**DAVID ROSS SPORTS VILLAGE CLIMBING WALL NOVICE POLICY**

**Risks** – ***“The Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC) recognises that all climbing activities have a risk of serious injury or death. Participants must recognise that even if they follow all good practice there may still be the risk of accident and injury. It is the responsibility of the participant to adhere to the conditions of use.”***

Climbing is inherently dangerous and it is likely that anyone who is new to climbing is unlikely to be aware of all the hazards that apply. Anyone who is new to climbing is referred to as a novice.

**Novice climber** – A novice is any user unable to satisfy the minimum requirements set by the centre for unsupervised Climbing, Bouldering or Auto Belay. This may be because they are not experienced enough, do not meet age requirements or there may be another reason that they require supervision. It is possible for a climber to be registered for unsupervised bouldering, but also classed as a novice for roped climbing.

It is important that novices are identified before they enter the climbing wall to ensure that they are supervised at all times by an instructor, authorised supervisor or experienced climber.

A novice may attend relevant sessions provided by DRSV without completing a registration form. The instructor will ensure that the novice is supervised at all times and ensure that the novice is aware of hazards within the climbing wall area. Novices will also be required to sign a form acknowledging the risks of climbing at the beginning of any such session.

Introductory sessions suitable for novices:

**Learn to climb** – this covers use of the climbing wall, bouldering wall and auto belay

**Bouldering induction** – this covers safe use of the bouldering wall

**Auto Belay induction** – this covers safe use of the Auto Belay

**Climbing taster** – this is a short taster session that gives non-climbers a taste of climbing

**Engage session** – (Staff and students only) – this session is similar to a taster but is slightly longer

A novice may take part in ‘taster’ events being supervised by authorised supervisors. The supervisor would be responsible for ensuring that all participants are given a short safety brief and that they are supervised at all times.

Taster events:

**Girls’ night in** – Usually staffed by several experienced climbers

**Climbing club tasters** – Usually run by climbing club early in term one

Guest of experienced climber:

Only adults registered to climb/boulder unsupervised may supervise novice climbers. The supervisor may only supervise novices within their declared competency. For example, a bouldering only user may only supervise novices bouldering. Operators may require an additional induction or training for supervisors. Young people (17 and under) may never supervise novices.

Operators may allow a maximum of two novices per supervisor, though they may choose to restrict this by age, activity or experience. Groups of novices can only be supervised by qualified instructors or authorised supervisors.

Novice climbers are the responsibility of the supervisor and the supervisor must remain with their novice(s) when in the centre. The Supervisor has a duty to inform the novice of relevant risks and help them manage these risks. A novice supervision form must be completed to ensure both the supervisor and novice understand the responsibilities of each party.

**“Novices should be accompanied by a responsible experienced climber or should take**

**one of the centre's introduction courses.”**

**Access to the climbing wall**

**Risk**: Novice climber attempts to access the climbing wall

**Mitigation**. The climbing wall is protected by a magnetic lock. Only those climbers who have registered are able to open the climbing wall door and access the climbing wall.

Sources of information:

ABC Safety and Management Guidelines (Issue 6) Chapter 2.5 Novice Supervision

BMC Climbing Wall Manual Chapter 5.6 Provision for beginners and minors