



Field Studies
Council

Primary Outdoor Learning Resources

Field Studies Council: Outdoor Learning Experiences

www.field-studies-council.org



What are the barriers to outdoor learning?

Make a list of any barriers to learning outdoors for:

- *Your whole school*
- *Yourself*
- *Your pupils*



Common barriers to learning outdoors:

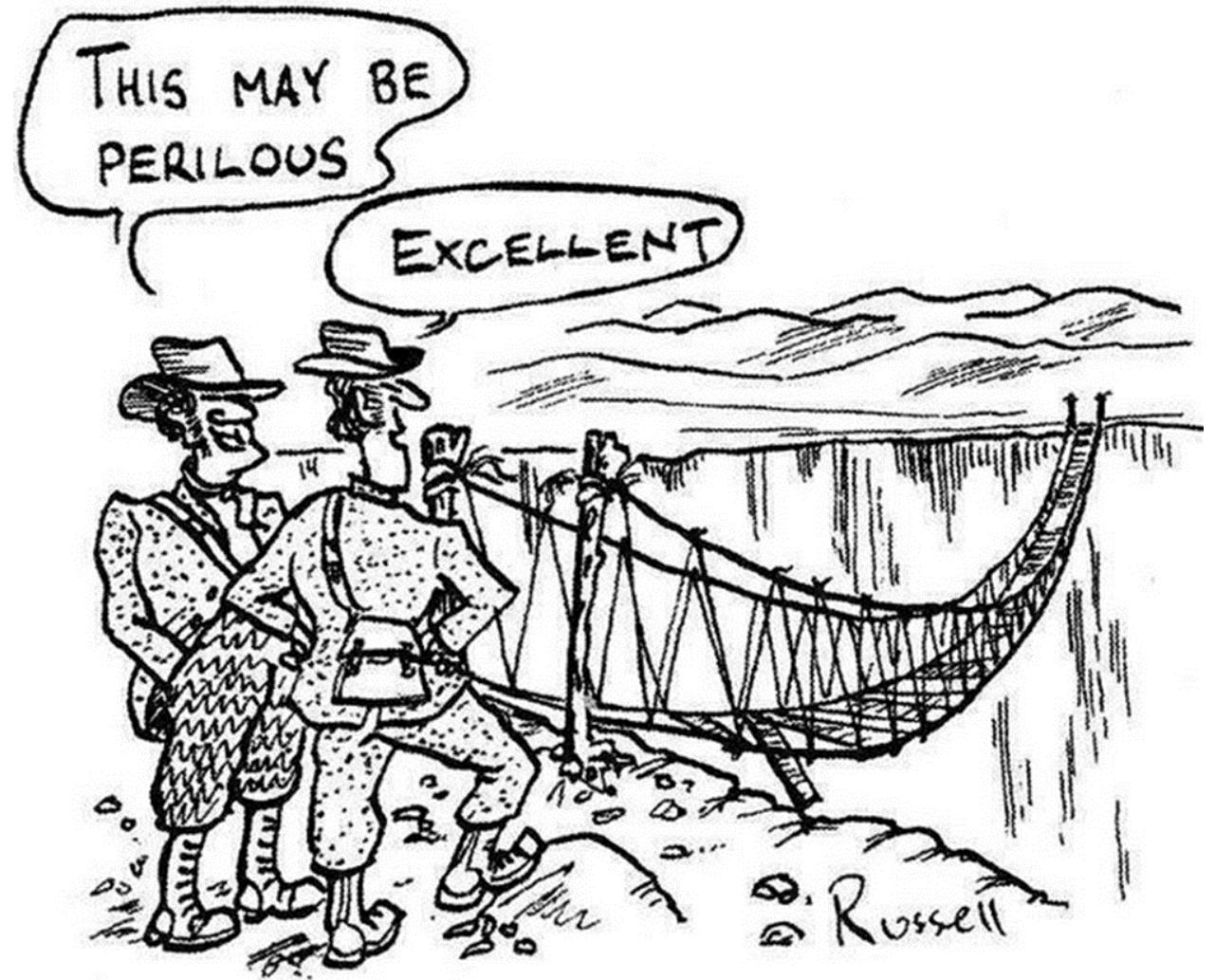
The most common barriers to fieldwork and outdoor learning we hear from teachers are:

