

Risk assessment for KS3, KS4 & older students. Habitat & river activities at Rushall Farm

SITE NAME: Rushall farm	GRID REF: SU 589 726
OWNER: W. Cumber & son (Theale) Ltd	TEL. NO: 0118 9744 547
ASSESSOR: John Bishop 07803923842	
NEAREST HOSPITAL: Accident & Emergency: Royal Berkshire, Craven Road, Reading (0118 987 5111), Minor Injuries (Work Hours) West Berkshire Community Hospital, Thatcham (01635 273300) SITE ACCESS FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES: from Scratchface Lane	

ACTIVITIES AT RUSHALL FARM

Activity: TRAILER RIDES		
HAZARD	RISK LEVEL (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)	ACTION
Overhanging branches and brambles on trailer ride routes	low	Check for and remove any potentially dangerous overhanging vegetation on routes to be used that day. Frequently used trailer routes regularly maintained
Open sided trailer	medium	Safety talk given by Trust leader before every ride to ensure children i) stay seated at all times when trailer is moving; ii) keep hands, feet and heads inside of green bars; and iii) hold onto green bars if necessary. Teachers and parents to sit evenly spaced between children in order for them to reach across if necessary. JST leader or teacher to sit at back of trailer, not children, with chain secured across doorway before departing. Trailer driver instructed to drive slowly when children are on board, and made especially aware of very young children on a visit. Max speed 18mph on road, 10mph on farm tracks (see sticker in tractor cab) All trailer drivers in possession of driving license, Lantra certificate or suitable experience.
Activity: POND DIPPING		
Direct access to pond edge	High	JST leader to instruct group to first sit on benches away from pond for instructions before starting activity and then only to dip from purpose built platform. Kickboards always to be maintained in good condition.
Deep Water	Medium	Warning sign and rescue buoy always in place. Throw line put out prior to all visits and staff instructed for use.
Slippery surface on bridge and platform in wet conditions	Low	Children instructed in safety talk not to run on platform Wire covering of surface to be regularly maintained
Gaps between horizontal bars on dipping platform	Medium	Children instructed before beginning activity to make sure they do not lean below the lowest bar or lean too far over. Adequate supervision of group at all times by JST leader and school staff.
Bacteria in pond water	Medium	Health & safety talk to all groups. Cuts covered and use of antiseptic wipes. Wash hands after activity using soap and water. Advice on how to use nets to avoid splashing.
Ground conditions – path to platform slippery and water logged in wet conditions	Low	Advise group of conditions Removal of debris from start of platform prior to visits
Wildlife hazards – snakes, fungi etc.	Low	Warn children not to approach
Overhanging branches and potential falling branches	Low	Tree safety survey carried out spring 2018
Equipment on platform- Possibility of trip hazard	Medium	Children instructed before dipping to be aware of equipment. Magnifying pots, spoons & I.D. sheets kept in one central bowl
Nets on Platform- Limited space	Medium	Children instructed before dipping to be aware of both ends of nets. Smaller, brighter and more visible nets used
Activity: RIVER STUDIES at PANGFIELD SU565718, PLUM MANGER SU592720, LOXMOOR SU565718 (only used very rarely), COLLEGE SITE SU6041372576 (MEASURING, DIPPING, CHEMICAL TESTING) & BRIDLE LODGE SU587718 (MEANDER STUDY)/BUCKLEBURY MILL/ THE DAIRIES.		
Dead trees along pathways	Low	Check stability on pre-visit check
Roadside hazard – crossing road from Oak Tree Field to Mariners Lane and onto Folly Bridge Gate	medium	Staff to ensure adult at front and back of group Walk single file into oncoming traffic Warn children Adequate supervision
Brambles and thorns at eye-height on paths	Low	Clear path prior to visit
Uneven ground on paths including Back Lane badger sett	Low	Warn children
Weather conditions – especially relevant given lack of shelter at Pangfield	Low	First Aid kit and blanket to be brought along on each visit Provide schools with recommendations for suitable clothing
Slippery banks	medium	Health & safety talk to all groups and only use points of safe access.
Deep / fast flowing water	High	Sites to be visited before each visit to ensure water is not too deep for a visit and to remove obstacles from the river Teachers to be made aware that visit may have to be cancelled if, on inspection, the river is considered to be unsafe for fieldwork. Rope off section where river has scoured out deep sections
Using waders	Low	Health & safety talk to all groups

		Try and ensure that wader size is as close to child shoe size as possible.
Using / carrying field equipment	Low	Health & safety talk to all groups
Bridges gets slippery when wet	Low	Instruct children to walk carefully across bridges.
Bacteria in water	Medium	Cuts covered prior to starting activity Children with severe cuts or eczema to be advised not to have contact with water Health & safety talk to all groups Health & safety guidelines to be sent to all schools Hands washed after visit to river and prior to eating
Silt / Mud especially at Plum Manger meander	Low	Instruct children prior to visit regarding waders becoming stuck
Wildlife hazards – snakes, fungi, dropped antlers etc.	Low	Warn children not to approach
Activity: WOODLAND MINI-BEAST HUNTING (HABITATS)		
Overhanging branches and brambles on walk through Rushall Copse	low	Route through woodland to be checked and cut back prior to visit Warn children on approach to woodland
Trip hazard – tree roots, slippery leaves	low	Children instructed not to run in the woods and watch where they are walking at all times
Splitting up into smaller groups for mini-beast hunting	low	JST leader to divide group according to number of adults, making sure there is one adult with each group Groups to stay within earshot and sight of leader at activity starting point
Rolling logs and stones	low	Only carried out with JST Staff present
Activity: SWEEP NETTING IN MEADOW (HABITATS)		
Metal frame on sweep net	low	Children instructed to sweep a safe distance away from group members JST leader/teachers to supervise
Brambles & Nettles	low	Children instructed to avoid brambles and to be careful of nettles (identification) but encouraged to sweep nettles
RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RUSHALL WOODS (General & for Woodland Walk)		
HAZARD	RISK LEVEL (HIGH/MEDIUM/LOW)	ACTION
Trees and branches hanging over lane to Rushall Manor.	High	Report any danger immediately.
Falling trees and vegetation over path above bonfire site (woods behind farmhouse) and more directly over bonfire site	High	Check before use.
Roots on path above farmhouse trip hazard	Low	Health & Safety Talk, make children risk aware
Tree stump in middle of path above farmhouse	Low	Health & Safety Talk, make children risk aware
Vegetation overgrowing path	Medium	Route through woodland to be checked and cut back prior to visit Warn children on approach to woodland
Slope in woods behind farmhouse – very slippery in wet weather	Low	Monitor in wet weather and assess suitability for children. Warn children and advise caution
Road Crossing	Medium	Children made aware of road and instruction on sign and to cross the road sensibly.
Bracken near path	Low	Children warned not to touch as can cut hands
Activity: BEES		
Bees in Observation hive	Low	Children supervised. Glass reinforced. Ensure no way bees can escape. Particular focus on the feeder area
The bee game	Medium	Potential trip hazard. Make sure played on the grass if outside or upstairs in the stable area
Egyptian beekeeping	Low	Ensure the honey slave isn't allergic to honey
Honey tasting	Low	Only after hand washing, ensure that no children are allergic to honey

John Bishop 14th September 2019