

CAYTON BAY BEACH & SURF SCHOOL RISK ASSESSMENT

Establishment - Scarborough Surf School Assessment

Date: March 1st 2016

Activity / Location - Surf Instruction at Cayton Bay Beach, Killerby Cliff, Scarborough YO11 3NR

This activity is supported by an SOP and an EAP.

HAZARDS

OFF THE BEACH:

1. Existing medical conditions

Control:

- Check in advance, via booking form or enrolment form.

Further action.

- Ensure personal medications available as appropriate.

2. Inappropriate equipment

Control:

- Instructors to have own wetsuits and accessories (if and when required).
- Clients to have correct size wetsuits of sufficient thickness for the time of year.
- Clients to have correct sized boots/gloves/hoods (if and when required).
- Clients to have the correct length, weight and construction of board.
- All clients to have leashes in good repair.

Further action:

- Ensure adequate range of wetsuits, boots, gloves and hoods (if required) and boards with suitable leash are available and in good working order.
- Equipment checked before and after every lesson and periodically through the season.
- Any damaged kit to be replaced.

3. Dehydration

Control:

- Check there has been adequate fluid intake.
- Drinking water taken in first aid kit.

4. Low energy levels

Control:

- Check there has been adequate food/ nourishment intake prior to moving to beach.
- Check there has not been an over- intake of food/ nourishment.
- hot and cold food available if required.

GETTING TO THE BEACH:

1. Crossing carpark from shop (injury from moving vehicles).

Control:

- Advice given about cars in car park.
- Students to follow instructor.
- Speed restrictions apply.
- Instructors present throughout and group moved as one unit at the same time so as to be easily managed.

2. Steep hill and steps onto beach (risk of falling).

Control:

- Advice given about hill and steps.
- Clients encourage to pair up with boards.
- Help on hand if required.
- Instructors present throughout to give on hand help and advice.

ON THE BEACH:

1. Falling, tripping and slipping.

Control:

- Advice given re: uneven surfaces.
- Advice given by instructors.
- Supervision by instructors of dangers.
- First Aid kit available on beach.
- Extra sunscreen carried in First Aid dry bag.

2. Beach-related debris (sharps, rocks, flotsam, jetsam).

Control:

- Advice given by instructors, supervision by instructors.
- Use of wetsuit boots (depending on water temperature).
- Group advised to stay clear whilst traversing beach.
- Safe area of beach used for going through basics.
- Bins provided for any waste.
- Council informed of any contamination.

3. Sunburn

Control:

- Apply high-factor sunscreen.

- Instructors to wear caps/hats as appropriate.
- Clients made aware of dangers of over-exposure to sun.
- Extra sunscreen carried in First Aid dry bag.

4. Heat exhaustion/ heatstroke

Control:

- Instructors to monitor group.
- Instructors to ensure adequate liquid intake.
- Wetsuit ventilation as appropriate.
- Clients made aware of danger.
- Check prevailing weather conditions.
- Include emergency blanket in First Aid kit.

5. Other beach activities

Control:

- Group advised to stay clear whilst traversing beach.
- Suitable area chosen for both, 'on land' and 'in water', practice and tuition - move if necessary.

IN THE WATER:

1. Drowning

Control:

- Use of qualified instructors
- EAP
- Check swimming ability at time of registration
- Follow NOP
- Follow EAP
- Use of distress and recall signal
- Instructor to monitor and control group

Further action:

- Keep EAP's and NOP's up-to- date
- Daily liaison with lifeguards when in place
- Check prevailing weather conditions

2. Hypothermia

Control:

- Use of correct-fitting wetsuits.
- Use of correct-thickness wetsuits and accessories for time of year.
- Emergency heat blanket carried in media bag.
- Check prevailing weather conditions.
- Assess group throughout lesson.
- Use regular warm ups.

Further action:

- Follow EAP if client becomes cold (removal from lesson and up to warmth of shop asap).

3. Other injuries**Control:**

- Follow NOP and EAP.
- Medical bag and emergency phone as well as rescue board always present during lessons.

4. Water pollution**Control:**

- Use of appropriate beaches.
- Follow council / lifeguard advice.
- Daily beach checks for any contaminants.
- Liaise with local councils.
- Follow cancellation/ refund procedures.

5. Marine stings**Control:**

- Use appropriate wetsuits and accessories.
- In areas/times where weaver fish are prevalent use of wetsuit boots.

Further action:

- Check with lifeguards.
- Enquire re anaphylactic reactions during the client health check.

