

# **General Risk Assessment Holt Hall Field Study Centre**

## **Location**

All lessons and locations i.e. Holt Hall building, grounds and all off site locations.

## **Risks**

The following risks are applicable to anyone taking part in any activity.

- Risk due to lack of appropriate supervision.
- Risk due to inadequate staff to student ratio.
- Risk due to lack of responsibility on the part of students.
- Risk due to inappropriate transport.
- Risk due to lack of consideration to weather conditions.
- Risk due to inadequate first aid provision.
- Risk due to lack of consideration for personal medical requirements.

## **Safety Measures**

### **Supervision**

#### **Group leader**

- One teacher, the group leader, has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard for the health and safety of the group.
- The group leader is responsible for the group at all times even when not in direct contact with them.
- When there is a joint group from two or more establishments, an overall Group Leader should be nominated, whose responsibility will be to ensure that the 'Educational Visits and Journeys, Policy, Requirements and Guidance, Norfolk LEA 2002' document is complied with. However, the responsibility for the welfare of individual young people from each establishment rests with their own appointed Group Leader.

The Group leader should:

- Be appointed by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- Follow LEA and / Governing body regulations, guidelines and policies.
- Appoint a deputy.
- Have undertaken a prior visit / inspection visit where appropriate, in order to carry out a local risk assessment.
- Clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned.
- Be able to control and lead students of the relevant age range.

- Be aware of and act upon, any responsibilities associated with the rights of landowners, public agencies and the general public, and the preservation of the environment. (Holt Hall teaching staff leading activities will also be aware of these issues).
- Be aware of child protection issues.
- Ensure adequate first aid provision will be available.
- Undertake and complete, with support from the EVC, the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents.
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Review regularly undertaken visits / activities with the EVC and advise the head teacher where adjustments may be necessary.
- Ensure that teachers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the visit involves including the learning outcomes.
- Have enough information on the students proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed.
- Ensure that students are not exposed to activities that are outside their capabilities. Where appropriate a programme of prior experience should be planned to prepare students.
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- Using on-going assessment procedures consider stopping the visit if the risk to health or safety of the students is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality.
- Ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the group's teachers and other supervisors have the details of students' special educational or medical needs that will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively.
- Regularly count the students to ensure none are missing, especially at the beginning and end of any activity and before leaving any venue.

### **Teachers**

- Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

Teachers should:

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable.

## **Adult supervisors**

- Adults other than teachers should not be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment and where appropriate checks have been undertaken.
- All adult supervisors, including teachers and parent/volunteer helpers who may be alone with students at any time must have been 'list 99' checked.
- All adult supervisors, including teachers and parent/volunteer helpers, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. They must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group, help with control and discipline and let the group leader know if any health and safety concerns arise during the visit.
- All supervisors should be aware of any students who may require closer supervision such as those with special needs, behavioural difficulties or medical issues.

## **Ratios**

- Suitable staff to student ratios must be complied with at all times. These will usually be at least 1:6 +1 for year 3, 1:10-15 +1 for years 4-6, and **1:15 +1 for years 7 to 13**, not including Holt Hall Staff.
- If the group is mixed, there must be a teacher of each sex accompanying the group.

## **Students**

The group leader must make it clear to students that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at Holt Hall.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.
- Any students whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be sent home. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

## **Transport**

- Students at Holt Hall are normally transported in the centre's three minibuses.
- The minibuses are checked by Holt Hall staff every week and are serviced annually.
- Minibus safety procedures, emergency procedures, insurance certificate, MOT certificates and Norfolk County Council Minibus driving assessment certificates are kept in a file in the visitors staff room where they are available for inspection.
- Drivers are legally responsible for the vehicle and its condition.
- The Group Leader is responsible for the passengers.

- Designated Holt Hall staff who have completed a Norfolk County Council driving assessment may drive Holt Hall minibuses.
- Holt Hall minibuses may also be driven by anyone who:
  - Holds a clean full driving licence for this class of vehicle, category B and D1, (i.e. ordinary driving licence).
  - Is over 25 years of age.
  - Has passed a Norfolk County Council driving assessment.
  - Has had their licence inspected and approved by the Head of Centre.
- Each Holt Hall minibus has a 'Small Bus Permit' granted under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985. This means that the buses cannot be used for carrying passengers for 'hire or reward for profit'. It also means that drivers do not need to hold a PSV Operator's Licence.