Justification	Space	Safety	Weather
<p>There is a wealth of research and information on the benefits of good outdoor learning.</p> <p>About Outdoor Learning</p> <p>Get support planning your visit:</p> <p>https://oeapng.info/visit-leader/</p>	<p>High quality outdoor learning can be done with little to no grounds at school:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Creating space2. Local green spaces like parks and community gardens3. Partnering with other schools <p>https://www.lotc.org.uk/tips-for-using-your-school-grounds-for-learning/</p>	<p>Your school will have a policy structure to follow. Know what is your, and your school's responsibilities.</p> <p>Field Studies Council resources in this series will cover assessing risk. Further help: Balancing risk and benefits in the outdoors</p> <p>OEAP National Guidance Risk Management</p>	<p>At Field Studies Council we would say that there is no such things as bad weather, only a lack of preparation. But we appreciate that not all schools and children have wet weather gear.</p> <p>https://ltl.org.uk/resources/finding-or-funding-clothing/</p> <p>https://countrytrust.org.uk/news/list-of-funds-available-to-support-educational-visits/</p>

Risk Assessment

We know the benefits of outdoor learning and fieldwork, so how do we ensure we are conducting safe fieldwork?

Victorian risk assessment



Planning a trip

Read the linked document [School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths](#)

Consider summarising the following:

- Recognising the benefit
- Staff expectations
- School, pupil and parental expectations
- What if things go wrong?



School trips and outdoor learning activities

Tackling the health and safety myths



Introduction

- 1 School trips have clear benefits for pupils, and large numbers of successful visits and outdoor learning activities take place each year.
- 2 Misunderstandings about the application of health and safety law may, in some cases, discourage schools and teachers from organising such trips. These misunderstandings stem from a wide range of issues but may include frustrations about paperwork, fears of prosecution if the trip goes wrong, and the belief that a teacher will be sued if a child is injured.
- 3 This statement gives clear messages to tackle the myths about bureaucracy and prosecution. However, HSE has no influence on the levels and types of civil claims for compensation that may be made against schools or individual teachers.

What is risk management about?

