



Chelsea Physic Garden  
Health & Safety Information & Risk Identification Guide for  
Schools & Colleges  
Learning & Public Engagement Department  
May 2022

## Completing your risk assessment guide

This guide is intended for the use of children, adult participants, volunteers, and teaching staff when planning a visit to Chelsea Physic Garden. Please be advised, this document is designed to help you plan for your visit **and does not replace your own risk assessment**. Groups should conduct their own pre-visit assessment before their trip.

The following should be considered when producing your risk assessment:

### Fire & Evacuation

Chelsea Physic Garden has full evacuation procedures in case of emergency or fire. Visitors are informed where the fire exits and muster points (Hans Sloane statue).

All fire exits are clearly marked and all staff have received training in evacuation procedures. Our security, fire and safety procedures are tested on a regular basis and updated as necessary. An alarm is used to alert staff and visitors of an evacuation.

In the event of a fire evacuation, teachers should take the register and report any missing persons to a member of uniformed staff or wearing a company badge.

Teachers and adults should remain with their pupils at all times and ensure they are accompanied in the event of evacuation. Please ensure that your group understands the importance of following such procedures in the event of an evacuation. Fire exits in the Learning Centre, potting shed and within the Garden are always kept clear of blockages

### First Aid

The Garden has members of staff trained to provide basic First Aid treatment, although its provision is ultimately the responsibility of the teacher, or the group leader, who must carry a First Aid kit at all times. Please report any accidents to a member of the Learning staff who will be able to call for a First Aider.

Potential health risks to take into consideration at the Garden include:

### Potential risks & risk mitigation within the Learning Centre

- **Sustaining light injury on equipment in the classroom (cuts/bruises), craft items (scissors, glue) or trapping fingers in doors**  
A First Aid-trained member of staff is onsite at all times, school groups should always bring a first – aider with them
- **Burns whilst using hot materials or heating equipment in classroom**  
Activities are supervised by volunteers and teachers and a First Aider is always on site. Hot water urn has warnings written on it regarding heat. Induction hobs are kept away from groups and only turned on when in use during a session
- **Risk of exposure to harmful substances – glue, chemicals (citric acid), dyes, paint, hot liquids, and solids**  
Classroom is kept well ventilated and only non-toxic glues and paints used. If necessary, hazardous activities take place in a separate room or outside in a specially cordoned-off area. Activities are always supervised by volunteers and teachers with the adequate ratio of pupils to teachers

## Outdoor risks & risk mitigation

- **Slipping, tripping or falling due to water leaks/spillages/wet paths**  
Staff and Volunteers are aware of trip hazards and these are covered with electrical tape or painted white
- **Risk of tripping on uneven paving, including the pond**  
Visitors are warned not to cross tapes or access forbidden areas- Signage in place where necessary. Participants are led by trained staff members or volunteers to avoid potential risk areas
- **Branches or trees may fall**  
If a branch/tree is looking vulnerable, avoid the area and speak to a member of staff as soon as possible. Areas are cordoned off and signage/plastic cones in place when tree surgeons or garden staff working- Garden staff and volunteers pre-warn visitors of any area of risk

## Extreme weather risks & risk mitigation

- **Danger during high winds outdoors**  
Staff and volunteers are trained on our high winds' procedure - If wind speeds pick up during an activity, appropriate changes will be made, such as staying in classroom space. The Garden will be closed in case of high winds and all bookings/events cancelled
- **Risk of overheating in hot glasshouses**  
Visitors should be conscious of overheating and any visitor at risk should avoid entering
- **Risk of headaches, fainting or heatstroke in hot weather**  
Visitors, staff and volunteers should carry water with them on hot days. Appropriate dress for the day's weather encouraged. Windows and doors are opened and exposure to heat or greenhouses are reduced/avoided. A First Aid-trained member of staff is onsite at all times

## Major injury risks & risk mitigation

- **Risk of Weil's disease, hypothermia and stomach upsets from pond water**  
**Drowning risk near/in pond**  
Participants are led by trained staff member or volunteer at all times and deep-water signage in place. Adequate adult to child ratios are essential for pond-dipping activities. The pond is not to be used for activities in snowy or icy weather

## Plant Hazards/Allergies risks & risk mitigation

- **Risk of allergies, pricking or skin irritation from poisonous plants and berries in garden**  
At the beginning of a visit staff and volunteers inform visitors of risk and ask they **do not touch any plants/berries in the garden as they can be poisonous.** Signage in place for highly poisonous plants
- **Risk of stings from insect bites (beehives onsite)**  
If any allergy is known, the school or family /individual is responsible for bringing and administering an EpiPen

- **Risk of tetanus or disease contracted from compost heaps/wormeries from touch or ingestion**

Plastic spoons/trowels/gloves are available for wormeries/compost. Staff and volunteers instruct participants on proper handling. Hands must always be washed after touching any soil or when handling compost

### **Allergens and food consumption**

As per Natasha's Law which came into effect on 1st October 2021, all food outlets need to provide full ingredient lists with clear allergen labelling on food that is prepared, packed and offered or sold to consumers on the same premises. As a result, no personal food or food from outside the café may be consumed on the Chelsea Physic Garden café premises (including tables in the gazebo/uncovered areas of the café) to ensure food safety and prevent risks of cross contamination. Food purchased or brought from outside the café may be consumed on benches around the garden or on the lower lawn.

### **COVID-19 procedures**

We adjust our policy in accordance with the most recent government Covid guidelines. Please see [www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/index.htm) for more information and consider these policies when creating your own risk assessment.

### **Safeguarding**

See our safeguarding policy

### **Security**

The inside and outside of the Garden are covered by a network of CCTV cameras. Images are monitored and recorded to help ensure the safety of visitors and the living collection. Unattended bags should be reported to a member of staff- Please do not touch them.

### **Missing child Policy- Risk of being separated from the rest of the group**

Staff and volunteers are trained in missing child and safeguarding procedures. Pupils should inform a member of the Learning team or volunteer (uniformed staff) should they become separated from the rest of the group- Please ensure all pupils and accompanying adults are made aware of this in advance of their visit

### **Supervision and behaviour**

Teachers and adults should remain with their pupils at all times and must have the correct adult to pupil ratio (1:3 for Early Year Foundation Stage; 1:6 for Key Stages 1 & 2 and 1:15 for Key Stages 3, 4 & 5).

Responsibility for pupils on school or college visits remains with the teachers at all times. The Garden reserves the right to refuse admission to groups who are not considered to have sufficient adult supervision.

If the behaviour of any groups or individuals affects the safety or enjoyment of other visitors, they will be asked to leave. Teachers should ensure that their pupils understand

how they are expected to behave and have contingency measures in place in the event that anyone is asked to leave.

If you have any other questions about your visit. please contact our Learning team at [learning@chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk](mailto:learning@chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk).

**We hope you have an enjoyable and safe visit to Chelsea Physic Garden and we look forward to welcoming you.**