

RISK ASSESSMENT

Event name: Gardening and related activities

Date: 1st April 2019

Activity: Community or church events where gardening is part of the activity

Ref: RA 17

	Hazard	Risk	Who is at risk	Controls in Place/Action Required	Checked
1	Animal manures	Microbial contamination (potentially pathogenic)	Staff, volunteers	Wherever possible avoid the use of fresh organic manures to incorporate into the garden in favour of alternative soil improvers, it is appreciated that this is not always possible. It is essential that if you do work with manures staff and volunteers wear gloves when undertaking this task. All staff and volunteers to ensure they wash their hands in antiseptic gel at the completion of the task.	
2	Bees, wasps and other insects	Stings	Staff, volunteers	These are natural inhabitants of the garden and pose no risk unless provoked. Supervising staff must be aware of any staff or volunteers allergic to specific insects. If stung, they should seek first aid.	
3	Chemicals used in the garden	Inhalation, skin or eye contact.	Staff, volunteers, visitors and passers-by	Adopt environmentally sensitive approach to gardening i.e. without the use of chemicals. If used, chemicals to be used by qualified adult and in the proper manner and to be used and stored in accordance with health and safety legislation. Where it is deemed absolutely necessary to use chemicals, a separate risk assessment and COSHH assessment should be carried out	
4	Climbing	Falling	Staff, volunteers	Adequate supervision and instructions not to climb objects in the garden.	
5	Compost	Pathogenic microbial contamination	Staff, volunteers	Compost should be stored in cool place i.e. not in a greenhouse	
6	Composting	Airborne particles, Flies, Vermin, Lifting/Turning	Staff, volunteers	Avoid turning compost heaps but keep as cold heaps. Staff and volunteers must wear face mask and gloves to do this. Avoid making compost heaps too wet by adding too much fruit waste as this attracts flies and does not make effective compost. If there is too much fruit waste then this will need to be disposed of elsewhere and compost heaps just kept for garden waste.	
7	Fallen leaves	Slips, trips, litter within leaves	Staff, volunteers	Do not collect fallen leaves for making leaf compost in areas where there is potential for hazardous objects such as syringes/ broken glass/ sharp items to be buried amongst leaves. No running in garden/ leaf collecting area. Staff and volunteers to wear gloves and use tools appropriate for the job e.g. lightweight plastic leaf rakes and leaf hands.	
8	Fire	Dangers from heat, smoke and fire	Staff, volunteers	Emergency evacuation procedures to be in place and understood by all participants. Assembly point identified and all participants aware of it.	
9	Infection	Various	Staff, volunteers	Staff and volunteers to wash their hands after touching plants or soil/compost and before handling food and drink. Cover any cuts or abrasions before garden sessions or ensure gloves are worn.	

10	Lifting	Injury, strain.	Staff, volunteers	Staff and volunteers are not to lift heavy objects or to overfill wheelbarrows where in use.	
11	Mulching	Airborne particles, Fungi, Turning	Staff, volunteers	Buy organic mulch materials in bags from a reputable source or use a weed suppressant such as mypex. Alternatively, use shredded paper, layers of cardboard or homemade compost. Reduce risk of air borne particles by wetting loose mulch materials before applying.	
12	Plant supports	Damage to the eye	Staff, volunteers	Plant supports to be avoided where possible. When being used care should be taken. Staff and volunteers to be made aware of hazard and to take care when leaning over beds. Cane toppers to be used where cane height less than 1.8m high.	
13	Plants	Ingestion, allergic reactions	Staff, volunteers	Supervising staff to be made aware of staff and volunteers known to have specific plant and food allergies or hay fever and to know who is responsible for administering medication. Some plants may be irritating to skin (gloves to be worn) or contain parts which are harmful or toxic if eaten or have been sprayed with chemicals. Staff and volunteers must not eat plants from the garden unless they are competent to identify the potentially harmful plants in their garden. Do not plant potentially poisonous plants (e.g. daffodils) in edible beds.	
14	Running/falls	Slips, trips and falls	Staff and volunteers	All staff and volunteers instructed to walk in the garden.	
15	Traffic	Injury from vehicles	Staff, volunteers	Groups to keep to designated paths and to be road safe when moving between base and garden.	
16	Soil-related hazards	Tetanus, Toxoplasmosis	Staff, volunteers	Supervising staff coordinators as to whether or not staff and volunteers have had tetanus inoculation before sessions start. Hands must be thoroughly washed at the end of each session and especially before eating food/ drinking. Supervising staff to check garden before session and remove any animal mess whilst wearing gloves. Bury/dispose of mess away from the garden and wash trowel and hands afterwards. Staff or volunteers come across buried animal mess, adult to remove as above and wash hands immediately if they have had direct contact.	
		Skin irritation	Staff, volunteers	Proprietary compost e.g. for seed sowing, can be handled without gloves but hands must be washed after the session. Staff or volunteers with skin irritations e.g. eczema, or cuts/abrasions, or are likely to have a suppressed immune system, should wear disposable gloves.	
		Soil blowing into eyes	Staff, volunteers	Bags of compost or potting media should be opened with the head away from the opening as far as practically possible. Moisten dry compost/potting media before using. Avoid storing compost/potting media in greenhouses or other warm places. Avoid using loose compost and digging/ raking soil in dry and windy conditions. Compost heaps – see composting below	

