

SAFETY POLICY

COMMUNICATION AND ORGANISATION

The responsibility for the supervision of visiting groups and the planning and delivery of the programme rests with the visiting staff. However, if certain activities are to be Centre-led, then the Centre Manager or a member of the Centre staff assumes direct responsibility for the group concerned.

Detailed information and advice is available to party leaders during the planning stage. When required to do so, the Manager will meet with future users. Preliminary visits to the Centre are welcomed. In addition, detailed discussion is possible by telephone.

The final say on all matters relating to the day to day running of the Hornsea Outdoor Residential Centre and the conduct of all residents rest with the Centre Manager. The Manager has the right to terminate the stay of any individual or group at his/her discretion. Should this occur, all charges will be waived except for disbursements made on the users behalf, for example, transport costs.

Close contact is maintained throughout a group's stay between the Centre management and visiting staff. Help and advice is always available should it be needed. Visiting staff should feel free to seek this at any time.

Groups are always met and welcomed upon arrival. Soon after, a briefing will be given to visiting children and their staff. This provides an opportunity for safety rules to be discussed and for any questions and concerns to be addressed.

SAFETY ON SITE

This section covers the health and safety of visiting groups and their staff.

Primary responsibility for the supervision of groups on site lies with the visiting teaching staff.

The Centre Manager resides on site and will normally be available to give any help or support that may be needed. Should it become necessary, the Manager has authority to insist that standards of behaviour or supervision are improved. Should the Manager be absent whilst a group is in residence, arrangements for emergency cover will be agreed with the visiting party leader in advance.

The Centre conforms to all fire regulations. The fire alarms are tested weekly and all extinguishers are checked annually. Emergency exits are available to dormitories and all other areas used by children with the exception of the ablution block and the drying room. These doors should be kept clear of obstructions at all times.

Readers will be aware that the issue of security at all educational establishments has, regrettably, been highlighted by recent events. There have been no incidents at the Hornsea Centre so it is to be hoped that security worries will not mar the sense of freedom that we have here. Nevertheless, visiting staff should be aware that our site is wide open and that a certain amount of care and vigilance should be exercised. Care should be taken before children are allowed to roam about unsupervised. An example of this is the practice of allowing children to leave the dining room to visit the toilets during meal times. The sight of any suspicious stranger on site should be reported to the Centre staff immediately. Party leaders should, of course, inform the Centre staff of any visitors they are expecting. The likelihood of accidents occurring on site can be greatly reduced by good supervision. In particular, excessive amounts of unsupervised and unstructured free time should be avoided.

Visiting staff are required to lock all social and working areas when they have finished for the night. Exterior lights around the sleeping accommodation will automatically light once dusk arrives.

Special care needs to be exercised on and around steps and also in the toilets, washrooms, showers and changing rooms. These floors can become very slippery when wet. Doorways are another potential danger point, especially those to the hall. When large numbers of children are passing through they should be supervised in order that a scum does not take place. Children should, at all times, be strongly discouraged from running between Centre buildings.

Sports and games on the field have the same risks as similar activities back at school and the same procedures and precautions should be adopted. Caution should be exercised if children enter the wooded environmental areas on the field. These areas are overgrown and contain brambles, logs, hidden holes and other dangers.

It is inevitable that some minor accidents will occur from time to time. It is hoped that these will be few and far between and that supervising staff will be able to deal with them swiftly and effectively. Care should be taken that the safety of the remaining group does not become compromised whilst staff are busy attending to a child in difficulties.

First-aid boxes are available in the **CLASSROOM, KITCHEN, STAFFROOM** and the **MANAGER'S BUNGALOW**. These boxes are checked regularly and if staff have occasion to use anything they should inform the Manager so that it can be replaced.

Hornsea Cottage Hospital is about five minutes away by motor car. It is staffed 24 hours a day and provides a useful source of professional help with minor injuries or ailments. It does not boast an accident and emergency department. The best course of action with more serious problems is to contact the Ambulance Service on 999. The patient will then be taken to Hull where a full range of medical facilities are available. Help with non urgent medical problems can also be obtained from the doctor's practice in Hornsea during surgery hours. There are three chemists in Hornsea town. Please inform the Centre Manager as soon as possible of any incident requiring outside medical help.

