

## SURREY WILDLIFE TRUST – Risk Assessment Form

### Outdoor Learning on Education Reserves

<b>Assessed:</b>	General risks and benefits	<b>Date:</b>	Feb 2026
<b>Site Location</b>	Nower Wood	<b>Updates:</b>	
<b>Assessed By:</b>	A Boyce, L Shorthose, E Rothwell, E Wetherell, K Porter		
<b>Refer to:</b>	<b>Activity specific risk assessments</b>	<b>Review:</b>	Feb 2027

**Benefits:**

- 1) Participants will feel the physical and mental health benefits of learning outdoors
- 2) Enriched understanding of the natural environment through observing and engaging with a variety of species
- 3) Enhanced self-esteem of participants through learning new skills and especially for those that learn better outside a classroom
- 4) PHSE- care for each other and the environment, teamwork, working in new environments with new leaders, having fun.

Type of Hazard	Likelihood of Occurrence	Hazard Severity	Risk Factor	Precautions Action to be taken to reduce the risk.	New Likelihood of Occurrence	New Hazard Severity	New Risk Factor
General Emergency	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	Staff and volunteers trained in emergency first aid and aware of emergency procedures. Nearest A&E for Nower Wood: Epsom KT18 7EG First Aid Kit to be taken for use on site and radio and/or mobile phone available for all groups for use in emergency.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Getting lost/separated from group	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	SWT and school leader to undertake regular head counts. Establish boundaries for each activity and ensure participants remain in view. When walking between locations, if possible, have an adult at the rear of the group.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Self-guided visits - getting lost - emergencies	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	All first time self-guided groups are required to do a recce before visiting. They will be given maps with routes to follow and instructions that relate to clear landmarks. Groups advised that from anywhere on the reserve if they head uphill they will find the blue rope trail which will eventually lead them back to the centre. All groups will be given a contact phone number or radio for the office in case of emergency or getting lost.	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Uneven ground - slips, trips and falls	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	Advise suitable footwear to be worn during pre-course liaison. Make participants aware of uneven ground e.g. tree roots, holes, stones, slippery mud. Ensure participants take their time and are advised not to run around the centre.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Use of equipment and tools	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	When lifting equipment, staff and volunteers should bend at the knees to avoid damage to their backs and should assess the load before lifting. Heavy equipment should be carried by two or more people depending on weight or the load split. Use lifting/transporting aids e.g. wheelbarrow where possible. Safe use of equipment (e.g., pond nets, soil augers) to be demonstrated prior to visitors using. Appropriate tool safety talks and PPE to be provided for practical tasks.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

Type of Hazard	Likelihood of Occurrence	Hazard Severity	Risk Factor	Precautions Action to be taken to reduce the risk.	New Likelihood of Occurrence	New Hazard Severity	New Risk Factor
Use of props in games	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	Ensure any props are sanitised after use. Blindfolds are washed after every use. Ensure props are suitably sized and securely attached to students to avoid any trip hazard or visual impairment. Ensure students are instructed on correct use of any props to avoid injuries to self/others.	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Injury from - natural materials - craft tool use	<b>3</b> <b>3</b>	<b>1</b> <b>3</b>	<b>3</b> <b>9</b>	Children to be aware how to safely handle natural materials and gloves to be worn if necessary. No running whilst holding sticks or tools including scissors etc. Hands must be washed afterwards. Children and adults briefed on how to use tools where appropriate. Children supervised at all times when using tools.	<b>2</b> <b>1</b>	<b>1</b> <b>3</b>	<b>2</b> <b>3</b>
Extreme weather - Hypothermia/heatstroke	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	Advise suitable clothing in pre course liaison. Spares available on site Staff must dynamically assess conditions and group wellbeing. Return to shelter if necessary.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Risk of injury from falling branches	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>15</b>	Regular tree safety inspections along paths and activity areas. Site inspected before visitors arrive. Staff to follow safety protocol – check forecast. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind speeds above 23mph cancel / stay indoors.</li> <li>• Average wind speeds between 17-23mph, dynamic assessment – return to center if windspeeds / gusts pick up.</li> </ul> No activities / talks under infected ash trees and avoid paths through ash showing die back during winds >18mph. Daily risk assessment to advise volunteers of any no go areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader to dynamically assess during walk or activity.</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Danger from abandoned tools left out on site	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	Volunteers and staff to be aware of working areas and avoid if possible. Advise visitors of presence of people working on site. Conservation volunteers to be briefed not to leave tools unattended. Brief use on safe use, transport and storage of tools.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Risk of burns and scalds	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	If school has requested refreshments, urn to be on side, away from student lunch tables. Only staff or age appropriate prepare hot drinks.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Skin irritation, stings, bites, scratches, allergic reactions through contact with insects/ vegetation during visit	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	Visitors advised to wear long sleeves and trousers. Visitors advised to keep to paths at start of day; leader to take participants on an appropriate route. Avoid direct contact with known plant irritants (e.g. Hogweeds, spurge, Hemlock, Wild parsnip, Foxglove). If contact occurs clean affected area with soap and COLD water as soon as possible and do not expose contaminated skin to sunlight. Use equipment to handle and observe invertebrates (black pots, spoons, viewers etc). Latex free gloves available to those with nut allergies. <b>Ensure any participant with plant related/insect allergy is carrying prescribed medication such as an EpiPen.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

