

# SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION OUTDOORS RISK REGISTER

**SCHOOL:**  
**SUPERVISING TEACHERS/STAFF:**  
**PROGRAM/EXCURSION:**

**YEAR LEVEL:**  
**DATES:**  
**LOCATION(S): ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS VICTORIA - CRANBOURNE**

Risk Description	Existing Controls	Benefits	Risk Assessment – with existing controls				Treatment	Residual Risk Assessment – after treatments			Actions
			Effectiveness of existing controls	Risk Consequences	Risk Likelihood	Risk Rating		Risk Consequences	Risk Likelihood	Risk Rating	
Describe the risk event, cause/s and consequence/s. For example, <i>Something occurs ... caused by ... leading to ...</i>	Describe any existing policy, procedure, practice or device that acts to minimise the risk	What is the benefit of exposing students to this risk?					For those risks requiring treatment in addition to the existing controls. List: • What will be done? • Who is accountable? • When will it happen?				Options are: Extreme/High - Do not proceed Medium - Ongoing review required Low - Only periodic review required
<b>Lost children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools should follow recommended supervision ratios of 1:3 for kindergarten / preschool; 1:5 for Prep to 2; and 1:10 for year 3 to 12</li> <li>Ensure the students are mentally and physically prepared for walking through a large site.</li> <li>Teachers/supervising adults should employ effective supervision strategies, e.g. Emergency meeting points, regular head counts, name badges, mobile contact number displayed on students, utilising RBG staff in case of emergencies. Teachers need to bring a mobile phone.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Contact with nature to promote positive physical, social, cognitive and emotional benefits for children.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequent and authentic contact with natural environments is vital for children’s overall development and in promoting their sense of independence, autonomy and wellbeing.</li> <li>Exposure to reasonable risk within nature gives children opportunities to learn to: assess and manage their own risk, to self regulate and manage their own activity, to develop autonomy and to become independent decision makers.</li> <li>Nature stimulates social interactions between children, helping them to develop powers of observation and creativity. Nature instils a sense of peace and being at one with the world (Crain, 2001).</li> <li>'Nature buffers the</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Severe Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Possible Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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		impact of life stress on children and helps them deal with adversity. The greater the amount of nature exposure, the greater the benefits' (Wells, 2000).									
<b>Exposure to weather</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wind</li> <li>• Rain</li> <li>• Heat</li> <li>• Extreme Weather Conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure students are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions on the day of the excursion, including hats and sunscreen, or raincoats and beanies, where appropriate. All students and staff must wear closed toe shoes. Limited undercover areas are available in the event of wet weather.</li> <li>• Ensure students have had a drink of water before beginning their Learning program. In hot weather, it is advisable for students to carry a full water bottle as there are limited drinking fountains accessible during programs.</li> <li>• Education sessions will not operate in extreme weather conditions e.g. Temperatures over 35°C, very high winds, or during electric storms</li> </ul>	<b>Authentic connections, understandings and relationships with nature.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically experiencing changes within nature allows children to connect holistically and spiritually with the natural world and 'to discover their innate 'sense of relatedness and connectiveness to the natural world' (Phenice &amp; Griffore 2003).</li> <li>• Physical and spiritual connections with nature are intrinsic to indigenous people's sense of place and belonging.</li> <li>• Experiencing weather changes and its impact upon the natural environment promotes an understanding within children of seasonal and life cycles.</li> <li>• 'Outdoor education fosters connected knowing, where education is part of, rather than separate from life' (Gardner, 1991).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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<b>Slips Trips and Falls</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falling over in the Rockpool Waterway</li> <li>• Slipping on paths</li> <li>• Tripping over tree roots</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climbing on the rocks and trees in the Australian Garden is not allowed</li> <li>• For their own safety and for the protection of plants, students must remain on paths and not enter garden beds</li> <li>• Walking between the flags of the rockpool waterway is permitted, under direct teacher supervision. Students should not run or move beyond the flags</li> <li>• Throughout the excursion, student supervision remains the responsibility of visiting Teachers, and students should be actively supervised at all times</li> <li>• Paths are regularly maintained by RBG</li> <li>• During Learning programs, an RBG staff member will walk at the front of the group assessing any potential hazards during the program</li> <li>• First Aid officers are on duty at all times at the Visitor Centre, however schools are required to carry their own First Aid Kit</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical play in natural environments provides an endless variety of cognitive, physical and creative challenges for children to negotiate, problem solve, practice and master</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing in natural environments enables children to encounter a rich variety of texture and terrain, with each encounter challenging children to approach each situation in new ways (Elliott (ed.), 2008).