

THE ECOLOGY CENTRE RISK ASSESSMENT



Venue: The Ecology Centre and offsite locations **Date:** Nov 21 – 22 **Telephone:** 01592-891567

The Ecology Centre has been designed for use by a wide range of people. We aim to offer a place of safety where people feel welcome and able to enjoy activities without being over burdened by rules and regulations. We aim to cultivate a culture of safety and all The Ecology Centre staff are trained to reduce risk for groups and individuals. Many activities are rated in the medium risk category due to many groups unfamiliarity with the countryside. As our first measure of risk avoidance all groups will receive a general briefing at the beginning of every class or event covering basic safety procedures and rules. This Risk Assessment covers both staff and participants during the activities detailed below.

Responsible Persons – key emergency contact during programme (name, contact details) Liz Corke (Education Manager), 01592-891567, Fraser Nicol (Education Officer) 01592 891567

Police Scotland – 101

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
Mini beasts – searching/handling	Irritation to anaphylactic shock where allergy is present. Lyme’s disease.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear group briefings and risk disclosure • Knowledge of site if tick rich – avoid areas if necessary • Emergency contact forms and medical information to be carried by group leaders or TEC staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tick briefing to be given/available on website as appropriate 	Low
Mini beast Activities- Terrain and surroundings, exposure to disease, broken glass, litter, uneven ground surfaces, etc.	Slips and falls leading to injury or cuts.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear group briefings • First aid competence • First aid kit carried 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site checks – removal of trip hazards where appropriate, re-siting of activities if broken glass/hazardous litter is significantly present. 	Low
Activities in public parks – child protection risk	Abduction and Abuse	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff vigilance • Clear boundaries to be established by the leader appropriate to the age/stage of groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to work in sight of adults as appropriate. 	Low
Activities in public parks – contact with dogs and dog faeces	Dog bites – mild to severe injury and even death Contact with dog faeces – potential to contract Toxocariasis.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group leaders to check area for dog faeces prior to start and move location of activity if necessary. • Group briefing to include what to do if a dog comes into the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group leaders to act proactively if dogs pose a risk – asking owners to put dogs on leads. 	Medium

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participants are working in. Access to handwashing facilities and antibacterial gel/hand wipes. Staff vigilance 		
Pond and River Activities- Water, banks and currents.	Slips and falls leading to injury, drowning and death Weil's disease, E-coli etc.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash hands immediately after wetting or use hand sanitiser if hand washing facilities unavailable. Group briefings – clear boundaries set. First aid competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to be working in sight of adults/group leaders when next to rivers and ponds. Appropriate child: adult ratios for activities involving or next to water. 	Medium
Equipment- Nets, trays etc.	Poke in eye or body, trips and falls, injuries and potential drowning through distraction or mishandling equipment	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group briefings and clear boundaries set. Group management and supervision Appropriate child to adult ratios. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An adequate ratio of nets to participants to avoid crowding at water's edge. 	Low
Pond Creatures- Great Diving Beetle larvae	Bites, stings and allergic reactions to shock.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group briefings Knowledge of site Emergency contact forms and medical information to be carried by group leaders or TEC staff. First Aid kit carried by competent First Aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation to avoid contact with diving beetle larvae clearly given. Where participants are unable to identify larvae recommendation given to avoid contact with all pond creatures. 	Low
Marine creatures	Bites, stings and allergic reactions to shock.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group briefings and supervision. Knowledge of site. Knowledge of medical history/condition Emergency contact forms and medical information to be carried by group leaders or TEC staff. First Aid kit carried by competent First Aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advice on what to handle and how to handle creatures clearly given. 	Low
Rock Pool Guddles- Slippery wet rocks, sharp edges, seaweed, tide and waves, cliffs, pollution, litter and	Cuts, injuries to drowning and death. Poisoning or illness	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group briefings Site knowledge Adequate supervision and appropriate ratios First Aid kit carried by competent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of tides and sea conditions 	Low

