

Risk Assessment Activity – Offsite Climbing and Abseiling

Pioneer Centre	Assessed by: James Kniffen	Assessed:	Last Review /Next Review Date
		22/06/21	16/07/25 16/07/26

Overview: Offsite Climbing and Abseiling is delivered by a qualified Rock-Climbing Instructor (RCI) or higher and has responsibility for the day of delivery. Staffing Ratio 1:8 under instruction and at least two staff members present for the session and a 2:12 ratio if there are two or more qualified staff delivering the session. All appropriate personal protective equipment is worn during the session. Sessions normally take place in the same location (Llanymynech Quarry on Cul-de-Sac Quarry crag) and will only involve single pitch climbs. Annual inspections by AALA and Technical Advisor to ensure best practice is being used. And there are regular safety inspections of all technical equipment. A Parental consent form is filled in for each child participating which details medical details, emergency contact info, a participation statement outlining risks of participating.

Hazards	Groups of People at Risk from the Hazards Identified	Probability	Control Measures
Injury from falling or slipping on approach to climb or abseil	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructor to give clear instructions on how to approach. Instructors carefully supervise approaches and use appropriate techniques to safeguard against a slip.
		Major/Fatal	
		High	
Injury/fatality due to ropes being cut on sharp edge / sharp equipment	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Qualified staff to oversee rigging of climbs and abseils and to use rope protection over edges and standard rigging set ups for climbs and abseil set ups (connectors into fixed anchors/bolts). Equipment is regularly checked and properly maintained by trained and qualified staff. A visual inspection before use on the day is carried out by qualified staff.
		Major/Fatal	
		High	
Injury due to swing into the wall on an Abseil	Guest/participant	Likely	Instructor staff to coach participant over the edge encouraging them to get low while negotiating the edge of the crag. If possible, use a location with a good ramp/slope into the abseil wall.
		Minor	
		Medium	
Entrapment in belay device – hair / fingers	Guest/participant	Unlikely	Instructor to brief participants on how to use belay devices for abseiling and warn of fingers and hair getting caught in device. Participants will be asked to tuck away loose clothing and tie back long hair. Abseil set ups will always be a releasable abseil with a safety rope to be able to manage an entrapment issue.
		Major	
		Medium	
Injury from falling whilst climbing due to	Guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructor to ensure no one starts climbing without being belayed.

not being belayed or not being tied in properly		Major/Fatal	Instructor to check clients tied in/clipped in properly before every climb or abseil. Instructor to belay or supervise group belaying with appropriate backups in place and make sure the belay rope is tight and taken in as the climber progresses (especially during the first 3 to 4 meters after leaving the ground).
		High	
Injury from falling whilst climbing due to improper belay technique	Guest/participants	Likely	Staff to be suitably qualified and supervise group belaying or belay themselves if group deemed not suitable.
		Major	
		High	
Injury from falling due to climb set up failure	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Very Unlikely	Only qualified staff to set up climbs or set up to be checked before use by qualified staff.
		Major/fatal	
		Medium	
Injury from rock fall (other falling objects)	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors to wear helmets and to ensure all participants were helmets in defined boundaries/areas.
		Major/fatal	
		Medium	
Injury from falling out of harness	Guest/participants	Very Unlikely	Instructors ensure the harnesses are properly fitted and check again before setting off on climb or abseil. For smaller participants, a full body or chest harness will be used if the instructor judges it to be necessary.
		Major/fatal	
		Medium	
Frozen /stuck climber	Guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors build up participants confidence in equipment through demoing abseil/lowering position and then possibly getting them to climb up a few meters and then with a tight rope sit down to get a feel for rope and how secure climbing on top rope is. Further to this, instructors choose climbs that don't have large ledges to prevent climbers from being able to hold on frozen. If a climber becomes frozen look to giving a tight rope and coaxing the climber down. Finally, instructor to access either on adjacent climb or from above by abseiling down which will require making sure the group is safe, the belayer holding the rope is competent and backed up or tied off and then the instructor accessing the climber uses best access to climber to sort out the problem (adjacent climb or abseil down) and then returns to the ground to supervise the lowering etc.
		Minor	
		Medium	
Cuts / bruises	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Likely	Staff carry a first aid kit to help deal with minor injuries.
		Minor	
		Medium	

Dehydration	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Very Unlikely	Instructors make sure participants bring suitable drinks and encourage regular drinking during the session.
		Major	
		Medium	
Heat Exhaustion/Stroke	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors to ensure plenty of opportunity to stop and drink and take in food and to be willing to change plans based on the group's fitness, energy levels and motivation and weather. Shady areas to be taken advantage of as well.
		Major/fatal	
		Medium	
Sun burn	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Likely	Instructors ensure participants have suitable clothing; head cover and sun cream.
		Minor	
		Medium	
Cold-Exposure/hypothermia	Guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructor to ensure participants have appropriate clothing before leaving centre and instructors to have spare clothing, group shelter and spare food if weather forecast is showing colder temperatures and wind chill.
		Major	
		Medium	
Injury due to improper use of equipment	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Instructors to train participants in how to properly use equipment and monitor them to ensure correct.
		Major	
		Medium	
Injury due to faulty equipment	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Very Unlikely	Equipment is regularly checked and properly maintained by trained and qualified staff. A visual inspection before use on the day is carried out by qualified staff.
		Major/fatal	
		Medium	
Vehicle crash	Instructors, staff and guest/participants	Unlikely	Drivers must have at least 2 years' experience and be signed off by an appropriate manager and to drive the mini-bus (with passengers must have the MIDAS training). Planned breaks for longer drives will be put in place. Vehicle checks are done on a regularly bases by H&S officer/maintenance team to ensure good working order of centre vehicles. When using a personal vehicle, it is up to the owner to ensure the vehicle is in good working order.
		Major/fatal	
		High	