



Blue Light Rock Climbing Standard Operating Procedures

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Next Review	06/11/2025
Revised By:	Dominic Crow
Authorised By:	Brendon Crompton

Purpose

This policy shows you the safe practice of the Blue Light Rock-Climbing Wall. This policy needs to follow Blue Lights SMS. All staff and contractors need to follow this policy when using the Blue Light Climbing wall. This is a “living document” and may be changed following new safe practice guidelines or new equipment standards.

Responsibilities

Blue Light Rock & Ropes

Scope

Participants climb up one of the 6 artificial climbing walls belayed by a trained staff member or an inducted adult helper or student over the age of 14, supervised by a trained staff member

Location

Blue Light Youth Center Papakura - Climbing tower.
Red Hill Community Centre Papakura – Climbing Wall

Instructor Competency

Adventure works level 4 Rock instructor or NZOIA climbing wall supervisor qualification, or higher
Blue Light internal competency signed off. *(Refer to Appendix (A)).*

Adult Helper Competency

Physically and mentally able to follow and demonstrate duties outlined in adult induction for belaying or pastoral care

Participant Competencies

Under - 150kg (about 330.69 lb.)
Able to climb the Rock Wall



Technical Advisors

Internal TA: Dominic Crow - 0220326887

External TA: Kyle Smart – Youth Town - 02718000907

Technical Expert: Peter Cammell - 0274905218

Ratios

Maximum of 12 students to one instructor.

Minimum one adult accompanying group.

If there are any participant with different abilities or students with behavioural challenges which may alter them completing the activities safely the instructor consults with the lead instructor to decide as to whether another instructor / helper is required. At any point during the activity if the instructor believes there could be extra risk the instructor should stop the session and consult with the lead instructor to bring on additional support.

Risk Management

Refer to Rock Climbing AMP.

If the instructor feels session is unsafe, they have full authority to call a halt to the activity.

This can be but not limited to:

- Weather: Heavy rain, High winds, and thunderstorms
- Refer to 30/30 rule- If you hear thunder within 30sec of seeing lightning we shut high ropes for 30min. 30min restarts after every time if this occurs again.
- Participants not listening or physically unable or medical issues
- Equipment or facilities unsafe

Call Lead instructor over if ever unsure _

Personal Safety

Instructors need to always maintain personal safety. They can only instruct and perform tasks they have been trained in. No activity will run unless the lead instructor is onsite and trained in rescues for all activities running.

Blue Light Staff Responsibilities

- Blue Light staff will be trained to run the Blue Light Rock-Climbing Wall and receive continuous training when needed to develop skills and group management.
- Blue Light staff are responsible of all safety aspects of the running of the Rock-Climbing wall.
- Supply and continuously maintain all safety equipment and facilities for the running of Climbing wall
- Will have read the AMP and follow all procedures of the SOP and signed the SOP acknowledgment
- Have first aid equipment & First Aid Certified person on site
- Have cell phone communication to the Lead Instructor
- Manage new hazards/risks as they arise and later discuss in debrief
- **Call a halt to the activity if conditions or facility become unsafe**

Instructor Positioning

Blue Light staff will be positioned close enough to provide direct supervision to participants belaying unless the belayer has been trained and has provided evidence through performing correct belay technique. When the instructor is confident, they may position themselves to indirectly supervise the belayer.

At all times staff will position themselves so that they can see and manage belayers, climbers, harnesses and attaching of the climbers.

Pre-Activity

- Lead instructor to assess weather and determine if activity can run
- Instructors running activity are required to have read and signed the SOP and AMP
- The lead instructor needs to check ratios for groups and risk acknowledgment forms have been signed.
- Lead instructor and instructor in charge will need to review groups medical information and create plans if less able participants need added help
- Lead instructor to ensure all 3 monthly equipment inspections have been completed

Set Up

- Complete a full facility and equipment pre use inspection, refer to equipment section

Approved knots for climbing wall (all with a finishing knot):

Bowline on a bite



Double figure 8 on a bite



Retraced 8



- Attach rope to haul cord and pull through until both ends touch the ground
- Remove haul cord and place out of the way
- Rope closest to climbing wall tie in an 'allowed knot', attach one triple lock karabiner or 2x opposing screw gates to your knot

Ground Anchor

- If using floor anchors attach adjustable sling onto floor anchor with 8mm mallion.
- Thread rope furthest from the wall through belay device correctly and attach belay device with a karabiner to the adjustable sling.
- Place snap link into last attachment of adjustable sling



No Ground anchor

- Thread rope furthest from the wall through belay device correctly and attach belay device to a karabiner.





