

Safety in Groups Guidelines

Planning and managing groups on sites.
Guidelines for organisers and leaders.

Introduction

This booklet is aimed at ensuring the highest possible safety standards for schools and other groups visiting Colliers Wood. Colliers Wood is maintained by Broxtowe Borough Council. By describing the standards of safety which visiting schools are recommended to provide for their pupils, it provides a quality assurance document for governors, head teachers, teachers, parents and pupils alike.

As the safety of visiting Colliers Wood is the joint responsibility of the visiting schools and other groups and agencies responsible for the management of sites (e.g. Broxtowe Borough Council), this document makes clear the responsibilities of, and provides codes of practice for, all groups of staff/adults/leaders.

The document follows the recommendations and requirements of the LEA's "Educational Visits Policy For Nottinghamshire Schools" and the Education Department Circulars in relation to specific outdoor activities. It is expected that all visits and activities taking place at this site will follow the recommendations of these documents.

In following the codes of practice, all concerned need to appreciate that no document of this nature can cover every possible set of circumstances. Safe educational experiences ultimately rely on the common sense and good judgement of teachers and other adults, while working within their own experience and capabilities. All visiting teachers and leaders should have access to and be familiar with these codes of practice.

These guidelines cover:

Stages of planning and delivery

PRE PLANNING
BEFORE THE ACTIVITY
DURING THE ACTIVITY
AFTER THE ACTIVITY

And consider key aspects of:

ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY
STAFF AND RESOURCES
COMMUNICATION
HEALTH AND SAFETY
PARTICIPANTS
RISK ASSESSMENT
INFORMATION, ADMINISTRATION AND PROMOTION

Activity planning

1. Assess the purpose, nature and extent of the activity.

- The location, and route, activities on site and resources needed.
- How it will be managed – What staff and resources? What ratio of staff to children?
- Who is leading the activity? What leader/facilitator skills are needed? Do they have relevant training? – This will depend on the nature and scope – Essentially a trained first aider with a Certificate of Qualification in First Aid (to at least basic emergency level), and first aid kit.
- Are there any agreements or special requirements needed from sites or others? E.g. booking, letter of agreement, special leaders, a site risk assessment.
- Will any additional tools or specialist skills be required?

2. Establish Health and Safety arrangements

- Consult Risk Assessment for Colliers Wood (available from Durban House Heritage Centre) and carry out risk assessment for your group/activities, including the journey.
- Accident, emergency and communication arrangements. An emergency communication system must be set up between the visiting group, the school and the parents.
- What First Aid provision is available and is it clearly marked and accessible?
- Radio or mobile telephone communication procedure. These should include provisions for abandoning the activity if the weather deteriorates or if any other unexpected problem arises during the activity.

3. Set the parameters for the participants:

- Maximum number of participants
- What clothing is required?
- What footwear is required?
- What level of fitness is required and have any relevant medical conditions been disclosed to teacher/leader?
- Are special skills required?
- Is any additional equipment required?

4. Information, administration and promotion arrangements

- What information is or can be made available to potential participants? This may depend on the way in which the activity is promoted. Information needs to be provided which will enable potential participants (via organiser) to make choices about whether to become involved, to ensure that they are properly prepared (the leader must be aware of any relevant medical conditions of participants) and to make the most of the learning opportunities available.
- How can information be provided? Via a leaflet, poster or by inviting participants to telephone the leader.
- Establish an appropriate booking system, if required.

Before the activity

Safety Responsibilities

1. Safety responsibilities of Broxtowe Borough Council at Colliers Wood

Take overall responsibility for the management of health and safety of all areas in their operational control, including risk assessment, fire safety etc. and communicating this to visiting groups.

2. Safety responsibilities of Durban House Heritage Centre

The centre is responsible for:

- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health provisions and procedures affecting cleaning are adhered to, including the storage of materials and disposal of waste.

