

GROUP DETAILS

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL:

Leader:	Group Phone:
Participants:	

ACTIVITY DETAILS

Purpose of Activity:	Date:
Benefit of Activity: Develops careful handling and ethical sampling techniques around wildlife. Fosters curiosity and appreciation for freshwater biodiversity. Introduces scientific observation through identification of pond organisms. Links seasonal change and water quality to visible life cycles. Promotes inquiry-based learning through direct observation and questioning. Teaches ecosystem concepts including predator/prey, habitats, and food chains.	

HAZARDS

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Allergic reactions	Swelling, breathing difficulty	Supports inclusive participation and emergency preparedness.	Medical needs recorded in advance. Staff trained in identifying allergic reactions and using epi-pens. Allergy plans shared before each session. Avoid known allergens like pollen-heavy plants if at-risk students are present. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Med
Drowning during rescue attempt	Drowning, panic	Promotes calm thinking and clear roles in emergency response.	Adults remain the only ones to intervene in emergencies. Throw rope stored within arm's reach. Children taught to call for help and step back if someone falls in. Emergency procedures clearly shared with staff. (ALL)	Adults	Before Measure: High After Measure: Med

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Falling into water	Drowning, hypothermia	Encourages understanding of personal limits and water safety.	Boundaries marked with rope, cones, or pegs. Adults positioned between children and water. Children taught safe body position for dipping. Emergency throw rope kept within reach. Session paused if safety rules are not followed. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Med
Boisterous behaviour near water	Falls, hitting others	Reinforces emotional regulation and peer consideration.	Clear expectations set at start. No pushing, running or loud shouting near the pond. Adults intervene immediately if unsafe behaviour seen. Natural consequences (pause in activity) used for learning. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low
Cold exposure or wet clothing	Chills, discomfort, illness	Teaches preparedness for changing outdoor conditions.	Children instructed to wear waterproof layers and spare clothes brought. Seating area kept dry and sheltered. Warm drinks or hand warmers available if needed. Session paused if children become visibly cold or uncomfortable. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Debris or litter in water	Cuts, contamination	Encourages environmental stewardship and respect for ecosystems.	Pond checked for rubbish or sharp objects before session. Any found is removed by adults wearing gloves. Children warned not to touch anything unknown or shiny. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Disturbing or harming wildlife	Harm to animals, bites	Instills empathy and care for small creatures and habitats.	Children taught to handle pond life gently and return it promptly. No dipping in nesting or high-activity areas. Magnifying pots and ID sheets used for minimal contact. Wildlife care modeled by staff. (ALL)	Wildlife, Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Electrical items near water	Shock, equipment damage	Teaches respect for equipment and managing mixed-use environments.	Any electronics (e.g. microscopes) kept on dry, stable surfaces far from pond edge. Hands dried fully before handling. Electrical cords kept out of path zones. (ALL)	Children, Adults	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Footing hazards near pond edge	Slips, trips, falls, cuts, twisted ankles	Allows children to access and investigate the pond edge, providing close-up, hands-on learning experiences that deepen engagement with aquatic habitats and real-world environments.	Inspect and mark uneven, sharp, or slippery surfaces before sessions. Provide guidance on safe, gripped footwear. Position equipment in designated zones away from walkways. Maintain active supervision to reinforce slow, careful movement near the water. (ALL)	All participants	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low
Improper equipment use	Injury, damage	Develops responsibility and respectful use of shared tools.	Children taught correct technique for each tool. Equipment labelled and checked each session. Broken or misused items removed immediately. Children modelled safe use by staff. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Insect bites or stings	Swelling, allergic reaction	Encourages respectful observation of insects and calm response to discomfort.	Area checked for wasp nests or ant hills before session. Children wear long sleeves and avoid disturbing insects. Adults carry bite cream and epi-pens if required. First aid procedures discussed with all staff. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Interference from public or animals	Distraction, bites	Teaches awareness of shared spaces and responsible behaviour.	Staff remain aware of nearby paths or open access. Children told not to engage with dogs or other groups. A designated adult assigned to monitor boundary areas. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Lack of supervision	Injury, panic, misbehaviour	Builds trust and ensures children feel secure outdoors.	Correct adult-to-child ratios maintained. All areas within line of sight. Staff briefed before session and assigned to zones. Children never left unattended at pond edge. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Muscle strain from awkward posture	Strain, aches, discomfort	Encourages ergonomic awareness in active tasks.	Children guided to sit or kneel comfortably while dipping. Rotate roles regularly to reduce time spent in one position. Lightweight tools used to avoid overexertion. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Over-reaching toward water	Falling, shoulder strain	Develops physical control and reduces impulsive actions near danger.	Children shown safe kneeling or squatting positions. Dipping only allowed at marked zones with adult presence. Poles kept short enough to prevent leaning. Children removed from edge if unsafe posture is used repeatedly. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Overcrowding at pond edge	Falls, pushing	Supports cooperation and patience in turn-taking scenarios.	Limit of 3-4 children per dipping station enforced. Rotations set by timer or whistle. Adults manage group flow. Extra activities provided to keep waiting children engaged. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low
Poor lighting or visibility	Trips, confusion	Reinforces boundaries of safe operating conditions.	Sessions only run in daylight or well-lit conditions. No pond dipping in twilight. If vision compromised, session moved or ended. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Sharp tools or net poles	Cuts, bruises, splinters	Develops respect for tools and coordination when working closely.	All nets checked before use for cracks or splinters. Children shown how to hold nets with space between each other. Nets stored safely when not in use. Carrying and dipping techniques clearly demonstrated at the start. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Straying from boundaries	Getting lost, injury	Promotes independence within agreed safe limits.	Clear physical boundaries laid out with cones, flags or tape. Children told not to leave set area. Buddy system used. Staff positioned around perimeter for full visibility. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Students with additional needs	Overwhelm, exclusion	Ensures all children access meaningful outdoor learning and develop confidence in natural spaces.	Staff made aware of individual needs in advance. 1:1 support provided where needed. Instructions given visually and verbally. Activity adapted to be sensory-friendly if required. Staff monitor regulation and offer breaks without stigma. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: High After Measure: Low
Sun glare on water	Poor visibility, misjudgement	Enhances visual focus and comfort during activity.	Staff monitor light levels and change direction of approach if needed. Hats with peaks encouraged. Shade options provided if glare is affecting visibility. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Sunburn or overheating	Burns, dehydration	Builds awareness of sun safety and energy regulation.	Children wear hats and sunscreen. Sessions scheduled in shaded areas or earlier parts of the day. Drinking water provided. Regular rest breaks encouraged in warm weather. Staff monitor for signs of fatigue. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Tick bites	Lyme disease, itching	Increases awareness of nature-related risks and body awareness.	Children wear long sleeves and tuck trousers into socks. After the session, children perform tick checks with staff guidance. Staff trained in tick removal and response to symptoms. Session cancelled in high-risk tick areas. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Unsafe or contaminated water	Illness, skin irritation, infection, stomach upset	Promotes learning in real-world environments while developing strong health and hygiene awareness.	Pre-session water checks for algae, odour, and clarity. Prohibit ingestion of pond/river water. Compulsory handwashing after activity. Waterproof coverings for any cuts. Cancel or relocate session if water is unsafe. Use the situation to discuss water safety and ecology with participants. (ALL)	All participants	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low

HAZARD	RISK	RISK BENEFIT	MEASURE	RISK TO	RISK LEVEL
Vegetation contact hazards	Scratches, eye injury, tripping, entanglement, panic	Enables safe exploration of natural pond surroundings, helping children develop spatial awareness, navigation skills, and appreciation of diverse plant habitats.	Trim or clearly mark low branches. Guide children away from dense or overhanging vegetation. Tie back long hair. Maintain clear, obstacle-free dipping zones for safe access and movement. (ALL)	Children	Before Measure: Med After Measure: Low
Unpredicted risks	Illness, injury, death		Ongoing dynamic risk assessment carried out by all staff. Any observed potential hazards should be notified to group leader and immediate action taken if required. (ALL)	All	N/A

NOTES

Extra notes & activity evaluation:

Completed by

Reviewed/Approved by

Risk Assessment Date

Review Required Date