident report completed by:

Date:

Incident reported to:

Date:



## Risk Assessment – Education General

### Checklist / Toolbox Talk

Number of attendees: .....

Task Leaders Check List – Complete for every task and keep a copy with your risk assessment.		
Pre-activity	Complete (Y/N)	Notes
Timings for start, breaks and finish explained to participants. Record timings below.		
Start time - 1pm..... Finish time - 3pm		
<b>Remember</b> - Do not overrun. Towards the end of the task, you must make sure that everyone is working with a finish time in mind so do not allow extra work to be taken on near the end of the afternoon.		
Comprehensive explanation of the task and why it is being done given to all participants.		
<b>Remember</b> - having an understanding of the why the Trust manages sites as it does is an important part of the volunteer experience. Explain a little about the site. For example, if it is a SSSI or has any other designation, explain what that means and why it is important. Give information on the current management of the site, the work you will be doing that day and how that helps to maintain the value of the site for people and wildlife.		
Participants issued with necessary protective clothing.		
Participants issued with correct tools and have received training in how to use tools issued.		
<b>Remember</b> - Only tools provided by DWT should be used on task. For every tool that the participants will be using, you should tell them:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The name of the tool</li> <li>2. The purpose of the tool</li> <li>3. The safety checks that should be carried out before use</li> <li>4. How to use it safely and effectively</li> <li>5. How to carry it safely</li> <li>6. How to position it safely when not in use</li> <li>7. How NOT to use it! Explain the damage that can be caused if a tool is used incorrectly, both to the tool itself and in terms of personal injury.</li> </ol>		

## Risk Assessment – Education General

Participants briefed on site hazards, safety measures in place and first aiders.		
<b>Remember</b> - hazards may not relate directly to the task an individual volunteer is doing but to what others are doing around them and the site. Tell participants any relevant safety details covering equipment being used around them e.g. chainsaw operators, farm machinery in an adjacent field. Identify physical hazards on the site e.g. steep terrain, open water. Always state a safe minimum working distance relating to hazards within which no volunteer should enter unless instructed to do so.		
Participants briefed on who the qualified first aiders are, location of first aid kits & what to do if they are injured.		
<b>Remember</b> - all injuries, however small, must be reported to a First Aider and the Task Leader immediately.		
Vehicle parked facing the exit, ready for a quick evacuation if necessary. Everyone on task made aware of where vehicle keys are.		
<b>Remember</b> - Late comers must receive the same briefing as all other participants. Record late comers have been briefed in the note's sections.		
<b>During Activity</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Site conditions changed or task changed/alterd due to unforeseen circumstances – briefings and safety instructions amended accordingly and provided to participants. Complete another check sheet and risk assessment if needed.		
<b>Remember</b> - Whilst work is taking place, you should be aware of where everyone is and what they are doing. If you see participants not following instruction or acting in a potentially dangerous manner, stop them immediately and provide further instruction. If their actions continue to put themselves or others at risk, remove them from the task.		
<b>End of the task</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Tools and equipment collected and safely packed onto vehicles. Count to ensure nothing has been lost. Record any lost items		
Site left in a safe condition no hazards left e.g. hung-up tree. All fires extinguished.		
Record number of volunteers/staff leaving site – confirm all present		



# Risk Assessment – Education General

Date:           \*\*/\*\*/\*\* .....  
Completed by: ..... \*\*\*\*\* .....  
Signature:     ..... \*\*\*\*\* .....