

## **GAISCE - THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD**

### **VENTURE SECTION SAFETY REMINDER**

**All Award Participants under 18 years of age must be supervised at all times during the venture activity.**

#### **Procedures for PALS and Employees Involved In Overnight Activities**

When taking young people away on their Venture Activity PALS and employees should always be attentive to such matters as:

- a. Safety: Activities, buildings, transport etc.
- b. Insurance: Adequate to cover all aspects of the trip
- c. Parental consent: Written consent should be obtained from parents/guardians before taking young people under the age of 18 away
- d. Medical concerns: Medical information which might be relevant for example allergies etc should be known to Leaders and employees prior to leaving for a Venture
- e. Sleeping arrangements: Sleeping areas for males and females should be in separate quarters and supervised by two (if possible) adults of the same sex as the group being supervised
- f. Maintaining standards and good practice in the relaxed atmospheres of a trip away from home may be difficult as normal boundaries and standards of behaviour can be inadvertently crossed over. Agree a code of behaviour with the participants before embarking on the venture.

#### **Safety! Safety! Safety!**

**The level of supervision will depend on the Award.**

**At Bronze level Participants should be walking on low level paths, such as sections of the Wicklow Way and should be supervised at all stages. Gaisce - The President's Award Leader or some other suitably qualified person must supervise all Bronze expeditions.**

**A level of supervision is also required at Silver level - clear checks need to be in place to ensure safety, appropriate behaviour etc.**

At Gold level the Participants should be fully trained in first-aid and safety as well as map and compass reading in all aspects of foot expeditions before embarking on their Gold expedition. Plenty of practical experience is essential. The expedition at Gold level should be abroad or in wild country with the minimum of pathways used.

#### **Safety! Safety! Safety!**

**All groups embarking on a foot expedition should leave a clear map of their route (route card) with at least one specified person for example the school principal, before embarking on the expedition. The approximate time required for walking each section should be specified. This will obviously assist both from a safety point of view and in case a Participant needs to be contacted urgently for example by a parent. The Leader must be satisfied that the route complies with the requirements for the Award and that the requirements were met in practice.**

Similarly, the group should have an emergency plan with their map, in the event of bad weather or if a Participant becomes ill or incapacitated. For this reason, the plan should contain a brief description of what the group will do in an emergency on each stage of the walk, for example *"We will descend to the roadway on the right of our route and proceed to the nearest house"*.

This simplifies matters if there is an emergency. The information should also contain the telephone numbers of hostels in which the group is staying.

### **CAUTION:**

A foot expedition on the mountains should not be undertaken if the leader of the expedition lacks the appropriate mountaineering skills. Bronze and Silver Participants should not be allowed on the mountains without adequate supervision – either by the PAL or another adult known to and nominated by the PAL.

### **CYCLING EXPEDITION**

At every level the Participants should be self-contained for their cycling expedition for example

- They should have adequate practice.
- They should know how to carry out simple repairs for example mend a puncture, replace cables, and tighten the cones.
- They should have proper clothing and wear helmets.

At Bronze and Silver level someone in authority should be present to supervise the group. If the Leader cannot act in this capacity then a suitable alternative supervisor must be found for example another suitably qualified person.

**If you are planning a different type of Adventure Journey please contact the Gaisce office to discuss.**

### **DUTY TO CARE**

Gaisce – The President's Award is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its participants and PALS by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm and neglect. Gaisce – The President's Award accepts that in all matters concerning child protection, the welfare and protection of the young person is the paramount consideration. This child protection and code of ethics policy aims to protect young people and adult volunteer leaders involved in the Award Programme.

Our Child Protection Policy is available to download from our website [www.gaisce.ie](http://www.gaisce.ie) To order a hardcopy please contact us (details below) and we will be delighted to send it on to you.

Should have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us:

**GAISCE – THE PRESIDENT'S AWARD**  
**Ratra House**  
**Phoenix Park, Dublin 8**  
**TEL: 01 6171999**  
**E-mail: [mail@gaisce.ie](mailto:mail@gaisce.ie) Web site: [www.gaisce.ie](http://www.gaisce.ie)**