3. Safety responsibilities of visiting schools

Through the management of the teacher leading the visit and the school's own Educational Visits Co-ordinator, the visiting school is responsible for:

- Ensuring the leader of the visit, and other visiting staff if possible, visit the site prior to the visit. If no visit takes place, then the leader of the visit must assess the site and needs to brief other staff thoroughly.
- Ensuring that all visits take place within the policies, guidelines and Codes of Practice provided by their LEA and Colliers Wood.

4. General emergency procedure

- All leaders in charge of a group should be prepared for and ready to deal with any emergency which may arise. Groups are advised to have a mobile phone with them when visiting Colliers Wood.
- Take charge of the situation. Ensure safety and well being of the whole group. Make sure all members of the party are accounted for.
- Establish who is injured or ill and the extent of injuries or illness. Give emergency aid if necessary (to sustain breathing and circulation and prevent bleeding).
- If the situation is urgent or life threatening, telephone 999 and ask for the required services, giving your name, location, number of casualties and an assessment of injuries/illness. Ask for immediate medical advice if necessary.
- Once any urgent situation has been dealt with, take time to reflect and decide the best course of action. Inform the centre staff, if you have not already done so, and share the problem.
- Ensure any pupil taken to hospital is accompanied by an adult.
- Prevent access to telephones, including mobile phones by anyone other than group leaders, to ensure information about the event is managed appropriately. Contact the head teacher giving clear details of the situation. The head teacher should contact parents and the chairman of school governors.
- Ensure that other pupils are cared for, that they understand what has happened and are distanced from the situation if appropriate. Be aware that others in the party, adults and pupils, you included, may be suffering from shock.
- In the event of a serious incident the head teacher should contact the Education Department, the Health and Safety Executive and Broxtowe Borough Council.

Re-assess activity

Check Risk Assessment for Changes

- Is there any work going on in the vicinity of the planned activity?
- Is the route safe and free of hazards? Have hazards been guarded against?
- Ensure that accident, emergency (see section "General Emergency Procedure") and communication arrangements are planned and understood by all.
- Is appropriate First Aid available?
- Details of the activity (including time leaving, route, destination, return time, mobile phone numbers, number in party and name of guide) should be left with a responsible person.
- On assembly the organiser must ensure that the participants meet all the criteria which have been set:
 - Is everyone's name on the register?
 - Are they wearing the appropriate clothing?
 - Are they wearing the appropriate footwear?
 - Do they appear to meet the fitness requirements?
 - Do they have the appropriate skills?
 - Are they the correct age?
 - Has the maximum number been exceeded?
 - Where vehicles, bicycles or equipment are provided by participants, do they appear to be safe and suitable for the planned activity?
 - If the leader/organiser, the participants or the equipment do not meet these requirements, the activity should not be allowed to go ahead.

Introductory talk

- Check that everyone can hear you.
- Essential at the start of every new project or activity to inform participants about:
 - Why they are doing the activity – their contribution, social improvements, quality of life, improving access, sharing good practice, country code etc.
 - What to expect – may be length and type of activity, equipment needed (refer to risk assessment).
 - What is expected of them – how you need them to work as a team, what skills they need to employ, what sort of behaviour is acceptable, arrangements and supervision for "free time" and break times.
 - Gives key information in relation to the activity and their safety – what to do in the event of an emergency or accident, first aid and communication arrangements, lets them know how to use equipment, defines limits and boundaries of area being used etc.

You might also need to include:

TOUR OF WHOLE SITE AREA – site management and care, tasks required.
EQUIPMENT DEMONSTRATION – name and use for each, safety information. Pair experienced volunteers with newcomers if you can – show good practice.
INFORMATION FOR PUBLIC ON SITE ABOUT THE ACTIVITY.

