



SUBJECT: Pond Safety

RECIPIENTS: All Council Controlled Schools

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HSB11

POND SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

Lincolnshire County Council believes that ponds situated on schools sites provide excellent learning opportunities and can enable highly beneficial educational activities for all children. This information sheet is designed to provide some tips and guidance for site managers and teachers or those in charge of taking children pond dipping to ensure the safety of pupils and those ponds can remain in safe use and continue to provide valuable learning opportunities.

Hazards and Risks

When considering safety issues, and in particular the risk of drowning in a pond, there are a number of factors to assess:

- Unsupervised access to the pond, particularly by younger children.
- The water as a drowning hazard.
- Water quality and associated health hazards such as [leptospirosis](#) and the effects of blue/green algae.
- Interaction of the water with features such as steep banks, slips, trips and falls, silt, and overhanging branches.

Controls and actions to consider when assessing the risk:

- ☞ The pond area is secured by a fence and a locked gate to prevent pupils gaining unsupervised access. Or covered with a rigid steel mesh when not in use. (The fence should be 1.1 metres high with 100mm spaced vertical bars in accordance with The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) recommendations.
- ☞ Close supervision is provided by staff during visits to the pond area.
- ☞ The pond is not deep (recommended less than 500mm) and has gradually sloping sides. This allows Staff to easily carry out a wading rescue if a pupil falls in.
- ☞ Reach poles, details of the risk assessment, and emergency action plans should be available to teachers supervising the activity.
- ☞ Appropriate footwear should be worn to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- ☞ Good hygiene control should be followed.

Further Information

- [Are You Water Wise? Quiz](#)
- [Pond-garden water safety – Water Safety Information](#)
- [Pond Dipping – Water Safety Information](#)
- [Water safety for children and young people](#)
- [Potential Perils of a Pond](#)

If you require further assistance or clarification on the subject please contact:

Your Mouchel Health & Safety Adviser (see George section: Corporate > Information for Working > Risk Management > H&S Advisers)