Health & Safety Risk Assessment for Rafting.

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
Drowning	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Ratios not to exceed 1:18 students or 2:24 • Participants must wear appropriate buoyancy aids for the duration of the activity and fitted correctly. • In the case of capsize, staff to ensure all participants involved are accounted for and safe. • Buoyancy aids checked by staff prior to the session beginning. • Annual check on buoyancy aids conducted by HC. • Staff vigilance throughout the session to ensure buoyancy aids are worn correctly. • Rafts to have rope attached to avoid falls when participants get on & off. • FST to carry a throw bag at all times as well as suitable knife to cut ropes if necessary. • Staff are to receive training annually on the throwing and recovery of rafts and participants.	LOW
Personal Injury – cuts, bruises, rope burns, squashed and injured fingers, back	VC, VSA FST	2	40	80	• Correct briefing and control of the group at all times, especially before activities or games. • Assessment of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity.	LOW

injuries from lifting and dislocations.					• FST should demonstrate and explain the method for launching and exiting their rafts using the tether, or Painter. • 2 students per raft. Numbers not to exceed 3 per raft. • Helmets to be worn at all times by students before the rafts are moved, when on the water, and until rafts are returned for dismantling. • Sessions will include a briefing on good lifting and carrying technique and reinforced throughout the session. • Briefing on the dangers of standing on unsecured poles during the construction and dismantling phases, HC to have available anti roll stands to secure poles for tying. • Briefing on the dangers of entrapment of fingers during both the construction and dismantling phases. • 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.	
Personnel – Loss of line of sight individuals or groups or moving to unsafe areas.	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Assessments of groups and individual's ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity. • No group member will be allowed out of sight of FST during the session, unless off the water and	LOW

					under the supervision of a teacher, or group leader. ● 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. ● Weather conditions must be taken into account. ● VSA should be fully briefed on their responsibilities whilst on session, as laid down in the Hooke Court 'Rafting Activity Guidelines and Ops' document. ● Site and the activity must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.	
Third Party Influence	FST, VSA, VC	1	40	40	● 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 rafting group. ● FST to visually inspect all equipment prior to any activity for outside influence/damage. ● The Rafting activity must be appropriate to the age, size and ability of all members of the group.	LOW

Site Problems	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity. • Launching platforms on the island and banks should be checked prior to activity to ensure they are structurally sound. • 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. • Weather conditions must be taken into account. • Group leaders/teachers should be fully briefed on their responsibilities during the session, as laid down in the Hooke Court 'Rafting Activity Guidelines and Ops' document. • Site must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group.	LOW
Equipment Problems – failure due to defects, incorrect use of equipment.	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• All equipment should conform to industry standards laid down by British Canoeing. • FST to check equipment prior, and after activity • Continuous checks should be made on all equipment before and during the activity. Taking note of personal equipment with reference to its suitability especially and including the fitting of buoyancy aids.	LOW

Exposure	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Assessments of groups and individual ability and physical and psychological states before, during and after activity. • Weather conditions must be taken into account. • Site and the activity must be suitable and appropriate for all members of the group. • Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.	LOW
Weather Conditions	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Weather conditions must be taken into account, considering high winds and low temperatures. • Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.	LOW
Water Conditions	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• Water conditions must be taken into account with regards to high winds, temperature and cleanliness. • Special care must be taken with reference to hypothermia and appropriate monitoring of the group especially when the risk is high.	LOW
Weils Disease & general water contamination	FST, VSA, VC	1	75	75	• FST 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. • Participants to be warned of the risks and instructed to wash their hands at the earliest possible time.	LOW

					• The cleanliness of the water will be taken into account by FST when deciding on the structure and content of the session.	

- **PFD visual inspection to happen during every use to check for physical damage as well as UV damage.**
- **Hooke Court staff are to receive staff training at least once a year from qualified technical advisor.**
- **First Aid kit to be kept either in the Raft Build shed or in the PFD shed. MUST be kept dry.**
- **Record of PDF inspection for individual Buoyancy Aids MUST be kept.**