

Task Assessed: Educational group visits to Dawyck Botanic Garden – guidance for teachers/practitioners.

Persons at risk: Group leaders, group members, RBGE staff, students and visitors

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE GROUP'S WELFARE on a visit to the Garden is with the activity organiser through their leaders.

We expect groups to carry out their own risk assessments – please use the information below to assist you with this

NOTE: If **first aid assistance** is required during your visit, please phone the numbers below. If an ambulance is needed dial 999 first, then let Garden staff know. **Emergency number:** Dawyck [01721 760254](tel:01721760254)

Reviewer	Date	Changes
Cath Ashby	27/03/23	Update
Harry Soolia	23/02/2024	Update and colour change
Harry Soolia	18/08/2025	Annual Update

Reviewer	Date	Changes

RISK RATING is a measure of (A) Potential severity & (B) Likelihood

RE-ASSESS RISK RATING as and when task changes or proposed actions have been applied

<u>RISK RATING - GUIDANCE ONLY</u>			LIKELIHOOD				*PROBABLE - happens repeatedly / expected *POSSIBLE - potential exists / uncommon *IMPROBABLE - rarely occurs / unlikely *EXTREMELY REMOTE – approaches zero chance
			PROBABLE (3)	POSSIBLE (2)	IMPROBABLE (1)	EXTREMELY REMOTE (0)	
SEVERITY	FATAL/DISABILITY	(3)	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	
	MAJOR INJURY	(2)	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	
	MINOR INJURY	(1)	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	
	NEGILIGBLE	(0)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	

Hazard	(A)	(B)	(A x B)	Controls & Monitoring Procedures	(A1)	(B2)	(A1 x B2)	Proposed action to further reduce risk
	potential Severity	Likelihood	Base Risk rating		Potential Severity after controls	Likelihood after controls	New Risk rating	
General access hazards								
Risk of injury – slips, trips, areas of active work	2	2	4	Garden inspected before opening to the public and any findings reported or repaired or roped off. Warn group to take care in areas when grass or paths are wet & choose suitable locations for active games. Always keep an eye on your groups. Never cross any form of barrier.	2	1	2	
Events in the garden Risk of injury, eg tripping, on cables and lighting	2	2	4	There may be extra vehicles and cabling and lighting laid in areas of the garden for events. Take care and avoid these areas in activities. Never cross any form of barrier.	2	1	2	
Ponds/water features Risk of drowning	3	2	6	Warn group to be careful and not to go beyond existing barriers. Supervise carefully. Place adults in strategic positions.	3	1	3	Emergency flotation devices found at all ponds
Animal stings/bites								

Risk of sting leading to anaphylactic shock	3	2	6	Group leaders are responsible for managing any known allergies in young people, for bringing appropriate medication and ability to administer it.	3	1	3	
Risk of sting or animal bite leading to minor injury or infection	1	2	2	Warn group not to try to touch wild animals/birds. Guide children to be calm around stinging insects.	1	1	1	Check activity areas for wasp nests and warn children and move to another location.
Risk of tick bite leading to infection (Lyme disease)	3	2	6	Group leaders are aware what ticks look like and how to remove safely using tick twister/card. At peak tick times avoid using wilder areas if possible. Before activity in longer grass/ferns/wilder areas warn group to tuck trousers into socks. Post activity - Visually look at clothing for ticks and brush off with hands. Tell children to ask parents to check for ticks afterwards. If ticks are present shake clothing outdoors and put into washing machine or into a bag. Be vigilant on skin for the next 24 hours as ticks can make their way around the body slowly and make a bite later. If you are bitten follow advice on NHS website .	3	1	3	On led programmes - Tick bite removal kits supplied in RBGE First Aid kits.
Injuries from plants								
Risk of injury by plant spines, splinters, twigs or similar	1	2	2	Be aware that some plants have spines and take care when touching. Be aware that wood may cause splinters and take care when touching. Warn children to be careful with eyes nears twigs and spines at eye level.	1	1	1	Practitioner to select pieces of wood to handle which are unlikely to cause splinters.