- Tie classic prussic (if needed) to dead end of rope with a locking karabiner
- Double check all knots are correctly tied, dressed and ropes are not twisted

Have correct number of harnesses, helmets, and a chest harness.

If you are unsure of anything consult with lead instructor

Make sure instructors have:

- Harness
- Rescue gear (Prussik, belay device, anchor chain and 2x karabiners)
- Helmet
- Closed toe shoes
- Cell phone
- Appropriate clothing for weather

Make sure participants and adult helpers have:

- Closed toe shoes
- Appropriate clothing for weather
- Hair tied back
- Loose jewelry removed or hidden

Brief to Group

Introduce yourself & Activity

- **Explanation of climbs**
 - Colors either mixed or individual
 - Difficulties of each
 - Rotation end time
 - Explain challenge by choice
- **Rules and safety**
 - No walking under climbers
 - To follow your rope when climbing
 - No climbing without belayers
 - Where to stop climbing
 - How to come down
- **Harness fitting** (*refer to helmet and harness section*)
- **Helmet fitting** (*refer to helmet and harness section*)
- **Climber and Belayers roles and responsibilities.**
 - (This needs to be done verbally and demonstrated)
 - How to open and attach karabiners - for climbers, belayers (and prussic if needed)
 - Basic spotting if needed (instructor discretion)
 - Climbing calls
- **Belay training** (*refer to belay section*)
 - Pull, Lock, Grab, Slide technique
 - Proper lowering technique
 - Prussic and bucket (if needed)
- **Everyone to perform horizontal practice**
 - Start first climber.



Adult Brief

Cover emergency procedure if instructor is incapacitated to get two students to get closest instructor (*Abseiling or High ropes*) if no other activities are operating the closest staff member will be (*office*)
To remove the rest of the students to other side of tower

Responsibilities during activity:

- Pastoral care
- Possibly practice abseil or bottom of the rope de attaching
- Reinforcing boundaries or other guidelines the instructor may put in place

Running of the Activity

- Explain and demonstrate spotting to the group (*Instructor discretion*)
 - Active spotting
 - Body positioning
 - Hand high and ready to guide body down if needed
- Explain and show how karabiners work and how they should be attached, make sure before anyone climbs prussic and climber shows instructor a “safety squeeze”
- Explain and demonstrate prussic use (if slot device is being used)
- Explain and demonstrate use of belay device (refer to belay section)
- Allow parties to become familiar with horizontal practice until the belayer feels comfortable and instructor deems safe to begin climbing.
- Before first climb make all participants aware that safety squeeze needs to be shown to instructor before climbing and needs to make sure belay team has confirmed verbally, they are ready for climber to climb
- Throughout coach participants and belayers with technique on climbing and belaying
- Throughout session ensure all participants to stay within the climbing area
- If at any point belayers have completed two climbers without instructor needing to intervene the instructor can decide to supervise belayer indirectly but continue to monitor at all times. Belayer needs to be aware that before climbers leave the ground instructor still needs to double check and before climber is lowered instructor needs to be informed before decent begins.
- During activity instructor should be visually checking all participants harnesses before climber leaves the ground and placing chest harness on participants when needed
- **If ground anchors are not being used** ensure if there is a climber heavier than the belayer yourself or appoint another participant to assist in weighting the belayer while the climber is on the activity. (refer to belay section to how to weight belayer correctly)

At any time if instructor feels like the session is unsafe, they can call a halt to the session

Pack Down and Post Activity

- As equipment is packed down check for wear and tear
- All gear to be stored back in tower, if gear is wet ensure dehumidifier is switched on
- Roller door to be closed and tower door locked
- Any equipment issues or issues that arise during session are to be recorded on a debrief form and given to program co coordinator
- Any incidents recorded on Audit
- De-brief to be completed as soon as practicable


Belay Technique

If not using ground anchors If you ever think the climber is heavier than the belayer get another participant to be the belayers “anchor” by holding the harness not the gear loops.

If using a slot device, a prussik is required, if using a locking assist device prussik is up to instructor discretion.



