

# Kayaking Risk Assessment

**Reviewed: January 2026.**

**Date of next review: January 2027**

Hazard/Risk	Who could be affected by hazard.	Likelihood of being affected	Worst consequence of being affected	Risk Level	How hazard/risk is mitigated	Residual risk level
<b>Drowning.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kayaking sessions will be staffed by a minimum of a British Canoeing Paddlesport Instructor (or old Level 1 coach).</li> <li>● Ratios will follow British Canoeing guidelines as laid out in the document 'Environmental Definitions and Employment Guidelines for Instructors Coaches and Leaders. V2- 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov21.pdf'.</li> <li>● Communication with reception and lake must be available (Mobile Phone)</li> <li>● Every session will include a boat talk and capsize briefing.</li> <li>● All equipment should be regularly checked and maintained. Such checks will be documented and highlight inadequacies, breakages and wear and tear.</li> <li>● Thorough briefings and control of the group always.</li> <li>● Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before the activity, and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability, especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</li> <li>● Breakages will be reported and documented.</li> <li>● Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>● Group leaders/teachers should be fully briefed on their responsibilities whilst on session, as laid down in the Hooke Court Kayaking Activity Guidelines and Ops document.</li> <li>● The site and session content must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.</li> <li>● Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group will take place, especially when the risk is high.</li> </ul>	LOW

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buoyancy aids will remain on for the duration of the session.</li> <li>• If the Instructor allows VC to enter the water at the end of a session it must follow the Kayaking Activity Guidelines and Ops document.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Personal Injury</b> – cuts, bruises, rope burns, squashed and injured fingers, back injuries from lifting and dislocations.</p>	VC, VSA FST	2	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct briefing and control of the group always considered, especially before activities or games.</li> <li>• Assessment of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.</li> <li>• Students will be helped when exiting their kayak.</li> <li>• Helmets will be worn where the Kayak Instructor deems that a specific risk of head injury exists.</li> <li>• Sessions will include a briefing on good lifting and carrying technique and reinforced throughout the session.</li> <li>• Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before, and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</li> <li>• Trees above the water should be checked before each session for loose hanging branches, especially after bad weather/storms.</li> <li>• Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>• Games will appropriate to the size, age and ability and experience of the group.</li> </ul>	LOW
<p><b>Personnel</b> – Loss of line of sight individuals or groups or moving to unsafe areas.</p>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.</li> <li>• No group member will be allowed out of sight of the Kayak Instructor during the session, unless off the water and under the supervision of a teacher, or group leader.</li> <li>• Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before, and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its</li> </ul>	LOW

					<p>suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather conditions must be taken into account.</li> <li>• Group leaders/teachers should be fully briefed on their responsibilities whilst on session, as laid down in the Hooke Court 'Kayaking Activity Guidelines and Ops' document.</li> <li>• Site and the activity must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.</li> </ul>	
<b>Third Party Influence.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	40	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site will be secure, and protected as far as is practical, from any outside influence including other groups. If other children are around as spectators, then they must be under the direct supervision of an additional member of school staff, rather than the one in charge of the kayaking group.</li> <li>• Instructor to visually inspect all equipment prior to any activity for outside influence/damage.</li> <li>• The Kayaking activity must be appropriate to the age, size and ability of all members of the group.</li> </ul>	LOW
<b>Site Problems.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correct briefing and control of the group at all times.</li> <li>• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.</li> <li>• Checks should be made on all equipment before the activity and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</li> <li>• Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>• Group leaders/teachers should be fully briefed on their responsibilities during the session, as laid down in the Hooke Court 'Kayaking Activity Guidelines and Ops' document.</li> <li>• Site must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.</li> </ul>	LOW
<b>Equipment Problems – failure due to</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All equipment should conform to standards laid down by British Canoeing.</li> </ul>	LOW

defects, incorrect use of equipment.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.</li> <li>• Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before the activity and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</li> <li>• Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>• Helpers/teachers should be fully briefed on their responsibilities whilst on session, as laid down in the Hooke Court 'Kayaking Activity Guidelines and Ops' document.</li> </ul>	
<b>Exposure.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.</li> <li>• Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before the activity and if necessary, during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.</li> <li>• Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>• Site and the activity must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.</li> <li>• Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.</li> </ul>	LOW
<b>Weather Conditions.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather conditions must be always considered.</li> <li>• Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.</li> </ul>	LOW
<b>Water Conditions.</b>	VC, VSA FST	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water conditions must be always considered with regards to temperature and cleanliness.</li> <li>• Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.</li> </ul>	LOW

<b>Weils Disease &amp; general water contamination.</b>	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instructor should look out for discoloration, unusual smell, foam on the surface, or activities within the stream catchment that might raise risk levels. For example, muck spreading.</li><li>• Participants to be warned of the risks and instructed to wash their hands at the earliest possible time.</li><li>• The cleanliness of the water will be always considered by the Kayak instructor when deciding on the structure and content of the session.</li></ul>	LOW
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