

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

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|--|--|---------------|--|--|---------------------|
|  | Toxocariasis.  |               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group briefing to include what to do if a dog comes into the area participants are working in.</li> <li>Access to handwashing facilities and antibacterial gel/hand wipes.</li> <li>Staff vigilance</li> </ul>  | leads.   |                     |
| <b>Pond and River Activities- Water, banks and currents.</b> | Slips and falls leading to injury, drowning and death<br>Weil's disease, E-coli etc.                               | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash hands immediately after wetting or use hand sanitiser if hand washing facilities unavailable.</li> <li>Group briefings – clear boundaries set.</li> <li>First aid competence</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children to be working in sight of adults/group leaders when next to rivers and ponds.</li> <li>Appropriate child: adult ratios for activities involving or next to water.</li> </ul>               | Medium              |
| <b>Equipment- Nets, trays etc.</b>                           | Poke in eye or body, trips and falls, injuries and potential drowning through distraction or mishandling equipment | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group briefings and clear boundaries set.</li> <li>Group management and supervision</li> <li>Appropriate child to adult ratios.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An adequate ratio of nets to participants to avoid crowding at water's edge.</li> </ul>   | Low                 |
| <b>Pond Creatures- Great Diving Beetle larvae</b>            | Bites, stings and allergic reactions to shock.   | Low           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group briefings</li> <li>Knowledge of site</li> <li>Emergency contact forms and medical information to be carried by group leaders or TEC staff.</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent First Aider</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul> | Low                 |
| <b>Marine creatures</b>                                      | Bites, stings and allergic reactions to shock.   | Low           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group briefings and supervision.</li> <li>Knowledge of site.</li> <li>Knowledge of medical history/condition</li> <li>Emergency contact forms and medical information to be carried by group leaders or TEC staff.</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent First Aider</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice on what to handle and how to handle creatures clearly given.</li> </ul>  | Low                 |

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| <b>Rock Pool Guddles- Slippery wet rocks, sharp edges, seaweed, tide and waves, cliffs, pollution, litter and diseases.</b> | Cuts, injuries to drowning and death.<br>Poisoning or illness   | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group briefings</li> <li>Site knowledge</li> <li>Adequate supervision and appropriate ratios</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent First Aider</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of tides and sea conditions</li> </ul>  | Low                 |
| <b>Fossil Walks (see also rock pool guddles)</b>  | Cuts from handling rocks<br>Fragments of rock in the eye<br>Injury to fingers from using tools<br>Slips, trips, falls | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site risk assessed</li> <li>Group briefings and appropriate supervision</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tools used suitable for age/ability range</li> <li>PPE provided if required</li> <li>Route of walk disclosed to member of TEC staff at base</li> </ul>  | Low                 |
| <b>Night Walks- including bat watching in low light.</b>  | Trips and falls leading to injury. Losing people and splitting up.  | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site choice and staff competence</li> <li>Group briefing</li> <li>Close supervision of group</li> <li>Regular head counts</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carry torches and extra batteries.</li> <li>Protocol for lost group members explained and carried out if necessary.</li> <li>Staff to carry walkie-talkies or charged mobile phones in areas of known reception.</li> </ul> | Low                 |
| <b>Sensory Walks- Plant toxins, stings from nettles, hogweeds etc</b>   | Irritation, allergy, poisoning.   | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefing on what to touch or pick</li> <li>Supervision by competent persons</li> <li>Site knowledge and staff competence.</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Boundaries of activity altered to avoid areas with poisonous plants if necessary.</li> </ul>  | Low                 |
| <b>Willow Weaving- Branches and twigs.</b>  | Eye injury<br>Trips   | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear group briefings</li> <li>Staff competence</li> <li>Adequate ratios of staff: participants</li> <li>First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Space group out</li> <li>Ensure cut ends are blunt not pointed</li> </ul>   | Low                 |

