

Risk Assessment Activity – Sensory Swing

Pioneer Centre	Assessed by: Ronan Halpenny	Assessed/ Reviewed:	Next Review Date
		Sept 2025 12/12/2025	12/12/2026
Reviewed by:	James Kniffen	12/12/2025	
Reviewed by:	Assist Chief: Max Bishop Senior Instructors: Andrew Evrard, Joseph Page, Steph McMenemy, Kieren Plant & Ronan Halpenny Lead Instructors: Rebecca Arms	Dec 2025	

Overview: A purpose-built Sensory Swing girder was bolted into the roof structure in Mackenzie Hall. It was manufactured by a local steel works Border Engineer and has been pull tested by High Times Consultants and has met the minimum of 6kN of force required for its intended use. It is well overengineered and is designed to and used for one participant at a time. Quarterly checks of the structure and its fixings will be done by competent staff and an annual external inspection carried out by High Times Consultants. The Swing is aimed at but not restricted to SEN groups as it provides many benefits and is an alternative to the higher impact activities we provide. Only one person on the swing at a time.

Hazards	Groups of People at Risk from the Hazards Identified	Probability	Control Measures – Reduces the severity and lowers the probability to acceptable levels
		Severity	
		Risk Category	
Structural Failure	Instructors, staff and guest/participant	Very Unlikely	The steel bar used as the anchor for the sensory swing will be structurally checked every quarter by a competent person. As well as this, each day it is to be used, a visual check will be carried out by a competent person.
		Fatal	
		Medium	
Ceiling fixtures falling	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Very Unlikely	An external, qualified inspection company will carry out a technical inspection on the structure each year and will submit a report to us detailing the condition of the fixtures at the time of the inspection. If needed, they will decommission it, removing it from use until it has been made safe to use.
		Fatal	
		Medium	
Unauthorised use of activity	Guest/participants	Very Likely	Outside of the session Mackenzie Hall is locked to prevent access to the groups. If the Mackenzie Hall is in use by a group, the rope used to participate in the activity is locked away safely out of reach.
		Fatal	
		High	
Rope burns		Likely	

	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Minor	Group briefed on correct clothing. Instructor supervises guests contact with rope. Instructors are trained in safe lifting and lowering practices (lowering slowly and smoothly) and are given gloves that can be used to belay to help reduce the risk of friction burns. Staff are trained on the correct way to swing someone in the seat around the room.
		Medium	
High level fall	Guest/participant	Very Unlikely	All equipment used is given a visual inspection before use, as well as being checked bi-monthly by a competent person. Any equipment with a cause for concern will be removed from use until a competent person has reviewed the equipment and either repaired it or permanently decommissioned and replaced it.
		Fatal	
		Medium	
Slips, trips and falls	Instructors, staff, guest/participants	Likely	Instructors visually check the area upon arrival. General brief and group management is provided by instructors to ensure activities are run safely and guests will be advised to follow the no running safety rule when in the activity area.
		Minor	
		Medium	
Accidental contact with the wall	Guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors are trained in techniques for swinging guests around the hall both rotating in a circle and backwards and forwards. Also, the measurement of the equipment used (mainly the rope) cancels this out as a possibility. All equipment is to be cleared from the swing zone.
		Major	
		Medium	
Soft tissue injury	Instructors, staff, guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors are aware of group's capabilities and encourage group to warm up/cool down as needed.
		Minor	
		Low	
Physiological effects	Guest/participants	Very Unlikely	Instructors are aware of the group's needs and medical issues. Decisions are made by the instructor as to whether the activity is suitable for them. Multiple different harnesses can be used to best suit the guests' needs.
		Major	
		Medium	
Stress/Panic attack	Guest/participants	Unlikely	Challenge by choice brief is given and instructors will respect participants' choices. Instructors will err on the side of caution if participants start to panic or have a strong emotional reaction to the activity. The instructors will react quickly to ensure the level of stress is brought back down to an acceptable level.
		Major/trauma	
		Medium	
Hair/fingers caught in belay device	Guest/participants	Likely	Hair will be encouraged to be tied back. A bridle is used to connect the guest's harness to the belay system, creating space between the belay device and the guest's head/hair.
		Minor	
		Medium	
Nausea	Instructor, staff, guest/participant	Likely	Instructors are trained in controlling the speed and direction of the guest, the guest can ask to slow down or stop at any point.
		Minor	
		Medium	

			Upon request the direction of swinging can be changed from rotational to forwards and backwards to help prevent nausea.
Forceful impact with person in chair	Instructor, staff, guest/participants	Unlikely	A seating area is set up before the guests arrive away from the activity area. They are briefed on the dangers of the activity and are required to listen to the safety briefing given by the instructor, outlining where they can and can't be sat when not taking part. A physical barrier is put in place to keep waiting participants away from guests on the swing.
		Major	
		Medium	
Rope systems failure	Instructor, staff, guest/participant	Very Unlikely	The equipment used is checked by a competent PPE inspector bi-monthly and recorded accordingly. Upon arrival to the activity, the lead instructor on the session will carry out a visual check. Any faulty equipment is removed and replaced when necessary. A backup lanyard is clipped to the bridle in case pulley/locking system fails.
		Fatal	
		Medium	