



Vernham Dean Gillum's C of E Primary School Pond Safety Policy

Aims & Purpose

Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England Primary School aims to offer our pupils as rich a learning environment as possible in order to enhance the curriculum. We have worked hard to ensure that the school grounds are an attractive area for pupils to play in and have further developed the school pond area. The design of our pond has been kept as shallow as possible and does not exceed the primary school regulations of no more than 900mm; it does not have any electrical equipment nearby.

We wish to ensure that all pupils have access to this environment, in a safe and controlled way. We aim to allow pupils to use the pond as a 'hands on' resource to enhance the curriculum as a whole.

It is an agreement across the school community that pupils must be kept safe at all times and will never be left unsupervised.

Guidelines

- Pupils and adults must be kept safe at all times
- The Caretaker, Health and Safety Manger and Headteacher will check the pond regularly to ensure that the area is safe
- Pupils must be accompanied by an adult at ALL times, Ratio 1:10 (maximum)
- During the activity, adults must ensure that those pupils with cuts on their hands cover them with waterproof plasters or wear suitable gloves, avoid ingestion of water and ensure that all pupils wash their hands after the activity immediately in line with school policy and practice
- Staff and pupils will wear suitable footwear when working around the pond and wildlife area
- A copy of the ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) guidelines on Leptospirosis (Weil's Disease) is located on the staff curriculum area and should be read by all staff
- A first aid trained member of staff must be in attendance of the activity taking place
- In the event of emergency, the alarm must be raised with the school office

Management

The school will carry out risk assessments in relation to the pond and activities involving the pond. All relevant information (i.e. the findings of the assessment and the control measures) must be relayed to staff and to others that may carry out activities involving the pond. The warning sign on the perimeter fence of the pond that states that 'only pupils that are supervised are allowed into the pond area' must be kept in good condition.

Classes or groups using the pond must be supervised at all times. The ratio of pupils to staff must allow full control of the activity. Trainee teachers must be accompanied by the class teacher who is responsible for ensuring that school policy is carried out. The maximum number of children within the pond area is 1 class with adult supervision of 1 teacher and 2 adult helpers per class. Within close proximity of the actual pond itself (approximately 2m), the ratio of adult to pupils should be such that each adult can **easily supervise** those they are responsible for; it should be pre-agreed which adult is responsible for which pupils (key person).

When the pond is not being used, the gate must be locked at all times; pupils are informed that if the gate is open, they must not enter for any reason unless permission is given by an adult.

The pond must be regularly maintained to ensure that the perimeter does not become obscured and that the area around the pond does not deteriorate. Edges that are open for access for pond dipping should be gently sloping, or flat and well defined. The edges of the pond must be clearly visible.

The school has an emergency action plan in place for incidents associated with the pond. (See Appendix A).

This covers:

- How to rescue a person who has fallen in
- Resuscitation and first aid
- How to call for assistance
- What to do with other pupils during an emergency situation

Adequate instruction must be issued to pupils as to the risks associated with the pond and activities in the pond area before entering the pond area.

Security

The problems of pupils falling into a pond are perhaps greatest not with pupils during school hours, but with youngsters during out-of-school time, weekends, holidays etc. if they were to enter the wildlife area. To prevent this, the pond has an enclosed perimeter fence and locked gate. There is controlled access at all times. The pond is a whole-school resource and security and general supervision are easier to achieve if all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

Date of policy and plan update (annual review): Autumn 2018

Signed.....Headteacher

Signed.....Chair of Governors

Appendix A

Emergency Action Plan for incidents associated with the Pond.

All staff must be familiar with this pond emergency action plan. It is there to provide a safe environment.

Before any activities are started staff must assure themselves that the pond appears safe and operational and that the paths are not obstructed.

Staff must be alert at all times. In the event of a child falling into the pond resulting in injury or near drowning follow the steps:

- If safe to do so, an adult could walk into the water to aid the victim
- Send someone to summon other help and the emergency services

A minor incident is considered to be a child slipping feet first into the water.

A major incident is considered to be life threatening for any and all individuals including suspected drowning.

Emergency Services:

- Ring 999 or 911
- School telephone number is 01264 737241
- The address is:
Vernham Dean
SP11 0JY
- Give details of the incident to the operator

Other Action

The five bar gate by the all-weather pitch should be opened to allow access to emergency vehicles across to the pond area.