In addition to the recording systems used by visiting schools, the Centre has to maintain its own record of accidents and 'near misses'.

TRANSPORTATION

A 53 seater coach is provided for the transportation of visiting children and staff. (Applicable to Wakefield schools only).

The Centre has a car park large enough for the coach to enter, turn and park comfortably. When visiting schools hire a coach to take trips to the outlying districts the following points should be borne in mind.

Care should be taken as to:

1. Where the coach is parked.
2. The amount of traffic and any other hazards at that particular point.
3. Where the children will be assembled in order to board and debus.
4. The children should be lined up in a safe position and board the coach in an orderly manner.
5. They should be counted onto the coach.
6. All hand baggage should be safely stowed.
7. The driver must not be distracted.
8. Adults should, at all times, be positioned in a manner so that the children are constantly supervised.

Coach drop-offs and pick-ups should only take place in suitable places. Party leaders should not hesitate to ask coach drivers to move to a more suitable parking spot or to turn coaches around so that embarkation and disembarkation is carried out on the correct side of the road. If a coach is leaving a group, staff should ensure that the driver is aware of the exact time and place of pick-up. On arrival at the destination all the above points should be borne in mind added to which, the children should once again be counted before leaving the area of the coach. A member of staff should always leave the coach prior to the children. This should, hopefully, prevent any of the group dispersing haphazardly and becoming temporarily unsupervised.

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES OFF SITE

Where ever possible all activities and outside visits should be carefully planned prior to arriving at the Centre. Teachers should take advantage of anything of educational value that arises spontaneously. This should occur within the framework of an established structure. Plans should include provision for severe weather and, where relevant, tide times should be taken into consideration. Staff should be flexible and ready to make modifications to a proposed outing if conditions become unfavourable. In order to keep visiting staff fully informed, a local weather forecast and tide times are displayed in the dining room and updated-daily.

One particular member of staff should be in overall charge of any trip. Care should be taken to avoid any confusion and there should be no possibility of conflicting instructions being given to the children. The splitting of a large group into smaller parties must be done clearly so that the precise numbers in any sub-group are known and each child understands where, and with whom, they are supposed to be.

In most instances, groups and sub-groups should be kept together. It is often appropriate to allow children to spread out, perhaps to complete a work sheet or during free-time over lunch. Should this happen, clear limits must be set beyond which the children are not allowed to stray. A clear and audible recall signal needs to be specified in advance.

When groups are not accompanied by a member of the Centre staff, the Centre should be informed of where they are going and what time they are expected to return. Normally this would be done by the submission of a written programme in advance of the parties visit, but the Centre Manager must be informed of any changes to the programme.

It is advisable to carry a mobile telephone on visits and outings. In addition to being available for emergency use, it can also be used to contact the Centre should the need arise. The number of any personal phone should be lodged with the Centre Manager.

Most of the above points will seem obvious to staff who are experienced at working with children outside the classroom environment. Visiting staff are encouraged to use their own professional judgement in deciding what is appropriate and what is not in any given circumstances. Visiting staff should always feel free to seek the advice of the Centre Manager when planning and implementing their group's programme.

EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

It is totally unnecessary to carry large amounts of heavy equipment. Nevertheless, the presence of simple items, combined with the knowledge of how to use them, can be of great value.

A basic first-aid kit should be carried at all times. The Centre has day sacks available containing first-aid kits for those visiting staff who have not brought their own. It is also vital that at least one member of the party is the holder of a valid first-aid certificate.

Unless the group is visiting purely urban areas it is also a good idea to carry a relevant map. Dependent upon the time of year, a good reliable source of light should also be available. Children should be encouraged to carry spare clothing, hat and gloves. During summer months, consideration should be given to the use of sun block.

VISITS TO ESTABLISHED SITES

This category includes museums and other similar venues such as, the Sea Life Centre at Scarborough. These places normally have organised facilities and trained staff for dealing with emergencies.

It is unlikely that children will be exposed to danger at venues such as these, but they could have minor accidents or be taken ill. Help is likely to be close at hand. Good road access, telephones and staff who will be experienced in dealing with such matters are normally available.

