

Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment

Activity Details

CARA Creation Date: 16-Apr-2024			
Activity:	Animal Observation and Handling		
Activity Scope:	<p>This guideline is provided to support schools in implementing the Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure</p> <p>The CARA planner must be used for the specific school context in conjunction with this guideline considering additional risks, hazards and controls and including environmental, facility, equipment and student considerations</p> <p>For activities beyond the scope of this guideline, complete a CARA record using the CARA generic template</p> <p>This guideline relates to student participation in activities involving observing and handling animals and/or animal remains (e.g. bones, skins) to support curriculum delivery within, and external to, a laboratory or classroom. Such activities include, but not limited to, care of classroom pets, livestock husbandry activities, collecting of frog spawn, and observation of animals in their natural surroundings or of exhibited animals.</p> <p>Depending on the scope of this activity, other risk assessments may be required when planning. Curriculum activities encompassing more than one CARA guideline (e.g. Biological activities, Agricultural activities) must comply with the requirements of all CARA guidelines appropriate to the activity.</p> <p>For curriculum activities involving marine animals (e.g. fishing) consult the Marine organism activities guideline.</p> <p>For activities conducted at a non-Department of Education venue, and/or when engaging external expertise, request written risk assessment advice and attach it to this CARA record.</p> <p>For activities conducted off-site, schools must comply with the School excursions and/or International school study tours procedure.</p>		
Guidelines:	https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/stages-of-schooling/CARA/activity-guidelines		
Activity Description:	Creature Feature- An activity we deliver to all ages (as an excursion or incursion) students have the opportunity to experience animals up close learning about their features, behaviours and habitat requirements.		
Inherent Risk Level:	Medium		
Inherent Risk Level Description:	Activities at medium risk locations (e.g. school oval, chicken coop) and/or with medium risk equipment (e.g. electrical equipment) and/or animals that may cause a minor injury or illness (e.g. larger domesticated animals such as dogs, sheep).		
Start Date:	Monday, 29 April, 2024	End Date:	Sunday, 29 April, 2029
On School Grounds:	Yes	Is parental permission required for this activity?	No

Activity Requirements

Schools must comply with animal welfare legislation. Consult the department's [Animals in education](#) webpage. Comply with [Animal in Queensland State Schools procedure](#) when handling live animals.

Include any additional information used to support student safety in the activity (e.g. resources from Standard operating procedures from [Queensland Schools Animal Ethics Committee's Forms and publications](#),

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published activities or online risk assessment tools) on the CARA record.

Schools must prevent and manage infection control in accordance with the [Infection control](#) procedure. Utilise the [Infection control guideline](#) for practical implementation advice.

Obtain any approvals, [permits](#) or safety advice from the local authority (e.g. property owners), if relevant.

Students

Schools must consider age, maturity and skill level of students when planning curriculum activities. Adjustments are required for [students with disability](#) to support access and participation in the curriculum. Consult with the parents/carers of students with disability, or when appropriate the student, to ensure risks related to their child's participation in the activity are identified and managed.

Schools must consult current student medical information and/or health plans in accordance with the [Managing students' health support needs at school](#) procedure. Record information about any student condition (e.g. physical or medical) that may inhibit safe engagement in the activity and include specific support measures within emergency procedures.

Emergency and first-aid

Emergency plans and injury management procedures must be established for foreseeable incidents (e.g. accidental ingestion, exposure to poisonous material).

Adult supervisors must have:

- emergency contact details of all participants
- a medical alert list and a process for administering student medication;
- communication equipment suitable to conditions (e.g. mobile phone) and a process for obtaining assistance and/or receiving emergency advice.

Safety procedures must be determined for the location (e.g. using specialised equipment, handling animals safely) and are to be informed by details provided on manufacturer's instructions, product labels, vendor SDS, [SOP](#) and local authorities.

Access is required to [First aid equipment](#) and consumables suitable for foreseeable incidents. Refer to [Queensland Poisons Information Centre](#) for further information about types of poisoning and first aid treatment, or phone 13 11 26.

