

Please note that this risk assessment applies to the activity at the date of writing and under the prevailing weather conditions at this time. Please discuss any possible changes to this assessment with Leeson staff before undertaking this activity.

Activity: The River Piddle at West Mills, Wareham (Grid Ref SY913876), and access to this site from the public car park (Grid Ref SY920873).

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS **NO VEHICLE ACCESS** ONTO THE COMMON BEYOND THE CATTLE GRID. PLEASE PARK ALL VEHICLES IN THE PUBLIC CAR PARK. ANY VEHICLES PARKED OVER THE CATTLE GRID ARE AT RISK OF BEING DAMAGED BY HORSES.

Risk Assessment Completed By: Michael Gould and Louise Harding

**Date: January 2020
Review: January 2021**

See General Off-Site Risk Assessment

1	Traffic	Car park and narrow pavements, school and hospital traffic, 2 roads to cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective waistcoats, single file, appropriate road crossings
2	Cattle Grid		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use gate adjacent to grid rather than allow pupils to risk walking on the cattle grid
3	Horses	There is a large number of horses kept on the common who can, at times, prove to be a real nuisance and hazard to groups walking on the track and working beside the river	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to carry dipping nets to help ward off the horses if they approach too closely, keep group calm, single file with staff to supervise and reassure pupils if required, avoid giving the horses any food and try to keep them away from the river bank by closing the gate if appropriate
4	Equipment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief pupils on how to carry and use equipment safely, especially tapes and nets
5	River Banks	The river banks are undercut in some places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the banks immediately on arrival and mark our safe areas for pupils to work. • Throwline to be carried and accessible when at river bank
6	Water / currents etc	Deeper channels on north (furthest) side of river, deeper further downstream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that all staff leading work at West Mills are familiar with the site and know the characteristics of the river fully. • Throwline to be carried and accessible when at river bank
7	Weir	Strong undercurrent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief pupils to avoid approaching the weir when in the river, close supervision. • Throwline to be carried and accessible when at river bank
8	River bed	Sharp stones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils working in the river MUST have some form of

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			footwear on.
9	Exposure	Little shelter from wind, rain or sun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check weather forecast and pupils clothing beforehand, carry extra clothing in case of unintentional immersion
10	Hygiene and disease	Dirty water on hands whilst eating, Weils disease	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to plan the day so that lunch is taken before the pupils touch the water, carry hygienic wipes if required • Use alcohol hand gel after being in contact with water • Avoid contact with water if open wounds are present.
11	Water dropwort	Poisoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid celery like plants with white carrot flowers. Do not touch or eat. • Avoid disturbing growing plants as exposed roots could be eaten by cattle which would be fatal.
Emergency		<p>Good mobile phone signal at the site. Emergency services can reach the riverbank. NOTE that there are NO accident / casualty facilities at Wareham Hospital.</p> <p>Police/Ambulance/Coastguard – 999 or 112 Leeson House – 01929 422126</p>	
THROWLINE		<p>ALL GROUPS WORKING AT WEST MILLS MUST CARRY A THROWLINE, AND STAFF MUST BE BRIEFED ON HOW TO USE IT IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION</p>	