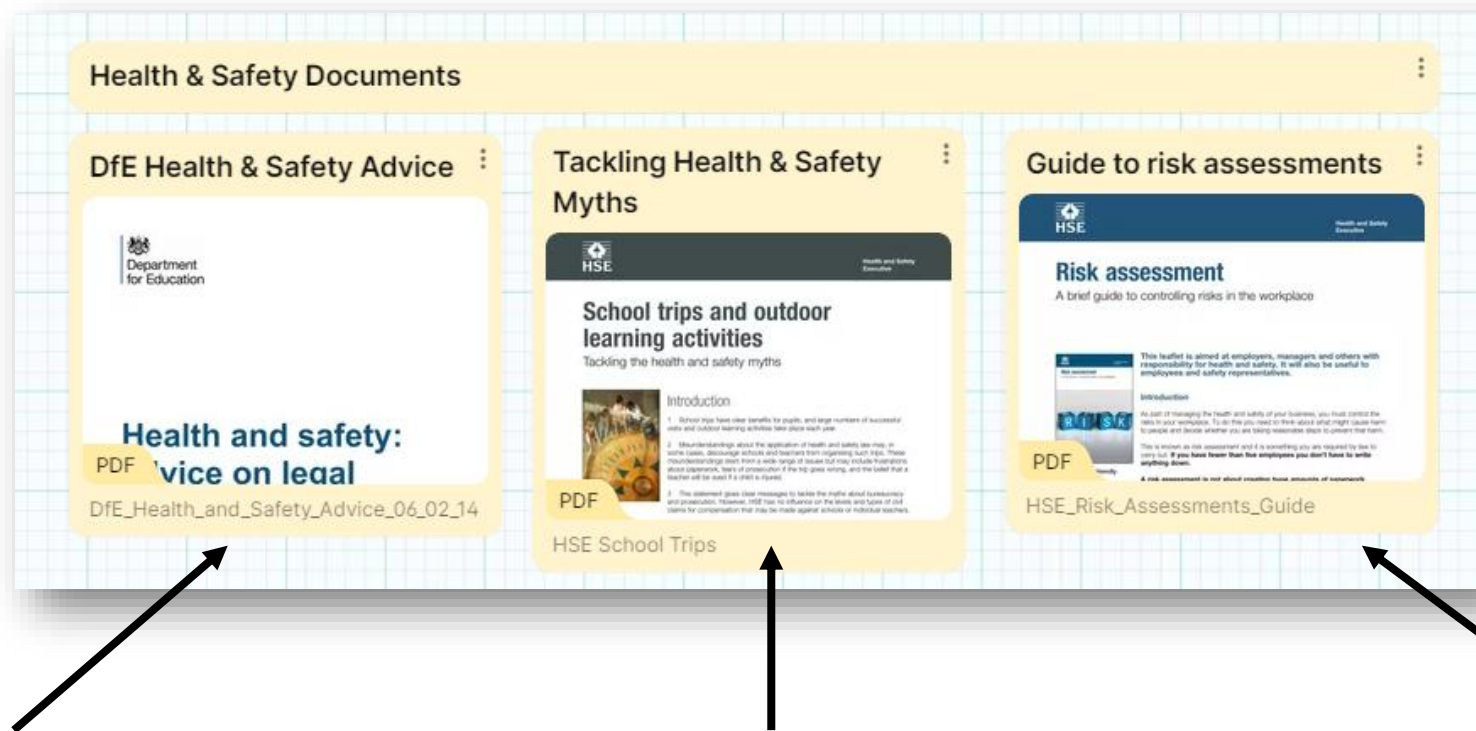


“Providing overall benefit to society by balancing risks and benefits AND enabling innovation and learning. ”

NOT

“Generating useless paperwork mountains”
OR “Creating a totally risk free society”

Legal Documentation



Great summary of roles, responsibilities of teachers and schools and how the law applies in that context.

[Health and safety on educational visits - GOV.UK](#)

Outlines expectations from stakeholders as well as HSE role.

[Managing risks and risk assessment at work: Overview - HSE](#)

More in depth notes on the 5 step risk assessment process.

Risk Assessments

There are many mechanisms to conduct Risk Assessments, and your school may have their own process. At Field Studies Council we use the Five Steps to Risk Assessment.

Five Steps to Risk Assessment -

- A. Identify the hazards
- B. Decide who might be harmed and how
- C. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- D. Record your findings and implement them
- E. Review your risk assessment and update if necessary

Sound familiar...?

Teacher A walks into a room and sees Fred balancing back on the back legs of a chair. Fred is told to 'put all four legs on the floor' and is observed to do so.

Hazard Identification	Teacher A identifies an unbalanced chair. (The risk is a fall)
Person at Risk	Fred.
Evaluate Risk	Likelihood of a fall occurring is high and the potential for the fall to cause harm is also quite high.
Control Measures	Fred is told to 'put all four legs of the chair on the floor'.
Review	Fred is observed to sit properly on the chair.

As teachers you are constantly assessing risk! So don't let the process scare you just because you are going outside.

Risk Assessment Types

- Generic – e.g. bug hunting
- Site Specific – e.g. The wildflower area on school grounds
- Dynamic – what happens on the day.



Making a risk assessment

Identify and make a list of any hazards, try to group them in similar categories

Hazard – anything that can cause harm.

Risk – the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard and its severity.

Risk = Likelihood of occurrence X Severity of outcome

HSE Risk Matrix						
Severity		1	2	3	4	5
		insignificant	minor	moderate	major	catastrophic
Likelihood	Almost certain [E]	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5
	Likely [D]	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5
	Possible [C]	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
	Unlikely [B]	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5
	Almost never [A]	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5

Put in place control measures or mitigation to reduce the severity and or likelihood of the risk down to the green or yellow categories. E.g. washing hands after working outside, reduces the risk of infection.