

Residential and Off-site Activity Policy

Version History

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Brief Description of Changes
2025/1		SLT	Supersedes the off-site activities policy
2026/1	September 26	Board of Management	Yearly review and updates

Policy Owner

HR Manager
Head of Children and Young People

Purpose and Scope

YMCA East Surrey recognises that off-site activities including residential trips offer people we support the opportunity to enrich their lives through new experiences.

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees and managers around the planning, organising and resourcing of off-site and residential trips, whilst at the same time ensuring that the health & safety of our colleagues and service users is paramount throughout the experience.

This policy applies to all employees of the Company. This is a statement of policy only and does not form part of your contract of employment. We may amend this policy at any time, in our absolute discretion.

Relevant Legislation or Governance Requirements

- Working together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Working Time Regulations (1998)
- The Health & Safety at Work Act (1974)

Planning

Parent and/or carers will be informed when people we support are taking part in an off-site activity, through prior communication.

People we support will be assigned to a particular employee whilst on the outing, with appropriate ratios being maintained. One colleague, at a minimum, will be fully Paediatric/First Aid trained depending on the age group and regulatory requirement of the people participating in the trip.

Prior to the trip Group Leaders must complete an **Off-Site Activity Proposal Form** to be off by a Senior Manager.

A full risk assessment must be in place prior to any off-site activity. The risk assessment will assess any potential risk at the venue and include emergency details within the surrounding location. These risk assessments will be reviewed prior to each off-site

activity and will be carried with the Group Leader through-out. The risk assessment must include:

- generic risks inherent in the activity
- event specific risks as identified from a pre-visit
- on-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures
- any alternative contingency plan, which must be attached to the approval form
- use of mobile phones and wearable technology by employees, and emergency contact plan during the trip.

External providers will have their own risk assessment documents that can be used to help in this process. For certain activities an adventurous activity licence is legally required (www.aala.org.uk). If this is the case, their licence number need only be quoted instead of requiring their documents.

Essential records and resources, such as contact details for colleagues, emergency contacts, first aid kit, medication, spare clothing, toileting equipment, will be taken.

The Head of Service has the authority to approve all off-site activities that are residential, go abroad or are hazardous, and the Facilities Manager needs to be made aware of all hazardous activities. A Senior Manager can approve all off-site activities that are non-hazardous. Please see Appendix A for the list of hazardous activities.

Resourcing

The Group Leader will identify and agree any additional staff costs, such as sleep in allowance, overtime etc, required for the trip.

Colleagues supporting on a trip or residential will be paid at their normally hourly rate for the hours worked, up to a maximum of 12 hours per day, this includes any travel time.

Colleagues supporting on an off-site activity or residential must:

- act in accordance with our company policies for the duration of the trip
- not consume alcohol or drugs whilst supporting on the trip
- have read the activity proposal form
- be aware of any specific support plans for the people participating on the trip
- be aware of the risk assessments in relation to the trip, and in particular the emergency responses in the surrounding areas

Sleep-In

If the trip is an overnight residential, there will be one designated sleep-in, as a minimum. If you are the designated sleep-in, you must be ready for duty (when woken, if asleep) whenever the need arises during the specified 'sleep-in' period.

The sleep-in will be required to be able to undertake the full range of their normal duties, along with any others that are necessary and appropriate.

Carrying out 'sleep-in' duties will be in accordance with the normal rules, disciplines and conventions of attending work. This includes being in a fit and sober condition in line with our policies.

Depending on the people we support the designated sleep in times may vary, but it will be a minimum of an 8-hour shift. The sleep-in will receive payment for this shift at the rate of national minimum wage. This will be the same for all persons who undertake the sleep-in duty, regardless of their basic pay rate.

The designated 'sleep-in' can also support with the activity during the day as long as the Working Time Regulations 1998 are adhered to in relation to rest periods.

Rest Periods

The Working Time Regulations 1998 include limits on minimum hours worked and specify minimum rest periods following a period of duty. Periods of time asleep when on a 'sleep-in' duty count as working time under this directive.

Colleagues supporting on a day trip or residential will be entitled to an uninterrupted rest break of at least 20 minutes for every 6 hours that they work. If due to the activity a rest break cannot be taken, colleagues will be entitled to a compensatory rest break. A compensatory rest break means that you can take the break at a later time. It should be taken within a reasonable time from when you missed the break and should last as long as a specific rest break would have lasted.

Travel Arrangements

If a company vehicle is being used for the trip, the vehicle must be adequately maintained (Serviced & MOT) to cover the period of the trip. Records of vehicles and drivers including licences, insurance and MOT certificates will be kept by the Human Resources department.

