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School of OUTDOORS

Health and Safety policy

schoolofoutdoors.uk

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Policy Statement

School of Outdoors Limited (SoO) is committed to encouraging team members and clients to take part, but the health, well-being and safety of each individual is always our paramount concern for those involved in SoO activities. This means that we must be satisfied that our team members are properly trained and to enable events and activities to proceed knowing that they have taken all reasonable precautions to ensure the health and safety of clients in their care. This policy forms part of the SoO guidelines, which should be adopted by all SoO directors and team members.

To support our Health & Safety policy statement we are committed to the following duties:

- To undertake regular, recorded risk assessment of SoO activities undertaken by the company;
- to create a safe environment by putting health & safety measures in place as identified by the assessment;
- to ensure that all team members are aware of, understand and follow the SoO health & safety policy;
- to ensure that normal operating procedures and emergency operating procedures are in place and known by all team members;
- to provide access to adequate first aid facilities, qualified first aiders and telephone support at all times;
- to report any injuries or accidents sustained during any SoO activity or whilst on the SoO premises;
- to ensure that the implementation of the policy is reviewed regularly and monitored for effectiveness.

Definitions

Adventurous activities:

are activities which potentially place clients at a higher level of risk than is usual either because of the nature of the activity or the area in which the activity takes place (remote setting, river or mountain environment or likelihood of bad weather).

Remote:

is more than thirty minutes access to a fixed line telephone and/or more than twenty minutes from vehicle access; and/or greater than one and a half hours delay for medical assistance.

Non-Remote:

is generally within 30 minutes of a fixed line telephone, within 20 minutes of vehicle access and closer than one and a half hours delay for medical assistance.

Course Director:

refers to the team member nominated by the company directors to organise the activity and to have ultimate responsibility and therefore authority while the activity is in progress.

Instructor:

is the team member with the qualifications and/or experience to implement the activities.

Volunteer:

include SoO administrative staff, parents, activity leaders and community members known to SoO and of good character.

Legal duty of care:

requires that the course director in charge should take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety of any client under their care. This duty of care will arise whenever a client/instructor relationship exists.

Parent(s):

is inclusive of those with parental responsibilities and guardians.

Informed consent:

means that parents give agreement to their young person participating in an activity after they have been made aware of the details of the activity and the risks and costs associated with it.

Client:

Is a person undertaking an activity with SoO.

Home Contact:

is the person who parent and group leader have contact with in case of an emergency or a change in plans.

Responsibilities

Company Directors Responsibilities

Company directors should ensure that:

- Activities comply with national regulations and guidelines, and adequate safeguarding procedures are in place;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and clients have been considered;

- parents have signed consent forms and are aware of details including pick-up and drop-off points;
- arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the clients;
- adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- a company contact has been nominated and the course director has details;
- the course director, Instructors and nominated company contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures;
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

Course Director Responsibilities

The course director should ensure that;

- They have overall responsibility for the supervision and behaviour of clients and should have regard to the health and safety of all clients;
- they have been approved by company directors;
- they obtain prior agreement before any amendments to activity plans;
- they follow the relevant regulations, guidelines and policies;
- they clearly define each Instructors role and ensure all tasks have been assigned;
- they are able to control and lead clients of the relevant age range;
- they are suitably competent to instruct clients in an activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- they are aware of child protection issues;
- they ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- they undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the event / activity including the briefing of clients and parents if required;
- they undertake and complete a dynamic risk assessment at the start, and frequently during all activities;
- they review regularly undertaken activity/activities and advise the company directors where adjustments may be necessary;
- they ensure that instructors and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- they have enough information on the clients proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- they ensure the ratio of supervisors to clients is appropriate for the needs of the group;
- they gain informed consent by ensuring that the parental information, medical and consent forms are issued, completed and returned prior to the event / activity;
- they consider stopping the activity if the risk to the health or safety of the clients is unacceptable;
- they ensure they have details of the company home contact;
- they ensure that the company home contact has a copy of the emergency procedures;

- they ensure that instructors and other supervisors have the details of clients special; educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- they observe the guidance set out for Instructors and other adults.

The course director should make it clear to clients that they must;

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the instructors and other supervisors including those at the venue of the activity;
- dress and behave sensibly to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or instructors about it;

Any client whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the activity

Instructor Responsibilities

Instructors should ensure that;

- They do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances;
- they follow the instructions of the course director and help with control and discipline;
- they hold responsibility for any activity they are trained and in charge of;
- they consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the course director, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the clients in their charge is unacceptable.

Volunteers Responsibilities

Volunteers should ensure that;

- They are clear about their roles and responsibilities during the activity and do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- they are not to be left in sole charge of clients except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- they follow the instructions of the course director and instructors and help with control and discipline.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the course director put the safety measures in place?

- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Remote Working

School of Outdoors have a separate remote working policy and provide the following advice and guidance to all employees working remotely.

- When working from home, set up a designated workspace. Separate space for yourself to work in, somewhere you can focus on tasks without being distracted and set up with everything you need for a normal working day – computer, phone, stationery, papers…etc.
- Make sure you have all the tech you need. This includes a reliable and secure internet connection
- Get dressed. Changing into working clothes will help you mentally switch to productive work mode. It will also help you distinguish between 'homeworking' and 'home life'.
- Write a daily to-do list. Set out a list of realistic, achievable tasks to keep you focused.
- Know when to step away from your desk. Be clear about when your working day begins and ends and take breaks to refresh. It's easy to let yourself be 'always on' when your home and office are the same place. When work is over, be sure you switch off to avoid burnout.
- Stay in conversation. Contribute regularly to team chats/group emails so you don't drop off the radar. Ask about what people are working on and share what's on your plate. Being physically separated means you miss the 'coffee machine moments' so this is a means to keep informed.
- Foster relationships. Make time for non-work chats as you would in the workplace and use video calling to maintain face-to-face contact.
- Be clear in your communication. Speaking in person gives you visual and audio cues that help you communicate. Conversing remotely removes a lot of that extra information so make your communications extra clear and concise.
- Ask for support when needed. Speak out when you need assistance, further training or support. Your manager, colleagues and you are part of a team and should be supporting each other, especially remotely.
- Make remote working work for you. Change where you sit, put on music, whatever helps you work.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

School of Outdoors have a separate Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Version Control

Version	Author	Summary of Changes	Date
1.0	Dominic Taylor	Policy created	01/09/2019
2.0	Dominic Taylor	Full Review	06/04/2021
3.0	Dominic Taylor	Full Review	06/04/2022
4.0	Jonathan Hitchinson	Full Review	01/03/2023

5.0	Jonathan Hitchinson	Full Review	01/09/2023
6.0	Jonathan Hitchinson	Full Review	27/09/2024
7.0	Jonathan Hitchinson	Full Review	01/07/2026

Appendix

Incident Reporting

The Incident reporting form can be found and completed by clicking reports in Evente,

- Click 'Reports
    - + Add New Report
        - Select Incident Report and select event id.
            - Select Safeguarding in the Incident category.