

Helper Good Practice Guide

A promise to our holiday-makers

During the SuperTroop holiday...

...wherever you are

...whoever you are with

...whatever you are doing

These are your fundamental rights:

To be valued as an individual

To be treated with dignity and respect

To be loved and cared for

To be kept safe

To have fun

Valuing holiday-makers as individuals

- Care for and treat every holiday-maker as unique
- Give holiday-makers enough time to take part, to do things for themselves, to understand and to be understood
- Give the best possible care that can be provided

Treating holiday-makers with respect and dignity

- Address every holiday-maker with respect
- Never refer to a holiday-maker, or talk about them, as if they are defined by their disability, nor refer to a holiday-maker with any derogatory term
- Never discuss one holiday-maker in the presence of another, or talk about a holiday-maker who is present as if they were absent

Being loved and cared for

- Provide access to communication support at all times
- Patiently listen to holiday-makers, especially if they are not easy to understand
- Give information about what is happening before it happens
- Give opportunities to play and choices of what to do

Keeping a holiday-maker safe

- Be aware of risks in the environment
- Do not expose holiday-makers to unnecessary risks
- Protect their identity and personal information
- Build relationships of trust
- Monitor for signs of abuse or distress: talk to someone if you have concerns

and having fun...

Keeping Holiday-Makers Safe

BE RESPONSIBLE

- Never leave a child unattended or out of sight
- Be vigilant - some children will run off
- Don't model dangerous, silly behaviour - demonstrate safe behaviour
- Keep children away from the kitchen or similarly risky areas
- Wear suncream / sun hats in hot weather
- Physically assist children carefully and thoughtfully
- Get permission from your group leader to swap with another helper
- Return to the house on time in the evening and in a fit state to care for your holiday-maker overnight

BE INFORMED

- Read the *All About Me* book & learn about kids' individual preferences
- Pay attention and listen at the briefing meeting
- Pay attention during the fire practice at the beginning of the week
 - Be aware of your nearest fire exit
- Remember your online training and previous in-person training
- Read this booklet and the helper handbook

GET HELP

- Group leaders and senior team helpers are available to support you whenever needed
- First aiders are available by radio contact at all times
- Ask questions in your group meetings and read comments made by previous helpers
- Ask for help if you need it or if you are unsure

Personal Care

Treat every child with dignity and respect

- ensure privacy appropriate to their age and situation
- encourage able children to close the toilet cubicle door
- use the minimum number of people necessary when carrying out personal care
- ensure holiday-makers are clean and presentable when they're out and about, especially after a meal or snack

Involve the child as far as possible in their own personal care

- ask the child to do as much as possible themselves
- check your actions with the child at all times. e.g. *"show me how Mummy washes your hair"*
- tell the child what you are doing e.g. *"I am washing your back now. Now I'm going to dry you"*

Be responsive to a child's reactions

- If a child becomes upset or distressed during personal care make sure you mention this to your group leader
- If a child's skin looks sore or uncomfortable, ask the medical team to take a look

Never do something unless you know how to do it

- ask more experienced helpers to show you how to do things or to help you if you are having difficulties
- only designated senior staff should administer any kind of medication

Follow basic hygiene rules

- always wash children with a flannel or sponge rather than bare hands
- wear plastic gloves & an apron when changing pads or cleaning up any bodily fluids, such as wiping bottoms
- always wash your hands before performing any intimate care
- always wash both your own and your child's hands after using the toilet, regardless of who went to the loo and who cleaned up

Personal care and gender

- having a gender balance in the helper team is important to ensure we always have enough staff to meet our holiday-makers' personal care needed
- as a rule, someone of the same gender as the holiday-maker should be on the frontline when it comes to intimate personal care
- someone of a different gender can provide secondary care, such as passing wipes or cleaning up a space
- trans helpers should provide care according to their gender (not their sex assigned at birth)
- for non-binary helpers we propose that they should normally provide personal care according to what they are most familiar with from their own body
- trans or non-binary helpers should feel free to get in touch to discuss any questions or worries they have about providing personal care, so we can ensure they are comfortable and confident