6. Rips and currents**Control:**

- Use professional judgement for advanced groups.
- Group made aware of dangers before entering water.
- Follow NOP and EAP.

Further action:

- Liaison with lifeguards if present
- Local knowledge of beach characteristics and prevalence of rips and currents
- Move group as necessary, using hand signals and whistle as explained during pre-lesson safety brief or remove from water together and move along beach by foot to suitable location

7. Other water users**Control:**

- Use designated surfing areas
- Advice given re: space and surfing etiquette
- Be prepared to move surfing area to suit conditions and crowds

8. Falling off board (wipeout)

Control:

- Practice of wipeout procedure on beach.
- Board handling skills honed in shallows.
- Instructor to monitor and control group.
- Only foam boards to be used with plastic or rubberised fins for all beginner lessons.

What we do to eliminate/minimise the hazards/risks

Our instructors hold current Beach lifeguard certificates from Surf Life Saving GB (SLSGB), advanced first aid qualification and also have a vast experience and background knowledge of the local area, environment and conditions from many combined years in the water. We operate using our Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP), should any incident arise.

Conditions.

Prior to each session we check weather forecasts, surf conditions and tidal activity for that day, making certain it is safe to proceed with the planned activity. Risk assessments are also carried out throughout the activity to ensure that safe practice is maintained at all times during potential changeable conditions.

HAZARDS

Natural hazards:

Cliff faces surrounding bays - steep and unstable.

Rocks on beach - slippery, sharp, some submerged at high tide.

Tides - sections of bays can be cut off on an incoming tide and strong currents likely during spring tides.

Heavy seas - potential for wave impact against rocks in near shore surf as well as breaking waves out to sea.

Water temperature - ranging from 4-14°C.

Marine life - seals, jelly fish, weaver fish, sea birds.

Weather - heat, cold, electrical, wind, rain and the changing nature of weather.

Man-made hazards:

Steep pathways and steps on both entry / exit points.

Some metal work near world war two bunker.

Contaminants and associated containers and flotsam on high tide mark and possibly in water washed up or exposed ordnance.

People hazards:

Other water users - surfers, kayakers, personal water craft and boats.

People (intoxicated, criminal behaviour).

Dog walking.

Climbing.

Walkers and runners.

Beach sports (football and cricket etc).

Fishing.

RISKS and CONTROLS.

- 1. RISK:** Prominent rocks/boulders in certain areas of the beach, can be slippery, sharp and dangerous to walk on. Submerged rocks can cause collision injuries as people surf/swim.

CONTROL: Surfzone for lessons adhered to, keeping within a safe zone where no rocks are present. Customers made aware of such dangers during safety brief.

- 2. RISK:** Heavy seas, large breaking surf, spilling surf popular with surfers and often busy

CONTROL: Perry bouys and emergency phone at the North end of the beach, warning signs of heavy seas at beach access points. Lessons conducted in suitable conditions with optimum tides. Full safety brief to start all lessons. Mobile phone, full first aid kit, rescue board and whistle present on all lessons.

- 3. RISK:** Sandbars, can create dumping waves and commonly strong undertows combined with strong rips

CONTROL: Sands in continual movement. Experienced instructors can read and avoid such situations

- 4. RISK:** Colliding with rocks and cliff, danger of water users colliding with cliff edge or rocks along shore line

CONTROL: Only occurring on extreme Spring high tides which are easily predicted with tidal charts and therefore avoided with no lessons run during such conditions. There are various access and exit points along the cliffs through the centre of the bay if the beach goers do find themselves in difficulty

- 5. RISK:** Risk of injury from marine life, seal bites (extremely rare but risk of disease), jelly fish / weaver fish stings common in summer during low tides (danger of anaphylactic shock in rare cases), sea birds attacking (very uncommon).

CONTROL: Surfers made aware and advised to wear boot. First aid kit and fully qualified lifeguard present during all lessons, full suits worn year round to offer maximum protection from marine life as well as the elements. Customers asked if they have any allergies prior to lesson.

- 6. RISK:** Rubbish left by visitors or washed up on shore. Could be sharp, causing cuts or infection. Dog fouling on beach and footpaths being a major source of infection.

CONTROL: Protective footwear and wetsuits protect the feet and body, there will always be an instructor leading and looking out for any harmful substances or items that commonly get washed up or found along the coastline. We would also use bins provided to remove of any form of rubbish that was safe to touch and inform police if anything such as hypodermic needles were spotted for safe removal and disposal.

