

## Health & Safety Risk Assessment for Mud Trail.

**Any children participating in mud run will need to bring swimwear to go underneath clothing.**

**Long sleeves tops and trousers will be required.**

**Old trainers or footwear that can get muddy.**

**Children will need to bring an extra towel, flip flops or similar and plastic bag for muddy clothing.**

### General Precautions

1. Prior to any activity on the Mud Trail the Field Studies Tutor (FST) must use the 'Tutors H&S Inspection' sheet to systematically conduct a check based upon information given on this sheet.
2. FST should remove any sticks or twigs that may have fallen onto the activity area, prior to the activity taking place.
3. FST must check that there is sufficient coverage of water/mud under and around activity areas to soften any possible falls.
4. The FST and VSA should remain vigilant throughout overseeing the whole activity, ensuring that the whole group completes one component before the group moves onto the next obstacle, it should not be a free time activity.
5. The FST and VSA should not act to aid individuals through any element of the 'Trail' unless the FST/VSA considers it appropriate in light of the particular individual within the group.
6. General warnings should be issued at the beginning of the session. Entrapment of fingers and hands in vice and vice like parts of the equipment, cuts from sharp stones, fall impacts against self and others, suitable clothing covering legs, tied shoes and slips/falls in adverse weather conditions.
7. The areas around each component are cleared of vegetation that may cause stings or allergic reactions.
8. Areas within a 1 m radius of the components is soft mud should anyone fall onto the ground. In dry periods extra water is added to maintain the cushioning effect of the mud.
9. No running at any time.
10. FST/VSA should check all footwear to ensure it is well fitted and will not easily come off in the mud. Shoe laces should be tied well Gaffer tape may be used as extra security if necessary.
11. The gate to the activity area should be locked at all times unless a member of Hooke Court staff is supervising any activity. The FST is responsible for the locking of the gate after each activity.
12. The FST should return and complete, sign and date the 'Mud Trail Visual Check Records Book'.
13. FST or VSA must be present or in view of activity area at all times – key location points: top and bottom of course, river course and tyre obstacles.

### **Routine Visual Check Inspection:**

To be carried out before every opening

The routine visual check is primarily used to identify any obvious signs of signs of deterioration since the last use and as set out in EN15567-2. As a minimum, they should inspect the course for the following:

- General: All components and parts of the structure will be checked for signs of damage and wear.
- Structural integrity of the course and safety system(s): Is the course stable and fixed to the ground/structures as intended. Is the safety system(s) as per the manufactures guidelines for connection to the structure and is the wire (if applicable) secure and anchored correctly.
- Cleanliness of the site: Is the site and the course clean, tidy and safe to operate, for example leaf litter on steps or ropes in the way of walking routes.
- Vandalism: Does the course show any signs of unauthorised entry (or part off) and has the course been vandalised, damaged or tampered with.
- Storm damage: Does the course show any signs of damage caused by surrounding trees (or part of) that have fallen onto it? Extra checks should be carried out if the course/element is tree based. If there has been an electrical storm has any lightening struck the course.
- Ground cover: The ground covering should thoroughly inspected for foreign objects that may cause injury to participants. If any objects are found, they are to be removed before the course can be used.
- Sharpe edges: Any sharp edges should be identified and removed before the 'Trail' is used.
- Missing components: A check should be made to confirm that there is nothing missing or removed from the course prior to opening.
- Excessive wear (of moving parts): The 'Trail;' will show wear over time and the amount will be dependant on how much the course is used and how well its looked after but has there been excessive wear over a short period of time.
- Cable tension: Make sure the cables have not stretched over time.

## **General Hazards.**

1. Slips, trips and falls:  
The area around the Trail is wet and there are large areas of mud and standing water that may be slippery.  
There are fallen sticks and growing plants around the site that may trip participants.  
Some of the components of the Trail necessitate climbing over, through or under them where individuals may fall onto the ground.  
Moving between components is often through mud and boggy ground.
2. Collision with stationary object:  
As participants complete the Trail they may fall onto the ground or nearby objects.  
The slippery surface may cause an individual to fall whilst moving between components.
3. Splinters:  
Wood has been used to construct various parts of the Trail and over time splinters may appear through general wear and tear.  
Edges of wood may fray or catch on individuals over time.
4. Cuts, scraps and grazes:  
There are many stones and broken stones in the area of the Trail that may have sharp edges and cause injury as participants access the various components.
5. Stings, allergic reactions and prickles:  
There are many wild plants that grow in the area of the Trail that may cause stings or cause allergic reactions when they come into contact with the participants.
6. Stomach upsets and illness:  
With various pools of water and often wet mud there is a risk that it may enter through the mouth, either directly or from hands and clothing, causing stomach upset or illness.