During the activity

- It is important that the leader/organiser is free to keep an overview of the activity and is not tied to one particular group or area.
- The organiser should, depending on the nature of the activity, ensure that the party stays together and should make regular checks to ensure that all participants are present and well. One person should be nominated to stay at the back of the group to ensure that nobody falls behind. Regular head counts should also be taken.
- The leader must ensure suitable behaviour and supervision of pupils at all times.
- If the weather deteriorates or if there are any other unexpected problems the organiser must have regard to the pre-arranged emergency procedures and decide the appropriate course of action and communicate this to the participants.
- Ensure good working practices – pair experienced with non experienced adults, make sure everyone has something to do at the start, set realistic targets, rotate jobs if possible, delegate wherever possible, give praise, keep work site tidy, keep equipment in one place, try to call people by their names (wear labels if you need to), draw on volunteers skills.
- Respond to differing levels of ability, fitness and challenge – ask them about their interests, be aware that some adults have phobias, including insects, spiders, long grass, water etc.
- Following any accident, illness or 'near miss' incidents, record these back at school. These should also be reported to The Health & Safety Officer, Broxtowe Borough Council, Foster Ave, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 1AB.

After the activity

- Allow time for clearing up if needed, and check the area is left tidy and undisturbed.
- Thank everyone for taking part and check everyone is there – a formal head-count is essential.
- Evaluate the safety arrangements and if appropriate amend the procedure or implement change for the next event. Return any evaluation sheets to Durban House.
- At the end of every visit, the whole programme should be reviewed and any lessons learned taken on board for any future visits.
- Ensure relevant and adequate follow-up work to consolidate learning in a variety of styles.

More safety information

A risk assessment for Colliers Wood is available from Durban House Heritage Centre.

British Standards Institute
www.bci-global.com/Corporate/BritishStandards

Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk

BTCV – a range of useful information on volunteers
www.btcv.org.uk

Council for Environmental Education
www.cee.org.uk

Department for Education and Science
www.dfes.gov.uk

Institute for Leisure and Amenity Management
www.ilam.org.uk

Institute for Public Rights of Way
www.iprow.org.uk

RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents)
Useful information on water safety
www.rosipa.com

Visitor Safety in the Countryside Group
www.vscg.co.uk

Walking for Health Initiative
www.whi.org.uk

Standard First Aid Kit

Vary, normally for 10-12, usually contain:

Guidance card

20 sterile adhesive dressings

2 sterile eye pads

6 triangular bandages

6 safety pins

6 medicated, unsterilised dressings

2 large, sterile, unmedicated dressings

3 extra large, sterile, unmedicated dressings

Disposable fine elastic gloves

Plastic mouth resuscitation unit

900ml of sterile water or saline

Recommended Welfare kit

Additional useful equipment

Mobile phones

Wet wipes – general cleaning

1 pair scissors

10 safety pins

Needle and thread

Pencil and paper

Toilet roll/sanitary towel

Cotton wool

30 plasters (hypoallergenic only)

10p/20p pieces

Set of spare clothes

Towels (when working in or near water)

Mints or sweets

Blanket/sheet

Whistle

Torch

Basic Principles for Safety

Who is the qualified First Aider? Make sure everyone knows who they are.

Make sure that you and participants have plenty of drinking water, especially in hot weather.

Long trousers are more appropriate in woodland.

Always wear strong shoes, boots or Wellington boots.

Wear a hat for warmth or shade from hot sun.

Only carry as much equipment as you can comfortably manage.

Supplementary notes

Education and groups and insurance

Be aware of the LEA Guidelines and Polices on school visits and that the LEA's position regarding insurance is clear to schools. Need to check with your organisation's Head for private/independent schools. Arrange an insurance policy for an amount acceptable to your organisation.

There are new guidelines in circulation from Department for Education and Science - see website www.dfes.gov.uk

Always discuss the visit and activities with your school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator and plan it well with their help.

Children and vulnerable adults

As a volunteer, group or task leader, you take on a position of responsibility with regards to children (Children Act) and are therefore required to obtain Disclosure by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This is a checking process against a national registered database of offenders and information held by departments - Home Office, Health, Education and Employment. Where this is required it will be carried out by employer or project organiser.

Follow your group's/school's policy on checking volunteers with CRB.

Health and Safety At Work Act (HASWA)

Any organisation will have responsibility under the Health and Safety At Work Act (HASWA) to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that those engaging in these types of activities are not exposed to risks to their health and safety from the activities.

Check with those in charge of your organisation and act appropriately.

