Canoeing Risk Assessment					
Written by	**Ben Pearse Team Leader**	**Date reviewed**	**December 2025**	**Description of activity: journey or games on the river yare**	
Reviewed by	**Sam Fenton Deputy Manager**	**Date of next review**	**December 2026**	**Qualifications required for activity paddle UK paddle sports instructor qualification. 1:12 participants or 1:8 boats not including their own boat**	

What could go wrong?	Who is at risk?	What controls are put in place
Hot weather Dehydration, sun burn and sun stroke	*Participants* *Staff*	*Participants* *Encourage participants to stay hydrated. If participants are visibly unwell we will get them to sit in the shade so they can lower their internal temperature. If conditions do not improve staff will get teachers to preform first aid.* *Staff* *Staff will need to come prepared for the sessions with the correct clothing and sufficient water for the session.*
Wind and rain Hyperthermia, getting wet	Participants Staff	Participants Ensure that all participants are wearing suitable clothing for the weather conditions and the session. If participants are visually unwell ask them to cover up in suitable clothing. Staff All staff working in the outdoors must be prepared for all weather conditions so should all be wearing correct clothing.
Slips, Trips, Falls Head injuries, sprains, cuts and other injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to remind all participants and other members of staff to walk within the session areas and to walk when carrying any equipment.
Equipment failure	Participants Staff	Instructor to check all equipment during the session and at the end of each session and making sure any damaged equipment is changed and

Minor and major injuries		noted to be check by management. Instructor to make sure all PPE is fitted correctly.
Broken equipment Minor and major injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to make sure all equipment is checked when setting up and any damaged or broken equipment is not used and moved away from other equipment and noted to management.
Manual handling Musclue strains, back injuries	Participants Staff	Participants Instructor to show and help participants move canoes and other equipment with right technique to prevent injuries. Staff Staff to make sure they are asking for help if needed and making sure all canoes are empty before moving. Ensuring that correct lifting methods are used to make sure injuries are prevented
Other river users Conversation with unknown people and collisions with other river users.	Participants Staff	Instructors to remind participants that there may be other river users and what to do when encountered with one and how to act and behave to ensure all river users are safe. Instructors keep boats within there sight while paddling on the river and will observe and intervene with any interactions with other river users. The area of the river we paddle on is low in river traffic as there are not many public launching points.
Poor leadership & instructing Minor, major and critical injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to maintain control of the group by setting rules where needed to ensure the session is ran safety. Such as where participants can and can't be during different parts of the session, that when the instructor is talking all participants are listening, all equipment must be used in the way the instructor has shown throughout the session.
Falling in the water Drowning, hyperthermia, cold water shock	Participants Staff	Instructor to teach participants how to avoid falling into the water, instructor teach participants what to do if they do fall in to ensure that they are rescued quickly, instructor also to point out where the waters edge is and where the end of the slip way is when launching and landing canoes. Activity session plan modified to accommodate weather conditions and participants ability.
Infections from water and riverbank Water born diseases/ illness	Participants Staff	Instructor to remind all participants to wash their hands with warm soapy water to help fight the risk of infection.

Collisions with other canoes, paddles and obstructions Cuts, bruises minor, major and critical injuries.	Participants Staff	Canoes Instructor to remind participants to look where they are going and not to go too fast and that they must stay in control of their canoe throughout the session. Also to keep hands, arms, legs and feet in the canoe at all times unless told otherwise by the instructor Paddles Instructor to remind participants to keep their paddles low and not to hit others with their paddle. Paddles should never be at head height, when rafting up all paddles must be placed in canoes.
Animals and wildlife on the river Stress, psychological damage, bites	Participants Staff	Instructor to brief all participants on what to do if wildlife is encountered on the river and that participants should not try to touch or harm any wildlife.
Bites and stings Allergic reactions	Participants Staff	Instructor to know all medicals in the group and know what is needed if something was to happen, and to carry a first aid kit sealed in a waterproof container
Debris/ rubbish in the river Minor, major injuries from unsee rubbish in the riverbed and river pollution	Participants Staff	Instructor to ensure all participants are wearing closed toe shoes throughout the entire activity. (NO WELLY BOOTS).
Radio failure/ out of radio range from Eaton Vale office Unable to communicate with centre in case of emergency.	Participants Staff	Instructor to carry a water mobile phone in a waterproof pouch provided by Eaton Vale with important phone numbers saved.
Jumping in (end of session) Drowning, cold-water shock, hyperthermia	Participants staff	Instructor to make sure that participants only jump when the water in clear and that the instructor is ready. Instructor to also manage the number of participants jumping based on the group and their behaviour during the session. Jumping in not to take place if weather is poor and unsuitable.