



Education Services

Policy: Letting of Council Premises to Youth Groups

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INTRODUCTION

Adult Leaders wishing to work with young people under 18 years of age must familiarise themselves with this document and complete and sign the accompanying Application Form, Child Protection Policy Statement to confirm that they agree to ensure that the standards are adopted within their organisation/group, and have the Reference Section signed and completed by an appropriate person.

The following requirements are examples of general good practice and represent general guidance for a broad range of community youth groups. However, where specific codes of practice exist, for example for particular sports or other activities in affiliation with a national or governing body, these should be adhered to.

CHILD PROTECTION

Organisations or groups working with children under the age of 18 should ensure that the youth group has a commitment to Child Protection. All adults working with children and young people – whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, should ensure that the following controls and procedures are in place.

- Vetting arrangements for all adults working / helping / supervising activities with young people under the age of 18. This should ideally be through a current satisfactory Criminal Record check.
- Two adults must be in attendance at all sessions to ensure that no adults find themselves working alone with children.
- Where there are mixed sex groups, a male and female adult should be present.
- There should be a sufficient number of adults present in relation to the number of young people and the nature of the activity as below:

Ratio 1 - 10 for under 12's

Ratio 1 - 15 for over 12's

Note that the above ratios are offered as general guidance for community youth groups. Levels of adult supervision will vary according to circumstances, e.g., groups with under 5 year olds or for hazardous sports, etc, will require considerably more adult supervision.

GENERAL SAFETY

- A register with details of participants, including emergency contact numbers, should be in place and kept up to date. A sessional attendance register should also be kept.
- Location of telephone, first aid kit and fire exits must be noted.
- A fire safety briefing must be carried out with each group and/or a practice fire drill with each group at least once per school term.
- Young people should not be allowed to enter a building or commence activity prior to the arrival of an approved adult.
- Equipment and facilities must:
 - Meet safety standards
 - Be regularly checked
 - Be appropriate to the age and ability of participants
- Activities must be appropriate for the age, experience and ability of participants.
- Groups should make the following information available to parents:
 - The group's activities;
 - The adult involved;
 - The details of times, venues etc.
- Permission for excursions and detailed arrangements for the safe return of the young people should be obtained from the parents.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Adults working with young people under the age of 18 must:

- Never use any form of physical punishment to discipline participants;
- Avoid participating in physical contact games with young people;
- Encourage an environment where each individual treats all others with respect;
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy;
- Give positive reinforcement and encouragement whenever possible;
- Have separate sleeping accommodation for leaders and young people on all residential trips;
- Give all young people equal opportunities to participate as appropriate to their age and development;
- Project a positive role model;
- Be aware of the emotional development of young people in relation to those performing leadership roles;

- Not drink alcohol, use illegal substances, or smoke when working with young people;
- Avoid being alone in a vehicle with a child/young person;
- Be aware of procedures regarding reporting of suspected child abuse.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

- Council Staff have the right to visit groups at any time
- Any damage to property must be reported to the Co-ordinator/Caretaker or Facilities Management Assistant (FMA), .
- In the event of an accident an accident report form, available from the Co-ordinator/ Caretaker or FMA, must be completed.

A COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE RETAINED FOR INFORMATION AND REFERENCE