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
diseases.			First Aider		
Fossil Walks (see also rock pool guddles)	Cuts from handling rocks Fragments of rock in the eye Injury to fingers from using tools Slips, trips, falls	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site risk assessed Group briefings and appropriate supervision First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools used suitable for age/ability range PPE provided if required Route of walk disclosed to member of TEC staff at base 	Low
Night Walks- including bat watching in low light.	Trips and falls leading to injury. Losing people and splitting up.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site choice and staff competence Group briefing Close supervision of group Regular head counts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry torches and extra batteries. Protocol for lost group members explained and carried out if necessary. Staff to carry walkie-talkies or charged mobile phones in areas of known reception. 	Low
Sensory Walks- Plant toxins, stings from nettles, hogweeds etc	Irritation, allergy, poisoning.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing on what to touch or pick Supervision by competent persons Site knowledge and staff competence. First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundaries of activity altered to avoid areas with poisonous plants if necessary. 	Low
Willow Weaving- Branches and twigs.	Eye injury Trips	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear group briefings Staff competence Adequate ratios of staff: participants First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space group out Ensure cut ends are blunt not pointed 	Low
Wild Foods and Fungi Forays.	Stomach upsets to death	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear group briefings Staff competence Adequate ratios of staff: participants First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group leader able to demonstrate sufficiently expert knowledge of wild food. Knowledge of correct preparation of food items Group briefings and supervision Activities only provided to groups who can competently understand the wild food or SSC code. 	Medium
Talking Tours and Walks	Getting lost	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear group briefings Staff competence Adequate ratios of staff: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-visit site and allow time for familiarisation with site, location and facilities. 	Low

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> participants First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Assess new sites Meeting place arranged during initial group briefing. 	
Face Painting- Toxic paints, infectious skin conditions	Allergies and irritation to skin and eyes. Transfer of infections	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear group briefings Staff competence Adequate ratios of staff: participants First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use hypoallergenic paints and avoid eyes Keep sponges and brushes clean Clean in soap and water between each person 	Low
Open Public Events- Fairs and Fetes	Injury from displays, collapsing props or shelters	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper levels of staffing of events Clear group briefings Staff competence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate construction and anchorage Adequate emergency planning Properly marked exits and assembly points 	Low
Blindfold games/Outdoor games	Increased risk of fall/trip/collision; cuts, bruising to breaks and strains	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear briefing Close supervision First Aid kit carried by competent first aider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site selection and removal of obvious trip hazards 	Low
Outreach activities- Alternative curriculum groups	Reportable injury	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct staff/pupil ratio Close supervision Full risk assessment if new activity is planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to terminate session if required 	Low
Practical activities using tools	Eye injuries, cuts from tools, slips and trips leading to injuries	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear briefing Close supervision First aid kit carried by competent First Aider Follow tools specific assessment below for bow saw, billhook, loppers, secateurs and hand-drill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools correctly maintained Work suitable for age/ability range PPE provided if required 	Medium
Use of Knives	Minor cuts to serious cuts, loss of blood to death.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All knives have sheaths, sheaths always on if not in use Knives stored in designated tool box when not in use Appropriate adult to child ration for tool use Knives are kept in good repair, regularly cleaned and sharpened First Aid competence and First 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff competence – all staff working with knives to be fully trained to do so. Knowledge of group behaviour and learning styles – group competence and safety assessed prior to working with knives All knife work to be pre-approved by Education Manager or General Manager 	High

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aid kit within arm's reach All knives are signed in and out of office. 	Tool talk to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using knife on the outside of the legs -cutting away from yourself -keeping tools two arms and a tool length away from other people -No glove on knife hand. - Ensure participants use a glove on the non-tool hand. 	
Use of Billhook	Cutting or stabbing yourself or others with the billhook. Standing or falling onto billhook. Minor to serious cuts, loss of blood, death.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All billhooks have covers, covers always on if not in use Billhooks stored in designated tool box when not in use Appropriate adult to child ration Billhooks are kept in good repair, regularly cleaned and sharpened First Aid competence and First Aid kit within arm's reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool talk given each time billhook used. To include: Tool talk to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using billhook on the outside of the legs -cutting away from yourself -keeping tools two arms and a tool length away from other people -No glove on billhook hand. -Billhook shouldn't be swung – it should always start in contact with the wood. - Ensure participants use a glove on the non-tool hand. 	Medium
Use of Bow Saw	Cutting yourself or others due to saw slipping or jumping whilst cutting, incorrect carrying or tripping/falling on bowsaw. Minor to moderate cuts, loss of blood.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bow saws stored and transported in a safe container (e.g. tool box or small suitcase and stored there when not in use Bow saw covers not used Appropriate adult to child ratio Saws kept in good repair and blades replaced when needed First aid kit and first aider available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool talk before use of bow saw and monitor use. Tool talk to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using bow saw tools two arms and a tool length away from other people. -gloves are not worn on bow saw hand. Ensure participants use bow saw appropriately (e.g. drawing in a slow and controlled manner) -Ensure participants use a glove on the non-tool hand. -Ensure wood is well supported before sawing 	Medium
Use of Hand drill	Cutting or stabbing yourself or others with the drill. Blood loss.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand drill transported without drill bit in place and in tool box Appropriate adult to child ratios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool talk before using drill - What you are drilling needs to be secured either by being held or clamped	Low