Participants and clothing/equipment

Where the organiser believes that a participant is inadequately prepared for the activity, they should make this clear to the person concerned or their guardian. If possible, any warning should be given in the presence of witnesses, and recorded in writing. At all times, the organiser must conduct themselves politely and make it clear that in their opinion the person is not properly equipped or that the planned activity may not be suitable for that person. Where the participants are adults, they should make it clear that if the person insists on participating, that they do so at their own risk. Ensure that adult volunteers are not placed in a vulnerable position themselves, for example, pair helpers when distant from other groups.

Supplementary notes continued

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

The Disability Discrimination Act was passed in 1995 to ensure that disabled people are treated in a fair and equal way.

The act places duties on providers of goods, facilities and services.

- The duties on service providers are being introduced in three stages:
 - It is unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people less favourably for a reason related to their disability;
 - Service providers have to make "reasonable adjustments" for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services; and
 - Service providers will also have to make "reasonable adjustments" to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.
- The Act makes it unlawful for a service provider to discriminate against a disabled person:
 - By refusing to provide (or deliberately not providing) any service which it provides (or is prepared to provide) to members of the public; or
 - In the standard of service which it provides to the disabled person or the manner in which it provides it; or
 - In the terms on which it provides a service to the disabled person.

The act does not place any duty on providing for elderly people who do not have a disability or for families with small children or other people who may be restricted in their use of the countryside. However, the benefits of an accessible, inclusive environment for disabled people would also benefit other user groups.

Colliers Wood Site Emergency Plan (Events)

Instructions to Leaders

In the event of an accident the Project Leader shall call the appropriate emergency services and direct them to the site using the information given below.

The second nominated person shall proceed to the nearest access point and await the arrival / direct the emergency services to the accident scene.

Site Name / Address

Colliers Wood, Engine Lane, Moorgreen, Notts.

Tel: 0115 9177777 (Broxtowe Borough Council)

Directions to Site

From Nuthall, Kimberley, Watnall

Take the B600 Watnall Road towards, Eastwood and Brinsley. You are entering Moorgreen when you pass St Mary's, Greasley. Bear right at the Horse & Groom public house and continue to the bottom of the hill. Turn left into Engine Lane. (Colliers Wood is sign posted.) Entrance to car park is on the left.

From Hucknall

Take the B6009 Watnall Road/Long Lane towards Kimberley. At the T junction in Watnall turn right onto B600. Follow Nuthall/Kimberley/Watnall directions from this point.

From Selston, Somercotes

Take Nottingham Road towards Nottingham. Pass by Underwood and Brinsley until Moorgreen Reservoir is on your left. Immediately after, turn right into Engine Lane which is marked by winding wheel entrance features.

From the centre of Eastwood

Pass by Morrisons Supermarket, bearing left at the traffic lights onto the A608 Mansfield Road. Towards the bottom of the hill turn right into Greenhills Road. Durban House Heritage Centre is at this junction. Continue along this road whose name changes to Lower Beauvale and then Engine Lane to pass the site on your right. The car park entrance is on the right prior to the junction with the B600. Please note that there is a 2m height barrier at the end of Lower Beauvale and another at the site entrance road.

From the centre of Eastwood avoiding the height restriction barrier

Take Nottingham Road towards Kimberley. At Hill Top turn left into Dovecote Road (B6010). Continue to the end of this road to reach Moorgreen at the Horse & Groom public house. Turn left and then take the next left into Engine Lane. There is ample on-road parking for vehicles that cannot pass under the 2m height barrier at the car park entrance.

Colliers Wood Site Emergency Plan (Events)

Entrance Points

Vehicle entrance is off Engine Lane. Further pedestrian entrances are from Moorgreen village adjacent to Holydene Nursery and Mill Road.

Local Information

Accident and emergency hospital:

Ilkeston Community Hospital, Heanor Rd, Ilkeston, DE7 8LN. Tel: 0115 9305522

Police station:

Eastwood Police Station, Nottingham Rd Tel: 0115 9400999

Fire:

In emergency dial 999

Colliers Wood Access Points

