

Risk Assessment – Ball Games

Area of Operation: generic ball games

Who is at risk?

- Staff
- Students
- Members of the public

Hazards	Risks	Safety Measures to Control Risks
Injuries from physical activity	Risk of bruises, sprains, or strains from running, falling, or physical contact	○ Lead a structured warm-up and stretching routine before activities to prevent injury. ○ Staff monitor for safe play, discourage overly aggressive behaviour, and encourage children to respect boundaries. ○ Carry a first aid kit, with staff trained in handling minor injuries such as cuts, sprains, and bruises.
Equipment related injuries	Risk of injury from being struck by balls or equipment like cricket bats or football goals	○ Provide age-appropriate equipment, demonstrating safe use, especially with bats and balls. ○ Designate specific zones for equipment setup to ensure children stay at a safe distance, particularly when using bats or heavy balls. - Use soft or foam balls if hard balls increase the risk of injury for younger children.
Crowded or confined spaces	Risk of overstimulation, leading to distress or children wandering off	○ Choose open, spacious areas to minimise crowding and give children room to play. ○ Conduct frequent headcounts and remind children to stay within designated boundaries. ○ Consider sensory aids, like earplugs or fidget items, to support children prone to overstimulation or sensory distress.
Fatigue or overexertion	Potential for tiredness, muscle strain, or discomfort due to prolonged activity	○ Plan regular breaks to rest and rehydrate, particularly in warm weather or during intensive activities. ○ Ensure activities are adapted to children's physical abilities and encourage them to communicate if they feel tired or need to rest. ○ Provide water and healthy snacks to maintain energy.

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Risk of being struck by a moving ball	Risk of injury from fastmoving balls during games like football or cricket	○ Educate children on the need to remain aware of the play area and the movement of balls. ○ Limit play intensity or use soft or foam balls if injury risks are heightened. ○ Staff position themselves to monitor and intervene quickly if the game becomes overly intense or competitive. ○ Avoid heading footballs to due to head and neck related injuries.
Use of public toilets	Risk of separation from the group and interactions with strangers	○ Staff accompany children to toilets when needed, ensuring privacy and supervision. ○ Choose toilets close to the playing area for easy monitoring. - Set a designated meeting point near toilets in case of separation, and ensure children understand the regrouping process.
Separation or wandering	Risk of children straying from the group or moving into restricted or unsafe areas	○ Use a buddy system, with each staff member assigned to a small group of children. ○ Establish clear boundaries on the playing field and review them with children before starting. ○ Staff carry ID cards, mobile phones for quick communication if separation occurs.
Extreme weather conditions	Risk of heatstroke, dehydration, hypothermia, or other weather-related discomfort	○ Check the weather forecast before the activity, especially for extreme temperatures or adverse conditions. ○ Ensure children wear suitable clothing, and provide sunscreen, hats, and rain gear as necessary. ○ Plan regular breaks in shaded areas and encourage hydration, monitoring children for signs of discomfort or fatigue.
Children's potential behavioural issues	Risk of disruptive behaviour, leading to accidents, conflicts, or unsafe play	○ Maintain a high staff-to-child ratio to ensure close supervision and quick response to behavioural issues. ○ Brief children on expected behaviour, safe play practices, and respecting personal space, using a friendly but firm approach. ○ Staff trained in de-escalation techniques and positive reinforcement to manage behavioural issues effectively.
Interaction with the public	Potential for misunderstandings or conflicts with other park visitors	○ Choose areas with minimal public traffic or dedicated sports areas when possible. ○ Prepare children for appropriate behaviour around others, emphasising respectful distance and low noise levels. ○ Position staff nearby to intervene in conflicts or misunderstandings, with staff trained in conflict resolution and public communication.

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Food allergies and snacks	Risk of allergic reactions if children consume foods, they're allergic to during breaks	- Confirm any food allergies or dietary restrictions with children and parents beforehand. - Ensure only approved snacks are brought and check all snacks for allergens. - Staff trained in administering emergency allergy treatment, carrying necessary medications like EpiPens and a first aid kit.
Emergency evacuation	Risk of confusion or distress if evacuation from the area is required	- Review emergency procedures with staff and children before beginning the activity, with a clear plan for exit routes and meeting points. - Identify and communicate the location of exits and safe meeting points at the activity start. - Maintain a high staff-to-child ratio to keep children calm and focused during emergencies, ensuring they stay with the group.

To be read in conjunction with the following:

- Student's Risk Assessments
- Participant Consent / Medical Information
- Emergency Action Plan Flow-Chart
- Sports Centre Specific Rules and Regulations (If Off-Site)

Reviewed: September 2025

Approved by: **RAISE-AP** Educational Directors, September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2027