# **Health and Safety Policy**

## For Nature Days Field Studies Service

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### Health and Safety Policy

## Nature Days

This statement of Health & Safety Policy is produced in respect of Nature Days and forms the basis of future planning and implementation of health and safety matters.

**Section 1. Statement of commitment to the health and safety policy.**

Nature Days is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its customers, in so far is reasonably practicable. We also accept our responsibility for other persons who may be affected by our activities. We will take steps to ensure that our statutory duties are met at all times.

Any customer will be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable the safe participation in all activities. Although sometimes it will act in good faith and assume that the client group leader is competent to supervise.

The ultimate responsibility that of 'loco parentis' lies with the client group leader, the head of school etc. Nature Days are the 'provider', the 'instructor', the person with technical expertise, therefore, ND have a duty of care to my clients and will ensure that all activities are designed to take account of health and safety. Even when taking instruction from me the ultimate responsibility for supervision lies with the client group leader and they must be aware of this.

If a child cannot partake safely in the activity, or is threatening the safety the group, it is the responsibility of the client group leader to remove the child from the activity and meet the cost of doing this.

If the client group leader overrides my H&S advice, Nature Days cannot be held responsible, and may have to cancel the activity.

The supervision is the responsibility of the client group leader, as Nature Days does not know the children and therefore cannot be held fully responsible for discipline and control. The recommended ratios are set down by the County Council and National Governing Bodies, but as there is no relevant body for fieldwork, if Nature Days deem it necessary to alter the ratios Nature Days will state this in my risk assessments and the client group must meet them.

Every individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety, and for the safety of other people who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions. The children should be made aware of this by the group leader in advance of the trip, warned of the main hazards, and reminded of them again in the field.

Although at pains to stress where the ultimate responsibility lies in law, Nature Days

will always behave as if it lies with them, for as the technical expert, and the person familiar with the sites Nature Days accept that Nature Days have the greatest duty of care.

Nature Days wish to work in an atmosphere of good faith and believe in partnerships between client group leaders and instructors.

This policy will be regularly monitored to ensure that the objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

Signed \_

Date:17th July 2024 Reviewed: 7th August 2025

**Section 2 Organisational Arrangements.**

Nature Days accepts responsibility for health and safety matters, so far as is reasonably practicable:

Duties include:

Designing activities, policies and procedures that take account of health and safety issues.

Ensuring that customers are aware of hazards and safe behaviour as identified in RA.

Establishing that all equipment is kept in good condition, to include regular maintenance.

Provide adequate training, information, instruction and supervision to ensure that work is conducted safely. However as stated in section 1:

Although it is the duty of Nature Days to ensure that all activities are designed to take account of health and safety, if a teacher or "responsible adult" overrides my advice, it becomes their responsibility. The supervision is the responsibility of the "responsible adult" or the visiting members of staff, as Nature Days do not know the children and therefore cannot be held fully responsible for discipline and control.

Take immediate and appropriate steps to investigate and rectify any risks to health and safety arising from the work activity.

Ensure that all accidents and 'near-misses' are properly recorded and investigated.

First aid: Nature Days will ensure that she is suitably qualified to administer basic first aid assistance to customers.

**Section 3. Guidelines and procedures.**

3.1: Legislation and' documentation relating to health and safety for outdoor environmental education:

3.1.1: The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA'74)

This covers all aspects of health and safety at work throughout Great Britain (except Northern Ireland, Isle of Man and Channel Islands).

For the purposes of working to "best practise" Nature Days will work as though the duties of the 'Employer' are the responsibility of Nature Days. However, the overall responsibility lies with the "responsible adult" on family activities and the head of any school using our services.

And, in the eyes of this act, the children, young people or adults attending an activity are seen as 'Employees'.

Failing to comply with these regulations or obstructing them from being carried out is an offence, which can result in a heavy fine or possibly imprisonment.

**Employers Duties:** Employers are under a general duty to ensure, so far as is reasonable and practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes:

\* The provision and maintenance of equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.

\* Arrangements for ensuring safety in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.

\* The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of their employees

\* The maintenance of any place of work under their control, in a condition the is safe and without risks to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and exit from the place of work that are safe and without such risks.