### **Weather**

Most Holt Hall activities take place outside for at least part of the time. Weather conditions therefore have to be considered before most activities can take place.

- The Group Leader must ensure that the students are suitably dressed.
- Holt Hall Staff will advise the group leader as to what constitutes suitable clothing where necessary, both at the planning stage and before an activity.
- Any student who is not suitably dressed for an activity will not be allowed to take part in that activity.
- Prevailing weather conditions must be considered as part of the pre-activity and on-going risk assessments, by both Holt Hall staff and the Group Leader.
- Each activity must have a risk assessed 'Plan B' which can be put into operation if weather conditions make 'Plan A' too risky.
- Risks in cold, wet and windy weather include hypothermia.
- Risks in hot weather include:
  - Sunburn
  - Heat exhaustion
  - Heat stroke
- Risks in windy weather include:
  - Falling missiles such as branches and trees.
- Trees on the Holt Hall estate are monitored by the Holt Hall teaching staff before relevant activities, the Holt Hall garden staff, and by professional staff at the county council.
- If weather has been wet, some risks become more likely, e.g.
  - Cliffs are more likely to slip.
  - Trees are more likely to fall over in a wind.
  - Surfaces are more likely to be slippery.
  - Rivers and water bodies are likely to have higher levels and faster currents.

### **First Aid**

- All schools are required to bring a fully qualified first-aider to Holt Hall. This is someone who has undertaken the 'First Aid At Work' course lasting 4 days in

the first instance and a further 2 days every 3 years. All of the Holt Hall teaching staff, the Administrative Officer and the Finance Officer have undertaken this course.

- A First Aid kit is kept in each of the teaching rooms, staff rooms and minibuses. Holt Hall teaching staff carry a first aid kit when students are away from the Hall.
- Schools should satisfy themselves as part of their own risk assessment that first aid cover would be provided throughout their visit or journey, both during transportation and at the destination.
- Where young people are split into smaller groups for particular activities, and are remote from any first aid or emergency services, all participants should be accompanied by someone with emergency first aid training or have the means of contacting a qualified first-aider or the emergency services in the event of an emergency.
- Risk assessments for each activity must include a consideration for first aid needs relating to:
  - The number in the group and the nature of the activity.
  - The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be.
  - The distance to the nearest hospital.

### **Medical**

This is a summary. More detailed information may be found in 'Educational visits and Journeys, policy, requirements and guidance Norfolk LEA'.

- All supervising staff, including Holt Hall staff and especially the leader of the activity, must be aware of any allergies/illness suffered by participants. Group leaders must ensure that this information is recorded prior to the visit and is available to supervising staff at all times including during the visit.
- Parents must have informed the group leader of any regular medication that their child will need to take during the visit and to supply such medicine in the original, clearly labelled container.
- Group leaders must appoint a supervisor responsible for storing and issuing medication. A record must be kept of medications issued.
- One dose of paracetamol is the only pain-relieving drug which may be given to young people. It should not be given to young people receiving other medication without written permission from parents.

### **Asthma**

- A trip to Holt Hall is suitable for the majority of asthmatics. Attacks may be set off by a variety of stimuli and during a trip, students may find themselves in environments that are new to them. New triggers could be encountered so it is very important that supervisors understand how to recognise and treat an attack.
- Supervisors should ensure that young people with inhalers carry them or have access to their medication at all times, including those times when students are divided into groups for an activity.

- Asthma inhalers are of two types:
  - Relievers (usually blue) which act almost immediately and are used as needed.
  - Preventers (usually brown or red) which act slowly, do not influence an acute attack, and are usually used twice a day but sometimes more, and may be needed before physical activity.
- In an emergency, another young person's inhaler may be used, but this is not encouraged.
- If an acute attack occurs and two doses 5-10 minutes apart have not improved the condition, call an ambulance immediately.

