

Risk assessment – Moving Water

Bolton School	Assessment carried out by: Steven Bradley
Date of next review: 04/09/2026	Date assessment was carried out: 04/09/2025

Overview of activity	Bolton school runs various paddle sports trips which involves paddling on moving water, mainly on rivers in the North of England and North Wales. However sometimes we go further afield such as Scotland, Devon or even the French Alps This risk assessment aims to identify hazards specific to those environments and ways to mitigate those risks.				
What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed?	What are you already doing to control the risk?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?
Injury/Entrapment	staff/participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are qualified and experienced and current • Staff to decide if the rapid/feature is safe to run, needs protection or should be portaged • When pupils have sufficient experience, training is provided on how to avoid entrapment but also what to do if swimming towards an entrapment hazard. British Canoeing White Water Safety Rescue techniques are taught. 	Pupils to attend the White Water Safety and rescue course once suitably experienced	Staff	prior to event/during session
Rise in river levels/change in conditions	Staff/participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to ensure they have checked the forecast, checked the river level through the river level or environment agency apps • Choose a venue which is suitable for the group in the current conditions • If the venue isn't suitable on arrival despite the prior assumptions staff member should choose another venue, inform school base contact in the appropriate way, if this cannot be done then return to school. 	Speak to other experienced paddlers/coaches	Staff	Prior to session
Impact with object. Rock, tree, other paddler etc.	Staff/participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If an obvious impact with a rock/feature is obvious and likely to cause injury then staff and participants should not paddle that rapid/feature. • Paddlers will be made aware of the hazards if they haven't identified them already • Staff have the final say 	Inspect	Staff and pupils	During session
Injury caused by paddling a rapid	Staff/participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a rapid is likely to cause injury then it should be avoided 	inspect	Staff and pupils	During session

