



Risk Assessments – Helford River

(last updated: 27-01-26 by Rupert Whelan (Activities Manager))

All risks are further minimised by the supervision structure within the daily running of CST, as per the *CST Operating Procedures* and other policies. The term 'staff' below is a generic term for all levels of shore-based and on-water staff, volunteers and helpers. (Abbreviations used: AM (Activities Manager), LI (Lead Instructor), DO (Duty Officer), NGB (National Governing Body), PBL2 (RYA Powerboat Level 2), RYA (Royal Yachting Association), BC (British Canoeing)).

All risks associated with the various types of abuse of children and vulnerable adults are controlled by the CST '*Safeguarding and Child Protection (and Vulnerable Adults) Policy*'. The Designated Safeguarding Officer & Centre Welfare Officer is the CEO, Jakie Jewell.

Health and Safety Policy Statement: *“It is the policy of Children’s Sailing Trust that the health and safety of all staff and persons on site, including those afloat and those undertaking CST Training as its most important operational responsibility. The strict working practices adopted by CST are the product of the combined experience of the team, the guidelines of the appropriate national governing authorities and British law.”*

Risks Afloat					
HAZARD	RISK TO	Low, Medium or High (severity/likelihood)	CONTROLLED BY	FURTHER ACTION	Residual risk rating (after further actions)
Injury to student within a CST run session	Students	Medium / High	<p>Instructors to be trained and assessed to run the activity (through formal NGB Instructor qualifications or inhouse Instructor qualifications, inductions and ongoing staff training). CST to ensure appropriate ratios are maintained. Instructor to maintain constant awareness and group control.</p> <p>CST code of conduct to be available to all students prior to coming to CST with expectations of student behaviour.</p> <p>Manual Handling training given to instructors, advice and supervision given to students.</p>	DO to oversee all activities on the day and be available for back up. DO to remove anybody from a session that deems to be unsafe to themselves or any other user.	Low
Water (drowning)	All	High / Medium	Personal floatation device (PFD) to be worn at all times whilst near or on the water.	Visual monitoring by CST staff.	Low
	Students	High / Medium	<p>Safety cover provided by Instructors in line with NGB guidelines. All students to be a minimum of 'water confident'.</p> <p>Students who are unable to maintain an upright position should they fall in the water uninjured, or those with a medical condition whereby they have a higher risk of drowning (i.e epilepsy) to wear a lifejacket</p> <p>Maximum number of students per craft not to exceed manufacturers recommendation.</p> <p>All students to be briefed on capsizing/entrapment risks before session commences.</p>	<p>Communications maintained between Instructors and Duty Officer.</p> <p>The DO to authorise any dinghies that have over 3 students aboard.</p>	Low
Entrapment	Sailors	High / Medium	<p>All doublehander dinghies to be fitted with 40L masthead float.</p> <p>Powerboat drivers providing 'safety cover' to be trained in how to deal with entrapment.</p> <p>Quick-release harnesses to be used on trapeze boats.</p>	<p>Observation and swift response to capsizes from RYA qualified instructor.</p> <p>Powerboats to carry a safety knife.</p>	Low

			<p>Long hair to be tied back.</p> <p>Dangly jewellery to be removed or covered</p>	CST staff to carry safety knife upon their person.	
All	High / Medium	Powerboat drivers, or their crew, are ready to enter the water to assist with the righting of an inverted boat in the event of an entrapment.			Low
Sit on top kayakers Stand-up Paddleboarders	High / Low	Entrapment is extremely unlikely with a sit on top kayak or stand-up paddleboard due to no ropes or cockpit. However, all students briefed on what to do in the event of ending up underneath the craft.		Instructors to maintain a constant awareness of all paddlesport students and include in the session briefing the actions to be taken in the event of surfacing under a kayak or SUP.	Low
Rowing boats	High / Low	Entrapment is extremely unlikely with rowing boat due to the unlikely event of capsizing. However, all students briefed on what to do in the event of ending up underneath the craft.		Instructors to brief and monitor students on positioning within the rowing boat. Rowing boats not to be used where conditions promote instability (i.e. waves / swell)	Low
Injury From Propellers or being struck by a powerboat	All water users	<p>Drivers to always switch off the engine before recovering people who are in the water or who have any part of their body in the water.</p> <p>All drivers to maintain safe speed relative to proximity of other water users</p> <p>Killcords to be used at all times whilst the engine is in gear.</p>		<p>Ongoing visual checks by DO and regular staff training.</p> <p>All powerboat drivers to hold the RYA PBL2 qualification and be authorised by the AM before driving for CST.</p> <p>Only original engine manufacturers killcords to be used, inspected prior to each use for signs of wear</p>	Low
	Alongside towing of craft	<p>Whilst it is strongly encouraged not to perform alongside tows on dinghies with crew onboard, this may be necessary at times (so long as the crew are positioned inboard and it is safe to do so).</p> <p>No alongside towing of kayaks or stand-up paddleboards with person on board craft</p>			Medium