### **Diabetes**

- A trip to Holt Hall is suitable for the majority of diabetics. Diabetes is controlled by a careful balance of insulin, food and activity. During a trip this balance may become upset as, for example, the student may be more active than usual. It is vital that those supervising diabetic students have a supply of sugar with them at all times and understand how to recognise and treat a diabetic 'hypo'.
- Low blood sugar (Hypoglycaemia) occurs quickly and requires prompt treatment with some form of sugar. Give sugar in an easily absorbed form (3 dextrosol tablets and 55ml of fluid, or lucozade, or a sweet non-diet fizzy drink). If the student is well enough to eat, give whatever snack is usually carried. If there is no improvement within a few minutes, or if the student's level of consciousness deteriorates, call an ambulance.
- Never leave an unwell diabetic unsupervised.
- If possible, diabetics should carry their own supply of food.
- Ensure that the member of Holt Hall staff leading the activity is aware if there is a diabetic in the group.
- At the trip planning stage, meal times should be negotiated to try to fit in with the diabetic's normal routine where possible.

### **Anaphylaxis**

- A trip to Holt Hall is suitable for most students who suffer from anaphylaxis. This severe allergic reaction is triggered by substances such as nuts (especially peanuts), bee and wasp stings, fish, eggs, milk proteins, some drugs (e.g. penicillin) and some fruits. Those supervising students with severe allergies must know how to recognise and treat an attack.
- Prevention is the mainstay of management. The student should avoid all contact with the trigger substance.
- It is important that as many people as possible know the emergency instructions for each student and know where the medication is kept so they can fetch it for someone else if necessary.
- Always take the medication to the person, not the person to the medication.
- Medication may include antihistamine tablets, adrenaline inhaler, adrenalin injection (Epipen). Specific training is required for members of staff on how to administer an Epipen.

- Holt Hall must be informed about any severe allergies before the trip takes place so that precautions can be taken.
- During the trip, ensure that the member of Holt Hall staff organising the activity is aware of any severe allergies in the group.

### **Poisoning**

- Some plants on the estate are poisonous. Students may not eat anything during any activity unless specifically asked to do so under controlled circumstances.
- Students may eat during an activity if necessary due to a medical condition such as diabetes, but hygiene must be considered e.g. washing facilities may be arranged or plastic gloves provided to avoid contamination.

### **Hypothermia**

- Hypothermia develops when the body temperature falls below 35°C. It can be caused in young children by prolonged exposure to cold, out of doors, especially in wet and windy conditions.
- Hypothermia can be avoided by ensuring all students are suitably dressed with warm clothes including hat and gloves, and a wind proof and water proof outer layer. Students should not be kept outside for long periods in cold, wet or windy weather.
- Recognition features: shivering, cold skin, apathy, disorientation or irrational behaviour, occasional belligerence, slow and shallow breathing, in extreme cases, cardiac arrest.
- Treatment: Get the casualty warm. Cover the head, use extra clothing or blankets and return to Holt hall as soon as possible. The child should be warmed quickly by taking a warm bath if the child is able to get in unaided. If not, warming must be gradual.
- Call a doctor if there is any doubt about the child's condition.

### **Heat exhaustion**

In hot weather, especially if it is also humid and students are active, and especially if student has recently been unwell or is unused to working in very hot temperatures, the body cannot cool itself effectively, loses water and salt, and heat exhaustion can occur.

- Signs and symptoms: headache, dizziness and confusion, loss of appetite and nausea, sweating, pale clammy skin, cramps in arms, legs and abdomen, rapid weak pulse and breathing.
- Treatment: remove to a cool place, lie down, raise legs, give drinks of water and, if possible, follow this with a weak salt solution, even if casualty appears to recover, it is preferable to have a medical examination.
- Heat exhaustion can be avoided by dressing appropriately and ensuring that students are not active for long periods in very hot weather, but are given cooling down periods and regular cold drinks.

## Heat Stroke

May follow heat exhaustion. The body becomes dangerously overheated. It can occur suddenly, causing unconsciousness within minutes.