17	Syringes/needles/other contaminated waste	Puncture injuries, pathogenic microbial contamination, chemical contamination	Staff, volunteers	To be disposed of according to organisation policy
18	Tools	Injury, trips and falls	Staff, volunteers	Tools correctly maintained to be safe to use. Children to only use tools when instructed to do so. At start of each teaching session tool safety to be embedded. When working with children under seven, forks and spades are only to be used by children if there is a ratio of one adult helper to one child. All tools counted 'out' and 'in'. Appropriate type and size of tools to be selected for age of children. 'Tool stop' point to be clearly identified and all tools to be returned here when not in use during a session. Tools to be stored safely when not in use. Ensure adequate working space for staff and volunteers when they are working around garden beds.
19	Water	Slips, trips, falls	Staff, volunteers	Staff and volunteers shown how to water plants correctly to avoid soaking pathways. No running rule maintained.
20	Water Butts and Hoses	Drinking, Washing Hands, water-borne bugs/infections Drowning	Staff, volunteers	Water butts only to be installed if this is in line with the organisation's own Health and Safety Policy. Such butts must have child-proof, locked lids and should be firmly secured on a stable surface. Pupils must not wash their hands or wash garden produce for consumption with water from the butts. When using water from the butts for watering then pupils and adults must wash their hands afterwards. Water butts should be emptied and scrubbed out once a year. This job should be carried out by an adult with gloves and face mask. Water butts to be kept in cool position as far as practically possible. If not, consideration to be given to insulation or light reflecting paint. Empty water out of full hoses after use. (n.b. Full hoses left in sun or warm conditions may breed micro-organisms such as Legionella). Hoses should not be stored in warm place e.g. greenhouse. Hose pipes should be coiled/ rolled up after use and not left lying out where they could become a trip hazard.
21	Weather	Sunburn, dehydration, hypothermia, Slipping in wet weather, Soil blown into eyes	Staff, volunteers	Appropriate clothing to be worn for the weather conditions (hot, cold, wet, windy). Adequate fluids to be drunk when it is hot and work activities to be planned in shady areas where possible. Schools to advise pupils and parent helpers to apply own sun-cream and wear hats. In wet weather, garden surfaces can become slippery e.g. clay soils. Close paths if too slippery and revise activities to minimise risk of slipping. No running to, from and in garden. Avoid using loose compost and digging/raking soil in windy conditions.
22	Weather (flooding)	Potential (pathogenic) microbial contamination	Staff, volunteers	If gardens become flooded and waterlogged do not harvest crops from these areas for consumption, and relocate garden to area that has not been flooded. Do not grow crops in flooded area for at least 2 years after the flood.

23	Children at risk	Children or the volunteer is put at risk or made aware of a risk situation	Pupils, volunteer	Neither the pupils nor the volunteer should be put at risk. Ensure there is a Staff member around at all times when working with pupils. Ensure that volunteers are fully aware of and comply with the local school's child safeguarding policy and protocol.	
24	Lone working	No one else is aware of accidents at work or on way to work	Staff, volunteers	Ensure a buddy system is in place and that someone knows where you are and when you are expected home.	
25	Locked amenities	Unable to access areas to carry out work	Staff, volunteers	Ensure you have a keyholder's number at all times.	

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Changes must be notified to and countersigned by the team member(s) concerned