

Policy Reference: 48
Educational Visits Policy
Version: 1

Name and Designation of Policy Author(s)	Nina Chwastek, Headteacher		Is this a Statutory Document
			No
Approved By (Committee / Group)	Premises, Health and Safety Committee		
Date Approved	13.11.2017		
Date Ratified by FGB	13.11.2017		
Date Published	14/12/2017	Is this to be published publicly on the school website?	Yes
Review Date	Autumn 2020		
Target Audience	Staff, Parents, Governors		
Links to Other Strategies, Policies, Procedures, etc.	Safeguarding Policy, Whistle Blowing Policy, Behaviour Policy		

Version History

Date	Ver	Author Name and Designation	Summary of Main Changes
June 2017	1	Nina Chwastek, Headteacher	No previous version of this policy

Monitoring Compliance with the Policy

Describe Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Target	How will the KPI be Monitored?	Which Committee will Monitor this KPI?	Frequency of Review	Lead
Policy is available to all staff, parents and governors	100%	Through information to Governors / HT Report	Premises, Health and Safety Committee	Annually	Chair of Premises, Health and Safety Committee
Procedures for Educational Visits follow the policy	100%	Review of Educational visits and documentation	Premises, Health and Safety Committee	Annually	Chair of Premises, Health and Safety Committee
Educational Visits have a positive impact on the curriculum	100%	Review of Educational visits and impact on the curriculum	Curriculum	Annually	Chair of Curriculum Committee

Mission Statement

Our school community is rooted in the Gospel and the vision of St. Catherine of Siena. This inspires each of us *'To be who God wants us to be and so set the world on fire.'*

- We are called to love one another as we seek to be the best in all that we learn and do.
- We celebrate and nurture the gifts, talents and skills of everyone.
- We commit ourselves to grow together in faith, love and service.

Introduction

There is convincing research that suggests good quality learning outside the classroom adds significant value to young people's learning. Effective learning outside the classroom relies on problem solving skills, cooperation and interpersonal communication: all essential skills for today's young people.

All risk assessment forms are available from the Educational Visits co-ordinator (EVC) or on the school server.

Aims and Purposes

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

As part of the planning process, teachers are expected to plan enhancement and enrichment opportunities for each of their topics. Each year the school arranges a number of educational activities and visits that take place off the school site and/ or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. These include:

- Out of hours clubs
- Inter school team sports, such as football and netball
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship)
- Day visits for particular year groups (theatres, museums, art galleries, environmental activities)
- Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous.

This policy applies to all aspects of the educational visit and off-site activities. It includes the journey, any residential element and the activities undertaken.

Responsibilities

We all have a common law duty of care to do what is reasonable to prevent harm occurring to another person.

Under the statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfES requirements and LA guidelines. This school's EVC is the Headteacher – Miss J Chwastek

Specific responsibilities include:

- Local Authority – to approve overseas, residential and adventurous activities

- Headteacher – to approve visits, assesses competence of visit leaders and ensure that visits comply with DfE and LA guidance
- EVC – to approve visits, maintain records, provide advice and documentation, assess competence, review risk assessments, produce and monitor a school policy, ensure DBS checks done, liaise with LA, and ensure emergency contacts in place.
- Visit leader – to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, ensure visit is to a suitable place, is approved by the Head, including liaising with the office and EVC, completing risk assessments and relevant forms, submit a 'Plan B' in case the planned visit cannot take place and continually assess risks
- Supervising teachers and other adults – to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment
- Pupils – to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment and have a voice in drawing up the risk assessment itself.

As long as the school and local authority guidance is adhered to, any problem resulting in injury will normally be considered an accident.

Approval Procedure

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the Headteacher and EVC. The Governing Body receives notification of visits off-site and link Governor for health and safety samples documentation and policy to ensure that it is being followed.

In addition, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential
- Involving adventurous activity or
- Not run by a provider licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations

will require the additional approval of the LA. Further approval will also be required from the governing body for visits of these types.

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Visits 'for the sake of it' will not receive approval.