Risk of poisoning/stomach after eating plant or fungi material	3	2	6	Warn children not to eat any plants. Contact NHS DIRECT by calling 111 for first aid advice if you think a member of your group has ingested plant material in the garden. Notify the Garden staff on above number if First Aid assistance is needed.	3	1	3	Try to get a sample of the suspected plant and an estimate of how much has been ingested.
Weather								
Sun Risk of heat stroke	3	2	6	Find shade as much as possible on very hot days. Come prepared with suitable outdoor clothing, e.g., hats & bring bottles of water.	3	1	3	
Sun Risk of sunburn or heat rash	1	3	3	Children should carry sun lotion for personal use. Wear a hat and cover arms and legs.	1	1	1	
Rain & Cold Risk of hypothermia	2	1	2	Come prepared with suitable footwear and outdoor gear. Don't stay out too long if clothing isn't appropriate.	1	1	1	Regular checks on children
Wind Risk from falling trees, debris or glass	3	2	6	The gardens may shut during inclement weather or high winds, sometimes closing at short notice. Your visit may be cancelled for safety reasons. If high winds are forecast phone for advice in advance of your visit: Dawyck 01721 760254 Visitors on site will be alerted by staff of safe route and asked to leave the garden. Respect signs and barriers and follow suggested alternative routes in garden.	3	1	3	

Risk of being injured by lightning strikes	3	2	6	If electrical storms are forecast Garden staff will make decision on whether to shut the garden. Your visit may be cancelled in advance or cut short if necessary.	3	1	3	If caught in a storm follow advice by Met Office . Seek shelter. Avoid water and find a low-lying position away from trees, poles and metal objects.
Allergies								
Food Risk of anaphylactic shock leading to death	3	2	6	Group leaders are responsible for any known food allergies in young people, for bringing appropriate medication and ability to administer it.	3	1	3	On led programmes - Learning staff will check with teacher before offering any tasting experiences. Booking form asks for known allergies to be shared.
Plants Risk of allergic reaction (dermatitis or similar)	1	2	2	If any of your group have known plant allergies then long sleeves should be worn and touching any plant sap should be avoided. Plant diversity prevents any absolute guarantee of a person not encountering an unknown skin allergen. If a known skin allergy exists take care. Wash hands after touching anything in nature. Get advice from NHS DIRECT by calling 111 if a rash appears after being in the garden.	1	2	2	On led programmes - Learning staff will warn group of known irritant plants. Booking form asks for known allergies to be shared.

Machinery								
Risk of injury from tractors & trailers and vehicles on the paths, roads and in carpark	3	2	6	Warn group that we operate moving vehicles on main paths in the garden. Some are quiet electric vehicles, and you may not hear them approach. Take care when crossing and be vigilant when walking. Give clear boundaries when playing games on lawns and directions not to run onto paths. Move on to grass to allow vehicles to pass. Take care in the car park.	3	1	3	Drivers stick to speed limit & are vigilant around groups.
Risk of injury from lawnmowers	3	1	3	Lawnmowers operate on lawn areas. Be vigilant and move away to another area if necessary. Do not chase mowers or other machinery. Group leaders warn children to keep clear of lawnmowers.	3	1	3	Operators are vigilant around groups.
Other risks to children								
Risk of accidental injury by another child	2	1	2	Group leaders are responsible for the behaviour of the class.	2	1	2	
Risk of children becoming lost (safeguarding issue)	2	2	4	Group leaders are responsible for any children under their care. In the event of a child becoming separated from the group contact Garden staff to assist in finding the child. Contact number - Dawyck 01721 760254	2	1	2	Staff have a lost child policy and procedure that they will follow
Risk from visitors (safeguarding issue)	3	1	3	If you suspect any suspicious activity by a visitor phone number above to report or call 999 direct for police in emergencies.	3	1	3	Adults are vigilant. Let Garden staff know of any issues

				Gather your group and make your way to a more public area with other people present. Toilets and spaces are shared with members of the public. Supervise children carefully.				
Safeguarding risks	3	2	6	Members of our learning team have advanced disclosure and other staff have basic PVG.	3	1	3	If you would like to report a safeguarding concern email Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL): dsl@rbge.org.uk .
Teaching spaces								
Risk of injury from unsafe shelters	1	2	2	Garden staff carry out safety checks on all shelters. If guy ropes are present, they will have visual hazard warning, eg ribbon/tape. Warn taller people about any low doorways.	1	1	1	
Risk of injury in indoor spaces	1	2	2	Ask group to take care and walk inside buildings. Be vigilant when leaving buildings as there may be garden vehicles using the courtyard and road.	1	1	1	Staff will ensure groups are alerted to any risk inside teaching spaces if they are taking part in a programme with the Learning Team.
Rick of injury from cattle grid	1	2	2	Warn children not to walk over cattle grid. Always use footpath.	1	1	1	
Risk of injury during activities	1	2	2	Child-friendly kit and materials are used by Learning Team. Extra instructions will be given if specific risk is possible in an activity. Activities are age and group appropriate.	1	1	1	Dynamic risk assessments are made in each outdoor area at time of activity by Learning Team.

Programme specific risks								
Every Picture programme - Risk of safeguarding breach due to children taking photographs of each other	3	2	6	Children to be told to only take photographs of plants. Cameras to be checked after session and any photos of children to be deleted.	3	1	3	

Signed: **Cath Ashby (Schools Manager)**

Date: 26/08/26