- Signs and symptoms: headache, dizziness and discomfort, restlessness and confusion, hot, flushed, dry skin, a rapid deterioration of the level of response, full, bounding pulse, body temperature above 40 °C.
- Treatment: Move casualty to a cool place, remove as much of the outer clothing as possible, wrap the casualty in a cold wet sheet until temperature is 38 °C (under tongue), 37.5 °C (in armpit).
- Always seek medical aid.
- Heat stroke can be avoided by the same methods as for heat exhaustion.

## Sunburn

- Students should wear hats and clothing that does not leave too much skin exposed.
- Parents should have been advised to send a suitable sun protection cream for their child. **Students should be reminded to use it by their group leader.**
- Students must be provided with regular cold drinks.
- Activities should not involve students being exposed to the sun for long periods of time.
- Treatment: cover the student with light clothing or a towel, move out of sunlight, cool the skin by sponging with cold water for 10 minutes, give frequent sips of cold water.

## Lyme Disease

- Lyme disease is transmitted by ticks which normally live off sheep, deer and other small animals. There is a small risk that a student may be bitten by a tick and a much smaller risk that the tick may be carrying Lyme Disease.
- Symptoms: A small red patch or circle around the bite, flu-like symptoms, leading in extreme cases to meningitis-like symptoms.
- Treatment: The tick must be removed by a gentle twist and pull with tweezers, ensuring that the mouth parts are not left in the skin. At Holt Hall we would normally advise a trip to Holt Surgery to have the tick removed.
- **It is recommended that students wear long trousers when working in woodland, long grassland or bracken.**
- On returning home, if a student has any of the symptoms and especially if they know that they have been bitten by a tick, they should explain to the doctor where they have been and mention the possibility of Lyme Disease.

## Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease)

- Weil's disease is spread by urine of rats, voles and other rodents. Any water-body could be contaminated but stagnant or slow-moving water is a higher risk than flowing water. Students using the lake may be at risk of exposure although no cases of the disease have ever been reported from the estate.

- Infection may occur through open wounds or mucous membranes of eyes, nose and mouth. Exposure has to be quite heavy before a person will become infected. Incubation period 3 – 19 days.
- Symptoms; often flu-like to begin with; Stage 1 (90% - 95% of all cases) Temperature / fever; muscular pain (esp. calf, abdomen & neck); loss of appetite; vomiting; abdominal pain; exhaustion; nose bleeds; cold sores; bloodshot eyes/irritation/conjunctivitis; rash (may go on to produce bruising or bleeding); urine colour change from light to dark; severe headaches (unremitting and hard to relieve); delirium.  
Stage 2 skin discolouration; severe prostration; swollen liver; meningitis; jaundice; kidney damage.  
5% of cases result in death.
- Students working in or near the lake or river should cover any open wounds with a waterproof plaster. If it is not possible to cover an open wound, the student must not be allowed to come into contact with water.
- **Students with severe cases of eczema must not be allowed to come into contact with lake or river water.**
- Students must wear waterproof gloves when pond dipping to reduce contact with pond water. Hands must be washed thoroughly on return to the hall.
- Students must take a shower if they fall into the lake. This is most likely to occur during a raft building activity.
- Students may not be in, on or near the lake in bare feet.
- **Students must not wade into the lake unless they are wearing wellington boots and are instructed to do so.**
- **Students must not eat or drink while working at the lake or river.**
- **Students must behave sensibly when working close to or in potentially contaminated water.**
- **In the event of students developing flu-like symptoms after coming into contact with lake or river water parents/teachers should inform the appropriate authorities of the nature of the activities carried out.**

### **Holt Hall grounds**

- Students are not allowed onto the island unless supervised.
- Students may not climb trees.
- Students under 16 may not use the ropes course unsupervised.
- Students may not go onto the campsite if there is a camp in residence.

### **Emergency numbers**

- Ambulance, Police: 999
- Cromer Hospital: 01263 513571
- Holt Surgery: 01263 712461
- Holt Hall: 01263 713117

### **Telephone locations in an emergency**

- Holt Hall administration office