	Description	Action By
Step 1	The Group Leader plans and completes the Educational Visit form on Evolve. This documented plan is presented to the EVC / Educational Visit (EV) Form (Appendix 1) and any supporting documentation. NB: Residential visits require GB approval	Internal within School
Step 2	The Headteacher approves the visit documentation after satisfying themselves that the visit has been adequately planned and organised. The Governing Body samples visit documentation to ensure procedures and policy are followed	Internal within School
Step 3	For Visits Abroad and Adventurous Activity Visits that are not run by a provider licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations the School / Service notify the Corporate Health & Safety Team. EV Form (Appendix 1) & Summary of Information on Pupils (Appendix 2). Notification of Educational Visit must be submitted to the Health & Safety Service as far in advance as possible with a minimum time of 4 weeks prior to departure.	School and Manchester City Council Health and Safety Service
Step 4	Manchester City Council Health & Safety Service will record all visits notified to them and may request further documentation from the School or Service to evaluate whether a particular visit has been organised, risk assessed and managed in accordance with Manchester City Council guidance.	Health and Safety Service

Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgment of Risk').

The information to parents should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements, and ensure that the detail of other incidental activities is included, together with "Plan B" if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child. Please see Charging and Remissions Policy for further details.

Where a visit is taking place within the school day and is confined within the local vicinity, consent is not actually sought as the Form C that the schools files at the start of term is sufficient.

Staffing

a) Competence

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the

Head teacher and/or EVC. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities, the assessment is undertaken by the LA.

b) Ratio

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult /child ratio may be

Age:	4 years:	1:4
	5-6 years:	1:6
	7-10years:	1:10
	11+ years	1:15

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the Visit leader, EVC and Headteacher, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group – medical, SEN, behaviour
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of venue
- Weather conditions at that time of year
- Nature of transport involved

The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

c) Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils
- Age of pupils
- Responsibility of pupils
- Competence/ experience of staff
- Environment/ venue

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care.

During longer residential visits it is essential that staff work closely with external staff (when appropriate) to maintain supervision of the children. An off duty rota could be arranged with the visit leader so that a minimum of 2 adults are on duty at all times.

Pre-Visit Planning

Before going on the visit, the Leader and other teachers must carry out the following checks.

- Make clear the aims and objectives of the visit.
- Seek Headteacher's and EVC approval.
- LA notification or approval (if necessary).
- Informing parents of details and visit.

- Parental consent, including information such as medical, SEN or allergies.
- Liaise with other members of staff going on visit so aware of any additional needs of pupils.
- Ensure those going on the visit meet the required ratio levels and training (e.g. paediatric first aid)
- Devise itinerary and programme for the day.
- Liaise with the School Admin Staff to set financial contributions from parents.

Risk Assessment

Accidents do happen, but we must do what we reasonably can to prevent them. Managing risks helps us to achieve our objectives and helps to prevent things going wrong.

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- **Generic Risks** - normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by reference to the 'Educational Visits Checklist', and the school's generic self-assessment. There will be certain events such as sporting ones that have "generic" risk assessments.
- **Event Specific Risk** - any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity that is not covered in the generic policies. These should be recorded on the risk assessment form.
- **Ongoing Risk** – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Staff must be aware of the needs and risks associated with individual pupils and not adopt a complacent attitude as a result of previous risk free visits.

Pupils should be involved in risk assessment and management. This may include identifying potential risks and discussing their role in reducing risks. Through this they will develop risk awareness – an educational issue as well as a safety issue. It is an essential life skill.

The publication 'Group Safety at Water Margins' must be consulted when assessing risks where the visit involves walking along the seashore, collecting samples in ponds or rivers, or paddling in shallow water.

The visit leader's specific risk assessment needs to address issues not already covered by the school's generic risk assessments. Risk assessments must be simple, manageable, proportional, suitable and sufficient. Staff must consider the following: Staff, Activity, Group, Environment and Distance away (SAGED).

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, bad weather, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable

eventuality. This takes the form of a Plan B. Not having a Plan B has been a common cause of accidents.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the LA policy may drive a minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed / hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership Team.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should where possible be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits. Where children are under 6, a paediatric first trained member of staff must be present.

First aid kits are available from the School Office. If the visit involves the party splitting up, a kit should be taken for each group.