Regardless of device used, belaying is required for all steps referred to below

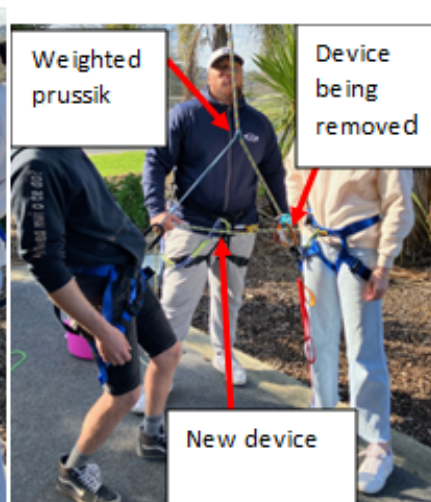
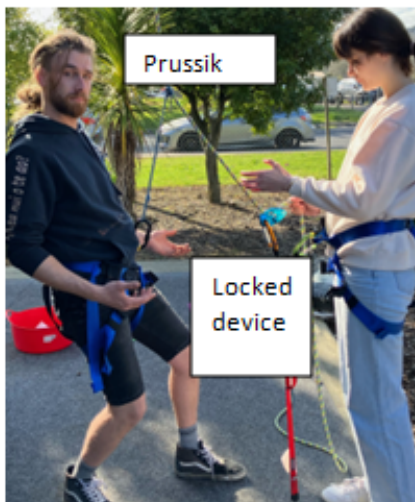
Pull rope through device	Pull hand into the Lock position	Grab locked rope	Slide hand back to starting position	Repeat
				
To Lower				
Slot Device <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure participant has all their weight on the rope - Use “grip & release” technique to control their speed to the ground 		Locking Assist Device <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure participant has all their weight on the rope - Grip the rope next to your hip with your right hand - Put pressure on the brake handle pulling it towards you - Use your right hand to control the speed of decent 		

Rescue

All instructors running Rock climbing are required to have a Prussik, Anchor chain, belay device & 2x locking karabiners. Even if they are not signed off to perform rescues, they need to be competent in tying a prussik until the rescue instructor arrives to perform the complete rescue.

Weighted Belay transfer

1. Ensure belayer is locking off the device
2. Tie prusik to belay rope above belay device and attach to yourself or 3rd person using a locking karabiner
3. Attach a belay device under the prussik and secure it to new belayer
4. Tension the prusik to give slack to the first belayers device and remove it.
5. Tighten any remanding slack between prussik and new belay device
6. Remove prussik and allow new belayer to continue belaying



Harness & Helmet Fitting

Helmet

- Long hair tied up but below helmet line
- Cradle of helmet to sit 2 fingers above eyebrows on forehead
- Helmet adjustment tightened firmly
- Chin strap tightened so cannot slide off the chin



Harness

- Everything removed from participants pockets
- Harness above all clothing
- Waist tightened first and above hips of participant
- Leg loops not twisted and tightened last



Chest Harness

Criteria to assess if participant needs a chest harness could be one of these suggestions but not limited to:



Option 1

- Top heavy
- Harness is not staying up when walking around
- If they have a barrel belly (no hips)
- Have mentioned harness is uncomfortable when hanging in it

Option 2



Equipment

Equipment	Pre-Use Inspection
Dynamic Ropes	Excessive fraying, soft or hard spots, Stiffness, Glazing, difference in diameter, obvious cuts, any core fibers visible
Karabiners	Rust, excessive wear, stiff moving parts, visible deformities
Prussik	Excessive fraying, soft or hard spots, Stiffness, Glazing, difference in diameter, obvious cuts, any core fibers visible, knots loosening or orientated incorrectly
Helmets	Fraying or cuts on chin strap, cracks or deformities of shell, rusting
Harnesses & chest harnesses	Fraying, stitching coming undone, cuts or tears in the fabric
Rope buckets	In one piece and clean inside
Rescue kit-Held on instructors' person <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prussik - Anchor Chain - Belay device - 2x Locking karabiners 	All parts checked as above and accessible