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drills kept in good repair and regularly oiled and cleaned • First aid kit and first aider available when drill in use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drill on flat surface - person holding the wood should wear gloves 	
Use of loppers	Cutting fingers, banging yourself or others, head injury, tripping over loppers on ground. Cuts, bruises	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loppers transported in tool box/suitcase and stored there when not in use. • Appropriate child to adult ration • Loppers kept in good repair (tightened/sharpened regularly) • First aid kit and first aider available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give tool talk before use of loppers Tool talk to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using loppers two arms and a tool length away from other people. -gloves are worn. -ensure participants use loppers appropriately (e.g. cutting wood no bigger than a 2 pence piece) -Tool should be carried pointing downward at your side. 	Low
Use of secateurs	Cutting fingers or stabbing yourself or others	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secateurs transported in tool box and stored there when not in use • Appropriate child to adult ratio • Secateurs kept in good repair • First aid kit and first aider available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give tool talk before use of loppers Tool talk to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -using secateurs two arms and a tool length away from other people. -ensure participants use secateurs appropriately -tool should be carried pointing downwards at your side 	Low
Fire lighting and campfires	Minor to serious burns. Forest fires.	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear group briefing and appropriate boundaries given. • Staff vigilance • First Aid Kit carried by competent first aider. • Fire policy methods to be followed at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff creating or supervising campfires to be fully trained to do so. • Fresh water carried – enough to extinguish fires and treat any burns • Fire blanket carried • Staff to follow procedure for extinguishing fires to prevent fire spreading. 	Medium
Campfires – toasted marshmallows	Burns and scolds Injury to eyes/body from sharpened sticks Allergies	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff competence • Staff vigilance • First Aid kit carried by competent first aider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to check with participants/group leaders re: allergies and medical conditions such as diabetes. • Clear group briefing on safety with sticks, waiting for marshmallows to cool etc. • Low numbers toasting marshmallows 	Low

Hazard	Severity & possible implication	Risk Category	Existing Controls	Further action required to reduce risk	Risk after controls
				at the same time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh water carried – enough to treat burns and to extinguish fires. • Fire blanket carried 	
Spread of Covid-19 virus	Potential for serious illness and death caused by covid-19	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ecology centre staff are carrying out twice weekly lateral flow tests. • As much of our work as possible takes place outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecology centre staff will reduce entry into any school/community buildings as much as possible and wear a mask whilst inside. • Frequent hand washing and cleaning of any shared equipment/resources 	Medium
Use of a Kelly Kettle	Minor to serious burns. Scalding from hot water/steam	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kettle is checked regularly to ensure it is in good repair • Water not stored in kettle • Follow controls and action for fires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure kettle placed on a stable/non-flammable surface for use • Ensure cork is removed from kettle before lighting • Ensure air hole and spout and facing in opposite directions so water/steam doesn't get near someone's face if they are blowing in air hole. • Use fire glove to handle hot kettle. 	Medium
Weather	High winds causing falling branches – crushing Sun – heat stroke, sun burn, dehydration Cold – hypothermia, exposure	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants advised to bring appropriate clothing to weather – warm waterproof, sun hat, sun cream and water bottle • Activities will not take place in woodland if wind exceeds 50mph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader to assess weather conditions on the day. Leader to monitor children for signs of cold or overheating and advise appropriately. Activities must be stopped if children's clothing becomes unsuitable for conditions. • Advise group to wear sun hats and sun cream when needed. Move group to shade when too sunny. Monitor participants for dehydration and give water if needed. 	Low
Use of rope and cord	Entanglement – suffocation Tripping – bumps and bruises Friction burns	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw attention to ropes and cord that may cause a trip hazard by tying bags to them • Cord and rope coiled neatly for storage and transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise group not to wrap themselves or others in rope or cord • Advise group not to pull rope quickly through each other's hands. 	

Completed by: Fraser Nicol
Confirmed by: Liz Corke

Date: 15.11.2021
Date: 15.11.2021