

Risk Assessment Guide for the Lake District Coast Aquarium

Note: This listing is provided by the Lake District Coast Aquarium as an aid to planning your visit to us and to help re-assure you that we are taking every reasonable precaution to avoid unnecessary accidents. As a staff member of a prospective school you are invited to come beforehand at your convenience and freely view our premises.

1. **Insurance.** We have all the current required cover for an establishment of this type, the minimum now being £10,000,000. We are insured with Sterling , and the policy certificate no. EB102426 can be viewed in our office. Periodic assessments by the Insurance agents are made to ensure we are currently compliant.
2. **Fire risk.** We are viewed as being low risk, given all public access is on the ground floor with ample fire exits well signposted in all areas. All fire fighting equipment is inspected under contract by Chubb, the current certificate no.A025254 having been issued in February of this year. This again is viewable in our office.
3. **Fire alarm system.** This is maintained by Protec Ltd, Maryport. We have periodic training sessions with the staff, who are therefore familiar with evacuation procedures. The whole building has wall mounted call points and smoke sensors as per the Fire Officer's rulings.
4. **First Aid.** There is a comprehensive first aid kit to be found in our Office at all times. Periodically we send a number of our staff on first aid courses so that there is a qualified person present at most times.
5. **Departure and arrival.** We are situated on the South Quay at Mary port, which is on a quiet service road. Coaches can draw up right outside the door, and there is a free waiting bay nearby. There is full disabled access (a ramp) to the entrance and we do in fact have an award for full compliance for the disabled. There is a wheelchair freely available on request.

6. **Supervision of Children (u/16s).** It is a requirement of entry to the display area that all children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times. With School groups we recommend at least one staff member per 10 children (one free adult is admitted with every ten children so this is not a financial consideration). If a guided tour is part of the itinerary then the appointed aquarist will give a short safety related talk before anyone enters the display area. The aquarist will be present for the duration of the guided tour and for any other agreed functions but is not at this or any other time responsible for the actions of the group being guided. This is the sole responsibility of the accompanying adults or staff members. What the aquarium does to the best of its ability (see next section on Zoo licensing) is to advise verbally and in writing of the main hazards to visitors, and also of the need to avoid abuse of the animals (fish and invertebrates) where they are within reach.

7. **Lake District Aquarium current Zoo Licence no. LN/20000032**

The aim of this legislation is to ensure both the welfare of the 'wild' inhabitants of the aquarium and the safety of the visiting public. Our current licence runs to 31/5/2017 and can be viewed on our premises. To hold this licence, which is obligatory, the aquarium undergoes detailed and routine inspections by Allerdale HSE and a government appointed vet. We cannot operate without their approval.

8. **Acceptable Risk.** The display environment is imaginative and captivating for people of all ages. A traditional old fashioned aquarium would have all displays presented as a series of windows set behind fascias which today's public would find boring and uninviting. This aquarium has a huge variety of displays of all shapes and sizes, some of which are 'open plan' so that fish can be viewed from above as well as from the side.

1. **No running**. There are hard surfaces, and some floors are wet (especially next to the crashing wave display). Warning signs are present but children must be reminded, not least of all because of the hazard this might present to other visitors.

2. **No climbing**. In order to get a closer look children are tempted to use the front and sides of some of the displays as climbing challenge. This is absolutely forbidden.

3. **Keep hands out of the displays**. We are a modern aquarium that in fact allows gentle contact (stroking only, not picking up) of the creatures in the rock pool display (starfish) and the rays only in the ray

pool. This facility may or may not be available long term depending on the combined opinions of our insurers, the Health and Safety executive, and the Zoo licensing authority's recommendations on animal welfare. The aquarist will be present to supervise these activities during your tour, but we also expect you as the children's guardians to have an active supervisory role. Despite a verbal caution on entry and numerous written warnings around the displays people of all ages are still tempted to reach into other displays. In reality this is highly unlikely to be a threat to the public, but can certainly cause fright and possible trauma to the fish so is absolutely forbidden.

Children and adults like to dangle their hands in the water and splash to try and attract the rays. This practice is allowed in some aquariums abroad so some visitors are 'preconditioned' and ignore all warnings, setting a bad visual example for others.. This is not allowed. We have high definition CCTV cameras covering the Rock Pool and Ray Pool to monitor visitor actions and have escorted individuals and groups out of the aquarium who persistently ignore our warnings.

4. **No tapping or banging on the glass**. This is almost a reflex action for some people if a fish is stationary. There is no chance of causing a breakage but the shock transmitted to the display inhabitants is real and can lead to trauma or death.

9. **Security.** We are open to the public but as a private concern we have the right to refuse entry to any persons we see as undesirable, or any persons who flagrantly break any of the important rules we clearly advertise. We have a CCTV system which covers all the main entry and exit points which gives us the ability to determine whether any individual is still on the premises, or when they left (i.e. in cases of a missing person) We also have immediate and direct summoning of the police via push buttons from key areas.

10. Other considerations.

1. **Light levels** in some areas are low. This is partly to reduce reflected light which would make looking into the displays difficult, partly because of the requirements of the fish and other inhabitants, and partly to add atmosphere and theatre which is part of the whole experience. Low light levels are another reason why running about is not permitted.

2. **Power cuts**. In the unlikely event of a power cut there is a comprehensive network of emergency lights maintained under contract by ADT which will automatically light all areas. Our staff are trained for this eventuality and will supervise evacuation to daylight.

3. **Trip and fall hazards**. All open displays are at a height that prevents any possible accidental entry by the public. The walkway above the ray pool has rigid mesh barriers that meet all current safety regulations. The same applies to our model boat pool outside.

4. **Service doorways and staff areas**. All these doorways where they are in public areas are marked as private and are required for insurance purposes to be kept locked at all times. The route through the aquarium is 'one way' and it is relatively easy for a few staff members to have full control of their charges.

5. **Toilets** for male , female and disabled are all grouped at the main entrance lobby.