Any pupil with an IHC (Individual Health Care Plan) must be considered on the risk assessment.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit.

Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk'). The letter to parents should therefore give full detail of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

Emergency Procedure

For visits that take place in school time, the office and EVC hold visit information including itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. For visits outside school hours, the school contacts must also hold this information or be able to access it quickly.

Educational Visits Checklist

The Educational Visits Checklist is an essential part of the risk management process and should be adhered to for all visits.

Evaluation

Within a week of a visit, the visit leader should evaluate the visit with the other supervising adults and inform the EVC of any aspects to be considered in future planning.

Booking Procedure

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:

- Headteacher
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- School Business Manager

Procedures

1. Complete and submit visit form on Evolve
2. Complete transport booking form at least 2 months in advance or as early as possible, and copy to EVC.
3. Liaise with School Admin Staff with regards to booking transport, cost, letter to parents and, if necessary, additional insurance
4. Inform parents using standard letter.
5. Upload Risk Assessment and letter to parents to the Educational Visits Form`
6. Carry out pre-visit if possible and necessary
7. Keep record of contributions made by parents by requesting up to date parentmail reports from the school office.
8. Use the educational visits checklist as an aide memoir before and on the day of the visit
If the headteacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**
11. Evaluate the visit with the EVC.

During the Visit

During the visit, the designated Leader, along with the other adults, must do the following whilst on the visit.

- Manage on-going risk such as changes in weather etc.
- Carry around emergency contact arrangements.
- Ensure have on their person any medication for any of the pupils.
- Have appropriate first aid kit.
- If residential, ensure there is a duty rota to allow for some down time for staff.
- Arrange meeting points where necessary.
- Regular head counts.
- Information for group leaders and with contact details for emergencies.
- If residential, security details for accommodation.

19. After the Educational Visit

Once the visit has been completed, we ask staff to review this wherever possible.

- Were the objectives of the visit met?
- Give feedback to the EVC.
- Carry out evaluation.
- Accident incident forms following LA procedures.

Farm Visits

When conducting risk assessment for farm visit please follow guidance that can be found on EVOLVE website in resources and then guidance.

St. Catherine's R.C. Primary School
Educational Visit Risk Assessment Form

Visit to:
Leader in Charge of Visit
Carried out by:

Dates of Visit
Persons considered in the assessment:
Date of Assessment

GENERIC BENEFITS - WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

POTENTIAL HAZARDS	CONTROL MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED	ESTABLISHMENT SPECIFIC CONTROL MEASURES, ARRANGEMENTS AND/OR ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY
1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES e.g. Weather,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Weather forecast checked where appropriate</i> • <i>Activities programme amended where necessary</i> 	
2 TRANSPORT e.g. vehicles, drivers, arrival and departure of vehicles, breakdowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Driving hours limited, with back-up driver on long journeys</i> • <i>Seat Belts used at all times</i> • <i>Marshalling as group leaves coach, etc.</i> • <i>Appropriate stops for eating and care arrangements en route</i> • <i>LA guidance on transport in private cars, booster seats, minibuses, and public transport followed.</i> 	
3 EQUIPMENT CLOTHING SUBSTANCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All clothing appropriate to the activities and location, including the use of weatherproof clothing</i> • <i>Appropriate footwear worn</i> • <i>Special equipment checked</i> • <i>All equipment appropriate to the activities and location</i> 	
4 ACTIVITIES and PROCEDURES e.g. Programme of activities, down time etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Detailed programme, including alternatives for bad weather</i> • <i>'Down time' arrangements</i> • <i>Adequate supervision at all times, with a duty rota in place</i> • <i>Agree standards of behaviour and conduct</i> • <i>Equipment suitable for activities and abilities of pupils</i> 	
5 SUPERVISION COMPETENCE DISCIPLINE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prior assessment of leaders and helpers in relation to the visit, the pupils involved and the activities taking place</i> • <i>Supervision ratio to keep sufficient check on all the party- including accompanying children other than pupils</i> • <i>Code of conduct established and maintained</i> • <i>Adequate staffing numbers available</i> • <i>Appropriate voluntary helpers used and fully briefed on their responsibilities</i> • <i>Police check for helpers under the Child Protection Act</i> 	
6 OVERALL PLANNING MONITORING AND CONTROL e.g. Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Only suitable accommodation used and checked for appropriate facilities. Fire precautions and certification checked and a fire drill carried out</i> ▪ <i>Emergency arrangements include carrying the contact numbers for all the participants, the emergency contact person at the</i> 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Contacts and Communication • Insurance • LA Approval via EVOLVE • Medical Arrangements • Parental Information • Research • Special Needs • Visits Abroad 	<p><i>establishment and for emergency services maintained by the leader of the party</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Mobile telephone available for emergency use</i> ▪ <i>Established appropriate emergency contacts with schools and parents</i> ▪ <i>Critical incident procedure functions properly</i> ▪ <i>Set up effective communication procedures with the group</i> ▪ <i>Insurance cover checked and parents informed of the limits of cover provided</i> • <i>Prior approval via EVOLVE of adventurous activities, overseas visits and or residential visits</i> • <i>Specific adventure activity guidelines being followed</i> • <i>All relevant medical information of all participants maintained</i> • <i>All appropriate medical arrangements, including first aid</i> • <i>Special potential health hazards associated with the site</i> • <i>Is it necessary to notify parents? Check this document and local policy</i> • <i>Have you provided appropriate information for parents?</i> • <i>Meeting with parents</i> • <i>Parental Consent</i> • <i>Do you need and have they given their consent</i> • <i>Researched the area, site accommodation, company</i> • <i>Pre visit carried out</i> • <i>Full account taken of any special needs involved</i> 	
<p>OTHER</p>		