Communication

Helping holiday-makers to understand and to be understood

- When you are talking, speak clearly and look at the individual at their eye-level
- Give them plenty of time to respond
- Ask them questions including...
 - closed questions, which require just Yes or No answers
 - open questions, which they can answer any way they wish
- Give them choices and an opportunity to speak. Don't rush the person into answering; they may need some time to think
- Use "commentary" to start interactions: talk about what you are doing together
- Use the timetable to help them to organise and sequence the days. Talk about what a fun, exciting time you are going to have together.
- Play alongside a child or young person, copy their actions as a way of bonding with them. Then try introducing a new activity e.g. *"look at this ball splashing! Can you make your toy splash in the water?"*
- Try and use basic signs to accompany your speech
- If they have a communication system, such as a communication board or hearing aid, make sure this is available and working.

Communicating with people with a learning disability

Using Makaton or Signalong

Makaton and Signalong are signing systems which are used alongside speech to aid communication. We will teach you some specific signs we use a lot, but for now we recommend exploring this YouTube channel and practicing some fun signs for the holiday, like sing, swim or dance – or useful ones like sleep, drink or wait.

Preventing & Managing Stressful Situations

- Make sure you read the information on the *All About Me* sheet, unique to each holiday-maker
- Prevention is always better than cure: keep holiday-makers busy and active, but also give them time to rest if they need it
- Model good behaviour: set a good example to follow
- Remember to praise them when they are being good, even (especially) if this is just sitting still or waiting
- If they are not being so good, be clear and consistent about what they shouldn't do. Describe what you would like them to do instead
- Perhaps, give choices on what you should do next together. Let them feel in control of their activities
- Recognise their feelings. It may be unreasonable to bite, kick or scream but it is not unreasonable to be angry or unhappy. Try to help them find acceptable ways to express themselves
- Encourage holiday makers to find a way out of difficult situations e.g. *"what could we do to make this better?"*
- Exploit opportunities to teach positive behaviour e.g. *"let's do this"* rather than *"don't do that"*

If you are with a holiday-maker who is becoming upset or showing signs of impending crisis, try and create a **low-arousal** context.

Use a gentle voice, reduce eye contact, relax your body

Create space. Try not to crowd them.

Step back, keep a low calm voice, give time and space.

Reduce demands - think *"do I need to say this?"*

Phones & Photos

Taking photos is part of a holiday. You might also want to use your phone with a holiday-maker to try out some funny filters or listen to music together.

Phones can also be important to keep in touch with your group leader – you might share your location or call them to find out where to rejoin the group after a break.

But phones should never be a distraction from caring for holiday-makers, and photos must always respect people's privacy.

Rules about Phones

- **Do not** use your phone for personal communication whilst on SuperTroop activities
- **Do not** use your phone when driving
- Inform the senior team immediately if you receive an inappropriate text or call from someone involved with SuperTroop

Rules about Photos

- **Never** take photos in bedrooms or changing rooms, even if the people involved are fully clothed. These are not appropriate spaces for photography.
- **Never** take pictures of anyone partially / fully nude, or of anyone in distress.
- **Do not** share photos or videos of holiday makers online, on social media or by texting them to friends & family
- Send your best photos to the senior team so they can be added to an online "best of" album – we will share some on social media if we have the family's permission

We would love you to join our social media channels. Follow us at:

Twitter / X : [@SuperTroopEdin](https://twitter.com/SuperTroopEdin)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SuperTroopEdin>

Instagram: [@SuperTroopEdin](https://www.instagram.com/SuperTroopEdin)

Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is also called Child Protection
- Safeguarding means protecting children, young people and vulnerable people from harm
- Our holiday-makers are both young and vulnerable, and we have a moral duty and a legal requirement to protect them
- It goes without saying that a SuperTroop helper must **never** cause harm to a holiday-maker, or to another volunteer
- You must not only **avoid causing harm** but also know how to **recognise and respond** to harm, including
 - Physical abuse
 - Neglect
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse

Signs of Harm

- Bruising, cuts, burns, marks on the body or loss of hair in clumps
- Injuries that can't be explained or don't fit with the account of what happened
- Subdued or changed behaviour in the presence of a particular person
- Signs of malnutrition or ill health
- Poorly fitting clothes, poor personal hygiene, and poor dental health.

If a Holiday-Maker Tells you Something

DO listen and support. Make general statements such as *"thank you for telling me"*, or *"that must have been very difficult"*.

DO ask an open question such as *"could you say that again"* or *"tell me a bit more about that"* especially if the information is unclear

DO NOT try to investigate and **DO NOT** ask leading questions (e.g. questions to which the answer is yes or no) as you could generate inaccurate information.

DO NOT promise to keep a secret. You have to report your concerns – breaking this promise could harm our relationship with the young person.

Next steps

1. Make a record of what you have heard, e.g. by making a note on your phone
2. Ask for a break at the first chance, and then share your concerns with our Child Protection Officer
3. Even if you're not sure, it's best to pass on your observations
4. They will help you formally record the concern and support you if you are feeling distressed.

If you see or hear something that raises a safeguarding concern:

Record what you see or are told

Ask open questions, but don't dig for details

Share the information with the Child Protection Officer

Ask for a debrief

Get more information in your training sessions and you can [read our detailed safeguarding information here](#).

Essentials to Get Ready for the Week

Make sure your Better Impact profile is up to date and check the home page there regularly

<https://app.betterimpact.com/Login>

Read your emails from the SuperTroop team and take action when you need to

Make sure your PVG check is completed and if in doubt, contact Anna on info@supertroop.org

Keep the holiday co-ordinators informed about any change in your circumstances – e.g. if you get ill.

Email coordinators.supertroop@gmail.com

Packing – make sure you bring...

Backpack
Water bottle
Sun cream and sun glasses
Waterproof
Swimming Towel x 1
Sensible swimwear, not revealing
Comfortable clothes
Clothes you don't mind getting wet/dirty

Proper pyjamas - you will be sharing a room and may be up and about at night
Good comfy shoes – trainers
Toiletries
Medication as required in a labelled bag: you will be asked to check these in to the medical room

Avoid bringing expensive technology (apart from your phone), sentimental items or jewellery

It's a good idea to download some fun and child-appropriate playlists to listen to with the holiday-makers, particularly for coach rides.

Helper Code of Conduct

At all times:

- Put the holiday makers' safety and well-being first
- Respect and support your fellow volunteers

This means:

- Ask for help when you need it, give help without judgement when you are asked
- Be compassionate and patient when others are struggling
- Lead by example and model positive behaviour
- Treat holiday-makers as you would want to be treated
- Take your time, especially in personal care situations, and do not cut corners
- Do not shout, threaten, restrict or punish
- Stay informed: pay attention during briefings; read risk assessments, *All About Me* sheets, handbooks and guides.
- Take care of yourself as well as taking care of others

...and have fun – it's a holiday!

Useful Links

- [Volunteer Welcome Pack](#)

Induction documents for new SuperTroop volunteers of all kinds, including our PVG Guideline and full Policy Handbook

You don't need to know all the Policies but it is good to know they exist!

- [Helper Welcome Pack](#)

Induction documents specifically for new helpers, including the Volunteer Handbook

- [Better Impact](#)

Our online volunteer management system, where we keep track of you and your information, like your next of kin, dietary needs, allergies and permission to be included in photos.

We also use this as a way to email helpers as a group and share training materials.

- [SuperTroop website](#)

Great to share with friends and family who are curious about what you're up to.