An adult with current emergency qualifications is required to be quickly accessible to the activity area. Emergency qualifications include:

- [HLTAID009](#) Provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or equivalent; and
- [HLTAID011](#) Provide first aid or [SISSS00118](#) - Sports Trainer Level 1 or equivalent

[Anaphylaxis accreditation](#). Refer to the [Supporting students with asthma and/or at risk of anaphylaxis at school procedure](#) for students with known allergies, and, if relevant, your school's Anaphylaxis Risk Management Plan.

Induction and instruction

Induction is required for all adult supervisors on emergency procedures (e.g. location of first aid support and equipment, evacuation assembly points) and safety procedures (e.g. identification of ingestion hazards, handling animals safely). If the activity is conducted at an off-site facility, induction is to be informed by advice provided in consultation with expertise at the location (e.g. zookeeper, farm owner).

- Ensure staff and students are aware of the potential disease transmission risks associated with the animal or animal part being handled
- Ensure staff and students are aware that exposure to animal faeces, body fluids, birth products, or enclosures contaminated with these materials can expose them to disease risks

Instruction is required for students and adult supervisors on correct techniques (e.g. correct set-up and operation of equipment, handling animals safely). Teacher demonstrations are recommended to exemplify safe and hygienic practices and techniques.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a class procedure in case an animal escapes or is unexpectedly encountered in the field or school grounds. This procedure would relate to the anticipated class reaction, specific location (e.g. classroom, farmyard or bush), capture equipment, particular animal or type of animal <p>Consent</p> <p>Parent consent is required for all activities conducted off-site and for extreme risk activities conducted on-site. It is strongly recommended for high risk activities conducted on-site.</p>	
The activity requirements have been met and any additional requirements for the activity are included below or attached	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Risk Management Details

Supervision	
For activities with students with a medical condition or disability that may impact on safety during the activity, consultation with parents is required prior to allocating supervision to determine the impact of students' medical condition or disability on safety during the activity.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The number of adult supervisors required to fulfil emergency and supervision roles must consider the nature of the activity, students' ages, abilities and specialised learning, access and/or health needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Before the activity, all adult supervisors must be familiar with the contents of the CARA record.	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the activity, all adult supervisors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> must be readily identifiable must closely monitor students with health support needs must comply with control measures from the CARA record and adapt as hazards arise must suspend the activity if the conditions become unfavourable (e.g. extreme temperatures, erratic animal behaviour). 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow the relevant Standard operating procedures from Queensland Schools Animal Ethics Committee's Forms and publications to maintain the duty of care associated with any use of an animal.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do NOT handle animals that cannot be positively identified (e.g. spiders, snakes) and managed safely by a qualified adult supervisor. Refer to Department of Environment and Science and the Queensland Museum's Dangerous insects and Common and dangerous snakes for information.	<input type="checkbox"/>
All animals that cannot be positively identified by a qualified adult supervisor are to be considered potentially venomous.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unfamiliar activities (e.g. from online sources) must be trialled without students to identify foreseeable hazards and plan safety processes. Do not proceed if risks of the activity outweigh educational outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supervision requirements determined as part of booking process. Visiting school to identify and provide additional supervision for identified students as required.	