Special care should be taken outside these places, car parks, picnic areas and the like. Children should be closely supervised at all times.

Such visits usually work best if the children have specific tasks to perform, the completion of a work sheet, sketching or observation. Staff are, of course, free to decide on what is most appropriate for their group.

SWIMMING

If a group is taken to the swimming baths the responsibility for provision of safety lies with the pool management. The groups' staff should however supervise their children and back up the pool staff in enforcing the rules. Teachers should be aware of any non swimmers within their group. Care and supervision should be exercised at all times in the changing rooms.

SPECIAL VISITS

This comprises all visits to places such as, Beverley Minster, the cattle market, farms, factories, churches, lifeboat stations, harbours and all similar places.

Staff visiting this type of location should be constantly aware of exactly where all those in their charge are and what they are doing. It is likely that there will be no physical barriers to deter children from areas and objects that could be potentially dangerous. Even somewhere apparently safe, such as a church, could have workmen's tools lying about. Guides at this type of venue are usually excellent from an educational point of view, but they may not have the necessary management skills or any awareness of safety issues.

LOW LEVEL WALKS

Walks may be undertaken as a means of reaching a particular destination or as an end in themselves. It is important that staff not only plan the activity but also the walk itself.

There should be some form of organisation which prevents children from becoming separated from the main body. Staff should be familiar with the route. The Centre Manager will provide assistance if required.

The party must either be split into groups or kept as a whole, straggling should not be allowed.

Should the party be required to cross a field in which a bull is present (a very common occurrence around Hornsea) then they should remain calm, orderly and quiet. The beast may well become alarmed if he is presented with a pack of screaming children running about.

When planning a walk, the age and ability of the children must be considered. Thought should be given to short cuts which would enable the party to return to the Centre quickly because of unforeseen circumstances, inclement weather or accident.

TOWN BEACHES

This category includes simple beaches with easy access. Staff taking a party to any beach should always have an awareness of tide and weather conditions.

Care should be taken to ensure that children do not wander off into more dangerous areas with for example, cliffs or deep rock pools. Groynes and similar structures can also be dangerous. If the sea is rough consider keeping children well away from the waters edge.

It is important to watch what is being picked up on the beach. It is not unknown in this area for hazardous substances to be washed up. In summer, jelly fish can present a danger if picked up. During the holiday season the beaches are very crowded and staff should seriously consider whether there are enough of them to oversee the party in these conditions.

IN THE SUMMER MONTHS HORNSEA BEACH IS HOST TO A NASTY LITTLE DEVIL, THE WEAVER FISH. IT IS TO BE FOUND BURIED IN THE SAND AT THE WATERS EDGE. IF STEPPED ON WITH BARE FEET IT WILL STING AND INJECT POISON INTO THE FOOT. THE PERSON RECEIVING SUCH A STING WILL REQUIRE HOSPITAL TREATMENT.

Sea bathing does, of course, present its own set of problems. At least one member of staff should be qualified in lifesaving to at least RLSS Bronze. Clearly defined areas must be set beyond which no child is allowed to go. Definite audible and visual signals of recall should be demonstrated and these must be obeyed immediately and without question. Stone throwing and 'skimming' are two activities that children enjoy around the sea. They should either be prohibited or closely supervised.

WILD BEACHES

This category includes beaches in more remote locations and those that have cliffs, rock ledges, caves, rock pools and loose boulders. All groups using these areas must be well supervised.

All the considerations outlined for town beaches apply here. However, remote beaches require a greater degree of awareness from staff. Once again, groups should have clearly defined areas where they are allowed to go. Children should not be allowed to climb cliffs or scramble around over where there is a danger of falling rocks.

It is crucial that staff visiting such beaches are fully aware of the tide, being cut off is a real possibility. If heavy seas or foul weather are forecast then staff should seriously consider cancelling or postponing the visit. The Centre Manager will advise.

CLIFF WALKS

There are a number of excellent cliff walks in our area. Paths often run very close to cliff edges. All points raised in the section on low level walks apply here. There are, however a number of additional considerations which mean that group organisation and control have to be much tighter.

