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| **Activity:** | Activities on the Water (E.g., Canoeing, Kayaking) | **Location:** | Offsite (e.g., Stafford Boat Club) | **Last review date:** | March 2023 | **Produced by:** | Alex Windows (Section Leader) |
| **Next review date:** | December 2025 | **Quality Assured by:** |  |

* POR 9.42 Water Activities - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/9-activities/#9.42>
* POR 9.43 Life Jackets and Buoyancy Aids - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/9-activities/#9.43>
* POR 9.44 Classification of Waters - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/9-activities/#9.44>
* POR 9.45 Activities on Class C Waters - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/9-activities/#9.45>
* TSA Activities on Class C Water Factsheet (FS120623) - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/general-water-activities/class-c-waters/>
* TSA Buoyancy Aids and Lifejackets Factsheet (FS120603) - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/general-water-activities/water-safety-buoyancy-aids-and-lifejackets/>
* National Directory of Waterways (Classification) - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/waterways/>
* TSAWaterborne diseases and immersion (FS120629) - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/general-water-activities/water-safety-waterborne-diseases-and-immersion/>
* TSA Canoeing Guidance - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/paddlesports/canoeing/>
* TSA Kayaking Guidance - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/paddlesports/kayaking/>
* TSA Rafting (Traditional) - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/paddlesports/rafting-traditional/>
* TSA Paddling Boarding - <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/running-your-section/programme-guidance/general-activity-guidance/paddlesports/stand-up-paddleboarding/>

**Statements below highlighted in bold are extracted from POR or supporting factsheets**, the wording of some statements may have been altered from the original.

| **What are the hazards?** | **What are the risks?** | **Who is most at risk?** | **What control measures will be put in place?** |
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| **Safety Equipment****(Buoyancy aids and helmets)** | DrowningDamage to equipment.Poor-fitting.Incorrect usage. | Persons on/in the water | * **All members taking part in water activities must wear an EC approved buoyancy aid or lifejacket appropriate to the activity, weather conditions, and size of the participant.**
* **Ensure all lifejackets and buoyancy aids being used are fit for purpose and suitable for the activity on each occasion that it is used.**
* Ensure users are shown how to wear safety equipment and how to use their equipment correctly.
* Leaders should check with young people that equipment is suitable and fitted correctly before allowing access to the water.
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| **Swimming Ability** | Drowning | Young people | * **Members taking part in any activity on the water must be able to demonstrate their ability to swim 50 metres in clothing and equipment appropriate to the activity, e.g., buoyancy aid, and keep afloat for five minutes.**
* **A non-swimmer may take part in water activities if no more than one non-swimmer is in any craft, on C or B1 waters only for single handed crafts.**
* Details of young persons' swimming ability obtained from parents/carers ahead of the activity if satisfactory. This should be recorded in the member's personal information or authorisation form.
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| **Water** | CapsizeInjuryDrowning | Persons on/in the water | * Know the classification of the water(s) for the activity. Ensure the correct number of persons with appropriate adventurous activity permits.
* Where activities take place on class C waters, **those in charge of the activity should have the appropriate skills and knowledge of the activity taking place and a knowledge of and ability to conduct appropriate risk assessments.**
* Ahead of the activity, assess water levels by researching or checking in person.
* If water levels are too high or flowing too fast a decision should be made about safety and if the activity can go ahead.
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| **Rescue** | CapsizeInjuryDrowning | Persons on/in the water | * **A safety plan is in place in case of an incident or emergency.**
* If required, ensure young people know how to capsize safely and right their boat correctly.
* Ensure there is a component leader to supervise and assist with rescue and get persons back into their boats safely.
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| **Launching Boats into Water** |  |  | * Leaders should assist young people in getting onto and off the water.
* Demonstrate correct boat and water entry and exit techniques.
* The area of launching and exit should be inspected before the start of the session and the group informed of any hazards.
