

DofE Phone and Tracking Policy

Introduction

No Limits Development and its team believe that the development of young people through adventure and a great part of that is a level of independence and immersion in the outdoors.

We also recognise that technology is a part of everyday life, and a tool participants should learn to use as part of keeping safe in the outdoors.

Carrying Phones on Expedition

A key part of students being safe whilst independent is knowing when to ask for help and being able to summon it. It is best practice that all DofE teams should carry suitable means of being able to contact the supervising instructors and external help within a reasonable time frame. In most expedition areas a mobile phone is a suitable tool to achieve this.

“NLD’s view of best practice is that all teams should carry two fully charged mobile phones ideally on different networks, switched on within their team. Where this is not possible, the situation should be discussed with the NLD operations team to assess the risk and discuss other appropriate measures.”

Phones are to be used as a tool for safety or to capture pictures and videos as memories. Teams should try and avoid their use for other purposes such as phoning home or playing music to allow them to embrace the spirit of the expedition.

All groups should be briefed on appropriate phone usage, and who it is appropriate to call when. A good guide is:

- Call 999 first if the situation is life threatening or will become so in the next 5 minutes.
- Call your “in expedition contact” (teacher, instructor course director) if the problem is not life threatening or will be the same in 5 minutes
- If you cannot reach any of your “in expedition contact”, but still need help, phone the NLD Duty Manager (details should be shared with teams, and can be found in all NLD first aid kits)

Use of phones and other safety considerations.

There is a range of ways mobile phones can be used to enhance a groups independence and safety beyond there use in an emergency, this can include messaging, location sharing and tracking. Usage should always be inline with GDPR and safeguarding guidance set out in other No Limits Policy, and always with a focus on safety.

No Limits instructors have a range of guidance on appropriate usage to ensure the use is appropriate to the level of risk presented by the activity and location.

Policy History

- V1 – Initial version launch April 2024 – Reviewed by Matt Simmon