



## Blue Light Abseiling Standard Operating Procedures

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Revised By:	Dominic Crow
Authorised By:	Brendon Crompton

### Purpose

This policy shows you the safe practice of the Blue Light Abseil tower. 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 abseil down a 9m artificial climbing wall. Belayed by trained staff

### Location

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

### Instructor Competency

Adventure works Abseil level 4/NZOIA Abseil Leader Qualification  
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 stairs in the tower.



## 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. – 1 x adult required at all times

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 Abseil AMP.*

If 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.

**Instructors need to use a prussik as a personal back up when abseiling.**

- Attach abseil device on anchor chain.
- Attach prussik to rope and harness attachment point.
- Allow prussik to grab the rope & weight test system hands free.
- Remove safety attachments and abseil.



### Blue Light Staff Responsibilities

- Blue Light staff will be trained to run the Blue Light abseil tower and have continuous training when needed to develop skills and group management.
- Blue Light staff are responsible for all safety aspects of the running of the abseil tower.
- Continuously maintain all safety equipment and facilities for the running of the abseil
- Ensure everyone has signed off on the activity they are appointed to.
- Ensure 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 de brief
- **Call a halt to the activity if conditions or facility become unsafe**

### Instructor Positioning

Blue Light staff will be positioned to stop any participants from crossing the safety line allowing them to be in danger close to the edge and provide supervision to participants abseiling to give them safety and technical advice.

### Pre-Activity

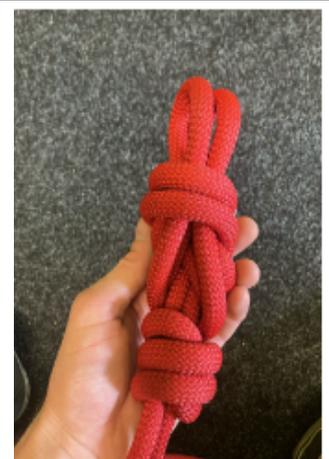
- Lead instructor to assess weather and determine if activity can run
- Instructors running activity need to have read and signed the SOP and AMP
- The lead instructor needs to check ratios for groups and risk acknowledgment forms have been signed.
- Lead instructor and instructor in charge will need 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

#### **Allowed knots for Abseil safety (reordered system of the process)**

**Bowline on a bite**

**Double figure 8**



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

2. Set one end of the mainline (static rope) within 1 foot off the ground and have this confirmed before anyone abseils

3. Tie off with an Italian hitch with a half hitch and then an over hand, clipping the bite back with a snap link. Flake the other end to the side

4. Tie an 'allowed' knot on safety line (dynamic rope) & attach locking karabiner, allow enough length to reach the safety tether then tie it off with half hitch and over hand, clip tail into the snap link



5. Ensure rope gate is shut

6. All knots look good on back up tether and karabiners have been attached



7. Double check all knots are correct and 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
- Prussik
- 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**

- **Introduction to self and activity**  
Rotation end time  
Explain challenge by choice
- **Rules and safety**  
Helmets worn under abseil and in the tower  
correct way to climb stairs in the tower  
How to abseil
- **Harness fitting (refer to harness & helmet section)**
- **Helmet fitting (refer to harness & helmet section)**



- **Roles and responsibilities.**  
(This needs to be done verbally and demonstrated)  
How to open and attach karabiners  
Practice abseil using correct body and hand positioning  
Max 4x participants at top of the tower at any time
- **Start first Abseiler**

#### Adult Brief

Cover emergency procedure if instructor is incapacitated to get two students to get closest instructor (Climbing or High ropes) if no other activities are operating where 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
- 1 x adult - bottom of the abseil removing the abseil equipment from the rope
- 1 x adult to be positioned at practice abseil & to direct students the first set of stairs in the tower ensuring they follow signage.(e.g.- wearing helmet / holding railing with both hands)

#### Running of the Activity

- Allow parties to become familiar with the practice abseil until they feel comfortable
- Ensure participants are attached to a tether or always sitting on the bench if at the top of the tower
- To always manage safety rope when participant is abseiling
- Instructors to continuously coach participants with correct abseiling technique
- Throughout session ensure all participants stay in abseil area
- Manage number of participants in the top of the tower
- During activity instructor should be visually checking all participants harnesses before sending down the abseil
- Consider the use of chest harness on participants when needed

**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 broken down check for wear and tear
- All gear stored back in tower if gear is wet ensure dehumidifier is switched on
- Roller door closed and tower door locked
- Any equipment issues or issues that arise during session are recorded on a debrief form and given to program co coordinator
- Any incidents recorded on Auditz
- De-brief to be completed following activity

## Rescue Procedure

All abseil instructors need to be competent in performing the rescue.

### Jammed abseiling device

1. Tie off the safety line with half hitch and over hand, clip tail into the snap link



2. Undo mainline knots and lower slowly until abseil device is unjammed



3. Give participant option to continue to be lowered or continue to abseil

If participant chosen to be lowered

- Undo safety line and lower participant to the ground slowly and controlled.
- If participant chosen to continue to abseil
- Tie off mainline with half hitch and over hand, clip tail into the snap link
- Get participant to hold abseil line ready to abseil
- Undo safety line and continue to manage safety line as participant abseils to the ground

## 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:



- 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
Prussic	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
<b>Facilities</b>	
Top anchors	Malliens orientated correctly, no visible wear
Wall & holds	No visible splinters or cracks, No gaps between features and wall
Surrounding area	Clear of clutter
<b>3 Monthly Inspections – Completed by Programme Coordinator – Recorded in database.</b>	
<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
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