</li> <li>• Children learn to problem solve cognitively, spatially and physically as they navigate through new and challenging environments and experiences.</li> <li>• Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility (Fjortoft, 2000).</li> <li>• Exposure to reasonable risk within nature gives children opportunities to become skilled in assessing their own risk, learn to self-regulate and manage their own activity, to develop autonomy and resilience and to become</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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		independent decision makers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When children play in natural environments, their play is more diverse, imaginative, creative and collaborative (Footrot 2000, Moore &amp; Wong 1996).</li> </ul>									
<b>Contact with soil, potting mix, plants</b> Handling gardening tools / hot glue guns Poisonous plants Allergies to nuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand washing facilities are available within the vicinity of all potting up, <b>ponding?</b> and worm farm activities.</li> <li>• Please ensure all students wash their hands in the public conveniences at the end of their program, prior to eating.</li> <li>• Potting mix is dampened down by RBG staff before use to reduce dust.</li> <li>• RBG staff will explain the correct and safe use of tools and other equipment. Active teacher supervision is required.</li> <li>• If you have children prone to 'mouthing' please supervise.</li> <li>• Please advise your RBG Learning Facilitator if you have any students with allergies to tree nuts. Macadamia and other nut bearing trees grow at the RBG. Allergy medication, such as EpiPens, should be carried with students where known allergies are present.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exploring nature through hands-on discovery learning, to promote active engagement, motivation and creativity.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authentic experiences whereby children construct understandings through hands-on explorations to encourage problem solving and discovery of new knowledge and connections.</li> <li>• Experiences that are specifically designed to stimulate children's natural curiosity, imagination and wonder, fostering delight, pleasure and satisfaction, surprise and unexpectedness.</li> <li>• Children learn by constructing their own knowledge about the world (Piaget, 1962).</li> <li>• 'The environment as the third teacher', enabling a feeling of belonging in a world that is alive, welcoming and authentic (Malaguzzi, 1994).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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<b>Exposure to animals / insects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swooping birds</li> <li>• Possibility of insect bites (bees, ants, mosquitoes)</li> <li>• Snake bite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please advise your RBG Learning Facilitator of any student allergies. Bees, wasps and ants are common in the Australian Garden and Bushland. Allergy medication, such as Epipens, should be carried with students where known allergies are present.</li> <li>• Ensure students are adequately supervised around wildlife – please don't chase or feed the birds, eels or turtles.</li> <li>• Areas where birds are nesting are signed; tours will avoid these areas where possible.</li> <li>• Please bring pest repellent and treatment for insect bites.</li> <li>• Venomous snakes occur in the Australian Garden and the Bushland. Please ensure students stay on pathways and are vigilant especially during warm weather. Students and staff are required to wear enclosed shoes. Snake sightings must be reported to your RBG Learning Facilitator or to another RBG staff member (if not during your learning program) as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	<b>Authentic connections, understandings and relationships with nature.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real life experiences and opportunities in which children learn to appreciate, respect and understand animals in their natural environments.</li> <li>• Animals are an endless source of wonder for children, fostering caring attitudes and sense of responsibility towards living things. (Sobel, 1996).</li> <li>• Children interact instinctively and naturally with animals, talking to them and investing in them emotionally, thus frequent exposure and interactions with animals allows children to learn how and when to approach animals safely, and when not to, i.e.: when bees are pollinating or birds are nesting.</li> <li>• Cultivating children's relationships with animals also fosters empathy, sensitivity and understanding (Sobel, 1996) as well as emotional attachments with nature and concern for its ongoing sustainability and protection (Bunting &amp; Cousins 1985).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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<b>Exposure to bodies of water</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falling in, or getting wet during ponding activities.