



Risk Assessment for Off-Site External Mentoring Activities

Location: Various off-site locations (e.g., community centres, parks, outdoor spaces, cultural venues)

1. Introduction

This risk assessment is designed to identify potential hazards and assess the risks associated with off-site external mentoring activities. These activities may include visits to parks, outdoor adventures, cultural venues, and other community settings. The goal is to ensure the safety of all young people, mentors, and staff during the activities. This assessment complies with UK health and safety regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and safeguarding guidelines.

2. Activity Description

- **Activity Type:** A wide range of activities, including team-building exercises, visits to cultural or community venues, outdoor adventures, sports, arts, and skills-based activities.
 - **Participants:** Young people (aged [Insert age range]) participating in one-on-one or group mentoring sessions.
 - **Location:** Activities may take place in various locations, including parks, indoor/outdoor sports facilities, community centres, museums, theatres, and other public or private venues.
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3. Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

A. Travel to and from Off-Site Locations

Hazards:

- Road traffic accidents while travelling to and from the venue

- Transporting young people in vehicles (vans, minibuses, or cars)
- Unsupervised young people while waiting for transportation

Risks:

- Injuries from road traffic accidents
- Missing persons or unaccounted-for individuals
- Stress or anxiety from travelling in groups or unfamiliar areas

Control Measures:

- Use only approved and licensed vehicles with qualified drivers to transport young people
- Ensure all participants are accounted for at the beginning and end of the trip
- Ensure all young people wear seatbelts or other appropriate safety restraints in vehicles
- Provide clear instructions to young people about transport arrangements, ensuring they know who to report to at each stage
- Ensure a ratio of at least 1 mentor to 2-3 young people, depending on the activity, for adequate supervision
- Ensure all young people are provided with contact details for staff in case of emergencies during travel

B. Physical Injuries during Outdoor/Active Activities

Hazards:

- Slips, trips, and falls during outdoor activities, hikes, or sports
- Injuries from equipment or natural obstacles (e.g., rocks, trees, water bodies)
- Weather-related hazards (e.g., sunburn, dehydration, hypothermia, or extreme heat/cold)

Risks:

- Sprains, fractures, cuts, bruises, or concussion from falls or impacts
- Dehydration, exhaustion, or heatstroke in extreme weather conditions

- Injuries from outdoor environments (e.g., animal bites, allergic reactions to plants)

Control Measures:

- Pre-activity risk assessment of the environment (e.g., checking the ground for uneven surfaces, hazardous materials, etc.)
- Ensure participants wear appropriate footwear and clothing for outdoor activities (e.g., walking boots, weather-appropriate clothing)
- Provide sufficient water and rest breaks during physical activities
- Use of protective equipment (e.g., helmets, knee/elbow pads) where appropriate
- Ensure young people are briefed on proper activity techniques and safety instructions
- Adjust activities to suit the weather conditions (e.g., canceling or rescheduling activities during extreme weather)
- First aid kits available on-site and mentors trained in basic first aid and CPR

C. Mental and Emotional Well-being

Hazards:

- Anxiety, stress, or discomfort experienced by young people during unfamiliar activities
- Challenging behavior from young people due to unfamiliar settings or activities
- Emotional distress during activities that involve reflection or self-expression

Risks:

- Emotional harm from participating in activities that cause distress
- Mental health deterioration from lack of support during stressful activities
- Conflict or aggression among young people

Control Measures:

- Ensure that young people are aware of the purpose of the activity and what to expect, helping to reduce anxiety

- Provide support and encouragement during activities, particularly those that may challenge young people's comfort zones
- Implement a clear behavior management policy and ensure mentors are trained in conflict resolution techniques
- Always have a mentor or staff member available for emotional support during the activity
- Maintain a low mentor-to-young person ratio to ensure adequate support and supervision
- Create a safe and inclusive space for self-expression, where young people feel supported by staff and peers

D. Participant Safety in Public Places

Hazards:

- Risk of getting lost or separated from the group in busy public spaces (e.g., museums, shopping centres, parks)
- Contact with members of the public or unfamiliar individuals
- Exposure to risks from theft, pickpockets, or scams in public venues

Risks:

- Missing or unaccounted-for participants
- Exposure to potential danger from unfamiliar individuals or situations
- Theft or loss of personal belongings

Control Measures:

- Ensure all young people are provided with identification (e.g., wristbands, ID cards) that includes mentor contact details
- Maintain regular headcounts and check-ins at each location
- Provide clear instructions to young people about where to meet if separated
- Keep the group together with regular headcounts, especially in crowded public spaces
- Ensure that young people are always supervised by a mentor when outside the group

- Establish a meeting point in case someone gets lost and make it known to all participants
- Provide all young people with safety guidelines (e.g., avoiding talking to strangers) and encourage vigilance of personal belongings

E. Food and Hygiene

Hazards:

- Food allergies or intolerances during lunch or snack breaks
- Poor hygiene practices leading to illness (e.g., not washing hands after using the toilet or touching animals)

Risks:

- Allergic reactions leading to medical emergencies
- Gastrointestinal illnesses due to lack of hygiene or food contamination

Control Measures:

- Ensure that young people with food allergies or intolerances are identified before the trip and are provided with suitable meals
- Ensure there are handwashing facilities available before meals and after using the toilet
- Monitor young people during meal breaks to ensure good hygiene practices (e.g., washing hands)
- If food is provided, ensure it is from reputable sources and stored/handled according to food safety regulations
- Provide young people with water to reduce the risk of dehydration

4. Emergency Procedures

- **First Aid:**
 - First aid kits to be carried at all times, with mentors trained in basic first aid

- Emergency medical services contact details and nearest medical facilities known to all mentors
 - **Emergency Evacuation:**
 - In case of an emergency, ensure all young people know the evacuation procedure and where the safe area is
 - Maintain a list of emergency contacts for each young person
 - Ensure all mentors know how to reach emergency services in the event of an incident
 - **Accident Reporting:**
 - All accidents or incidents, no matter how minor, must be reported to the program coordinator
 - Incident forms completed and reviewed to assess if any changes to procedures are needed
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5. Review and Monitoring

- This risk assessment will be reviewed annually or after any significant incident, change in activity, or new external venue is used
 - Feedback from young people, mentors, and staff will be taken into account to refine safety measures
 - Mentors will carry out dynamic risk assessments throughout the activity based on the environment and participants' needs
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Approved by:

Chris Sodey

Lead Coordinator of The ReConnect Programme

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