A COPY OF THIS RISK ASSESSMENT, WITH VISIT SPECIFIC CONTROL MEASURES IS TO BE PROVIDED TO THE EVC, HEADTEACHER/MANAGER AND ADDED AS AN ATTACHMENT TO THE EVOLVE VISIT FORM

Signed _____

Date _____

Please ensure that the risk assessment relates to this visit or activity.

i.e. It reflects this activity/these activities, at this location/these locations, led by these staff with these young people. Account has been taken of any young people with particular needs and an informed judgment regarding weather and water levels (if relevant) has been made. Please ensure this is shared and understood by all involved in leading the visit. The last column requires specific written control measures; a 'tick' or a 'yes' would probably not be considered suitable or sufficient evidence that a control measure is in place.

Appendix 1 Handbook for Group Leaders

SUPERVISION

HASPEV Chapter 3 and *Standards for Adventure* give advice on supervision ratios, vetting suitability of supervisors and brief advice on responsibilities, competence, head counts and remote supervision. This section aims to give more practical advice on supervision "in the field".

Responsibility

The Group leader is responsible overall for the group at all times. In delegating supervisory roles to other adults in the group, it is good practice for the group leader to:

- ◆ allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils;
- ◆ ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for;
- ◆ ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them;
- ◆ ensure that all adults understand that they are responsible to the group leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them;
- ◆ ensure that all adults and pupils are aware of the expected standards of behaviour.

It is good practice for each supervisor to:

- ◆ have a reasonable prior knowledge of the pupils including any special educational needs, medical needs or disabilities;
- ◆ carry a list/register of all group members;
- ◆ directly supervise the pupils (except during remote supervision) - particularly important when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified;
- ◆ regularly check that the entire group is present;
- ◆ have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives;
- ◆ have the means to contact the group leader/other supervisors if needing help;
- ◆ have prior knowledge of the venue – the group leader should normally have made an exploratory visit, see *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits*;
- ◆ anticipate a potential risk by recognising a hazard, by arriving, where necessary, at the point of hazard before the pupils do, and acting promptly where necessary;
- ◆ continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions;
- ◆ be competent to exercise appropriate control of the group, and to ensure that pupils abide by the agreed standards of behaviour;
- ◆ clearly understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out;
- ◆ have appropriate access to First Aid;

Each pupil should:

- ◆ know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her;
- ◆ have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions;

- ◆ rarely if ever be on their own;
- ◆ alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties;
- ◆ have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated;
- ◆ understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

Head counts etc.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. It is good practice for all supervisors to:

- ◆ carry a list/register of all pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times;
- ◆ ensure that pupils are readily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area. Brightly coloured caps, T-shirts or a school uniform can help identify group members more easily;
- ◆ avoid identification that could put pupils at risk e.g. name badges (though some schools find it useful to provide pupils with badges displaying the name of the school or hotel and an emergency contact number, or for visits abroad a note in the language of the country being visited);
- ◆ ensure that all pupils are aware of rendezvous points;
- ◆ ensure that all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the group.

