

# Activity Risk Assessment

|                                |  |      |            |          |                      |
|--------------------------------|--|------|------------|----------|----------------------|
| Activity                       | Bouldering   |      |            |          |                      |
| Address of premises            | Hesley Wood Activity Centre, White Lane, Chapelton, S35 2YH                                  |      |            |          |                      |
| Author of this risk assessment | Megan Hughes   |      |            |          |                      |
| Issue Date                     | 10/04/2024   |      |            |          |                      |
| Review                         | This document is reviewed annually. We can review it sooner if needed.                       |      |            |          |                      |
| Reviewed by                    | Alyssa Jordan  | Date | 28/11/2024 | Changes? | Yes, see review page |
| Reviewed by                    | Luke Joseph Alyssa Jordan  | Date | 21/11/25   | Changes? | No                   |
| Checked by Operations Director |  Andy Moore | Date | 21/11/25   |          |                      |

| Explanation of Risk Rating:<br>Risk Rating = Probability x Severity |   |  | Probability   |             |              | Rating | Actions resulting from Risk Rating   |
|---|---|--|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------|--|
|   |   |  | Unlikely<br>1 | Likely<br>2 | Certain<br>3 |        |  |
| Severity  | 1 | Minor injury or damage                             | 1             | 2           | 3            | 1-3    | <b>Low Risk:</b> Carry on, ensuring controls are in place. No further controls required.                                     |
|   | 2 | Major injury or damage                             | 2             | 4           | 6            | 4-6    | <b>Medium Risk:</b> 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    | <b>High Risk:</b> 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?<br>How might people be harmed?   | Risk Level<br>(with existing control measures) |          |        | Who is at risk? | What are the control measures?   |
|--|--|----------|--------|-----------------|--|
|  | Probability                                    | Severity | Rating |                 |  |
| Instructor i.e. Instructor error   | 1  | 2        | 2      | Participants    | All instructors must complete in-house training and assessment to run a bouldering session which follows guidelines of BMC bouldering recommendation. Ongoing quality checks are conducted to ensure session standards are maintained.   |
| Hazards arising from the actions of group members<br>i.e. Overcrowding<br>Disorderly Behaviour | 2  | 2        | 4      | All involved    | To prevent overcrowding and ensure safe supervision, a maximum group size of 12 participants with 2 observers is set for one-hour sessions. During events where no set time or group instructor must not exceed 25 people within the compound with a max of 15 people climbing ensuring adequate supervision of those climbing<br><br>The Group Leader needs to be present during sessions.<br><br>If a group members behaviour becomes dangerous follow the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Disorderly Behaviour. |
| Equipment failure  | 1  | 2        | 2      | Participants    | Only Hesley Wood equipment to be used on Hesley Wood sessions. Hesley Wood equipment is inspected and logged in accordance with its current inspection policy  |
| Structure failure  | 1  | 3        | 3      | All involved    | The climbing tower structure undergoes an annual inspection by a certified professional to ensure compliance with national regulatory standards. In addition, Hesley Wood staff perform pre-use safety checks to verify the integrity and safety of the structure.   |

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|--|--|----------|--------|--------------------|---|
|  | Probability                                    | Severity | Rating |                    |   |
| Weather:<br>Thunderstorms,<br>Heavy rain.                            | 1  | 2        | 2      | All involved       | Session may have to be cancelled or delayed due to lightning storms or heavy rain, where operation can become dangerous.<br><br>See weather policy for more details.  |
| Hazards arising from<br>the actions of 'non<br>qualified assistants. | 2  | 2        | 4      | All involved       | Staff responsible for leading the sessions to delegate responsibility appropriately to competent persons whilst still overseeing general safety.  |
| Falls from the wall.   | 2  | 2        | 4      | Participants       | Clearly communicate the climbing height limit using simple guidelines, such as: "Feet must remain on this ledge or lower," or "Hands must stay below the first set of mallions."<br>For events, rope can be threaded through mallions as a clear visual indicator for everyone within the climbing area.<br><br>Provide participants with instructions on safe landing techniques, such as bending the knees and rolling slightly to reduce impact forces.<br><br>Ensure pebble ground protection is specifically designed to disperse on impact. Regularly inspect and maintain the pebble surface to ensure even coverage and effective cushioning.<br><br>Helmets required for all participants and helpers to minimise the risk of head injuries. |
| Collisions Between<br>Climbers.                                      | 1  | 2        | 2      | Participants       | Participants are instructed to always maintain a safe and appropriate distance from one another. This is monitored continuously throughout the session to ensure compliance and prevent potential accidents.  |