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| **Activities (Paddling, Movement and Games)** | CapsizeInjuryCollisionDrowning | Persons on/in the water | * **The activity is suitable for the age and ability of the participants.**
* **A clear plan is in place for the activity.**
* **A safety briefing is given to all participants and people in charge.**
* **Participants are briefed, with clear boundaries which everyone understands.**
* Leaders could assign a number to young people and count them in and out of the activity regularly.
* Instruction given on the safe use of paddles and kayaks should be given at the safety briefing.
* Set and explain any signals and procedures, such as ‘move to one side’, ‘slow down’ etc.
* The leader in charge should organise each group’s movement on the water.
* Prevent congestion and collisions between boats or with other water users.
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| **Other Water Users (E.g., Boats)** |  |  | * Instructions should be given to young people at the safety briefing on the procedure when a boat is approaching.
* All paddlers will move to the side, stop paddling and hold on to the bank, where possible.
* An adult leader should indicate to move over to the side to allow other users to move past with plenty of space.
* Instructors should be in a location to put themselves between boats and young people.
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| **Clothing** | HypothermiaWeight/Drowning | Persons on/in the water | * Persons taking part in activities must **wear appropriate and suitable clothing, including footwear, for the activity which they are doing and the weather they may face**.
* Paddlers to wear cag tops supplied by the instructor dependent on weather conditions.
* Spare down jacket or fleece to be at hand if someone becomes cold. If paddlers become too cold, then they are to be removed from the cold environment as soon as is practical.
* Leaders should advise parents/carers of the clothing young people should wear and bring a change of clothing as required.
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| **Entrapment** |  |  | * If paddling on flowing water, Instructors should place themselves between any dangers and paddlers.
* Ensure the correct boat size for each individual paddler.
* Correct size buoyancy aid to be issued and to be checked to ensure correct fitting.
* None-swimmers in the group should be made aware of to all instructors and then should be closely supervised.
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| **Water Quality – Sewage, Algae, Contamination** | Ingestion or absorption of hazardous chemicals or sewage. IllnessAllergy  | Persons on/in and people immediately around the water. | * Leaders should look out for signs of unclean or contaminated water, sewage discharge, algal growth, or dead/dying fish. Young people should be diverted where possible to avoid this.
* Cover open cuts, scratches, or sores with a waterproof plaster.
* Leaders to advise to shower as soon as possible after contact with potentially contaminated water.
* Look out for symptoms of being unwell in young people.
* Abort the session if there are any serious concerns.
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| **Wildlife** **(Inc. Plants, animals, and birds)** | Animals attacking Stinging insectsAllergy | Persons on/in and people immediately around the water. | * Keep noise and disturbance to a minimum, especially near wildlife.
* Litter must be taken away from the site and disposed of appropriately.
* Take care when around water banks.
* Be aware and keep clear of animals, particularly nesting animals, and birds.
* Be aware of young people with allergies to vegetation or animals.
* **Ticks** - Young people could check themselves and each other regularly for ticks. Leaders should carry tick tweeters in first aid kits. Everyone should check themselves thoroughly when they get home, leaders to advise participants and parents.
* **Plants** - Young people should be briefed to avoid some vegetation, such as Brambles, Nettles, Western Gorse etc. Young people could be advised to cover up, e.g., wear long trousers and sleeves.
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| **Behaviour and Supervision** | Inexperience.Poor perception of risks and hazards - endangering themselves and others.Inappropriate behaviour. | Young people | * Young people should be briefed on appropriate behaviour in the environment and what is expected of them.
* An adult leader should explain specific rules relating to the event, location or activity before young people participate.
* When playing games set clear boundaries within which to play.
* Young people must not be allowed to play fight.
* The youngest or most inexperienced people should be closely supervised.
* Young people to exercise care when around the water's side.
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| **Equipment** | Impact injury Blunt injury | All | * Leaders should check if the equipment is working or not damaged before use.
* Young people should be shown how to use and carry equipment correctly by an adult leader.
* Equipment should be tidily stored in a central location when not in use.
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| **Public and other users** | Trespass.Disruption. | Young People. | * Respect other people and when passing other boats or fishermen, maintain a suitable level of noise.