	Powerboat crew	High / High	Helms to communicate to crew when changing gears, speed or direction. Helm to ensure all crew are appropriately seated with 2 solid handholds.		Low
Collision with public water users	All	High / High	Choice of operational area. Avoid areas with swimmers in the water. All round lookout while underpower	DO to monitor and adapt as necessary.	Low
Kit Failure	All	Medium / Medium	All kit subject to regular inspection and maintenance.	Any defect kit taken out of action and either identified as out of order or removed from use.	Low
Cold, Hypothermia and Afterdrop	Staff	Medium / Medium	Use of qualified, experienced, trained staff.	DO supervision and monitoring of wellbeing.	Low
	Students	Medium / High	Adequate briefing and students asked to bring wetsuits to on water sessions. Students asked to bring windproof jacket to on-water sessions.	CST have a small number of additional wetsuits and windproofs for those without. DO to make decision if U18s to take part in activity without suitable clothing. Instructors to monitor group/individuals for signs of cold. Water temperature to be monitored. Foil blankets in Safety Barrels.	Low

Heat and Hyperthermia	Students and staff	Medium / Medium	Regular breaks for rehydration and shade. Encouragement from Instructors/DO for groups to re-hydrate.	DO supervision. Students asked to bring full water bottle to each session.	Low
Sunburn	Students and staff	Medium / High	Instructors should 'recommend' to adults and 'strongly recommend' to children that they apply a high-factor sun cream before of sessions, and frequently throughout the day. Instructors to build in regular shade opportunities in periods of strong sunlight.	Suncream is provided by CST for those who do not have their own (especially Juniors) and is kept in the DO box. Information sent out within course confirmation letters of importance of providing own suncream/sunhats.	Low
Cut Feet	All	Medium / High	Suitable footwear should be worn by students and staff when operating ashore or afloat (something that won't slip or kick off).	Instructor briefings for students.	Low
Trapped body parts between boats and/or pontoon	All	High / Medium	Students to be briefed by Instructors to prevent.	Any trip hazards on pontoons (or damage to pontoons) to be dealt with as soon as they are discovered. Pontoons to be kept clear of guano build up. Suitable size operating area to avoid overcrowding/increased risk of collision.	Low
Injury from falling off kit into shallow water	All	High / High	Instructors caution, as far as is reasonably possible, that the water by the shore is shallow very close to the shore. Instructors avoid games that involve standing up in shallow water.	The discipline specific SOPs to highlight any specific hazards for Instructors to be made aware of and include in session briefings.	Low
Loss of communication from on water to shore	Staff	Medium / Medium	Powerboat drivers, and in most cases Instructors, to carry a VHF with Ch16 available. DO to carry operational mobile phone. When Instructors work out of sight of DO, at least one staff member to have access to mobile phone.	All powerboat safety barrels contain whistle/foghorn and flares. All instructors (when on water) should carry a whistle on their person. Instructors operating outside of proximity of the DO to carry operational mobile phone	Low

