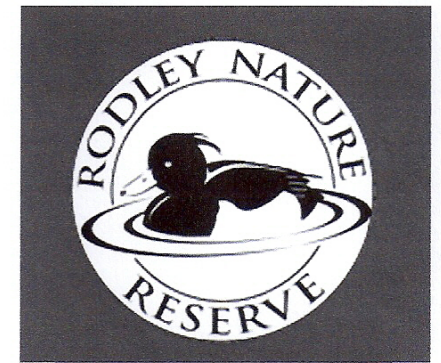


RODLEY NATURE RESERVE RISK ASSESSMENT



ACTIVITY	EDUCATIONAL VISITS
ASSESSED BY	Maggie Bellwood, Denese Swann
DATE	January 2025
REVIEW DATE	When required

SCOPE

This assessment is intended to manage risk associated with visits by school children and youth groups and their staff to Rodley Nature Reserve (RNR). It is intended as a generic assessment that should be reviewed by Education Team members for each visit and must be if prior knowledge suggests a particular risk.

The assessment identifies the responsibilities or RNR prior to, during and following visits and should be used to support school/group staff in the preparation of their own risk assessments prior to visits to the reserve.

METHOD STATEMENT

Schools, usually primary, book classes up to 30 into day-long sessions at the reserve made available on Tuesdays and Thursdays between March and October. Youth groups similarly book evening sessions. Visits are structured, curriculum oriented and facilitated by RNR volunteers who are members of the Education team.

Children spend time in the Visitor Centre and out on the reserve; they walk the meadows, use the hides and spend time pond-dipping, for which there is a separate risk assessment. School parties and groups have access to the toilet block and car park.

Accessible toilet and car parking spaces are available, and there are hard paths to all areas. All hides have wheelchair and child friendly height viewing panels.

First Aid supplies including tick removal tools and a defibrillator are available at the Visitor Centre. RNR expects that school parties and groups will have their own first aid kits and practitioners are advised to include epi-pens for first response to suspected anaphylactic shock.

Children remain at all times the responsibility of school and group staff. It should be noted that RNR does not require DBS checks of their volunteers and our safeguarding policy therefore indicates that our volunteers should not be alone with children.

On booking, school and group co-ordinators are invited to visit the reserve to conduct their own risk assessment. Those making repeat bookings are encouraged to refresh their knowledge of the reserve each time.

Travel to the reserve needs to be planned, and risk mitigated, by schools and groups and should include the following known issues:

- **The route across the canal bridge can be problematic for long passenger vehicles. These should park and drop off on Rodley Town St and visitors will walk onto the reserve along the access road over the canal and river.**
- **Summer trips might include a walk along the canal in any case**
- **Time needs to be allowed for the possibility that the swing bridge is in use by waterway traffic, which can sometimes take 20 minutes to clear the bridge.**

Severe weather:

Shelter is restricted once away from the visitor centre. There is a thatched gazebo with seats near the education pond. Alternative activities are planned to take place in the visitor centre if heavy rain or strong wind is forecast.

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	EXISTING OR PLANNED MITIGATION	RESPONSIBILITY
Travel to the reserve	Difficult access for long vehicles across the canal bridge RTA If walking, lost children	Use appropriate vehicles. Walking routes to be identified and time allowed for Trained drivers, seat belts in use, safe drop off and pick up points agreed Close supervision, high adult/child ratio	School/group
Access on to the reserve	Deep water at river crossing Farm vehicles	Signage and fencing Close supervision when walking	RNR/YW School/group

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	EXISTING OR PLANNED MITIGATION	RESPONSIBILITY
In general	<p>Risk of severe reaction from insect bites/ other allergies</p> <p>Adverse weather conditions, eg sunburn/ heatstroke, bruising/cuts from flying debris in high winds, 'exposure' from cold and wet, burns from lightning strike</p>	<p>Appropriate medication for anaphylactic shock to be available, especially where there is known risk in a cohort. All adults to be aware of symptoms/required action.</p> <p>Access to phones, radios, and land line in case of emergency</p> <p>Suitable clothing/footwear; sunscreen/has, shelter from sun or heavy rain to be sought. VC to be used in the event of a thunderstorm and up to date weather forecasts too be observed</p>	<p>School/group</p> <p>School/group/RNR</p> <p>School/groups</p> <p>RNR/School/group</p>
Access around the reserve	<p>Stings and scratches from overgrown vegetation including brambles and nettles along paths, around seats, ponds and viewing panels.</p> <p>Risk of tick bites, bee and wasp stings and other insect bites</p> <p>Slips and trips on uneven ground</p>	<p>Regular inspection of areas and cutting back where necessary.</p> <p>Children made aware of risks, including id of relevant plants</p> <p>First Aid kits to be carried around the reserve</p> <p>Strict supervision including walking/quiet/ following instruction</p> <p>Keep to paths</p> <p>Hi vis tabards at school/group discretion</p>	<p>RNR habitat team</p> <p>School/group/RNR vols</p> <p>Schools/group</p> <p>School/group</p> <p>School/group</p>
Use of visitor centre	<p>Scalds from water boiler</p> <p>Slips and trips</p>	<p>Only adults behind counter. Follow Tea room guidance</p> <p>Food spills and drips from wet clothes to be cleared asap</p>	<p>Adults to enforce</p> <p>RNR vols</p>
Use of toilets	<p>Safeguarding issues</p> <p>Slips and trips</p> <p>Scolding from hot water taps</p> <p>Exposure to hot weather</p>	<p>No opportunity for RNR volunteers to be alone with children</p> <p>At least one member of school/group staff to be responsible for each group of children at all times.</p> <p>Small groups of children to visit toilets.</p> <p>Spills to be cleared asap</p>	<p>School/group staff</p> <p>RNR vols</p>

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	EXISTING OR PLANNED MITIGATION	RESPONSIBILITY
Use of hides	Bruising/pinching/head injury from panel fastening Personal injury from close contact between children	Adults only to open panels, just prior to visits Small groups only	RNR vols School/group staff
Use of ponds	Separate risk assessment available		