|                                       |   |   |   |              |  |
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| Risk associated with use of spotters. | 2 | 2 | 4 | Participants | <p>Spotters should only be assigned if the group's maturity level ensures the safety of both the spotter and the climber. For example, younger participants (e.g., 5 years old) may lack the spatial awareness or focus required to spot effectively and safely.</p> <p>Spotters must be trained on proper spotting techniques, including positioning and hand placement, and how effectively to guide the climber in case of a fall.</p> <p>Spotters must be aware of climbers' movements and adjust their position to avoid accidental contact that could unbalance the climber or themselves.</p> <p>Spotters must maintain a safe yet close distance, ensuring they can assist without being directly in climber's fall zone where a fall could knock the spotter off balance.</p> |
| Joint strain or Damage.               | 1 | 2 | 2 | Participants | <p>Instructor should be made aware of any long- running joint or mobility problems which affect any member of the group and, where appropriate, should advise against taking part in the activity.</p> <p>Participants to be advised that if they feel discomfort whilst bouldering, they should alert the instructor to the situation so that instructor and participant can make an informed decision on whether continuing bouldering with adjustment being made would ensure the welfare of the participant or if participant cannot take part due to risk increasing injury.</p>  |

|   |          |          |          |                     |   |
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| <p>Warm-ups I.e. Running, Trips, Muscle Strain.</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>Participants</p> | <p>Warm-ups are recommended for all types of sports to prevent injury: All warm-ups should be suitable for the activity taking place: E.g. light jog/run moving on to warming up arms and shoulder or light bouldering at beginning of the activity.</p> <p>For warm-ups that involve running ensure area is clear of trip hazards and ensure suitable space between participants.</p> <p>For light dynamic stretching warm-ups, ensure area is clear and suitable for movements and all participants are appropriately spaced. Ensure all participants are free of any injuries that could be made worse by activity, all participants to stay in their comfortable range of movement to avoid muscle strains or pulls.</p> <p>For static stretching warm-ups: ensure adequate space for movement and participants are spaces out and are free of any injuries that could be made worse by intense movement. Static stretching should only be done after light movement i.e. walking/jogging so muscles are not cold. Participants to stay in their range of movement to avoid muscle strains or pulls. Stretches should not be held for more than one minute.</p> |
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| <p>Games .i.e.<br/>Obstructed<br/>Observation<br/>Falling of the wall,<br/>Collison, Trips<br/>Overcrowding.</p> | <p>1</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>Participants</p> | <p>Games that involve bouldering run the risk of the instructor’s observation points becoming obstructed by the tower. Instructor must move around to ensure visuals of participants are maintained throughout. Clear instructions must be given to participants about height limits for bouldering.</p> <p><b>Falls off the wall:</b><br/>Participants will be given clear instructions about height limits. They will be told to stay in the “safe area” of the climbing wall, where risk of injures that could occur from falling are minimised.<br/>Instructors need to give reminders regarding height limits and instructions on how to land safety i.e. bending knees.</p> <p><b>Collision:</b><br/>Games that involve movement around the wall should be kept at a pace so that reaction time is not impeded and to minimise risk of participant crashing into each other.</p> <p><b>Trips:</b><br/>Area should be checked for trip hazards before use.</p> <p><b>Overcrowding:</b><br/>Participants to keep a safe distance apart whilst climbing, reminder as needed.</p> |
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**Related Risk Documents**

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Bouldering, Inspection and Replacement Policy, Weather Policy and EAP for Overcrowding, EAP for Disorderly Behaviour and EAP for Structural Failure.

**Review Log**

| Reviewed by   | Date of review | Reason for review               | Changes made   | Actions required  | If actions have been completed insert date completed |
|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Alyssa Jordan | 28/11/2024     | Standardise and quality control | <p>Page numbers added to improve document navigation.</p> <p>Common risks that apply across in-house activities that have no formal qualifications are now highlighted under green heading.</p> <p>Session-specific risks are placed under blue heading.</p> <p>Language throughout document simplified for accessibility.</p> | Re issue RA to all instructors involved with bouldering | 20/12/2024   |

See Review Log – Bouldering for previous reviews and changes

Version 1 publication date: 21/11/2025