

Risk Benefit Assessment

Ponds and Wetland

Brief description of activity	Any activity undertaken with children and adults in a pond or wetland environment. This includes activities such as pond dipping, observations and field work, as well as the risks associated with ponds and wetlands on school sites more generally.
Location of activity	Ponds and wetlands
Participants	LtL staff Participants (Adult and children) Public
Benefit of activity	Greater opportunities for experiential learning and scientific inquiry. Learning about nature and developing nature connection from an environment rich in biodiversity. Improved wellbeing, practical risk taking – including learning to be safe around open water, physical skills and dexterity, social and communication skills.
This Risk Benefit Assessment should be read in conjunction with LTL's Health and Safety Policy, other relevant LTL Risk Benefit Assessment's and LTL Play Policy (as appropriate).	

Activity	Hazard	Control Methods
Any activity undertaken with children and adults in a pond or wetland environment. As well as the risks associated with ponds and wetlands on school sites more generally.	Drowning Trips slips and falling in water	• Suitability site check done for intended group visit (access, gathering places, group size) • An emergency action plan for incidents involving the pond/wetland should be in place by site owner (e.g school, local authority) and shared with LtL staff and visitors • Adequate supervision in place • Safety talk around expected behaviours (safe positioning for activities, not splashing, disturbing wildlife) given before entering pond or wetland area • Adequate protective measures in place (as advised and expected by site owner) such as secure fencing, clear pathways, pond covering (e.g protective grid) • Suitable PPE (waterproof plasters, protective gloves, lifebuoy) as required • LtL delivery staff to remain in sight and vigilant, carrying out dynamic risk assessment.

This could include: pond dipping, surveys, observations, field work,	Cold injuries (Hypothermia)	- Foil heat blanket in first aid kit - Spare clothing available
	Eye damage (reflection)	- Move into shaded area if possible - Reduce time spent close to water – change activity choice - Monitor weather (sun brightness)
	Bacterial infection (eyes, mouth, open wounds) e.g. weils disease, zoonosis	- Observe pond water quality - Discourage splashing - Handwashing after visit or before any potential hand to mouth contact (eating)
	Injury from equipment (hit by netting pole)	- Checking site suitability for planned activities - Providing clear safety instructions for planned activities - Dynamic risk assessment
	Being attacked by distressed animals	- Discussion around what species to expect around the pond or wetland and how to respect their habitats and behaviours - Provide guidance on the correct use of equipment (species collection) - Advise no direct handling of species
Precedents or comparisons:		Contact with water does bring more risks, and the hazards are potentially of high consequence, however, safe routine building and good group management, alongside maintenance of the area and its safety features make the likelihood of risk acceptably low.
Evaluation:		There are many schools and educational settings with ponds in the UK, and serious incidents are <u>extremely</u> rare.

	Related safety guidance can be found here: https://www.rosipa.com/leisure-water-safety/water/advice/pond-dipping support for pond creation and maintenance here: https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/advice-resources/
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Assessor	Holly Willmott	Signature		Date	25/03/26
Form Checked by	Emily Akerman	Signature	E.Akerman	Date	25/03/26
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