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Supervisor Qualifications	
All adult supervisors must comply with the Working with Children Authority - Blue Cards procedure and be able to identify, and respond to, risks or hazards that may emerge during the activity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A registered teacher must be appointed to maintain overall responsibility for the activity.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
At least one adult supervisor is required to be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A registered teacher, or other adult supervisor working under the direct supervision of a registered teacher, with competence (knowledge and skills) in handling animals relevant to the level of risk identified. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Facilities and Equipment	
Location must be suitable for the activity being undertaken to ensure safe participation and that safety rules and procedures can be followed. Undertake a reconnaissance of new or infrequently used locations to ascertain suitability.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Field guides (e.g. Queensland Museum app), charts and/or keys must be consulted to correctly identify species.	<input type="checkbox"/>
For curriculum activities involving chemicals, consult the Chemicals in curriculum activities notes. Note that all chemicals in schools must be managed in accordance with the department's Chemical management procedure.	<input type="checkbox"/>
All electrical equipment in schools must be managed in accordance with the department's Guide to managing electrical equipment in departmental schools and workplaces .	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consult Chemicals in curriculum activities for support in assessing the risks of chemicals used with/by students in curriculum activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
If a CARA record is required in OneSchool, a summary of chemicals, plant, equipment and/or materials used in the activity must be provided by entering directly onto the CARA record in OneSchool or by attaching a summary. Sample templates are provided on Chemicals in curriculum activities and Plant, equipment and materials in curriculum activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participants must wear Personal protective equipment as relevant (e.g. enclosed footwear, safety gloves).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other personal protective equipment appropriate to the activity may include lab standard eye protection, appropriate face protection (e.g. mask to protect against airborne toxins).	<input type="checkbox"/>
First aid equipment and consumables, as required. All emergency equipment and processes (e.g. eye wash unit) must be functional.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean up equipment as necessary (e.g. dustpan, waste bags, spill kit, disinfectants).	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Hazards and Control Measures	
Further to those listed, include any additional hazards and control measures considering the local context of the activity.	
Environmental hazards	
<p><i>Animal bites/stings - stings, poisoning, infection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise students not to handle animals until explicitly instructed by the qualified adult supervisor. Avoid deliberate contact with wild animals. Respond appropriately to approaching wildlife. Treat all wounds and bites immediately for Infection control. <p>If participating outside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to established practices regarding the use of insect repellent, outlined in Insect viruses and allergies. Continually assess threat of wildlife appropriate to the location. Immediately move the participants to a safe location if dangerous or unidentified wildlife are detected or suspected. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>If participating outside</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adhere to established practices regarding the use of insect repellent, outlined in Insect viruses and allergies. Continually assess threat of wildlife appropriate to the location. Immediately move the participants to a safe location if dangerous or unidentified wildlife are detected or suspected. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Biological material - fluids e.g. blood, saliva</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain aware of the allergen and disease risks associated with dust, dry matter and airborne organisms (e.g. Q fever). Implement appropriate handling and protective measures relevant to the route of transmission of potential zoonoses as outlined in Appendix 1 of Animal contact guidelines. Establish and follow hygiene guidelines when handling animals, their food and water, and when cleaning out cages and pens. Handle animals as little as possible using protective equipment (e.g. leather gloves) when appropriate. Ensure all animals are screened thoroughly for parasites (e.g. ticks and fleas) and students are warned of the potential hazards, symptoms and course of remedial action. Ensure animal remains (e.g. skeletons) are free of body tissue prior to handling. Wash hands and other contaminated areas of the body with soap and water before leaving the activity site. Clean tools and equipment following use to reduce the risk of contamination or accidental exposure to biological hazards. Dispose of hazardous biological materials using a double-bagging technique. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

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<p><i>Environmental conditions - weather, surfaces, surrounds</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constantly monitor and assess the animal for distress, pain or injury resulting from the activity. Assess, and ensure staff and students are aware of, the likely impact of environmental conditions (e.g. noise, adverse weather) on the behaviour of a particular animal. <p>When participating outside:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's sun safety strategy must be followed Assess weather (Bureau of Meteorology) and environmental conditions prior to participation. Follow the Managing excessive heat in schools guidelines when participating in very hot or extreme heat conditions. Ensure drink breaks occur regularly. Make water available for individual participants between drink breaks. Ensure warm clothing is prepared for cold weather conditions. Monitor participants for cold related illness (e.g. hypothermia). <p>When participating at night:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide appropriate lighting/illumination 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Facilities and equipment hazards	
<p><i>Faulty or dangerous equipment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular checks of agricultural infrastructure for safety hazards or broken equipment (fences, water troughs, crush, gates etc) Check equipment for damage before and during the activity. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Hazardous chemicals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All chemicals required for the decontamination processes must be arranged in advance and be readily available. Instruct students in the appropriate storage and administration of veterinary medicines and chemical treatments, as relevant. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Manual handling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the size and temperament of, and the potential for injury by, the animals being observed and/or handled. Use correct manual handling processes when lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying. Use aids for safe handling, lifting and carrying (e.g. guards, safety steps and mobile trolleys), as appropriate. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>Wastes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools must maintain, store, transport and dispose of waste materials appropriately (e.g. use Clinical and related waste guideline). Such materials include but not limited to, animal wastes and used equipment and instruments (e.g. gloves, husbandry disposables). Dispose of waste as soon as possible after the activity. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student considerations	