'Buddy' system

Each child is paired with a buddy. Each regularly checks that the other is present and is OK. A variant of this is the 'circle buddy' system – the pupils form a circle at the start of the visit so that each pupil has a left side buddy and a right side buddy. He or she will check on these when asked. Thus two pupils cannot vanish together and not be missed (as might happen with paired buddies).

Remote Supervision

Supervision can be close or remote but is always 24 hours:

- ◆ close supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of the supervisor;
- ◆ remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a group works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls (e.g. during certain Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions). The supervisor is present though not necessarily near or in sight, but his or her whereabouts are known;
- ◆ down time (or recreational time) – for example during the evenings – may involve close or remote supervision, but should not be unsupervised - the supervisors continue to be in charge;
- ◆ it is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations.

When supervision is remote:

- ◆ groups should be sufficiently trained and assessed as competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and emergency procedures. Remote supervision will normally be the final stage of a phased development programme;
- ◆ pupils will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have

- details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous;
- ◆ clear and understandable boundaries will be set for the group;
- ◆ there must be clear lines of communication between the group, the supervisor and the school. Do not rely exclusively on mobile phones;
- ◆ the supervisor should monitor the group's progress at appropriate intervals;
- ◆ the supervisor will be in the expedition or activity area and able to reach the group reasonably promptly should the group need support in an emergency;
- ◆ there should be a recognisable point at which the activity is completed;
- ◆ there should be clear arrangements for the abandonment of the activity where it cannot be safely completed.

Rearranging Groups

Potential danger points can occur when rearranging groups. In particular:

- ◆ when a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities;
- ◆ when groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor;
- ◆ during periods between activities;
- ◆ when small groups re-form into a large group.

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

- ◆ clearly takes responsibility for the group when their part of the programme begins, particularly making certain that all group members are aware of the changeover;
- ◆ clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information ensuring that the group members know who their next leader is.

Down Time

Group leaders should ensure that pupils continue to be properly supervised during downtime before, between and after activities, including the evenings on residential visits. A group occupied in study or activity is far safer than a group left to its own devices in an unfamiliar environment. Too much unstructured free time in a residential programme can allow time for mischief, bullying, homesickness and wandering off from the body of the group.

It is good practice to:

- ◆ ensure that all staff and pupils understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities;
- ◆ ensure that handover between activities is properly supervised, with a named supervisor responsible for the group if there is down-time between activities;
- ◆ ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues in the evening – however hard a day it has been, that it is not a time to relax in the bar or in front of the TV;
- ◆ use down-time in the evening or at the beginning of the day to brief the group on the planned activities for the day to come, e.g. the planned learning outcomes, specific health and safety issues, meal and break times etc.;
- ◆ use down time after activities for individual reflection on personal learning outcomes, and group discussion about the highs and lows of the day;
- ◆ apply the advice contained in "Remote Supervision" above, adapted as necessary, if it is felt reasonable to allow pupils some time without close

- supervision;
- ◆ occupy the group with mildly active, non-academic activities in the evening, e.g. craft activities, environmental activities, quizzes, team challenges, led-walks.

Night Time

Group leaders should ensure that:

- ◆ the group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use;
- ◆ teachers (of both genders where appropriate) have sleeping accommodation on the same floor immediately adjacent to the pupils' accommodation;
- ◆ there is a teacher present on that floor whenever the pupils are there;
- ◆ child protection arrangements are in place to protect both pupils and staff;
- ◆ where hotel/hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visits;
- ◆ in the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion;
- ◆ where possible, internal doors are lockable but staff must have reasonable access to the pupil accommodation at all times;
- ◆ where pupils' doors are locked, teachers have immediate access, as necessary, to a master key;
- ◆ all staff and pupils know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire. Where windows and doors are locked against intrusion at night, ensure that alternative escape routes are known and that all fire doors function properly.