\* The provision and maintenance of a safe working environment.

**Employee's Duties:** All employees are under a duty to take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of themselves and any other people who might be affected by their acts or omissions and to co-operate with their employers and others to enable them to comply with statutory duties and requirements.

Additionally, they must not intentionally or recklessly misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any aspect of health and safety law.

**3.1.2: The Children's Act 1989:** (requires the Local Authority to satisfy itself about)

Premises (at present Nature Days has no such premises):

Equipment:

\* Should be appropriate to the ages and stages of the children.

\* Where a CE standard exists, the equipment and furniture should conform to it.

**3.1.3: OEAP Guidance**

#### According to the ROSPA and OEAP guidelines:

In all cases, the duty remains with the headteacher and leader to ensure adequate supervision for the particular group and for the particular activity.

“Staffing ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through

the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive

staff/participant ratios for a particular age group or activity.”

Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as

starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may be

appropriate only where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has

no special requirements.

Ratios during outings should be determined by school or risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.

Therefore, each field trip will require different ratios based on an assessment of;

* The terrain – level of risk
* The location – remoteness, access to emergency help
* The age group
* The activity
* The group itself – gender, ability, number, special educational or medical needs, pupils previous experience.

Nature Days can recommend ratios based on the location, terrain, activity and age group but the visiting school leader is responsible for increasing these ratios if they feel the class warrants more supervision.

Although schools are expected to provide Nature Days details of specific needs of the children, such as physical, mental or behavioral, it is the school’s responsibility to write their own risk assessment for the class and individual pupils and increase the ratios based on their assessment.

A useful framework for assessing requirements for ratios and effective supervision

is SAGE:

• Staffing: who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits

of available numbers, abilities and experience.

• Activities to be undertaken: what do you want the group to do and what

is possible?

• Group characteristics: prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity,

gender, any specific or medical/dietary needs.

• Environment: indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban,

rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close

to the establishment or at a distance; and the ease of communications

between the group and base. Do not overlook environments to be passed

through between venues.

For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions.

#### Staffing ratios are a risk management issue and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/participant ratios for a particular age group or activity.

The decision you make about ratios, and the qualifications of the accompanying adults must be based on your assessment of the probability of harm to the children and young people participating in each visit. This responsibility lies with the visiting teacher as they know the children and the accompanying staff.

Remember that ratios in themselves do not guarantee safety.

NB. After risk assessing the site or activity it may be decided the more adults are required, the client group must abide by this.

Importantly the DfEE guidelines state that the instructor (in this case D. Thomas) is not to be counted as part of the ratio for they are not part of the group at all times, (on the coach, at lunch while they are setting up equipment etc.)

**3.1.4: Risk assessment.**

There is no such thing as absolute safety or zero risk.

Nature Days does not seek zero risk, as presenting pupils with beneficial challenges will inevitable expose them to risk and that in itself will lead to important skills in the participants.

Nature Days undertakes risk benefit analysis of all activities to ensure that any risks are outweighed by the benefits of the activities.

All field trips contain risk and wherever possible this risk will be minimised by the introduction of control measures based on a risk assessment.

However on-going dynamic risk assessments are undertaken throughout the field trip and any changes in the circumstances of the day or group will lead to changes in the day to deal with any increased risks.

All participants, children and adults will be informed of the control measures but they will also be encouraged to take an active part in keeping themselves safe.

It is good practice to review your assessment from time to time and to make sure that the precautions are still working effectively.

NB. Nature Days will risk assess sites and activities and make these available to client groups, but will make it clear that teachers etc. are charged to make their own assessments and need to add to the RA, any concerns over the behaviour or fitness of the group.

See Appendix for Risk assessment process and form.

3.1.5: Riddor:

Serious accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive. (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 RIDDOR).

A full report must be sent within ten working days on form 2508 which is available on the riddor website: http://www.riddor.gov.ukl/

or by phoning the riddor incident contact centre on: 0845 3009923

Such accidents include those resulting in:

! Death

! Bone fractures, except to finger, toes and thumbs

! Dislocation of shoulder, hip, knee or spine

! Loss of sight or penetrating eye injury

! An employee being absent from work more than three days.