Many of these cliffs are unfenced and even where fencing is present it is often very flimsy. The cliffs themselves may be much more dangerous than is apparent at a casual glance.

Before such walks are attempted, a thorough briefing should be given to the children. They must be absolutely forbidden to leave the path at anytime, irrespective of whether they can actually see danger. A very tight system of control and group organisation needs to be in place in order to ensure that all of the party are constantly supervised. The children must be given clear and precise instructions so that they know what they are supposed to be doing and exactly where they are supposed to be doing it.

Cliff walks are very exciting and offer a high degree of educational value. If teachers are in doubt about the behaviour of any member of their group they should carefully consider whether to include this activity. High winds and icy conditions are good reasons to cancel such visits.

If a cliff walk is proposed the Centre Manager will be pleased to assist with both the planning and leadership if this is desired.

IN CONCLUSION

THE HORNSEA OUTDOOR CENTRE IS VERY PROUD OF ITS EXCELLENT SAFETY RECORD. EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO ENSURE THAT THIS CONTINUES. IN ORDER TO DO THAT, THIS SAFETY POLICY WILL BE REGULARLY REVIEWED AND UPDATED. THE CENTRE'S OPERATING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES WILL BE CONSTANTLY MONITORED. BY DOING THIS, IT IS HOPED THAT, STANDARDS ARE NOT ONLY MAINTAINED BUT IMPROVED STILL FURTHER. THE CENTRE'S ACTIVITIES, PROJECTS AND METHODS ARE SUBJECT TO A CONSTANT PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT SUCH CHANGE IS PARALLELED BY SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS. SAFETY MONITORING WILL BE AN ONGOING PROCESS AND THIS SAFETY DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO BE FLUID. MODIFICATIONS WILL BE MADE OR FURTHER SECTIONS ADDED AS THE CENTRE DEVELOPS.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

There are three levels of accident, each require a different level of response. The following list is meant as a guide. It does not, of course, cover every eventuality so you must use your own judgement. Remember the four 'B's, and the three 'R's. Get your priorities right and treat accordingly.

BREATHING - BLEEDING - BURNS - BREAKS

AND THEN

REST - RELAX - REASSURE

1) Simple cuts and bruises, blisters, insect bites and stings, simple splinters, minor ailments.

Apply appropriate first aid, reassure. Monitor condition of casualty. Seek medical advice if you are worried.

2) Serious cuts and bruising, minor burns, blows to the head, difficult splinters, mild allergic reactions, sprains. Moderate eye and ear injuries, mild hypothermia, mild heat exhaustion, sun burn.

Give first aid and reassurance, arrange for casualty to visit Hornsea Cottage Hospital or Doctors surgery. After returning to Centre, check casualty's condition. Inform parent and Centre Manager.

3) Major bleeding, head injury, unconsciousness, foreign objects, serious eye or ear injuries, suspected fractures or dislocations, major burns, electric shock, choking, serious or sudden allergic reactions, hypothermia, serious heat stroke or serious illness.

Apply first aid, treat for shock, dial 999 or 112 for ambulance. Centre Manager to be informed immediately.

PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THE FOLLOWING

Ambulance response in this area can take up to an hour. In the event of a major accident or road traffic accident, the press will descend like the proverbial pack of wolves. It goes without saying that no information what-so-ever is given to the media.

A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF RISK ASSESSMENTS CAN BE FOUND IN WAKEFIELD'S: EDUCATIONAL VISITS HEALTH AND SAFETY HANDBOOK

YOUR PRIORITIES

PRIORITY NUMBER ONE IS AND WILL ALWAYS BE:

- 1) **ENSURE YOUR OWN SAFETY**
- 2) ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE REST OF THE GROUP
- 3) USING APPROPRIATE FIRST AID, TREAT AND STABILISE THE CASUALTY
- 4) INFORM THE CENTRE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

HORNSEA OUTDOOR RESIDENTIAL CENTRE	01694 532106
MANAGER'S MOBILE NUMBER	07776 450685
LOCAL COTTAGE HOSPITAL	01964 533146
DOCTORS SURGERY	01964 532212
LOCAL DENTIST	01964 532153
LOCAL POLICE	01964 532133
COASTGUARD	01262 672317