## Mud Trail Risk Assessment to be used in conjunction with General Precautions and Hazards Information.

<b>Mud Trail</b>						
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
Mud Walk: 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6.	FST, VSA, VC	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Controlled entry to the water/mud – one child at a time.</li> </ul>	LOW
Mud Tunnel: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	10	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• HC to cover with padding to reduce hard contact with parts of the tunnel.</li> <li>• Edges and corners of wood to be checked for damage and splinters, sanded where necessary.</li> <li>• Carpet matting laid under soil that has been sieved remove stones.</li> <li>• Regular strimming and weed removal around obstacles, periodic spraying of nettles inside the tunnel maybe conducted when 'Trail' is not in use, with sufficient time allowed after application before any VC comes into contact with herbicide, advice taken from manufacturer.</li> </ul>	LOW
Koala Bridge: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• FST to instruct group not to swing or bounce the bridge at any time.</li> <li>• FST to instruct group not no more than 1 person should be on the bridge at anytime.</li> <li>• In adverse weather conditions FST must stress the risk of slipping on the wires advising an upright posture and taking small steps.</li> <li>• FST to ensure VSA/VC are told to place their feet across the wires.</li> <li>• FST must ensure the VSA/VC do not bounce the foot wire for any reason.</li> <li>• VC should use the hand rope to support their traverse across the stream.</li> </ul>	LOW
Climbing Wall: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• VC should be advised that they should keep their feet on the board at the bottom of the wall and use hand holds only for hands, NOT feet.</li> <li>• Edges and corners of wood to be checked for damage and splinters, sanded where necessary.</li> </ul>	LOW
Zig Zag Crossing: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Only one person should be on each island and each pole at a time.</li> </ul>	LOW

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In adverse weather conditions FST must stress the risk of slipping on the poles advising an up-right posture, taking small steps and using the rope for support.</li> <li>• FST to ensure VSA/VC are told to place their feet across the poles.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that the hanging rope is not used as rope swing.</li> <li>• FST must ensure the VSA/VC do not bounce on the poles for any reason.</li> <li>• Edges and corners of wood to be checked for damage and splinters, sanded where necessary.</li> </ul>	
Stone Bridge: 1	FST, VSA, VC	1	40	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• A hand rail and steps are provided to assist any person to access and cross the bridge.</li> </ul>	LOW
Cargo Net: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	10	20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Area under the net checked to remove stones and sharp pieces.</li> <li>• Elastic rope used to allow free movement under the net.</li> <li>• Regular strimming and weed removal around obstacles, periodic spraying of nettles maybe conducted when 'Trail' is not in use, with sufficient time allowed after application before any VC comes into contact with herbicide, advice taken from manufacturer.</li> </ul>	LOW
Tyre Hurdles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• FST/VSA to ensure that only 1 person at a time attempts each of the hurdles.</li> <li>• VC should only attempt each hurdle in a controlled manner rather than jumping and/or diving.</li> <li>• Regular checks should be conducted to remove stones and sharp pieces of stone from the areas around and under each hurdle.</li> </ul>	LOW
Rope Bridge: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• FST to instruct group not to swing or bounce the bridge at any time.</li> <li>• FST to instruct group not no more than 1 person should be on the bridge at anytime.</li> <li>• In adverse weather conditions FST must stress the risk of slipping on the ropes advising an up right posture, taking small steps and using the hand rope provided.</li> </ul>	LOW

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure VSA/VC are told to place their feet across the ropes.</li> <li>• FST must ensure the VSA/VC do not bounce the foot ropes for any reason.</li> </ul>	
Raised Platform: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	1	40	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the platform.</li> <li>• Edges and corners of wood to be checked for damage and splinters, sanded where necessary.</li> </ul>	LOW
Tree Fence: 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Regular removal of nettles from the vicinity of the fence.</li> </ul>	LOW
Ducking Poles: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Poles suspended above the level of the mud so that VC can pass beneath easily without banging their head or body.</li> <li>• Regular checks should be conducted to remove stones and sharp pieces of stone from the areas around and under the poles.</li> </ul>	LOW
Diagonal balance Beams: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• In adverse weather conditions FST must stress the risk of slipping on the poles advising an alternative to walking across the poles.</li> <li>• Regular checks should be conducted to remove stones and sharp pieces of stone from the areas around and under each hurdle.</li> </ul>	LOW
Greasy Pole: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	20	40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• FST to ensure that no hazard exists within fall radius, 2 metres either side of the bridge.</li> <li>• In adverse weather conditions FST must stress the risk of slipping on the poles advising an alternative to walking across the poles.</li> <li>• Regular checks should be conducted to remove stones and sharp pieces of stone from the areas around and under each hurdle.</li> </ul>	LOW
Tire Tower: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	FST, VSA, VC	2	40	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FST to ensure that VSA or FST directly supervises or is in view of the piece of equipment at all times.</li> <li>• Regular checks should be conducted to remove stones and sharp pieces of stone</li> </ul>	LOW

					<p>from the areas around and under the framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VC encourages to use the center of the tires to cross the hurdle by marking outer tires with hazard tape or paint.</li><li>• Only 1 person should attempt to cross the hurdle at any time.</li><li>• VC should only attempt the hurdle in a controlled manner rather than jumping and/or diving through.</li><li>• Edges and corners of wood to be checked for damage and splinters, sanded where necessary.</li></ul>	
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Date Reviewed: January 2026  
Next Review Date: January 2027