3.2: Health and safety procedures:

3.2.1: General statement:

Nature Days will ensure the afore mentioned regulations are met by:

1. Providing clear adverts and descriptions of activities so clients know what conditions to expect.

2. Providing well organised risk assessed activities:

(a) The RAs are carried out by Dawn Thomas.

(b) The key hazards identified in the risk assessment are identified to school and community groups before activities, and made clear in at relevant points on the day of the activity.

(c) Check RA each time an activity is carried out and always visit sites regularly

Checking sites regularly: it is however not reasonable to check before every session. Thus one must be very vigilant and continue to undertake a dynamic risk assessment while out.

3. Nature Days has the LOtC quality badge and so does not provide Risk Assessments to visiting schools.

4. Providing correct supervision:

Ensuring that appropriate ratios are met by 'responsible adults' 'or teachers. Nature Days provides the 'guide', an extra, not responsible for the behaviour or safety of the children, but there to lead the field trip.

5. Send an email including dress codes what to bring and expect, behaviour codes etc.

6. Impressing upon the children/young people and adults their responsibilities for the health and safety of themselves and those around them.

7. Having accident and emergency procedures and clear site-specific emergency information (see over page).

8. Providing safe well-maintained equipment for use on site.

9. Checking the weather forecast in advance and altering location, activities, or cancelling if conditions are unsuitable e.g. too cold, high winds, weather warnings etc.

10. Making sure that the use of tools is well supervised:

1. Giving instructions for the safe handling and transport of sharp tools equipment, branches etc
2. Providing the appropriate protective clothing for tools and working conditions such as hard hats and gloves.
3. Younger children should use tools with at least 2: 1 supervision.
4. Older more capable children will be given clear guidelines as to safe and acceptable use. If these guidelines are not followed by a young person, the equipment is not to be used.

11. Having at least one fully trained first aider to be present, carrying an appropriate first aid kit and other relevant emergency kit e.g. Shelter, water, fire blanket, mobile phones etc.

12. Filling in accident book, for all accidents and near misses, and taking the details in the field if possible.

13. Reporting any accidents that qualify to Riddor within 10 working days either via the website: http://www.riddor.gov.uk/ or by phoning the riddor incident contact centre on 08453009923.

3.2.2: Specific procedures and forms:

3.2.2.1: Accident and Emergency Procedure.

Accident prevention:

• Teachers/responsible adults should be appropriately briefed, so that unfit and ill-dressed children do not attend the activities.

• Arrange adequate child: adult ratios with the customer groups, however this is ultimately their responsibility

• Risk assess all sites and activities and make key hazards known to all concerned.

• Make sure that it has been discussed who is to be the designated first aider

• Check sites regularly. (At least on a termly basis and before each use)

• As daily checks are not possible where appropriate lead from the front and undertake dynamic risk assessments.

Emergency Procedure:

• Stay calm. Remember priorities are 1. You. 2. Your group. 3. The casualty.

• Remember to delegate.

• All emergency equipment should be with the group.

• The allocated first aider should take charge of the casualty and the other adults should take charge of the rest of the group and plan evacuation and call emergency services if necessary.

• The site emergency details should contain all the relevant numbers and instructions to nearest phone and emergency services

• Teacher must go with child to hospital

• **Parents should be informed as soon as possible, but this is the responsibility group leader, they must contact base, and they must be able to contact parents.**

Accident and near miss reporting:

• Record all details in the official accident book/ incident, which should be on site with the first aid kit.

• The details must then be removed and stored somewhere secure.

Serious Accidents:

Serious accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive. (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 RIDDOR).

A full report must be sent within ten working days on form 2508 which is available on the riddor website: http://www.riddor.gov.uk!

or by phoning the riddor incident contact centre on: 0845 3009923 Such accidents include those resulting in:

! Death

! Bone fractures, except to finger, toes and thumbs

! Dislocation of shoulder, hip, knee or spine

! Loss of sight or penetrating eye injury

! An employee being absent from work more than three days.

3.2.2.2: Lost child procedure.

Prevention:

The group leader should have organised groups and adults responsible for regular head counts. They should also have a full register.

If the nature of the work or the terrain requires it, the young people should be briefed in what to do if separated from the group, and in some situations a "buddy system" is recommendable. Older students will have the mobile number of a member of staff.