Employees will ensure the use of seat belts and appropriate car seats if younger children are participating.

In the event of a road traffic accident, the emergency services will be contacted, in addition to the Head of Service, and parents/carers. The incident will also be recorded on MyConcern as soon as reasonably possible.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Senior Manager** is responsible for:

- approving all off-site activities that are non-hazardous
- ensuring that all off-site activities fulfil any statutory requirements and follow the relevant YMCA East Surrey and local authority policies and procedures
- ensuring the Group Leader's competence to lead the off-site activity and undertake or arrange any training that may be needed
- identifying, with the Group Leader, if the activity is non-hazardous or hazardous and ensuring an accurate risk assessment has been completed
- supporting the Group Leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of all supervising staff, adults and volunteer helpers
- ensuring that the Group Leader has completed, filed and distributed all relevant paperwork
- ensuring, in consultation with the Group Leader, that specific emergency situation procedures have been set up
- ensuring that the Group Leader has completed any accident or near-accident reports correctly on MyConcern, and inform the Facilities Manager if a Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) report

- needs to be made
- liaising with the Facilities Manager to ensure the proposed visit complies with the statutory regulations, company policies and insurance cover.

The **Group Leader** is responsible for:

- identifying the purpose of the visit and fulfilling any statutory requirements and to
- follow the relevant YMCA East Surrey procedures and guidance
- familiarising themselves with any relevant published advice and guidance
- obtain approval for the trip before making any financial commitment
- completing risk assessments for all off-site activities and identifying any control measures needed
- ensuring that all required resources are taken on the trip including relevant information of those participating, first aid equipment, medication, risk assessments and emergency provisions.
- stopping the activity or implement an alternative contingency plan if circumstances or risks change
- obtaining and acting upon recent weather forecasts and local advice
- ensuring that the correct ratio of adults to participants is agreed and maintained
- ensuring that all Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosures are in place and up to date
- making sure that colleagues supporting are qualified to the appropriate level
- keeping all the records for the off-site activity
- ensuring on the trip, a register will be taken at regular intervals
- obtaining parental consent (if appropriate) for all off-site activities from the parent/carer or young person themselves (if over 18 and competent to make such a decision)
- ensuring all the participants and staff/volunteers are fully briefed on the purpose of the activity, the procedures to be followed during the activity, the risk assessment control measures and actions to be taken in an emergency
- identifying the most appropriate person to act as emergency contact and ensuring they have access to emergency contact information, risk assessments and other paperwork
- completing a MyConcern record even if an accident form was completed at the venue
- completing a MyConcern report about any incidents or near-misses

Emergency Contact

The emergency contact will be the first point of contact at YMCA East Surrey for the Group Leader and will liaise with the relevant internal and external people/agencies on all nonemergency matters (e.g. delayed return).

This person will be assigned by the Senior Manager; it may be the Senior Manager or someone else who is available at the point where the trip started. The emergency contact must ensure that they have access to all relevant information about the activity, the colleagues/volunteers and the people participating.

Implementation and review

This Policy is reviewed annually and disseminated to staff on HealthboxHR and SharePoint.

Appendix A

Hazardous Activities

It is not possible to provide a definitive list of hazardous activities, therefore the Group Leader must consult with the Senior Manager, to ensure an off-site activity is not deemed to be hazardous. The following list give examples of activities that are deemed to be hazardous:

- residential trips
- trips abroad
- all activities in "open country" or "wild country"*
- swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools - see Appendix B)
- camping
- canoeing / kayaking
- sailing/windsurfing/kite surfing
- rafting or improvised rafting
- use of powered safety/rescue craft
- all other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- water skiing
- snorkel and aqualung/sub-aqua activities
- hill walking and mountaineering
- rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- abseiling
- river/gorge walking or scrambling
- coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- underground exploration/caving
- shooting and archery
- snow sports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including artificial slopes
- air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- motor sport – all forms
- high level ropes courses
- off road cycling
- "extreme" sports

*"open country" or "wild country" is defined as being mountainous country where a group will be dependent on themselves and remote from any immediate help. It is any place which is moorland (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level) or on a mountain above 600 meters and from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to walk back to an accessible road (an Ambulance could use it at the time of year proposed) or refuge (telephone plus shelter).

Appendix B

Swimming

UK swimming pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations.

Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.

For publicly lifeguarded pools abroad, the Group Leader must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water. Unless suitably qualified, the Group Leaders should not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do always retain a pastoral role for participants either through direct or remote supervision