

Site Hazard Card

Holt Hall Field Study Centre

Saltmarsh Ecology

Location

Stiffkey

Risks

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

- Problems due to inadequate supervision.
- Lost students
- Abducted students
- Drowning or being swept out to sea
- Injuries caused by slipping over on mud.
- Problems caused by improper use of field work equipment
- Immersion or exposure leading to hypothermia
- Heat stroke and sun burn
- Minibus travel.
- Damage to environment

Safety Measures

- Staff: student ratio must be at least 1:6+1 for year 3 and 1:15+1 for years 4-6, not including Holt Hall Staff but wherever possible use a ratio of 1:10+1 for years 4-6. Staff: student ratio must be 1:15+1 for years 7-13.

Lost students, abduction, drowning or being swept out to sea, immersion

- Tide times and approximate heights must be known.
- Students must leave the saltmarsh at least three hours before high tide.
- The leader must have a whistle and the students must always be close enough to hear it and be alerted to the orders of the leader.
- The leader must frequently count the students to ensure that they are all accounted for.
- The leader must have an overview of all the students at all times.

Slipping on mud

- All students must wear wellington boots and walk carefully, preferably on vegetation.
- Students should avoid creeks and pans where possible as they often contain deep mud.
- Students should find the narrowest gaps to jump creeks, jump onto vegetation and assume that creek edges will give way if they stand on them.
- If someone says they are stuck they must be taken seriously. It is very difficult or impossible to get out of mud unaided once both feet are stuck up to ankle deep. Students should help and support each other in slippery areas.

- If members of the group have mobility problems every effort should be made to help them to take part in this activity but it may be an unsuitable activity for some students.

Equipment

- Do not use ranging poles as high jump poles or put any weight on them as they will bend or break.
- Ranging poles must be carried vertically with the point downwards.
- Do not run or jump when carrying a ranging pole.
- In case of thunder and lightning, do not touch metal ranging poles. Move away from them and crouch down low if in an exposed area such as an open marsh.
- Point frame quadrats must be carried in a box to and from the fieldwork site. Students must take care when using them.
- Area quadrats must be folded when walking to and from fieldwork sites. They may not be slung around the neck or body in case of strangulation.
- Any lost or broken equipment must be paid for.

Hypothermia

- Students must be dressed suitably for the weather conditions. It is often much colder on the coast than at the hall so staff must check that students have enough on including something wind and waterproof and a warm hat or hood if necessary.
- In case of immersion, or hypothermia blankets must be kept in the minibus and an exposure blanket in the first aid kit. If necessary students may be returned to Holt Hall, be taken to accident and emergency at Cromer Hospital or an ambulance may be called, depending on the severity of the incident.

Heat stroke and sunburn

- Students must be dressed suitably for the conditions and use sun block if appropriate. Hats may be advisable.

Minibus travel

- Students must follow all minibus rules i.e. Seatbelts must be worn; do not distract the driver; no eating; do not remove seatbelt or attempt to get off until told to do so.
- Minibuses are regularly checked and maintained.

General health issues

- The leader must carry a first aid kit which contains fresh water, cleansing wipes and plasters so that minor wounds can be dealt with without removing a student and a member of staff back to the minibus.
- Diabetics must have food with them.
- Students must carry their asthma medication with them.
- Holt Hall and school staff must be made aware of any allergies to nuts, insect bites and stings etc.

Damage to the environment

- Students may not do anything that could cause erosion or damage to the saltmarsh environment.
- Students must not do anything that may disturb nesting birds.

Emergency numbers

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

Telephone locations in an emergency

- If possible a mobile phone should be taken on this activity.
- Main coast road in Stiffkey village.