

Risk Assessment – Zoos, Farms and Animal Centres

Area of Operation: zoos, farms, safari parks and animal centres

Who is at risk?

- Staff
- Students
- Members of the public

Hazards	Risks	Safety Measures to Control Risks
Use of public toilets	Risk of separation from the group and interactions with strangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff accompany student to toilets as needed, ensuring privacy and supervision. ○ Select toilets close to main activity areas for easy monitoring. ○ Designate a specific meeting point outside toilets in case of separation.
Separation or wandering	Risk of student straying from the group or entering restricted animal enclosures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement a buddy system, with each staff member assigned to a small group. ○ Review safety rules, boundaries, and meeting points with student before arrival. ○ Staff carry ID cards, mobile phones for quick communication if separation occurs.
Extreme weather conditions (outdoor areas)	Risk of heatstroke in hot weather, hypothermia in cold weather, or other weather-related discomfort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check the weather forecast prior to the visit and ensure student wear appropriate clothing. ○ Provide sunscreen, hats, or rain gear, as needed. ○ Plan regular breaks in shaded or sheltered areas and monitor for signs of weather-related discomfort.
Student's potential behavioural issues	Risk of disruptive behaviour or distress, which could lead to incidents with animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep a high staff-to-child ratio for close supervision and support. - Brief student on behaviour expectations around animals, including calm movements and respecting animal boundaries. ○ Staff trained in de-escalation techniques to manage behavioural issues.
Animal enclosures and feeding areas	Risk of injury from animal bites, scratches, or defensive reactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure student are briefed on safety around animals, such as not reaching into enclosures or touching animals without permission. - Only allow interaction with supervised, child-friendly animals in designated areas. ○ Staff carry a first aid kit for minor injuries.
Allergens and hygiene risks	Risk of allergic reactions, foodborne illnesses, or contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm any allergies before the visit and avoid areas with high allergen exposure. ○ Ensure student wash hands after animal contact or feeding areas. - Carry hand sanitiser and encourage student to avoid touching their faces after interacting with animals.

Hazards	Risks	Safety Measures to Control Risks
Large crowds and confined spaces	Risk of overstimulation, leading to distress or wandering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose quieter sections or visit during off-peak hours if possible. ○ Conduct regular headcounts and establish designated meeting points.
Interactions with the public	Potential for misunderstandings or conflicts with other visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare student for expected behaviour around others, such as keeping noise levels low and respecting space. ○ Position staff nearby to intervene if a situation arises. ○ Staff trained in de-escalation to calmly manage any conflicts and communicate the group's purpose if needed.
Long periods of walking or standing	Potential for fatigue, restlessness, or discomfort during extended walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan regular rest breaks at designated seating or shaded areas. - Ensure student have water and snacks to prevent fatigue and dehydration.
Emergency evacuation	Risk of confusion or distress in the event of an emergency or evacuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review emergency procedures with staff and student before entering the venue. ○ Identify and communicate emergency exits and external meeting points. - Keep a high staff-to-child ratio to support student and ensure they stay with the group in an emergency.

To be read in conjunction with the following:

- Student's Risk Assessments
- Participant Consent / Medical Information
- Emergency Action Plan Flow-Chart

Reviewed: September 2025

Approved by: **RAISE-AP** Educational Directors, September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2027