</li> <li>• Poor water quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RBG Learning Facilitators explain how to safely undertake ponding and water testing activities during Learning programs. Active teacher supervision is required.</li> <li>• The water depth at the ponding platform is about 30cm and at Lilypad bridge is 150cm (only used by Secondary students). Entering or drinking from the open water bodies is not allowed.</li> <li>• There are large and deep water bodies at the RBG. Swimming in or drinking from any of the RBG water body is prohibited.</li> <li>• Students should be actively supervised by school Teachers at all times, especially when around water.</li> <li>• Please bring a change of clothes (one set for your group).</li> </ul>	<b>Authentic connections, understandings and relationships with nature.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing in natural environments enables children to encounter a rich variety of texture and terrain, with each encounter challenging children to approach each situation in new ways (Elliott (ed.), 2008).</li> <li>• Children learn to problem solve cognitively, spatially and physically as they navigate through new and challenging environments and experiences.</li> <li>• Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility (Fjortoft, 2000).</li> <li>• Exposure to reasonable risk within nature gives children opportunities to become skilled in assessing their own risk, learn to self-regulate and manage their own activity, to develop autonomy and resilience and to become independent decision makers.</li> <li>• When children play in natural environments, their play is more diverse, imaginative, creative and collaborative (Footrot 2000, Moore &amp; Wong 1996).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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<b>Falling tree limbs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RBG regularly inspect and manage our trees to protect health and safety. Despite these steps trees may still unpredictably shed branches.</li> <li>• Ensure all supervising adults are aware of the unpredictable way in which branches may fall and land. Avoid sitting under trees on windy days.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Authentic connections, understandings and relationships with nature.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physically experiencing changes within nature allows children to connect holistically and spiritually with nature, allowing them to discover their 'innate 'sense of relatedness and connectiveness to the natural world' (Phenice &amp; Griffore 2003).</li> <li>• Regular interactions within nature help children develop understanding and respect for the environment, its dangers and delights. These experiences help shape children's environmental values and attitudes for the rest of their lives (Wilson 1996).</li> <li>• 'Outdoor education fosters connected knowing, where education is part of, rather than separate from life' (Gardner, 1991).</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	
<p><b>Traffic Hazards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entry to RBG: Trip, fall, hit by vehicle</li> <li>• Presence of RBG gardening, maintenance / delivery vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus pick up and drop off zones are located close to the Australian Garden entrance path.</li> <li>• Ensure adequate supervision when crossing car parks and roads.</li> <li>• The RBG teacher leads the groups – ensure students walk next to, or behind their leader.</li> <li>• There is a pedestrian crossing on the path that</li> </ul>	<p><b>Real life and contextual encounters.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking advantage of real life situations such as crossing a road within the gardens or, navigating gardener and delivery buggies assists children in developing genuine road safety skills and abilities.</li> <li>• Allowing children to practice their road safety</li> </ul>	Satisfactory Poor Unknown	Major Moderate Minor Insignificant	Almost certain Likely Unlikely Rare	Extreme High Medium Low				Extreme High Medium Low	

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	leads to Trig Point and the bushland where it crosses the Visitor Centre maintenance road.	skills within the Royal Botanic Garden is a reasonable risk in that the road and pathways have minimal traffic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children can practice their pedestrian road safety skills as they identify crossings as places to stop, look, listen and think before determining whether it is safe to cross, learn how to safely move aside to let a vehicle pass, discuss traffic signs and watch out for and identify signals affecting pedestrians.</li> <li>• 'Active involvement in real life experiences increases children's competence and self-esteem in a way that contrived activities never could' (Montessori).</li> </ul>									
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RBG management and staff recognise that they play an inherent role in prevention and mitigation activities to minimise the effects of emergencies that may occur. RBG implements an emergency procedures policy conforming to the Australian standard AS 3745-2010. RBG Education staff are trained in emergency response.											
<b>In Case of Emergencies whilst visiting the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne please call the Visitor Centre 03 5990 2265 or dial 000.</b>											

Add more rows as required. This is one way of documenting the risk management process and does not preclude other approaches.