

Kayaking Risk Assessment				
Written by	Ben Pearse Team Leader	Date reviewed	December 2025	Description of activity: A kayak journey along the river Yare with games
Reviewed by	Sam Fenton Deputy Manager	Date of next review	December 2026	Qualifications required for activity Paddle UK Paddle sports leader qualification & In house activity assessment



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.  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. Activity session plan modified to accommodate weather conditions and participants ability.
Equipment failure  Minor and major injuries	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 noted to be check by management

Broken equipment Minor and major injuries	Participants Staff	Instructor to make sure all equipment is check when setting up and any damaged or broke equipment is not used and moved away from other equipment and noted to management.
Manual handling  Muscles strain, back injuries	Participants Staff	Participants Instructor to show and help participants move kayaks 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 kayaks are empty before moving. Ensuring that the right 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 to teach participants what to do in the case of a capsize and how to get out of the kayak once it has overturned, instructor also to point out where the water's edge is and where the end of the slip way is when launching and landing kayaks. Activity session plan modified to accommodate weather conditions and participants ability.
Infections from water and riverbank  Water borne 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 kayaks, paddles and obstructions  Cuts, bruises minor, major and critical injuries.	Participants Staff	Kayaks 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 kayak throughout the

		<p>session. Also to keep hands, arms, legs and feet in the kayak at all times unless told otherwise by the instructor</p> <p>Paddles Instructor to remind participants that helmets are to be worn at all times and to watch where the blade of their paddle is to make sure they are not hitting anyone with it. When rafting up paddles are to be laid across decks of kayaks.</p>
<p>Animals and wildlife on the river</p> <p>Stress, psychological damage, bites</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Bites and stings</p> <p>Allergic reactions</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>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</p>
<p>Debris/ rubbish in the river</p> <p>Minor, major injuries from unseen rubbish in the riverbed</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to ensure all participants are wearing closed toe shoes throughout the entire activity. (NO WELLY BOOTS).</p>
<p>Radio failure/ out of radio range from Eaton Vale office</p> <p>Unable to communicate with centre in case of emergency.</p>	<p>Participants Staff</p>	<p>Instructor to carry a water mobile phone in a waterproof pouch provided by Eaton Vale with important phone numbers saved.</p>
<p>Jumping in (end of session)</p> <p>Drowning, cold water shock, hyperthermia</p>	<p>Participants staff</p>	<p>Instructor to make sure that participants only jump when the water is 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.</p> <p>Jumping in not to take place if weather is poor and unsuitable.</p>