

7. STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT ARE CRUCIAL TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, AND TO RECEIVING APPROVAL FOR VISITS

When completing the Bracknell Forest online monitoring and approval system. The qualifications and experience of the Group Leaders and other staff must be uploaded into the system.

7.01 Group Leader

Headteachers/Service Heads must appoint a Group Leader to be responsible for the running of an activity. The Group Leader must be an appropriate member of staff in the employ of the school/service/council.

7.02 Other Members of Staff

Other members of staff would normally be employees in a position where they were already responsible for the supervision of children or young people. They must also be appropriately qualified and experienced. Such a member of staff might be a teacher, youth worker, learning support assistant or a member of the care staff at a residential special school for example. All staff acting as Group Leaders must also be approved by the Headteacher/Service Head.

Adult Volunteers and Volunteer Instructors must also be competent where they are leading activities or responsible for the supervision of children or young people. They must be approved by the Headteacher/Service Head.

7.03 Activities Involving More Than One Establishment



Where activities involve a number of establishments from Bracknell Forest Council establishments should collaborate and agree a single member of staff to be appointed as the overall Group Leader/co-ordinator. In such cases Headteachers/Service Heads must continue to satisfy themselves that the care and supervision of participants will be at least as good as if a member of their staff were the Group Leader.

Where there are a number of schools/service areas from different Authorities making one group there are serious implications of liability that will require resolving prior to departure. The Adventure Activity Licensing Scheme may also be infringed. Group Leaders should seek advice from the Offsite Visits Advisor on this matter before making any arrangements.

7.04 Provider Staff Qualifications and Experience

Where staff including Volunteer Instructors are provided by the venue ask for specific details relating to the qualifications and experience of the staff who will be looking after your children and young people;

- Have the staff been Disclosure and Barring Service checked?
- Do the qualifications meet Bracknell Forest Council requirements and who has guaranteed their competence?
- Do staff have nationally recognised qualifications?
- Where staff are only employed for the season check qualifications and experience each year.
- Where staff are trained “in house”, how does the training relate to national standards? Individual curriculum vitae are helpful.
- Ensure that qualifications are relevant to the activity. An impressive sounding qualification might not be relevant to the activity.
- Is the facility approved by a National Governing Body? Does it have an Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) licence and/or an “Learning Outside the Classroom” (LOTC) badge?
NB: These are desirable but not essential requirements.
- Assessing the competence of staff may require technical knowledge and the Offsite Visits Advisor should be consulted.

7.05 Good Practice in Supervision and the Standard of Care

It is most important that Group Leaders and other supervisory adults are;

- Aware of the high standard of care required of them on off-site activities;
- They must always be aware of potential dangers and take necessary safeguards.

Particular care must be taken in environments that are naturally hazardous such as:

- Coastal environments, beaches and cliffs;
- Forested land;
- Areas close to running or open water;
- Mountain and moorland areas especially if snow and ice prevail;
- Ferries or boats of any kind;
- Areas liable to pedestrian and vehicular congestion e.g. airports, stations, on trains or using the London underground, at concerts and theatres.