

Activity Risk Assessment

Activity	Raft Building				
Address of premises	Hesley Wood Activity Centre, White Lane, Chapelton, S35 2YH				
Author of this risk assessment	Megan Hughes				
Issue Date	15/07/2024				
Review	This document is reviewed annually. We can review it sooner if needed.				
Reviewed by	Aaron King / Alyssa Jordan	Date	01/09/2024	Changes?	Yes, see review page
Reviewed by	Dan Crawford, Megan Hughes and Alyssa Jordan	Date	10/03/2025	Changes?	Yes, see review page
Checked by Operations Director	 Andy Moore	Date			

Explanation of Risk Rating: Risk Rating = Probability x Severity			Probability			Rating	Actions resulting from Risk Rating
			Unlikely 1	Likely 2	Certain 3		
Severity	1	Minor injury or damage	1	2	3	1-3	Low Risk: Carry on, ensuring controls are in place. No further controls required.
	2	Major injury or damage	2	4	6	4-6	Medium Risk: Implement extra controls if practical to reduce risk to low. Monitor risk level to ensure no increase.
	3	Severe injury or damage, Serious illness or death.	3	6	9	7-9	High Risk: Stop activity immediately. Implement further controls to reduce risk if possible. Find alternative method.

The Hesley Management Team will monitor and review the controls to reduce risk in accordance with South Yorkshire Scouts Health & Safety Policy.

The information contained within this Risk Assessment should be taken as the minimum requirement and is not to be considered exhaustive.

What is the hazard? How might people be harmed?	Risk Level (with existing control measures)			Who is at risk?	What are the control measures?
	Probability	Severity	Rating		
Water, i.e. Drowning.	2	3	6	Participants, Instructors, Intruders.	<p>Everyone on the water must wear appropriate buoyancy aid (B.A.) and helmet.</p> <p>All staff trained in appropriate Emergency Action Process.</p> <p>All Instructors to be trained to a satisfactory level and approved by an activity manager, who has the relevant qualifications, as safe to run the session.</p> <p>Radio must be taken to lake to call for help in case of difficulties.</p> <p>Instructors must ensure appropriate group sizes are adhered to. Accompanying adults can help support group at instructor's discretion.</p> <p>Standard group of 10 young people. Max 15 Participants.</p> <p>Intruders to be told to leave site. Lake staff to inform reception immediately. Manager to then take appropriate action if needed.</p> <p>Emergency throwline provided with code available via 999.</p> <p>Instructor to check with group leader of any weak or non-swimmers.</p>

Cold weather, i.e. Hypothermia.	2	2	4	All Involved	<p>Participants advised to bring spare clothes to the lake.</p> <p>Radio to be taken to the lake to call for Emergency Aid.</p> <p>Lake sessions restricted from 1st October to 1st April.</p> <p>Poster provided on box trailer with advice on COLD, HEAT and INFECTION.</p>
Water Bourne bacteria, i.e. Infection.	1	2	2	All Involved	<p>Advise customers to wash their hands after activity or shower where possible.</p> <p>Provide info via leptospirosis poster on box trailer door.</p>
Warm weather, i.e. heat exhaustion or heatstroke.	1	1	2	All Involved	<p>Session to be adapted to reduce the risk of overheating. (e.g. self-rescues from the lake back onto the rafts, less energetic pre-session warmups).</p>
Paddle strike, e.g. bruising to arms, legs or head from being hit by a paddle.	2	1	2	Participants, Instructors	<p>On the water: Instructor to stop participants who are using their paddles to splash others. This often ends up with participants accidentally 'following through' with their paddles and hitting someone.</p> <p>Instructor to try to keep canoers/paddleboarders away from any raft session participants. This reduces risk of participants accidentally entering water unintentionally and/or getting struck by passing canoe paddles.</p> <p>On the land: Making sure all participants are spaced out for the paddle games, so they are less likely to be hit by falling paddles.</p> <p>Both: Helmets worn.</p>
Broken glass or other debris on lakebed or shore,	2	2	4	Participants, Instructors.	<p>Appropriate footwear to be worn by all participants (e.g. old trainers) no flip flops or loose cros.</p>

