

10. MEDICAL AND CONSENT FORMS

10.01 When is Consent Necessary?

Written signed consent forms must be obtained for in respect of all participants including all adults, children and young people for all offsite and adventurous activities.

10.02 Who Can Sign a Medical and Consent Form?

- Parent/carer on behalf of a child or young person participating in activity/visit;
- Young people living independantly and aged 16 plus;
- Adult participants including staff.

10.03 Why is Consent Required?

Consent is required in respect of the following:

- For the participant to take part in the activity/visit;
- To delegate decisions about medical treatment to staff;

The Medical and Consent form also provides essential details of the next of kin and medical information about the participant.

Please note: Where signatories withhold consent for participants taking part in the activity/visit then the participant must not be taken on the visit. If this applies to a school then the curriculum aims should be delivered to the participant in some other way.

10.04 Consent Process

Bracknell Forest operates a two teir consent process depending on the nature of the visit.

- Annual consent for activities through out the year which involve local visits e.g. church, library. For school the annual data collection form has been adpated which will enable schools to get annual parental/carer approval at the same time. All other Service Areas will be able to complete the Medical and Consent form for the year.

Where consent is given for a year signatories **MUST** be notified in advance when participants are to be taken off site, and given other relevant information such as time of departure and time of return. It may be necessary to ask for a parental acknowledgement that they have received this information.

- One-off consent form need to be completed when a visit needs OVA approval (see 5.02) e.g. adventure activities and residential visits.

10.05 Provision of Information Prior to Consent

Sufficient information must be provided to signatories prior to consent in sufficient time to make an unhurried and informed decision about participation, and before they are financially committed.

There should be enough information to allow signatories to make an objective decision and this information must be in a written form.

10.06 Information Evenings

For residential and visits involving travelling by air or sea in addition to the written information an information meeting may be appropriate in order to expand on written information or in order to answer questions. (See section 3, the responsibilities of the Group Leader.) This may include information on the insurance arrangements in place to cover the visit.

10.07 Pressure on Parents/Carers

Great care should be taken to avoid putting parents/carers under undue pressure to allow children and young people to participate. It must be accepted that parents/carers may not agree to give consent to some activities.

10.08 Medical and Consent Form

The Bracknell Forest Council's Medical and Consent form must be used in all cases. It must have all necessary information attached to it when it is given to signatories to enable them to make the decision.

Copies of signed forms and must be retained until such time as all matters relating to an activity are finally settled.

10.09 Alterations to the Medical and Consent Form

Circumstances may arise in which the Bracknell Forest Medical and Consent form may need to be altered in order to gain more specific information. This is acceptable, but the wording on the Council's form, under the section headed "**Declaration**" can not be altered and any alterations must be approved by the Off-Site Visits Advisor before an altered form is used.

10.10 Medical Consent

Doctors can be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without parent/carer consent but it is possible that a surgeon in another country might be reluctant to operate on a child/young person unless assured that the Group Leader had authorisation to agree to such treatment. **When travelling abroad it is sensible to include a translation of the medical consent in the relevant foreign language.**

Where the signatory withhold medical consent for a participant on an activity it must be made clear to the signatory that in this circumstance neither Bracknell Forest Council, or any of its establishments or employees or volunteers assisting in the execution of its statutory duties can be held responsible for circumstances that might arise through not receiving medical care. Furthermore the signatory/next of kin must undertake to be contactable at all times in the event of an emergency so that any responsibility for decisions affecting their child can be made by them and not the supervising staff.

10.11 Consent for Photographs/Videos

Schools/establishments should follow the [Council's photograph guidelines](#).

Where a signatory withholds consent the Group Leader should ensure that they conform to the signatory's wishes and remove the participant from any situations where photographs/videos are being taken.

10.12 Storage of Medical and Consent Forms

- Annual forms – the information will be held on the SIMS system for schools and the signed declaration on the pupil file. All other establishments should follow guidance for one off forms below.
- One off forms – there should be a local procedure for all establishments to determine how the forms are securely stored.

10.13 Retention of Medical and Consent Forms

- Annual Forms – destroy at the end of the year.
- One off forms – destroy 3 months after the visit except in the case of an incident or complaint.