

Rockley Watersports Risk Assessment and Management

Adventure and outdoor activities offer educational and recreational opportunities as well as personal and social development to school pupils, and individuals regardless of their background. These activities can help to foster a spirit of adventure in which the individual can learn/improve to work with others and cope with an element of the unknown and so develop the ability to deal with changing circumstances and the management of risk.

Schools, parents & individuals are willing to accept a certain level of risk in order to secure these benefits, so long as they can be confident that the risk is worth taking and that it is being properly controlled. This cannot extend to the elimination of all risks or the establishment of standards that are so high as to reduce the potential benefits. The balance between challenge and safety is therefore an important consideration for us. The best facilities, environments and experiences are those that, through thoughtful design, management and maintenance, offer the client the maximum developmental value while ensuring that their safety is effectively managed.

Rockley Watersports focus is on real risks - those that cause real harm and suffering - not on trivial risks and petty health and safety.

This means that Rockley Watersports needs to identify, and make informed judgments about, the hazards to which clients are exposed. We then take steps to ensure that the risks are managed and controlled so far as is reasonably practicable while allowing the potential benefits to be delivered.

This risk management process needs to include:

- Ensuring that the activity is managed by people whose competence and experience are appropriate to the tasks as well as the hazards and whose judgment can be relied upon;
- Ensuring that participants, especially young people, are properly prepared to undertake the activity and that the activity is appropriate to their levels of physical and mental maturity;
- Enabling individuals to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility.
- Ensuring that management systems are in place to set the boundaries of acceptability of the risk and control mechanisms through risk assessments;
- Ensuring that the equipment to be used is fit for purpose in terms of its initial specification and subsequent maintenance;
- Ensuring that authoritative, relevant good practice is followed;
- Ensuring that statutory obligations are met.

Rockley Watersports manages risk through three assessments

1. Generic risk assessment – general risks applicable to all centres and activities
2. Site-specific risk assessment – particular risks associated with a particular centre & activity
3. Dynamic risk assessment – the risks at the time

The outdoors offers an environment that can meet individuals' needs for a sense of excitement and achievement. Properly managed outdoor and adventure activities can help individuals understand and develop risk awareness through risk assessment and risk management. This can thereby help to equip them to deal with the risks inherent in life. Achieving this depends on the identification of the hazards and risks and the development of the skills and experience necessary to overcome them with appropriate levels of supervision.