



Bristol Aquarium Risk Assessment

Once a booking is confirmed your school is welcome to have two free tickets to make a pre-visit recce. Please give us a call on 0117 9298929 to book in your free pre-visit.

The risk assessments produced in this document should be used as a guide only and an opportunity to conduct a full risk assessment in person prior to your booked visit is made available through a bookable free pre-visit for up to two people.

Important information

Insurance: Aspen Insurance | Policy Number: UKA6NQ6170PH

Bristol Aquarium Management: A dedicated duty manager, fire marshal and first aider are appointed each day to ensure that the aquarium is managed appropriately. Regular inspections are carried out by our maintenance team and duty manager to ensure that all areas are safe and fit for purpose.

Supervision: Children must be supervised at all times during a visit with appropriate numbers of staff to children to minimise incidents and disruption to paying visitors. **We reserve the right to ask any disruptive groups to leave.**

Severity	5	10	15	20	25
	4	8	12	16	20
	3	6	9	12	15
	2	4	6	8	10
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood					

Risk Rating

Likelihood – 1 (Highly Unlikely)/ 2 (Unlikely)/ 3 (Moderately likely)/ 4 (Likely)/ 5 (Highly Likely)

Severity – 1 (Insignificant)/ 2 (Minor injuries)/ 3 (Notable injuries)/ 4 (Major injuries)/ 5 (Death)

Upon Arrival

A member of the Bristol Aquarium team will greet your group on arrival to direct you to the toilets, your lunch area and also storage facilities for bags and coats. High Visibility jackets we would prefer not to be worn inside the displays, these can be stored, or if you need to wear them please can them turned inside out. Before you enter the displays, a staff member will go over the rules of the aquarium for your safety which include:

- No hands in open-top tanks
- Not to touch any of the animals
- No flash photography
- Not to bang on any of the glass or run around as the vibrations from these activities harm the animals

During Your Visit

Task: Walking through exhibits

Description: On a visit you will walk through seven themed zones across the ground floor and first floor. Between floors you will walk through our botanical gardens with gently inclining ramps between floors for all visitors suitable for wheelchairs and light mobility scooters.

Hazard	Who may be harmed?	Existing Controls	L	S	R
Falls from trip hazards	Children and Teachers	1. Staff will mention in the rules not to run around the displays 2. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip 3. Handrails are provided along the ramps for safe walking 4. Duty Manager to conduct regular walkthroughs to check for slip or trip hazards	2	2	4
Animal bite from putting hands in water	Children and Teachers	1. Staff will ask people not put their hands into the water before entry into aquarium 2. Warning signs available by open-top tanks 3. Food to be scattered over water rather than hand-feeding animals 4. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip	2	3	6
Bumped head from entering and exiting Seahorse Lighthouse crawlspace	Children	1. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip	2	2	4
Lost child	Children	1. Closed doors between zones prevent easy walkthrough 2. Staff on front desk monitoring people entering and exiting the displays 3. Staff trained to handle lost child scenario discreetly to avoid interception with Duty Manager organising look out. 4. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip	1	1	1

Guided Tour Experience

If you are paying for a guided tour experience we will provide interactive workshops along the way including fish feeding opportunities and interactive sessions to showcase fascinating animals such as sharks and stingrays. These sessions involve the tour guide showing objects to children which can include sharks teeth, sharks jaws, stingray barbs, skin and moults.

Task: Fish feeding experience

Description: Feeding the animals over a pre-determined open-top tank using cups with food distributed into by staff

Hazard	Who may be harmed?	Existing Controls	L	S	R
Animal bite from putting hands in water	Children and Teachers	1. Staff will ask people not put their hands into the water before entry into aquarium 2. Food will be scattered over the water rather than hand-feeding animals 3. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip	2	2	4
Ingesting fish food	Children and Teachers	1. Staff will tell the children not to eat the food 2. Staff will direct the children to wash their hands at the end of the tour	1	1	1
Fall from ledge	Children	1. Teachers will be asked to supervise and assist children in reaching the top of the tank	1	2	2

Task: Interactive workshops

Description: Hands on session with sharks teeth, jaws, and skin

Hazard	Who may be harmed?	Existing Controls	L	S	R
Injury from touching sharp teeth	Children	1. Staff will tell the children to be careful when they are handling the objects	3	2	6
Illness from bacteria from handled objects	Children	1. Staff will direct the children to wash their hands at the end of the tour	1	1	1

Fire Procedure

Bristol Aquarium has an intelligent fire alarm system which has two modes.

