Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre

Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment

Activity Details

			CARA Creation Date: 23-Mar-2021
Activity:	**Animal Observation and Handling**		
Activity Scope:	This guideline relates to student observation and handling of animals and animal remains such as bones or skins in non-laboratory or non-clinical settings as a curriculum activity. This includes, but is 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.		
Guidelines:	https://education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/school-curriculum/CARA/activity-guidelines		
Activity Description:	Animal Artefacts- Students are presented with a range of animal artefacts (all non- living). Students are encouraged to hold, investigate, identify and explain what animal these artefacts are and what animals they have come from.		
Inherent Risk Level:	Low		
Inherent Risk Level Description:	Activities with no contact or minimal contact with animals where the threat of injury, bites, stings or scratches being inflicted is minimal (e.g. observation of animals in their natural surroundings, in zoos or registered wildlife parks); low impact care and handling of classroom pets and small domesticated animals; and handling of exhibited animals under supervision.		
Start Date:	Tuesday, 30 March, 2021	End Date:	Sunday, 23 March, 2025
On School Grounds:	Yes	Is parental permission required for this activity?	No

Mandatory/Special Requirements	
If you are in charge of an animal, regardless of what you are using it for or how long it will be in your care, you have a duty of care to that animal and legal obligations under animal welfare legislation.	☐
Teachers should consider whether approvals or permits are required for the handling and use of animals. For further information, refer to animals in Queensland state schools.	☑
The vast majority of contact between animals and humans does not result in any illness. However animals may carry a range of micro-organisms potentially harmful to humans without showing any signs of illness themselves. Zoonotic diseases can be spread by: • direct contact through touching or handling animals or their carcases, or animal bites and scratches • indirect contact with animal faeces, blood and bodily fluids, aerosols, birth products or contact with contaminated objects, such as enclosures, animal environments, aquariums, food and water.	☑
Some animals present a higher risk of zoonoses because of increased shedding of harmful micro-organisms through their faeces and urine. These include: • birthing and pregnant animals • new-born hooved animals (e.g. calves) • newly hatching chickens • some reptiles and amphibians (e.g. snakes, lizards, frogs) • animals that are stressed or unwell.	☑
Certain groups of people may be at increased risk of contracting zoonoses and may suffer more severe symptoms (e.g. young children, immuno-compromised individuals).	☑
For comprehensive advice and precautionary measures about safe contact with animals, refer to animal contact guidelines (PDF, 1.7MB)	☑
For the specific requirements and risks pertaining to handling marine organisms, refer to the Handling marine organisms activity guideline.	☐
For the specific requirements and risks pertaining to observation or handling of animals or live biological material in laboratory or clinical settings, refer to the Biological activities activity guideline.	☐
For student involvement in activites where they will be working in and around stockyards, refer to the Stockyards activity guideline.	☐
Where hazardous chemicals are used or generated by the activity (e.g. dust, gas, fumes), complete the Chemical Hazards in the Curriculum template (DOCX, 295KB) and attach it to this risk assessment. Note: Where the overall risk level conclusion for the use of a hazardous chemical is extreme, the activity must not proceed, as risks are not effectively controlled.	☐

Risk Management Details

Supervision Requirements	
Covered in the Planning Considerations section as outlined in the CARA generic template	☐
Student:Teacher ratios considered as part of booking process.	

Qualification Requirements	
A registered teacher with competence (knowledge and skills) in the activity being undertaken and its potential hazards.	☑
OR	
An adult other than a registered teacher with competence (knowledge and skills) in the activity being undertaken, working under established safety procedures.	☑

Equipment/Facility Requirements	
Facilities (e.g. location, cages, yards, pens) that contain and safeguard the welfare of the animal/s and are sufficiently large enough to allow the animal freedom of movement and freedom from discomfort. Refer to Queensland Schools Animal Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures where relevant.	☐
Containment and restraint equipment (e.g. fencing, cages, traps, collars, harnesses, leashes, cattle races) must be properly maintained, suitable for the particular animal, and used as intended.	☐
Areas where animals are handled are free from obstructions that pose a hazard to the handlers and animals, and the surface and terrrain are suitable for use.	☑
Suitable facilites or equipment to dispose of animal wastes and effluent hygienically.	☐
Protective clothing (e.g. gloves, masks) and suitable footwear as relevant.	☐

Hazards and Control Measures	
Considering environmental conditions	
Remain aware of the allergen and disease risks associated with dust, dry matter and airborne organisms (e.g. Q fever).	☐
Accessing facilities and using equipment	
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.	☐
Ensure animals, especially those in the wild, are handled 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.	☑

Assess the size and temperament of, and the potential for injury by, the animals being observed and/or handled.	☐
Constantly monitor the animal for distress, pain or injury resulting from the activity to assess its ongoing suitability for the activity.	☐
Managing student considerations	
Ensure staff and students are aware of the potential disease transmision 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.	☐
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 • location (e.g. classroom, farmyard or bush) • capture equipment • particular animal or type of animal.	☐
Instruct students in appropriate low-stress handling techniques for the particular animal or species.	☐
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	☐
Assess the capacity of individual students to handle and restrain an animal using low-stress handling techniques.	☐
Students instructed to wash hands at the end of the activity. Students instructed to wear hats if activity is outdoors.	

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 provide extra supervision & details of specialised requirements for identified students as deemed necessary.