

Gwent Outdoor Education Centres

Safety Policy, Procedure and Practice - Information for Clients

The Gwent Residential Outdoor Education Service caters for approximately 7,000 people each year and has been in operation for over twenty years. We are proud of our excellent safety record which has been achieved through Centre Staff, Visiting Staff and all clients working in close collaboration and providing mutual support. All staff accept that the safety and welfare of the client is paramount at all times. The centres have been inspected by Health and Safety Executive and standards have been found to be satisfactory in all respects. The centres that provide adventure activities are licensed in accordance with "The Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety Act) 1995. (details from AALA 02920 755715)

Introduction

As well as providing accommodation facilities for those groups wishing to organise and carry out their own programmes of work, the Gwent Centres offer a wide range of other services. These range from advice and assistance to those who wish to organise and deliver their own courses in environmental and field studies, to providing the expertise and equipment required by outdoor development courses involving, for example caving, rock climbing or canoeing. As a result of this diversity, the direct responsibility for safety at any one time may lie with visiting staff or centre staff or be shared between the two.

Planning

In order to ensure that all concerned clearly understand their responsibilities we ask all party leaders to contact a member of the Centre teaching staff at least six weeks prior to their visit. Programme details and responsibility for leading activities will be discussed and clearly defined. We recommend to party leaders that parents of any client under 18 are made fully aware of the programme to be followed and informed of the qualifications and experience of staff who are to lead activities (see below).

The Centres have adequate Public Liability Insurance. Personal Accident Insurance can be arranged through the Party Leader.

Clients will be asked to supply details of home and work telephone numbers of next of kin, the client's doctor and any relevant medical conditions.

The Buildings and Equipment

The buildings are regularly inspected by officers of Property Services Department of Monmouthshire CC and the Gwent Fire Brigade and we comply with all recommendations that are made. All equipment provided is safe, well maintained and appropriate for the use to which it will be put.

Centre Vehicles

All vehicles are regularly maintained and inspected by the Transport Department of Monmouthshire County Council. All vehicles are fitted with seat belts for all passengers.

At the Centre

The welcome talk given by centre staff will include a reminder on the standards of conduct required of all visitors and a list of do's and don'ts specific to the site. This will be followed by a Fire Drill. All clients are expected to conform to safety advice given..

In the unlikely event of an accident, procedures are in place to ensure that professional help is always available and that parents are kept fully informed.

Activities Led by Staff of the Gwent Outdoor Centres

The teaching staff at the Gwent Outdoor Centres are highly qualified and experienced practitioners of outdoor education. Only staff with nationally recognised qualifications will lead hazardous pursuits such as canoeing, rock climbing, mountaineering and caving. All teaching staff hold current first aid qualifications. A list of their qualifications and experience can be obtained from the Head of Centres.

Parents who may be concerned about issues of safety should contact Ian Kennett, Head of Gwent Outdoor Centres, on 01600750221