

HEALTH & SAFETY

The following statement is intended to give a general overview of matters relating to health & safety.

The starting point when it comes to health & safety, risk assessments etc, is deciding who's responsible for what. In answer to that question, we are responsible for some aspects and the school or college are responsible for other aspects.

So let me start with our responsibilities. We undertake to provide a range of adventurous activities in a safe environment working within the relevant regulations and suitable qualified instructors. These regulations come from two sources, the health & safety at work act and activity regulations.

In respect of health & safety at work issues, we meet regularly with inspectors from Bromsgrove Environmental Health Department. They check our risk assessments, operating procedures etc, in respect of our facilities, food safety and all other general safety issues. I can confirm that there are no significant outstanding issues, and they are satisfied with our overall operating procedures.

In respect of activities we start with the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). They are a government agency, which is part of the Health & Safety Executive, and their role is to regulate outdoor activity centres. We have an AALA licence, No L 7701/R1474, which means they are happy with the way in which we run our activities. Each activity is run either to the standard set by the National Governing body (NGB), for example our canoeing is delivered in accordance with the regulations set out by the British Canoe Union. Where there is no NGB, i.e. use of zip wire, guidance and approval is sought from an appropriately highly qualified external consultant.

When it comes to risk assessments, we have individual sheets for all our activities and the various facilities. They are by their very nature technical and so we don't make them available for general inspection. There is a growing view within the industry that it is unfair to expect a non-qualified person to make an informed judgement about something of which they have little knowledge. So I believe it is sufficient for me to confirm that we have the necessary risk assessments in place and these have been independently verified.



We have a comprehensive Child Protection Policy in place, which reflects current good practise. All paid staff and volunteers working at the centre are subject to an enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) check. Additionally, Blackwell Adventure staff are trained in appropriate behaviour when working with young people.

Moving onto the schools / colleges responsibilities. The booking has been taken on the understanding that the general control and supervision of the students will remain with the teaching staff. In particular the none activity time, i.e. lunchtime, would be the schools / colleges responsibility. We also require some general supervision of the students during activities, although we will take responsibility for all the technical and safety aspects of the activity itself.

Finally can I say something about insurance. We have adequate liability insurance through Unity Insurance Services (the scout association) with liberty mutual insurance Policy no L0078974008. They have sufficient cover in place to meet the potential liability resulting from activities involving young people.

I hope this clarifies the situation and distinguishes the lines of responsibility. If you need any further information, please let me know.

Gareth Roberts
Director of Operations
Blackwell Adventure