- 7. RISK:** Effect of weather on people. Hot weather risk of heat stroke, cold weather risk of hypothermia (see above), electrical storms risk of being struck, sea mist risk of getting lost (land or sea) or falling off cliffs, rain and or wind making cliff faces and rocks more slippery

CONTROL: Public and customers advised to keep covered (i.e. wear hat) and use sunscreen. Creams and drinks available in the shop. Any form of electrical storm strictly avoided and customers removed from water immediately should one arise and taken to shelter. No lessons or hiring of equipment during foggy or low visibility conditions

- 8. RISK:** Ordnance either washed ashore or exposed by land slips and erosion. Very dangerous could explode.

CONTROL: Our instructors always lead and will be looking for anything out of the ordinary. We carry mobile phones so are able to raise the alarm should any such devices be spotted. Clients would be moved as far away as possible

- 9. RISK:** Water sports. swimming, Surfing, kayaking, boats, jet ski etc, could collide with other water users causing injury

CONTROL: Due to the nature of the bay there is no launching of any craft for a great distance. Kayakers and swimmers do frequent the area as well as the odd jet ski. We would only conduct lessons where it is safe to do so and there is no conflict between activities or danger to any parties.

- 10. RISK:** Intoxicated people. either clients or general public

CONTROL: We will reserve the right to refuse instruction to anyone we deem to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol as they would pose both a threat to themselves and others. Any public seemingly intoxicated would be avoided where possible and authorities notified should there be any potential risk to either instructors or clients, or to the person / people in question.

- 11. RISK:** Dog walkers. Risk of dogs attacking beach users and dog waste causing health risks. Signage warning of bylaws and dog waste bins provided.

CONTROL: Signage warning of bylaws and dog waste bins provided.

- 12. RISK:** Fishing. submerged line and hooks can pose a serious threat as well as larger washed up nets. As can people casting into areas used for coasteering.

CONTROL: Any obvious risk would be firstly avoided and subsequently removed where safe to do so either by instructors after the session or the relevant authority. We have numerous routes to use to avoid any fishermen who are already set up on our arrival as to avoid any unnecessary risk. We would always approach first and discuss alternatives and make sure lines were removed if we had no choice but to pass people fishing, alternative section of the beach would always be first option

13. RISK: Strong currents and rip tides. More apparent during heavy surf but lateral rips during large Spring tides can make swimming difficult with the potential to sweep people out to sea.

CONTROL: Covered during safety brief if customers are heading further out on an intermediate lesson. All beginners lesson conducted in waist depth water where there is always quick and simple access back on the the beach via walking in. Instructor in the water throughout to ensure clients don't venture too far out with rescue board nearby at all times if a rescue is required. Emergency phone and personal phones available if a member of the public gets into difficulty.

14. RISK: Risk of hypothermia or drowning due to cold. Prolonged exposure to cold water and wind temperatures can seriously impede a persons physical and mental ability making the simplest of tasks very difficult if not impossible

CONTROL: Full 5/3 winter weight suits issued as well as boots gloves and hoods during colder months or on request to reduce the loss of heat. Clients will be assessed throughout the sessions for any signs of cold. Anyone suffering from cold can be escorted back to the shop with thermal blanket if required and warmed up asap

15. RISK: Steep access points along the bay, can be difficult for the old or young after a lesson.

CONTROL: Instructors will be present and on hand to help and advise during entry and exit of the beach with clients advised to team up to help making carrying boards easier.

Additional equipment carried by our instructors

- Fully equipped first aid kit with heat blanket
- Mobile phone and watch
- High strength Sun cream and drinking water
- High visibility rash tops
- Water for group use
- Whistle raising alarm or group attention

PLUS - Many years of local experience surfing and teaching at Cayton Bay

High risk groups are:

- Elderly
- Children
- Groups of youths (particularly males)
- The intoxicated (drugs and alcohol)
- Disabled people

Due to the physical nature of the sport, fitness, as well as swimming ability are factors. We can tailor sessions to suit different parties such as stag do's, families, children etc, but there will always be certain constraints and times where we would consider it either inappropriate or unsafe to run a surf lesson. In such cases customers will be informed at an appropriate time, before the start of the activity.

Beach Safety Summary

Many risks along the coastline will alter daily. Sand levels are continually changing, burying or exposing rocks and other objects which may well be covered during certain stages of tide. Surfing at Cayton Bay, or on any other beach, will have its risks, but with the correct equipment, planning, preparation and knowledge of the area we are able to minimise this risk. Through safety measures and suitable equipment, our qualified instructors/lifeguards, with extensive knowledge of conditions (and the ability to forecast them) can ensure both water users and surf school clients can enjoy the coastline whilst remaining safe.