

Hazard Identification Sheet

Durham University Botanic Garden, Hollingside Lane, South Road, Durham, DH1 3TN www.durham.ac.uk/botanic.garden botanic.garden@durham.ac.uk

Please note: This is NOT a risk assessment. Teachers should follow DCSF Guidelines and write their own.

Please note: First aid provision is provided by Durham University. Any issues report to LET staff or Botanic Garden front desk. Following guidance, visiting groups should also have accompanying first aider and provision.

Updated: March 2026

Hazard Identification	Risk to all pupils and staff	Existing control measures	Further action by school
Vehicles on approach roads to the Botanic Garden and on Hollingside Lane.	Could be bumped or knocked over.	<p>School staff should supervise children upon approach to the venue, ensuring that they use paths when available. Learning and Engagement Team (LET) staff to welcome the group at the café entrance or in front of the greenhouses.</p> <p>School groups to be advised to drop off/pick up at the entrance close to the Howlands Park and Ride next to South Road.</p>	
Uneven paths, slippery paths, wet grass, muddy patches.	<p>Slip, fall, injury.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Children will be instructed by LET and school staff to walk at all times, staying on the footpath and not running. Group to be advised on suitable footwear.</p> <p>Children to be given safety explanations before walking and any hazards to be aware of such as slippery or uneven surfaces, uneven or damaged pathways and roads to cross.</p> <p>Where available, children will be advised to used handrails on any steps. Where</p>	

		<p>handrails are not available, children will be walked single file with guidance from LET staff.</p> <p>Any recent damage creating new uneven sections of path to be reported to Estates and Facilities to await repairs.</p>	
Steps/stairs in various locations.	Slip, fall, injury.	<p>As above for footpaths.</p> <p>Inclement weather will make certain areas difficult to access so this will be dependent on the day. Grotto and Bamboo stepways to be avoided if raining.</p>	
Ponds (there are several ponds in the Garden – one near the Visitor Centre, two in the greenhouse and two in the woodland garden).	<p>Injury, getting wet.</p> <p>All visitors and staff</p>	<p>All ponds are relatively shallow (max 4 ft) and are signposted.</p> <p>School children to be told not to enter the ponds or play near them. Children should be carefully supervised by LET and school/group staff when near the ponds.</p>	
Children wandering off and getting lost	<p>Distress, injury</p> <p>Children</p>	<p>Group reminded at the start of the visit of the need to stick together and not wander off; also what to do if they do get separated.</p> <p>LET and school staff to supervise children during visit.</p> <p>If a child gets separated from the group, they must stay where they are, stand still and keep away from any roads. An adult member of the group will be asked to re-trace their steps to find the child.</p> <p>LET and school staff to follow Durham University lost child procedures.</p>	

<p>Group eating/playing outdoors</p>	<p>Could be bumped or knocked over, other injuries.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Indoor space available, but groups may eat outside at group leader's discretion. Outdoor lunch areas are outside the greenhouses, and by the fountain area near the visitor centre (includes a pond).</p> <p>School/group staff to supervise children at all times.</p>	
<p>Weather</p>	<p>Sunburn/heatstroke, getting cold and wet, injury or death from falling trees.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Children should be advised to dress appropriately for the weather and apply sun cream/wear hats if needed. Waterproofs might be needed.</p> <p>Woodland sections of the Garden to be avoided in windy weather.</p>	
<p>Hot temperatures in glasshouses.</p>	<p>Overheating, fainting.</p>	<p>On hot days children should be encouraged to remove coats/hats/other garments.</p> <p>Visits to the greenhouse to be kept short and, if possible, to include breaks to allow the group to cool down outside.</p>	
<p>Some plants have sharp spines and thorns. Some sculptures have sharp edges.</p>	<p>Cuts, scratches, thorns in skin, rips to clothing</p>	<p>Children to be reminded not to touch plants unless directed to do so, and to only walk when visiting the Gardens.</p> <p>Children supervised at all times by LET and school/group staff.</p>	
<p>Extensive grounds and local woodland open to the public and university students and staff.</p>	<p>Physical harm; prosecution; litigation.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>LET and school/group staff to supervise children at all times.</p> <p>Allergens may be present, due to presence of public, especially in café area – school/group leaders asked to provide allergen information beforehand. Space cannot be guaranteed free from allergens.</p>	

<p>Contact with plants, soil, invertebrates and sheep</p>	<p>Infection, sickness, allergy.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Children to be reminded not to touch plants or animals unless directed to do so under supervision.</p> <p>Hand washing to be carried out in advance of lunch break and following messy activities such as planting.</p>	
<p>Stings from bees or wasps.</p>	<p>Soreness, swelling, allergic reaction. Distress and panic.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>School/group leaders asked to provide allergen information beforehand.</p> <p>Children to be reminded not to touch animals unless directed to do so under supervision.</p>	
<p>The Garden is a working environment and machinery may be in use, e.g. Grass cutters, strimmers, tractors, chainsaws, hedge cutters.</p>	<p>Injury or death.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Children to be kept in a group under LET and school/group staff supervision.</p> <p>Garden staff made aware of school visits, and to stop using equipment where possible if a school group is nearby. LET and school/group staff to watch out for machinery being used.</p> <p>In the event of Garden staff travelling in buggy on paths approach a school group, they are to slow down and stop while LET and school/group staff move the group off the path to allow Garden staff by.</p>	
<p>Improper conduct or allegations of such.</p>	<p>Physical and mental harm, litigation.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>DBS clearance for all staff with unsupervised access to children and all staff to work to University guidelines on working with children and young people.</p> <p>School/group leaders to be present with LET staff for the whole visit.</p> <p>School/group leaders only to supervise children using toilets.</p>	

<p>Fire</p>	<p>Burns, suffocation, death.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Fire evacuation procedures in place and will be explained to the group at the start of the day. All groups told at the introduction to a visit if a fire alarm is expected, the location of the nearest fire exit/evacuation point and the fire assembly point.</p> <p>Fire assembly point is Botanic Garden car park.</p>	
<p>Using Botanic Garden toilets</p>	<p>Slip, fall, injury, improper conduct.</p> <p>All visitors and staff.</p>	<p>Children to be accompanied by school staff.</p> <p>Limited number of children allowed in at any one time.</p> <p>When using public toilets, staff to ensure that no members of the public are inside before sending children in.</p> <p>FE and sixth form groups can accompany themselves to the toilets but must let a school and LET staff member know.</p>	