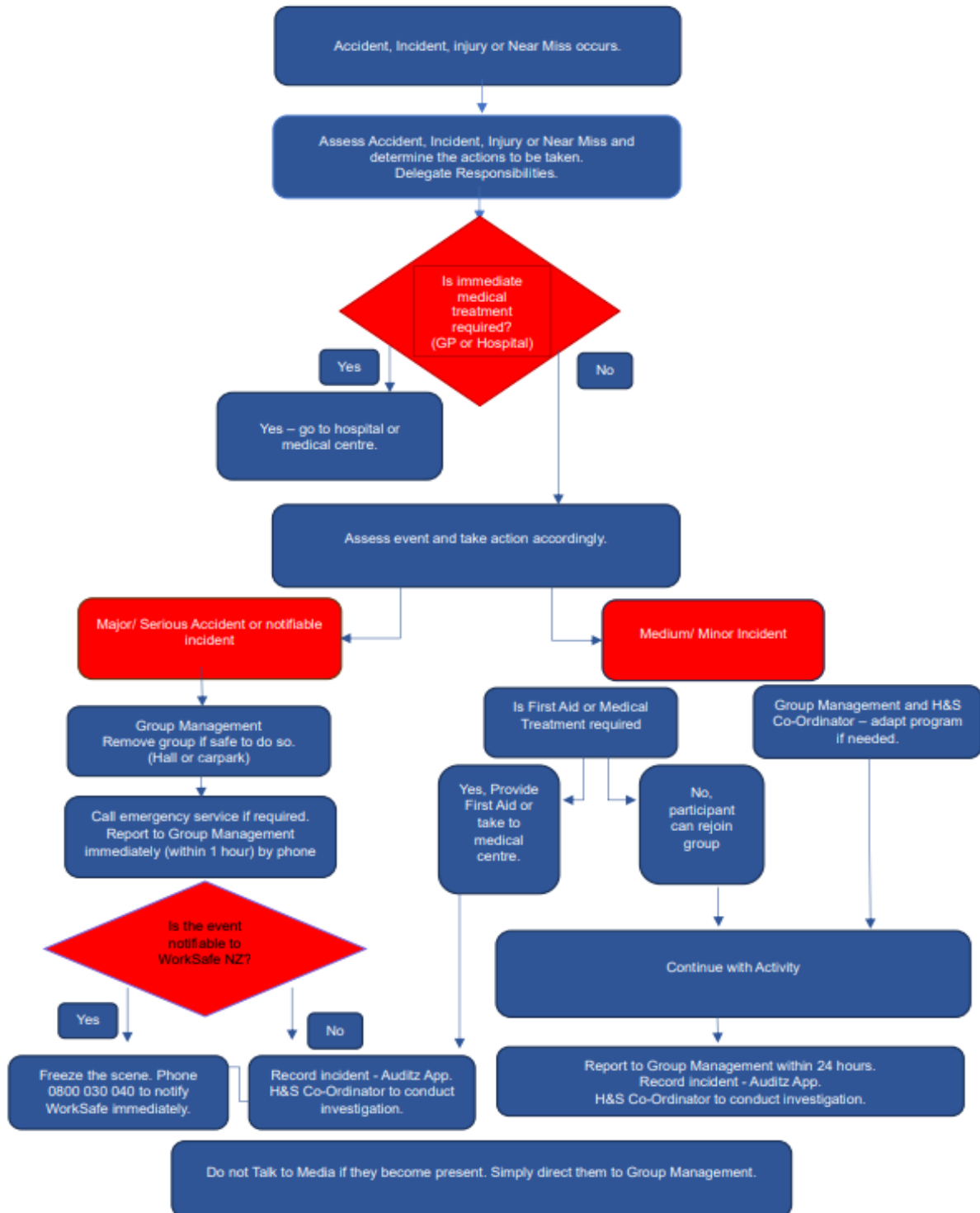


Facilities	
Top anchors	Mallions & SRD orientated correctly, Haul cord travelling under SRD guides
Wall & holds	No visible splinters or cracks, No gaps between features and wall
Surrounding area	Clear of clutter
3 Monthly Inspections – Completed by Programme Coordinator – Recorded in database.	
Equipment	Maintenance
Hardware	Water to clear grit and dirt then silicone spray and aired out before in contact with soft gear.
Soft Gear	Cleaned in warm water with very mild detergent when needed

Appendix B Emergency Response Plan



INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE





Employee Declaration

The Safe Operating Procedure for **Rock Climbing** have been covered in this session and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and review the information provided. I fully understand the procedures and agree to comply with them.

Employee Name	Signature	Date