The first mode is a staff warning which alerts the day's dedicated Duty Manager and Fire Marshal to investigate what has set the alarm into this first non-emergency mode and this may then be reset and evacuation may not be necessary.

The second mode is our emergency evacuation alarm and a message will play in your area directing you to your nearest fire exit. Please safely escort your group towards your nearest signposted fire exit and assemble safely away from the building. We will let you know when it is safe to return to the building. Our staff Fire Evacuation Point is at the main entrance in Anchor Square by the beetle statue should you wish to meet us there.

Assessments completed by Chloe O'Dell – Events & Experiences Manager August 2025

Please consider these protocols and how this may fit into your own fire procedures.

First Aid Procedure

Should a first aid situation occur during your trip we are well equipped with a team of qualified first aiders on-site, a private first aid room and a locally-accessible defibrillator in the event of an emergency.

A dedicated first aider will be available on the day to handle any situations which require medical attention. A duty manager will also likely be called to assist in a first aid situation where we will need to record this in our accident book.

In the event of a first aid situation a non-affected teacher should be present with the affected child or adult to be able to provide a clear account of what occurred and to sign the accident report. The teacher may be expected to assist the first aider in the event of an emergency

If any children have allergies it is the responsibility of the school to carry and be trained to provide antihistamine medication.

Wet floors

Wet floors may be encountered during a trip to Bristol Aquarium: on rainy days our entrance foyer may become slippery when wet, we frequently water the plants in our botanical houses and, whilst we try to minimise any splashes from displays or bucket spillages, you may encounter wet floors from these. We always try our hardest to signpost and deal with wet floors as soon as they are noted but we would encourage you to report any unattended wet floors to us at your earliest opportunity and take care when moving around them

Hazard	Who may be harmed?	Existing Controls	L	S	R
Slips on wet floors	Children, Teachers and Staff	1. Wet floor signs in place 2. Teachers or staff to alert Duty Manager or Maintenance to attend to cause of spillage	2	2	4

Gift Shop and Café Facilities

Access is available to our on-site gift shop and café. Goody bags from the gift shop can be ordered in advance to allow for a stress-free gift purchasing experience.

Hazard	Who may be harmed?	Existing Controls	L	S	R
Injuries from overcrowding in the gift shop	Children, Teachers, Staff and Public	1. School groups will be asked to enter the gift shop in small groups at a time 2. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip	1	1	1
Scalds from hot drinks from the café	Children and Teachers	1. Teachers will supervise children throughout the trip 2. Tables will be reserved for children to eat their lunch at away from general café customers	1	3	3
Allergic reaction from foods	Children and Teachers	1. Allergen information and safety labelling provided on tubs and individually wrapped items	1	5	5

		2. Allergen file available from cafe			
--	--	---	--	--	--

Toilet Facilities

Our main toilet facilities are located on the ground floor in our rear foyer which include disabled toilets and baby changing facilities. Whilst we currently do not provide changing facilities for older children and adults, We The Curious science museum have a room with a hoist in their café area (your school must arrange this with them prior to arriving) and they are located adjacent to Bristol Aquarium.

Two additional individual toilets are available on the first floor of the aquarium but these are not suitable for large volumes of people.

Following a guided tour experience, staff will encourage children to use the toilet facilities to wash their hands as they may have handled objects or fish food.

Toilets are thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis by our dedicated cleaning team and they are checked throughout the day by the Duty Manager.

We request that teachers accompany children to the toilets wherever possible to reduce disruption and encourage safeguarding. We also request that teachers check the toilets after their visit to ensure that taps are not left running and a mess is not left behind.

Darkened Areas

Some areas of the aquarium are set to lower levels of lighting to enhance the experience of seeing our animals in their naturally-themed environments. Whilst care is taken to ensure that areas are adequately lit for safe manoeuvre, time should be taken to let eyes adjust to the lighting change upon entry and exit to the displays as well as the naturally-lit botanical houses.

Some children experience emotional difficulties entering the darkened entrance and we are on hand to take any children (and at least one supervising teacher) to a side entrance into our naturally-lit botanical house where they can meet the group in the second Urban Jungle zone. This will cause them to miss the first zone of the aquarium out of the seven available however they will not miss out on their interactive session or fish feeding experience.

Don't forget to book your free pre-visit recce for up to two teachers!

If you have any concerns about your visit please call the office team on 0117 929 8929 and we will be very happy to help

We hope that you enjoy your trip to Bristol Aquarium!