i.e. Cuts & gashes.					<p>When water levels are low avoid areas with known hidden objects i.e. Tree stumps at the deep/far end of the lake.</p> <p>Staff will remove visible dangerous debris from lakebed, only if it is safe to do so.</p> <p>Staff to move debris on lakeside – waste bags will be provided in the box in water sport trailer.</p>
Disorderly behaviour that causes injury.	2	2	4	All Involved	<p>Group's own leader must be in attendance.</p> <p>Maximum 15 paddlers on the session.</p> <p>If behaviour becomes disorderly, stop the session – or remove individual participants from the session.</p> <p>Refer to EAP Overcrowding and Disorderly behaviour.</p>
Hazards arising from the actions of Instructor/staff.	1	2	2	All Involved	<p>All Instructors to be approved by a manager as safe to run the session.</p> <p>Activity manager to periodically observe sessions to support both safety and staff development.</p> <p>Near misses and accidents to be reported and discussed at manager meetings so that we can consider any ways to minimise the chance of recurrence.</p>
Equipment Failure, e.g. cuts, bruises.	1	2	2	Participants, Instructors.	<p>Equipment inspected and logged as per our Hesley Wood inspection and replacement procedure.</p> <p>Faulty equipment to be quarantined in activity store (for repair or replacement).</p>
Strong winds or Storms.	1	2	2	All Involved	<p>Sessions stop if winds on lake consistently exceed Beaufort 4 / 18mph. This benchmark may be lower depending on group (e.g. Older/more experienced participants maybe stronger may be able to manage higher winds compared to a younger group. – site staff will assess on the day and make appropriate decision).</p> <p>Thunderstorm = close lake & all get to shelter.</p>

<p>Unloading from trailers, e.g. boards falling on people, back injury.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>All Involved</p>	<p><u>Paddleboards:</u> Only allow adult helpers to help take boards off. Don't let them take the top boards off the trailer. Check behind you whilst taking a board off so you don't hit someone.</p> <p><u>Canoes:</u> Don't let participants take canoes off the trailer. Instructors to follow safe manual handling techniques (bent knees, straight back). Assistance may be given by adult helpers if briefed on safe manual handling techniques first. Have a minimum of 2 participants to drag/lift one boat.</p> <p><u>Raft:</u> Only instructors are permitted on the trailer. Participants are instructed to roll barrels whenever possible. Poles must be carried by one person at each end so there is no risk of the pole striking others. If an instructor is at the lake by themselves with no customers or staff nearby, they may carry a pole by themselves if safe manual handling techniques are adhered to.</p> <p><u>Paddleboards/Canoes:</u> No primary school aged participants to unload the trailer (although they can carry boards / drag canoes in twos once they are off the trailer).</p> <p><u>All:</u> Don't ask the whole group to help as too many people increases the risk of the area where you want to put boats/boards/poles down becoming too crowded.</p>
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Falls onto lakebed or another boat, i.e. ankle injury, injury from landing on hands or knees.	2	1	2	Participants, Instructors.	<p>Fall from raft:</p> <p>Instructor will make a quick assessment of group behaviour before allowing anyone to stand on raft.</p> <p>Instructor will direct rafts away from the shore and tell participants to sit down if they get too close whilst standing. At the shore, water is shallower and so a fall is more likely to end in the paddler's hands, feet or knees hitting the lakebed with force.</p> <p>Instructor to judge behaviour and balance to decide how close they are willing to allow two rafts with standing participants to get to one another. Instructor will direct them to move away if needed.</p> <p>Participants to be told to space out so if they do fall, they will splash into the water rather than potentially land on a board/boat or another participant which may be more likely to result in injury.</p>
Hazards arising from ropes, e.g. limb entrapment when leaving raft.	2	2	4	All Involved	<p>Instructor to warn and correct any participants if they are placing limbs under the ropes in an attempt to stay on the raft. If the raft tumbles and their body falls off the raft but their foot is trapped it can cause injury.</p> <p>Instructor to have access to a blunt tip knife for emergency use.</p>