Type of Hazard	Likelihood of Occurrence	Hazard Severity	Risk Factor	Precautions Action to be taken to reduce the risk.	New Likelihood of Occurrence	New Hazard Severity	New Risk Factor
Tick bites - risk of Lyme's disease	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	Visitors advised to wear long sleeves and trousers. Ask participants at end to check for tick bites and for them to remove ticks if found. Advise to see a doctor if symptoms of Lyme's disease develop (rash / flu) or if part of tick remains in body. First Aid kits contain tick removal devices. Staff should advise visitors/accompanying adults how to use them but should not attempt to remove the tick themselves. Group leaders are advised of ticks and are sent advice pre visit.	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Eye injuries – twigs, dust, insects, allergies	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	Advise visitors with hayfever etc to take medication before visit. Advise not to rub eyes with dirty hands. Use eye wash (in First Aid kit) if foreign objects enter eye to wash out the debris / administer appropriate first aid.	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Infections from water / contaminated soil e.g., Weil's Disease,	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	Brief students to check for fresh, open cuts or eczema on their hands and provide non-latex gloves for those that do for pond dipping. Brief students not to rub their eyes/ lick their fingers etc during activities. Wash hands as soon as possible with hot soapy water on return to base and <b>always</b> before eating.	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Use of chemicals in studies / activities	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	When using chemical/toxic substances (e.g. universal indicator, barium sulphate) ensure sensible precautions are taken – they are not to be ingested and contact with skin is to be avoided. Hands are to be washed after using chemicals, gloves to be worn in the case of sensitive skin/open wounds/eczema.	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Trespassers Dogs	<b>4</b> <b>2</b>	<b>4</b> <b>3</b>	<b>16</b> <b>6</b>	SWT follow incident procedure – do not deal with incident alone, call for help, alert relevant authorities as per SWT practice note 5. If you are accompanied and feel confident to do so then politely ask to leave. See SWT practice note 23. Only staff dogs allowed on site, Staff to keep dogs under control when any visitors on site. Keep dogs away from children with allergies / phobias of dogs.	<b>1</b> <b>1</b>	<b>4</b> <b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>3</b>
Vandalism and litter	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	SWT staff check and clear site before visitors arrive of any litter/hazardous waste that has been left by trespassers if it is safe to do so. Alter walking routes/activities to avoid damaged areas if necessary. Always lock away equipment.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Ponds/ditches - Drowning - Weil's disease	<b>2</b> <b>3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>2</b>	<b>8</b> <b>6</b>	Take care, keep away from edges unless activity requires. Keep group together. Advise that hands are washed after activities.	<b>1</b> <b>2</b>	<b>4</b> <b>2</b>	<b>4</b> <b>4</b>

<p>A simple equation can be used as a basis:</p> <p>♦ <b>Risk = Hazard Severity x Likelihood of Occurrence</b></p>	<p><b>Risk factors:</b>          1-3 = low, improve where possible          4-9 = medium, improve as soon as possible          10+ = high, unacceptable, reduce risk before work carried out</p>
<p>The <b>likelihood of occurrences</b> should be assessed on a scale of five:</p> <p><b>5 Likely</b> - An injury is probably going to occur</p> <p><b>4 Common</b> - An injury is likely to occur more than three times in a working year (doing this activity every day)</p> <p><b>3 Occasional</b> - An injury is likely to occur two or three times in a working year (doing this activity every day)</p> <p><b>2 Possible</b> - An injury may occur once in a working year (doing this activity every day)</p> <p><b>1 Not Likely</b> - An injury may occur less than once in a life time through this activity</p>	<p>The <b>hazard severity</b> should similarly be assessed on a scale of five:</p> <p><b>5 Very High</b> - multiple deaths</p> <p><b>4 High</b> - death to an individual</p> <p><b>3 Moderate</b> - injury or disease capable of keeping more than one person off work for 3 or more days</p> <p><b>2 Slight</b> - injury or disease capable of keeping one person off work three or more days</p> <p><b>1 Low</b> - minor injury to one individual</p>

Any accident must be written in the accident book in the office, this information will be transferred to the Health and Safety Committee at:  
 Surrey Wildlife Trust, School Lane, Pirbright, Surrey, GU24 OJN Tel. No. - 01483 795440

## **Nower Wood Emergency Procedure**

- All be aware**
- If you hear the fire bell, come back and gather in the upper car park ASAP. Perform a head count in the car park.
  - If you hear a persistent whistle, help is needed.

If an emergency occurs while out on the reserve:

1. (If someone has a mobile that works, phone 999 AND) Use two-way radio to call the office to alert them.
2. Tell office as much information as possible about the incident, eg nature of injury, age and sex of patient, if conscious, any pre-existing medical conditions etc.
3. Ask office to phone the emergency services with the information and to get back in touch when help arrives on site.
4. Stay with patient till emergency services arrive and keep in communication with office through two-way radio.
5. Deal with other pupils & teachers to the best of your ability and depending on the nature of the incident, the radios may help.
6. After incident/accident is dealt with please remember to fill out the appropriate forms and inform the manager.

**Nower Wood Educational Nature Reserve, Mill Way, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 8QA**