Head Injuries	Students	High / High	HELMET POLICY: As a standard practice, helmets should be offered to all, regardless of ability and conditions. CST require helmets to be worn when certain parameters are not met (student ability, wind conditions, kayaking, other mitigating factors). The DO or an Instructor can require helmets to be worn at any time.		Low
	All	High / Medium	Diagnosis of serious head injury, either immediate or delayed.	All head injuries reported to the DO who assesses appropriate actions. All patients leave with the CST advice sheet for head injuries with symptoms to look out for should the condition deteriorate. Any doubt or abnormal symptoms, precaution is taken to recommend the patient seek medical advice, or emergency services called.	Low
Lost/missing persons	All	High / Medium	All students continuously supervised by instructor during session with regular head counts. Accurate register kept by DO of all students taking part in sessions with robust signing in/out system in place.	All students handed to parent/guardian/school teacher after at the end of session. DO informed at first opportunity of any potential lost/missing person who will implement the “Lost/missing person” policy.	Low
Adverse weather: squalls / lightning strike / restricted visibility	All	Low / Medium	Students to be removed from the water (when adverse weather is in close proximity) and taken into a place of safety until it has passed.	Daily weather report included as part of DO briefing. Where risk of adverse weather is highly likely, consideration should be made to not go out or choice of operating areas.	Low
Water-related diseases Pollution	All	High / Medium High/Low	Instructors to remind participants that open cuts, grazes or wounds are suitably covered. Instructors to be aware of pollution forecasts and reports of fuel spillage	Medical tape and plasters available in first aid kits. Change locations or activity to allow for pollution.	Low Low
Medical ailments	All	High / High	Medical information captured on the Participant Consent form or Staff Info form with relevant details shared with the DO/Instructors where appropriate.	Instructors ask students of any medical concerns during initial briefing. Consideration on an individual basis as to adaptations or suitability to take part in	Medium

				activity and/or how medication kept throughout session	
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RISKS ASHORE: General					
HAZARD	RISK TO	Low, Medium or High (severity/likelihood)	CONTROLLED BY	FURTHER ACTION	Residual risk rating (after further actions)
Injury due to slip or trip.	All	Medium / Medium	Risks identified to new participants as soon as possible No running or jumping unless specifically notified for activity. Boats to be kept tidy, pontoons, changing facilities, surfaces and areas kept clear as is reasonably possible.	Adequate control of students by instructors.	Low
Injury due to sharp objects on shoreline	All	Medium / High	Footwear to be worn by students and staff at all times. DO to be notified of dangerous objects.		Low
Injury or Death due to fall from height	All	High / Low	Students not allowed to climb any rocks, cliffs or shorelines. Care to be taken on piers and on steps.	Adequate control of students by instructors.	Low
Drowning following unintended immersion	All	High / Medium	PFDs to be worn before when near water.	Adequate control of students by instructors.	Low
Injury due to rockfall	All	High / Low	Students to be kept away from unstable cliffs. Site specific risk assessments to be carried out.		Low
Injury or death due to a road traffic incident	All	High / Medium	Students to be briefed on traffic at Helford passage. Care to be taken when leaving the beach with groups.		Low

Manual handling of kit	Staff/ Students	Medium / Medium	Supervision/instruction in correct lifting techniques. All to stay uphill of boats being launched down hill	No lifting of kit without a sufficient number of people available. Instructional team to advise on this. DO to monitor.	Low
Fire	All	High / Low	Fire extinguishers located in Carwinion Shed, Ursula's Shed & all powerboats. All inspected and serviced regularly.	Regular staff trained in fire procedures – procedure in SOPs and included in Induction process.	Low
Medical ailments	All	High / High	Medical information captured on the Participant Consent form or Staff Info form with relevant details shared with the DO/Instructors where appropriate.	Instructors ask students of any medical concerns during initial briefing. Consideration on an individual basis as to adaptations or suitability to take part in activity and/or how medication kept throughout session.	Medium

RISKS DURING MAINTENANCE / FUELLING

HAZARD	RISK TO	CONTROLLED BY	FURTHER ACTION
Chemicals	Staff	Trained or supervised use only, PPE kit available.	COSHH details to be available to users.
Repair Materials	Staff	Trained or supervised use only, PPE kit available.	COSHH details to be available to users.
Use of Power Tools	Staff	Trained or supervised use only, PPE kit available.	Staff training in use of tools by experienced member of staff.
Fuel	Staff	Trained personnel only, PPE kit available.	No U16s allowed to fuel up. Eye wash facilities available when transferring fuel between containers. Fuel Handling Ops to be followed.

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