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<p><i>Student issues - student numbers, special needs, high risk behaviours, medical conditions, separation from the group</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove accessories (e.g. jewellery, lanyards) before participating. • Ensure fingernails and hair and clothing (e.g. long hair, loose shirts) do not pose a hazard. • Instruct participants in appropriate low-stress handling techniques for the particular animal or species. Assess the capacity of individuals to handle and restrain an animal using low-stress handling techniques. Monitor participants for signs of fear and/or hesitancy. • Account for all equipment, chemicals and resources (e.g. matches, sharp tools) after the activity. <p>Additionally, for off-site activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement procedures (e.g. buddy system, roll marking mechanisms) to account for all participants. 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Additional links</p> <p>Creating Healthier Workplaces</p> <p>Department of Agriculture and Fisheries</p> <p>Queensland Government - Coastal Marine Habitats</p> <p>Australian school science information support for teachers and technicians</p>	
<p>Students instructed to wash hands upon activity completion. Students offered to handle/pat, but not required to do so.</p>	

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Planning Considerations

Which students will be involved?

- Consider the number of students, size of student groups and students' capabilities e.g. age, experience, competence, fitness, maturity.
- Consider any individual student needs e.g. personalised learning, support provisions (including behaviour support plans), health management (including health plans and prescribed medication requirements).

Where will the students be?

- Consider the location of the activity e.g. remote/easily accessible, public /private, school/classroom/workshop/other.
- Is the number of students appropriate for the available space?
- If outdoors – sunsafe strategies are implemented; weather and environmental conditions are assessed before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms, water currents, tides); and strategies to reduce the likelihood of viruses, allergies and skin infections caused by insects (e.g. ticks, mosquitoes, spiders) and other animals are applied.
- The site is checked for hazards (e.g. poisonous plants, dangerous animals, uneven terrain, barbed wire,) and necessary controls implemented.
- Activities are appropriately situated in relation to buildings, pedestrians, members of the public, vehicles and other activities e.g. designated areas for activity, spectators and vehicles are established.

What will the students be doing?

- Consider the nature and duration of the activity i.e. need for drinking water, food, rest, appropriate clothing, warm-up and warm-down.
- Instruction in rules and pre-requisite skills is provided.
- Student skills are developed in a progressive and sequential manner.
- First aid and emergency medical treatment provisions are appropriate for the type of activity and location e.g. first aid kit, first aid trained personnel, Ventolin®, Epipen®, and students' personal prescribed medications as required in health plans are available.
- Emergency response strategies are in place e.g. communication plans (e.g. mobile phone, walkie talkie), safety induction, evacuation plans.
- Hair, clothing, footwear and jewellery are worn in a manner that is appropriate and safe for the activity.
- Personal items, e.g. drink bottles, towels and mouthguards, will not be shared between students.

What will the students be using?

- Instruction in safety procedures and safe handling of equipment is provided.
- Equipment is suitable for the activity, properly maintained, appropriately used and complies with the relevant safety standard.
- [Relevant department procedures and guidelines](#) are adhered to for the use of equipment and work processes.

Who will be leading the activity?

- A registered teacher has overall responsibility for the activity.
- Sufficient adult supervision is in place to manage the activity safely (including in emergency situations).
- The activity leader has the competence (knowledge and skills) to plan, induct, instruct and manage the activity safely for students and others.
- There are sufficient adults present with current First Aid qualifications (including CPR) or ready access to qualified first aid personnel.
- Blue Card requirements are adhered to for leaders/volunteers.

I have incorporated the above factors when planning my risk management strategies for this activity.

Additional activity-specific requirements for students with specialised learning needs are provided in the Other Details box below.

Visiting school to identify and provide additional supervision for identified students as required.