In case of incident:

1. Stay calm.

2. Gather group together, ask for information.

3. Always make sure the rest of the group is kept safe.

4. Depending on age, competence and nature of the terrain organise a search with adults, or adults and young people.

5. Maintain communication with all staff members.

6. After 20 - 30 mins, depending on conditions, call the police and inform school contact.

**3.2.2.3 Emergency evacuation**

In case of first aid evacuation then the group will get to the nearest road junction, as indicated on the site risk assessment safety card. The first aider will look after the casualty and call for ambulance or casualties parents. All sites are within 500m of a road junction. If the casualty is injured and immobile but does not need emergency services then the staff can help them to be moved to where the bus or other vehicle can collect them.

The rest of the field trip can only continue if enough staff stay for safety of the group.

Most schools call parents for evacuation when students are sick and in this case a member of staff will stay with the casualty until the parents arrive and Nature Days will continue teaching the group, either by adapting the day or locations so that there is enough staff with the group.

Other potential evacuations will be due to threats to the group such as:

* Fire
* Animal escape
* Chemical release
* terrorism

For all threats, as listed above, emergency evacuation process will vary depending on the location. All Nature Days activities take place in the countryside or town or in school grounds. If on school property, then school staff will take control and follow their procedures.

If out in the field, then Nature Days staff will judge the situation and know the best location to hide or to evacuate to. Nature Days and school staff will take the group away from the threat and if possible, get them on the bus so they can be evacuated. If this puts the group in more danger, then they will hide in a local building or vegetation.

Nature Days staff will be familiar with the site and know the best places to hold up or hide or access to help or safe place.

Mobile coverage for each site is identified on the risk assessment. Where there is no phone coverage, such as Port Eynon village, Nature Days staff know where to get coverage and safe houses to enter.

Communication is vital and all staff must have mobile phones at all times.

Summary:

1. Gather factual information to assess the situation
2. Take immediate action to safeguard pupils and staff
3. Call for emergency services support
4. Evacuate to safe place as identified by Nature Days staff
5. Communicate with school.

3.2.2.4: Emergency Equipment carried.

First aid Kit

Mobile phone

Accident and emergency procedure

Site Emergency info

Map of area

Accident / Injury record book (in car)

Wipes or antibacterial hand gel

Emergency water

Emergency snack - sugary

When considered necessary with reference to specific risk assessment:

Foam mat

Spare clothes

Emergency bothy

Torch

Throwline

3.2.2.4 : Health and Safety information to schools.

The booking system will include information on Health and safety which require a response.

* If any of the children have any specific needs, medical, behavioral etc. that could affect the H&S of the group I trust I will be briefed.
* The number of adults and children that you are sending on the trip.
* If any member of staff is a first aider.
* If a child has asthma their medicine must be checked on the bus, if they have forgotten it they cannot attend.
* The number of the school contact with whom we can liaise throughout the trip. This person must have the contact details for the whole group.

Other information is provided in an email after the initial booking form is completed.

The children must have food and drink, and the adults should carry some spare and have means of cleaning the children's hands after the toilet or before food.

This information will be placed in email and outline of day sent to school leader.

It is the duty of Nature Days to ensure that all activities are designed to take account of health and safety, however if a teacher insists on overriding my advice, it becomes their responsibility.

**No minimum ratio of children: adults is set down in Health and safety regulation,** however the nature of the activity or the pupils, may sometimes require a higher adult number and schools will be informed of this during the booking process. I need to be excluded from that ratio. It is much safer if the field tutor is the guide, the facilitator, not seen as an extra adult, responsible for counting heads etc.

"The ultimate responsibility for supervision lies with the visiting members of staff, as I do not know the children and therefore cannot be held responsible for discipline and control."

“The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for a visit. This includes the learning, development and supervision of the participants and the safety of all, including any other leaders and helpers.”

Nature Days will risk assess sites and activities but will not make these available to client groups, but will make it clear that teachers etc. are charged to make their own assessments and need to add to the RA, any concerns over the behaviour or fitness of the group.

