

Risk Assessments for Animal Handling (including Bearded Dragons, Corn Snakes, Pythons, Chelonians and Invertebrates) with The Ranch Weymouth and The Ranch on The Wild Side Aspects to Consider.

| **Aspects to Consider (Actual Hazards)** | **Control Measures** | **Severity**  | **Probability**  | **Level of Risk** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1. Animal escaping during presentations**  | * **Room or gallery doors to be closed whilst presentations and handling take place.**
* **Signs to be put on doors informing public to keep out whilst presentations take place**
* **Animals to be housed in secure carriers while being transported at venue Animals never to be left unattended out of their secure vivariums or transport carrier.**
 | **Low** | **Low** | **Low** |
| **2. Infections and bites during handling**  | * **Handlers to brief their group regarding any potential hazards and request adults to supervise the children during sessions**
* **The Ranch Staff/Volunteer to have knowledge of animals being handled and supervise handling to ensure gentle handling so as not to excite defence mechanisms**
* **Everyone (including The Ranch staff) to be reminded to wash hands after handling animals and specimens to prevent the small possibility of contracting infections including Salmonella virus and passing them on or between animals**
* **Hand gel to be made accessible to groups during sessions**
* **Animals used in sessions to be chosen for their temperament and no venomous animals to be used**
* **Disinfectant to be offered schools to treat anyone in the unlikely event of being bitten by snakes**
* **Setting to have trained first aider(s) and first aid equipment**
* **Protective rubber gloves to be offered to handle millipedes to prevent caustic urine irritating skin (teachers to check for latex allergies)**
* **Any animal being aggressive to handler or group to be removed from presentation immediately**
* **Snakes not to be handled if shedding their skins or immediately after eating**
* **Animals to be given non-handling time including weekends to reduce stress that could cause aggressive behaviour**
* **All open wounds or cuts to be protected from contact with animal.**
 | **Low** | **Low to Medium** | **Low** |
| **3. Fear and fainting** | * **Animals to be introduced to the children in a supportive environment so children can overcome their fears safely**
* **Children to be invited to handle animals and not obliged to during sessions**
* **Any children or adults showing signs of extreme fear to be taken to one side by school staff and given support**
* **Nominated first aider to administer any necessary medication, including Epipens, to children known to be an allergy sufferer to any of the animals**
 | **Low to Medium** | **Low** | **Low to Medium** |
| **4. Dust allergy** | * **Experiences do not involve animal fur or bedding. Most substrates are soil or sand based. Our animals will be removed from any substrate and placed in carrier enclosures.. However we cannot guarantee these as dust free environments - if advised upon booking that children or adults may suffer from a dust allergy and we will take this in to account when selecting the animals for handling or encounter.**
 | **Low** | **Low** | **Low** |