

04/05/16

The benefits to young people of being exposed to managed risk are well known. A visit to Woodrow High House will give young people an opportunity to learn first hand the thrill of the outdoors, with the comfort of knowing they are supported by our excellent safety standards.

This document is designed to help those with responsibility for organising trips to fulfil their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations, and to comply with the advisory documents from the Department for Education ([Health and Safety: Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for local Authorities, School Leaders, School Staff and Governing Bodies](#)) and the Health and Safety Executive ([School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities](#)).

Safety

All of our activity and learning programmes are operated in accordance with strict operating standards that define the minimum requirements for staff qualifications, supervision arrangements, equipment, facilities and appropriate clothing. We also follow the guidelines provided by the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for relevant activities operated at Woodrow, e.g. Archery GB.

Individual activities follow a defined session plan and all instructors are regularly observed to ensure they are complying with our safety standards and delivering a quality experience to our visitors. Operating standards also extend to cover our off-site sessions, such as the 'Woodland Walk'.

Risk assessments

Risk Assessments form the building blocks for ensuring effective health and safety management at Woodrow. We operate comprehensive baseline risk assessments for all activities and facilities at Woodrow. The control measures identified in the risk assessment enable us to develop our operating procedures and session plans.

'Dynamic Risk Assessments' are also undertaken by our staff immediately prior to an activity taking place. This process enables us to consider the particular needs of the group and any local conditions, e.g. the weather if it is an outdoor activity. The accompanying staff member will be asked for their input at this stage as we will rely on their knowledge of the individuals taking part.

The organisation planning the trip is responsible for carrying out its own risk assessments for travelling to and from Woodrow and for any excursions/activities away from the Centre which are not organised by Woodrow staff.

Insurance

The centre holds public liability insurance of £10,000,000 for any one occurrence. We can provide electronic copies of up-to-date insurance certificates if required.

Staffing

Ratios

It is not possible to lay down an exact formula that would apply equally to all sessions run at Woodrow. Ratios will take into account the advice given by NGBs, the venue, the hazards and weather conditions of the activity being undertaken, together with a consideration of any special needs or authority requirements. However, we apply the following broad principles as a minimum.

A. On-site sessions

An on-site activity group will normally consist of between 10-15 young people. One instructor will instruct one group on most sessions. Sometimes two or three groups are joined together to make one large group. On those occasions it may be deemed safe to operate with a higher ratio of young people to one instructor.

B. Off-site sessions

For the Woodland Walk instructors will carry a two-way radio and a mobile phone. Mobile phones are taken on all off-site activities.

C. Special Needs Groups

Once a visiting group informs the Centre of their special requirements, an assessment of staffing levels will be made and, where necessary, staffing levels will be increased. Please let us know of your group's needs in advance so we are able to make such plans.

D. Visiting staff and the instructor ratio

Accompanying group staff are expected to support the instructor with the supervision and control of the group. It is worth noting, therefore, that while there may be one instructor with a group of fifteen who will deal with the operation of the activity the accompanying staff member plays an important role. The instructor:young person ratio may be 1:15 but the staff:young person ratio would be 2:15.

Higher Risk Activities

Archery

All staff delivering archery sessions hold at least the Archery GB Instructor Award. This is the appropriate award for introductory archery sessions and is recognised nationally.

The Senior Instructors assessing the continuing competency of the instructor team each hold the Archery GB Leader award.

Swimming

The swimming pool is always lifeguarded by two staff who hold the Royal Lifesaving Society UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification or STA equivalent, with at least one of them poolside at all times. Woodrow High House is recognised and certified as an Approved Training Centre by the Institute of Qualified Lifeguards.

Weather

In the interests of safety it may on occasions be necessary to cancel or modify certain parts of the agreed programme. This is only likely to occur in the case of very severe weather conditions and particularly after snow fall or during high winds.

Equipment

Woodrow High House provides any specialist equipment required for an activity. All equipment provided is fit for purpose and is checked regularly for defects.

The low ropes course is inspected annually by a specialist contractor.

Trees

Our site is surveyed annually by a qualified arboroculturalist and any tree surgery which is recorded as being essential and/or urgent is carried out.

First aid

All staff working with young people hold a current first aid qualification.

Child protection

Our Safeguarding Policy requires that DBS checks are carried out on all staff employed at Woodrow. Our staff also attend Safeguarding and Child Protection Training.

Supervising young people during 'down time'

Accompanying staff are responsible for supervising the young people within their groups during 'down time'. However, Woodrow operates a 'Duty Instructor' system, which means that a member of our instructional team will always be available to give assistance and is on call throughout the night to deal with emergencies.

Security

The Woodrow grounds are private and the Centre is in a rural location. The following security arrangements are in operation:

- ✓ All visitors to the Centre are required to sign in at Reception.
- ✓ We have private grounds with no unauthorised public access.
- ✓ A Duty Instructor staffs the building at night and sleeps overnight in the main building to support visiting staff.
- ✓ We have CCTV monitoring the entry and approaches to the building.
- ✓ The two main entrance doors to the house are on key code access only.
- ✓ Radios are taken on all sessions.
- ✓ If certain items need to be stored securely (medication, valuables, etc.) we can provide an area in which to contain them.

Fire Protection

A Fire Risk Assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and all necessary arrangements have been put in place. The fire alarm is tested weekly, and we have an established regime for inspection, testing and maintenance of the emergency lighting, automatic detection systems and fire extinguishers.

All our staff have been trained in the execution of the emergency evacuation plan and all our Duty Instructors are also trained as Fire Marshals. Our fire procedures will be explained to your group during your welcome meeting.