* Take care around private residences to respect others’ privacy and not intrude on land or be too loud.
* Groups to keep quiet when approaching and passing private residences.
* Expectations to be set out by leaders before passing such areas.
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| **Manual Handling**  | Manual handling - injury to shoulders, backs, muscles, legs, etc | Young people and adults | * Ensure the use of good lifting techniques, lifting from the knees, not from the waist. Keep back straight.
* Advise not to attempt to carry more than capable of.
* Two young people should carry a kayak. Four young people to carry an open canoe, unless the instructor deems otherwise.
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| **Exertion** | DehydrationHungerExhaustion | Young People. | * Young people should be advised to tell a leader if they are feeling unwell or have any problems.
* Leaders should remain extra vigilant of those who may not have eaten or been drinking sufficiently.
* Young people should be advised to stay in groups moving at a comfortable pace for the slowest member.
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| **Weather** | Discomfort.Getting lost/stranded. | All | * Leaders should obtain a comprehensive suitable weather forecast, before embarking. Equipment, route, or advice should be adjusted as required.
* Leaders should monitor the weather forecast in advance and during the activity - if heavy rain is forecast then an alternative plan could be adopted.
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| **Hot Weather** | Dehydration.Exhaustion.Heat/Sunstroke.Sun Burn. | Young People. | * Adult leaders should be available to spot the signs of dehydration and exhaustion.
* Leaders should bring additional water to activities and provide a shaded area.
* Young people should put on sun protection as required, as advised by leaders. They must apply their own sun protection or be aided by another young person.
* Sun protection should not be supplied or applied by an adult.
* Young people should bring their own sun protection (and parents advised to do so well before the activity) to avoid any allergic reactions – these should not be provided by leaders.
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| **Cold Weather** | Hypothermia.Getting Wet.Poor Visibility. | Young People. | * Young people should wear an appropriate level of clothing depending on the weather conditions, as advised by leaders. Make sure everyone knows what kit works to keep them warm and dry.
* Leaders should assess the weather conditions before undertaking and during the activity and decide if the event should take place or continue.
* Hot drinks and soup could be considered to help keep you warm, hydrated and keep energy levels up.
* Consider the effect of the cold and damp on leaders too, as they are overseeing the safety of others. Make sure that the opportunity to get warm and dry is available. Ensure rest periods are reviewed so that everyone is fit to do what is required of them.
* Have lighting in your location and use torches or head torches to carry out your activities safely.
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| **Allergies** | IntolerancesAllergic reactionAnaphylaxis  | Young People. | * Details of allergies will be collected by leaders and stored securely.
* Should members be likely to encounter allergens, additional precautions should be taken to avoid or remove the allergen.
* Members susceptible to vegetative allergens should wear appropriate clothing to avoid contact.
* Ensure any medication is readily available and it can be administered if it is required, especially for those susceptible to allergens.
* Leaders should also pay attention to the pollen count. If this is high, hay fever sufferers may advise to wear wraparound sunglasses and bring any required medications.
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| **Medication** | Medical Conditions. | Young People. | * All medication, apart from those needed for emergencies, should be handed to leaders, who should be briefed on when and how they are needed to be taken.
* Emergency medicines, particularly inhalers, can be kept on a young person or handed to a leader who will remain close by.
* If required, additional measures should be put in place to ensure medication can be administered.
* Ensure any medication is readily available and it can be administered as required.
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| **Emergencies** | Unable to get help or locate. | All. | * Appropriate consent and personal information, including medical information, should be carried for all young people, including young leaders.
* Leaders should know the location of the nearest hospital.
* **Communication** - Every group should have an effective means of emergency communication with other groups, home contact (in touch) and emergency services.
* **Authorisation/Inform** – send the T0 form to DC and GSL.
* **Home Contact** (in touch) - Could be more than one person. Must be available ‘around the clock’ and they should be prepared to pass messages, including emergency communications, on from leaders to parents and vice versa, as well as other appropriate authorities.
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