Injuries from long pioneering poles, e.g. bumps from being struck with an end of the pole when the carrier is turning.	2	1	2	All Involved	<p>Instructor to advise poles are left on the ground until they are needed and to be aware of where the ends of poles are. When moving poles, 2 participants to carry poles from the ends to avoid accidental collision.</p> <p>Instructor to make sure everyone participating is wearing appropriate shoes i.e. trainers to protect toes from poles.</p>
Rolling poles into position, i.e. trapped thumbs.	2	1	2	All Involved	<p>When it's time for group to start rolling poles- instructor will approach group and warn participants that poles should be rolled towards themselves, and participants need to make sure all fingers and thumbs are on top of log when they roll. Instructor will then observe and make corrections/suggestions if needed.</p> <p>If there is an adult with one group, instructor can inform them of this advice/warning and ask them to be mindful of the potential risk.</p>
Falls onto lakebed from 1 person raft (aka 1 barrel), e.g. injury from landing on hands or knees.	2	1	2	Participants	<p>Single person rafts: At the end of the session, paddlers attempt the difficult challenge of paddling a single barrel.</p> <p>Instructor to tell participants that they need to go out as far as the water is up to at least your knees to reduce the risk of injury in the event they fall into water.</p>

Related Risk Documents

Standard operating Procedure (SOP) for Raft Building, Inspection and Replacement Policy, Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Overcrowding, EAP for Disorderly Behaviour, weather policy, EAP for Discovering someone in the water and Informational posters for COLD, HEAT, and INFECTION.

Review Log

Reviewed by	Date of review	Reason for review	Changes made	Actions required	If actions have been completed insert date completed
Dan Crawford, Megan Hughes and Alyssa Jordan	03/10/2025	Water Sports Technical Advisor Onboarding	General review. Adjustments made to ensure in line with operating procedures.	Reissue RA to all involved in water sports	14/4/2025

See Review Log – Raft Building for previous reviews and changes

Version one publication date: 14/4/2025

Before you come:

1. Check out our advice on COLD, HEAT and INFECTION.

COLD at our lake

On really cold days, there's a risk of hypothermia. Here's helpful information for group leaders and participants.

What causes hypothermia?
It's when you get too cold and your body temperature drops below 35°C. This could be because you:

- Stay out in the cold too long
- Don't wear enough clothes
- Have wet clothes and get cold
- Fall into cold water

Hypothermia: What to look for?

At first you might notice:

- Shivering
- Pale, cold and dry skin – skin and lips may turn blue or grey (on black or brown skin this may be easier to see on the palms of hands)

You might also notice

- Slurred speech
- Slow breathing
- Tiredness or confusion

When it gets even worse, you might notice

- A slow heartbeat (measured by the person's pulse)
- That their pulse may be difficult to find (because it's much weaker than normal)
- They stop shivering

What to do!

- Quickly get them indoors (or to shelter) and call 999
- Remove any wet clothing, wrap them in a blanket, sleeping bag or dry towel
- Make sure their head is covered
- Give them warm drinks and some sugary food like chocolate if they're fully awake
- Keep them awake by talking to them
- Make sure someone stays with them

Do not

- Don't use a hot shower or hot water bottle to warm them up
- Don't rub their arms, legs, feet or hands

Huh?! What is afterdrop?

When you get out of cold water, your body temperature can continue to drop even half an hour after you get out. This is called afterdrop.

- When you're in the cold water, your body reduces blood flow to your cold skin and outer flesh and pools warm blood near your vital organs
- When you get out of cold water, cold from your skin and outer flesh then transfers to the rest of your body

So, if someone's gotten very cold, keep an eye on them even after they're inside and dry.

HEAT at our lake

On really hot days, there's a risk of heat exhaustion, or even worse, heat stroke. The adults in charge of your visit will have made sure that there are enough first aiders, but it's a helpful reminder – especially when you're on the bank.

Heat exhaustion: What to watch for?

- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Excessive sweating
- Don't dry skin
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps

You might also notice:

- Headache or confusion
- Loss of appetite and feeling sick
- Fast breathing or pulse
- Temperature of 38°C or above
- Being very thirsty

Heat exhaustion: Follow these 4 steps!

- Move them to a cool place – out of the sun
- Remove all unnecessary clothing like shoes and socks
- Get them to drink cool water or, if available, a sports or rehydration drink
- Cool their skin – sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs wrapped in a cloth put under the armpits or on the neck are good too

Stay with them until they're better (They should start to cool down and feel better within 30 minutes)

Heatstroke: What to watch for?

You may see:

- Someone still unwell after 20 min in treatment for heat exhaustion
- A very high temperature (e.g. 40°C)
- Hot skin that's not sweating
- Fast heart beat
- Fast breathing or slurriness of speech
- Fooling confusion
- A seizure
- Loss of consciousness

Put the person in the recovery position if they lose consciousness.

Heat stroke: What to do!

- First aid is not enough to treat heat stroke
- Seek urgent medical help – Call 999
- Meanwhile, continue the four steps for heat exhaustion

How can we prevent all this?

- Drink more cold drinks, especially if you're active
- Wear light-coloured, loose clothing
- Avoid the sun between 11am and 3pm
- Avoid extreme exercise

INFECTION at lakes and rivers

We're at a lake. That means there's a small risk of you catching leptospirosis (also called Weil's disease when it's severe).

Leptospirosis: What to look for?

If you have any of these symptoms in the next 4 weeks, you must contact your doctors:

- a high temperature (usually between 38°C and 40°C)
- aches and pain, especially in the legs and back
- headache
- being sick or feeling sick
- diarrhoea
- loss of appetite
- redness of the eyes

Most infections result in no or only mild symptoms. But you may need medicines or even hospital treatment. That's why you must contact doctors and say your symptoms and what water activities you have done.

Like the NHS say, we won't let this small risk stop us enjoying the water. But we will make people aware just in case.

It can look like flu

Leptospirosis can look like flu. So, if you feel like you've got flu (e.g. fever, aches and pains), make sure you contact your doctors and say your symptoms and that you've been doing water activities.

How does leptospirosis happen?

There's a germ that lives in animals (e.g. rats, cows). The animals spread the germ when they wee. In dry conditions, the germs die really quickly. In moist places (like lakes and rivers), the germs can last for many days.

If the germs come into your body (for example through cuts or through your mouth), you can become infected.

It's a rare illness in the UK and affects less than 100 people per year. Most infected people either work with animals or catch it abroad.

It is so rare that it shouldn't stop anyone enjoying water activities. But you should still know about it – just in case.

How to say the words

- Leptospirosis: Say "lep-tow-spy-row-sis"
- Weil's disease: Say "Vee's disease"

2. Tell participants (and their parents) what kit they need. Make sure it's clear that flip flops and loose crocs come off in the lake so just aren't suitable. Old trainers or water shoes are. Feel free to copy and paste this visual guide:

Do wear: Old trainers Lace up pumps Non-lace up snug fitting pumps



Don't wear: Crocs/Open shoes



Sliders/Flip Flops



Wellies



They'll also need

- Clothes that they'll be wearing that are suitable for the time of year / expected weather.
- A towel, change of clothes in a bag.
- Drink.
- Sun tan cream (if hot weather expected).

At the session

- Discretely tell the instructor about any non-swimmers or weak swimmers. Much of the lake is shallow (so youngsters can stand and walk to the side) but we still need to know if participants can't swim 50m (50m is our rule of thumb for competent swimmer - even though in practice they are never more than 15 m away from the shore).
- Discretely tell the instructor about any special needs or disabilities (SEND) we need to be aware of. NB: If it's complex SEND, talk to us before the day. We do our best to include everyone – we do even better at this if we know in advance about, for example, profound deafness or a pre-verbal autistic teen.

After the session

- Get group to wash hands before eating.
- If it's been especially hot or cold, ensure the group get cool down / warmed up.