(h) All sites used by Nature Days for field trips are open to the public and will have shared facilities such as toilets. Sites such as Oxwich will also have dog walkers which can interact with students. Ilston valley does not have toilets until the very end and so wild wees will be required as necessary.

1. The children need to have waterproof coats and sensible shoes.

What type of shoes will be advised in an email from Nature Days.

Sun hats in the summer. Can the teachers carry suntan lotion in the spring and summer months. AND in the winter, extra layers as required.

Ilston River study:

Wellies usually the best, or sturdy shoes that can be wet and muddy. If you are planning to go in the river and taking measurements in the river wellies will be needed for this.

Oxwich:

Wellies are not always the best, rather sturdy shoes that can be wet and muddy!! Beach shoes are fine for rock pooling. Flip flops or sliders are not a good idea or crocs as they are not grippy.

It would also be advisable for everyone to wear long trousers and for the teacher in charge to bring some spare clothes in case of accidents.

(i) In advance of the trip groups must be decided and adults allocated to them (do not include me as a head counter), I trust the group leader will have a full register.

(j) The teacher in charge must have carried out a risk assessment and be familiar with the key hazards. Nature Days will identify hazards in the day’s outline, but this doesn't mean that you shouldn't carry a risk assessment out yourselves. In advance of the trip brief the adults and the young people of the risks involved.

(k) The young people must be briefed that if behaviour is not acceptable, they will have to be removed from the group and the expense of this met by the school or parents.

(I) Because of the nature of the terrain, I feel I have to draw your attention to the extremely unlikely possibility of Lymes disease. This is transmitted by ticks. No known cases on Gower due to the lack of deer but long trousers and closed shoes are recommended in the sand dunes. If after the trip a student finds a tick, make sure they remove it correctly and check for signs of flu. For more details https://www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk

(m) There may be weather conditions where the activity needs to be cancelled on H&S grounds; if this is the case we can always rearrange the trip.

Although I am self-employed, the Gower Society contribute towards the funding of my preparation; worksheets, reccy visits, risk assessments etc. and have helped with the costs of administration and the purchase of some equipment. I would like to say thank you for their help.

**Appendix:**

###### Risk assessment

Site:

Programme / session:

Site Map:

NB. A risk assessment is a fluid thing and must be constantly added too, corrected and updated.

To help simplify the tables hazards and risks have been given a rating, obviously this is very subjective and open to criticism; it is just a guide:

#### Hazards: Catastrophic/ Serious/ Minor / None

**Probability: High, Medium and Low.**

**Residual Risk: High, Medium and Low**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Who is at risk | How may they be harmed | Hazard | Probability | Control measures | Residual Risk | Improvements required. Date Implemented |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Date of risk assessment:

Signature of risk assessor

**Risk Assessment Guidelines**

(taken from HSE document '5 Steps to Risk Assessment’ www.hse.gov.uk)

Risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill.

You are legally required to assess the risks in your workplace.

The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant and whether you have covered it by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small (For instance electricity can kill but the risk of doing so in an office environment remote, provided that live components are insulated and metal casings properly earthed.)

**Hazard** means anything that can cause harm (e.g. fire, sharp objects etc.

**Risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.

**5 steps to Risk Assessment:**

Step 1: Look for Hazards.

Ignore the trivial and concentrate on significant hazards which could result in serious harm or affect several people.

Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how.

Because you will be working with children of different ages, remember to tailor your assessment to the appropriate age group i.e. size and likely behaviour, as well as adult staff members.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or if more should be done.

Consider the likelihood of the hazard causing harm and decide whether the risk is high medium or low.

In taking action ask yourself:

a) Can I get rid of the hazard?

b) If not how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

Use these principles to control the risks:

• Try a less risky option

• Prevent access (e.g. by guarding)

• Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard.

• Issue personal protective equipment.

• Provide welfare facilities i.e. First aid, water for washing/burns.

Step 4: Record your findings.

You must tell employees your findings and keep records to show inspectors. Risk assessments must be 'suitable and sufficient'. You need to be able to show that:

• A proper check was made

• You asked who might be affected.

• You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved.

• The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low.

Step 5: Review your assessment and revise it if necessary.

If there is any significant change, add to the assessment to take account of the new hazard. Don't amend your assessment for every trivial change.