| Hazard   | Severity & possible implication                                      | Risk Category | Existing Controls   | Further action required to reduce risk  | Risk after controls |
|--|--|---------------|---|---|---------------------|
| <b>Wild Foods and Fungi Forays.</b>                            | Stomach upsets to death  | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear group briefings</li> <li>• Staff competence</li> <li>• Adequate ratios of staff: participants</li> <li>• First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group leader able to demonstrate sufficiently expert knowledge of wild food.</li> <li>• Knowledge of correct preparation of food items</li> <li>• Group briefings and supervision</li> <li>• Activities only provided to groups who can competently understand the wild food or SSC code.</li> </ul> | Medium              |
| <b>Talking Tours and Walks</b>                                 | Getting lost   | Low           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear group briefings</li> <li>• Staff competence</li> <li>• Adequate ratios of staff: participants</li> <li>• First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-visit site and allow time for familiarisation with site, location and facilities.</li> <li>• Risk Assess new sites Meeting place arranged during initial group briefing.</li> </ul>  | Low                 |
| <b>Face Painting- Toxic paints, infectious skin conditions</b> | Allergies and irritation to skin and eyes.<br>Transfer of infections | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear group briefings</li> <li>• Staff competence</li> <li>• Adequate ratios of staff: participants</li> <li>• First Aid kit carried by competent first aider</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use hypoallergenic paints and avoid eyes</li> <li>• Keep sponges and brushes clean</li> </ul> Clean in soap and water between each person  | Low                 |
| <b>Open Public Events- Fairs and Fetes</b>                     | Injury from displays, collapsing props or shelters                   | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper levels of staffing of events</li> <li>• Clear group briefings</li> <li>• Staff competence</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate construction and anchorage</li> <li>• Adequate emergency planning</li> <li>• Properly marked exits and assembly points</li> </ul>   | Low                 |
| <b>Blindfold games/Outdoor games</b>                           | Increased risk of fall/trip/collision; cuts, bruising to breaks and  | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear briefing</li> <li>• Close supervision</li> <li>• First Aid kit carried by competent</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site selection and removal of obvious trip hazards</li> </ul>  | Low                 |

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|---|--|---------------|--|---|---------------------|
|   | strains  |               | first aider  |   |                     |
| <b>Outreach activities- Alternative curriculum groups</b> | Reportable injury  | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct staff/pupil ratio</li> <li>• Close supervision</li> <li>• Full risk assessment if new activity is planned</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to terminate session if required</li> </ul>  | Low                 |
| <b>Practical activities using tools</b>                   | Eye injuries, cuts from tools, slips and trips leading to injuries | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear briefing</li> <li>• Close supervision</li> <li>• First aid kit carried by competent First Aider</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools correctly maintained</li> <li>• Work suitable for age/ability range</li> <li>• PPE provided if required</li> </ul>   | Medium              |
| <b>Use of Knives</b>                                      | Minor cuts to serious cuts, loss of blood to death.                | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid competence and First Aid kit within arm's reach</li> <li>• Clear group safety briefing given.</li> <li>• Close supervision and low ratios.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff competence – all staff working with knives to be fully trained to do so.</li> <li>• Knowledge of group behaviour and learning styles – group competence and safety assessed prior to working with knives</li> <li>• All knife work to be pre-approved by Education Manager or General Manager</li> </ul> | High                |
| <b>Fire lighting and campfires</b>                        | Minor to serious burns. Forest fires.                              | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear group briefing and appropriate boundaries given.</li> <li>• Staff vigilance</li> <li>• First Aid Kit carried by competent first aider.</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff creating or supervising campfires to be fully trained to do so.</li> <li>• Fresh water carried – enough to extinguish fires and treat any burns</li> <li>• Fire blanket carried</li> <li>• Staff to follow procedure for extinguishing fires to prevent fire spreading.</li> </ul>                   | Medium              |

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|---|--|---------------|--|--|---------------------|
| <b>Campfires – toasted marshmallows</b> | Burns and scolds<br>Injury to eyes/body from sharpened sticks<br>Allergies | Medium        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff competence</li> <li>• Staff vigilance</li> <li>• First Aid kit carried by competent first aider.</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff to check with participants/group leaders re: allergies and medical conditions such as diabetes.</li> <li>• Clear group briefing on safety with sticks, waiting for marshmallows to cool etc.</li> <li>• Low numbers toasting marshmallows at the same time</li> <li>• Fresh water carried – enough to treat burns and to extinguish fires.</li> <li>• Fire blanket carried</li> </ul> | Low                 |
| <b>Spread of Covid-19 virus</b>         | Potential for serious illness and death caused by covid-19                 | High          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All ecology centre staff are carrying out twice weekly lateral flow tests.</li> <li>• As much of our work as possible takes place outdoors</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecology centre staff will reduce entry into any school/community buildings as much as possible and wear a mask whilst inside.</li> <li>• Frequent hand washing and cleaning of any shared equipment/resources</li> </ul>  | Medium              |

**Completed by: Fraser Nicol**

**Date: 15.11.2021**

**Confirmed by: Liz Corke**

**Date: 15.11.2021**