Don't be lulled into a sense of false security by local assurances, such as "no need to lock doors in this part of the country". The presence of the group may attract unwelcome attention that is unusual in the locality.

Travel

A driver cannot safely drive and supervise children at the same time. Group leaders should ensure that:

- ◆ transport by road has seat belts and that the pupils wear them;
- ◆ there is adequate supervision at all times when travelling;
- ◆ supervisors are reserved seats that allow them to supervise properly
- ◆ pupils are supervised when boarding and leaving;
- ◆ extra care is taken when leaving a vehicle in a country that drives on the right as some doors may open onto the road side;
- ◆ standards of behaviour are met, and in particular that drivers are not distracted
- ◆ smoking/alcohol etc. bans are observed;
- ◆ pupils are occupied on long journeys – this will help the journey pass quickly;
- ◆ evacuation procedures are clearly understood by everyone, luggage is securely stored and emergency exits are kept clear;
- ◆ there are adequate rest stops for drivers;
- ◆ head counts are carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport.

ONGOING RISK ASSESSMENT

HASPEV chapter 2 paragraphs 37-46, and *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits* deal with risk assessment. Risk assessment does not end when the visit begins.

Changes to the itinerary, changes to the weather, incidents (whether minor or major), staff illness – all or any of these may bring pupils face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk.

The group leader (and other adults with responsibility) prepares ongoing risk assessments while the visit is taking place. These normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They are not usually recorded until after the visit. They should be informed by the generic and visit or site specific risk assessments

It is good practice to have briefings each night to take stock and assess the circumstances for the next day, and to spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the pupils.

Check the local weather forecast

- ◆ to inform decisions on appropriate clothing;
- ◆ to be aware of whether water activities might be in areas prone to flash floods, high winds etc.;
- ◆ to be aware of whether trekking or climbing at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees, avalanches etc.

Seek local knowledge of potential hazards, e.g.

- ◆ tides;
- ◆ rivers/streams prone to sudden increases in flow;
- ◆ difficult terrain;
- ◆ crossing points for road, rail or water;
- ◆ unstable cliffs.

Plan B

- ◆ good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed;
- ◆ a flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those are prevented by unexpected circumstances;
- ◆ group leaders faced with potential difficulties will feel more confident to change the itinerary if a pre-assessed alternative is available;
- ◆ regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to reassess risks if the itinerary changes;
- ◆ on arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed, we recommend that the group leader should risk assess the situation before allowing the pupils to disembark from the transport;
- ◆ an unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original risk assessment, for example if the original intention to visit a land-only site has to be changed at short notice to a lake or seaside location.

Behaviour problems, illness or injury

- ◆ poor behaviour may be reduced by ensuring that all pupils are signed up to agreed standards of behaviour before (or at least at the beginning of) the visit;
- ◆ educational visits can be a good opportunity for school staff to get to know pupils away from the confines of the school. But the group leader should resist any temptation to accept lower standards of behaviour. The different hazards

that pupils may be exposed to away from the school will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as, or higher than, in the classroom;

- ◆ if one adult has to give prolonged attention to one group member, the group leader should reassess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all members of the group know who is responsible for them. Activities may need to be amended until the other adult returns all of his or her attention to the group;
- ◆ group leaders should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement;
- ◆ this may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Preparation

See *HASPEV* Chapter 10 and *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits*. By their nature, emergencies are usually unexpected. But careful emergency planning can mitigate the trauma of being caught up in an emergency. It is good practice for the group leader to:

- ◆ agree an emergency action plan, which includes 24-hour (i.e. constant cover) contact points at the school/LEA and clear roles for the group leader, school/LEA contact, head teacher e.g. managing media interest, supporting parents of an injured pupil, transport arrangements etc.;
- ◆ ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem;
- ◆ hold evening briefings with supervisors to discuss issues for the next day;
- ◆ spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the pupils;
- ◆ hold, or ensure that other adults in the group hold, up-to date competence in first aid and other lifesaving competence as necessary for the activities;
- ◆ ensure that the first aid kit is properly stocked and accessible (see Guidance on First Aid for Schools, paragraph 60 <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/firstaid>);
- ◆ ensure that all pupils' medical needs (e.g. asthma, diabetes, anaphylaxis) are known and that staff are competent to handle them (see Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/medical>);
- ◆ be aware that some diseases are more common in some countries and know what preventative action to take and what to do if a group member becomes infected;
- ◆ recognise that many of the health problems of pupils on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep;
- ◆ if appropriate, advise group members about the dangers of over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headache, dizziness and nausea;
- ◆ in warm climates, keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing – preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres – and use suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses;
- ◆ ensure that drivers take adequate rest breaks on long journeys;
- ◆ ensure that all pupils understand and follow the code of conduct;
- ◆ practice emergency drills e.g. evacuation of mini-bus;
- ◆ if abroad, know where the nearest British Embassy or Consulate is located and

the telephone number. Depending on the age of the pupils, it may be appropriate to ensure that they have this information to hand.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the group leader should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The main factors to consider include:

- ◆ establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ◆ ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- ◆ establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention;
- ◆ ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information, and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- ◆ notify the police if necessary;
- ◆ ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident;
- ◆ ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and the roles allocated to them – revise procedures and re-allocate roles as necessary;
- ◆ inform the school contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate). The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;
- ◆ details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- ◆ school contact should notify parents, providing as full a factual account of the incident as possible;
- ◆ notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact);
- ◆ notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad;
- ◆ ascertain phone numbers for future calls. Try not to rely solely on mobile phones;
- ◆ write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence;
- ◆ keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident;
- ◆ complete an accident report form as soon as possible. Contact HSE or local authority inspector, if appropriate;
- ◆ no-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Refer media enquiries to a designated media contact in the home area;
- ◆ no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from their LEA;
- ◆ keep receipts for any expenses incurred – insurers will require these.

ADVICE ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Coastal visits

HASPEV chapter 8 "Types of Visit" has advice on coastal visits at paragraphs 181-2. HASPEV states: "...many of the incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming."

The group leader will want to bear the following points in mind when assessing the risks of a coastal activity:

- ◆ tides, rip tides and sandbanks are potential hazards; timings and exit routes should be checked;
- ◆ group members should be aware of warning signs and flags;
- ◆ establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- ◆ look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc.;
- ◆ some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain are out of bounds, and whether the risk assessment allows swimming in the sea;
- ◆ cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to a safe distance from the cliff edge at all times – a "buffer zone" between the pupils and the hazard. Be aware that cliff falls can mean that cliff paths stop abruptly at the cliff edge;
- ◆ group leaders should not normally allow pupils to ride mountain bikes on any route that is near a sheer drop e.g. coastal path or canal towpath. If the risk assessment indicates that the risk could be managed adequately, then there should be a small known group of skilled and experienced riders accompanied by appropriately qualified staff;
- ◆ the local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information office can provide information and advice on the nature and location of hazards.

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters

Swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, canal, sea or lake should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. The pleas of children to be allowed to bathe – because it is hot weather, for example, or after a kayaking exercise - should be resisted where the bathing has not been prepared for. In-water activities should take place only when a proper risk assessment has been completed and proper measures put in to control the risks. The activities should be formal and supervised.

It is good practice that, wherever possible, group leaders seek out recognised bathing areas that have official surveillance i.e. qualified lifeguard cover. But, even then, group leaders should be aware that pupils might mingle with members of the public and be lost to view. Pupils should always be in sight and reasonable reach of their supervisors.

The group leader should:

- ◆ be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers;
- ◆ ascertain for themselves the level of the pupils' swimming ability;
- ◆ check the weather;
- ◆ be aware of the local conditions – such as currents, weeds, rip tides, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom – using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office;
- ◆ beware of rocks, breakwaters and other potential hazards;
- ◆ look out for warning signs and flags: a red flag means it is unsafe to swim; yellow flags mean that lifeguards are on patrol in the area between the flags; a black and white flag means it is an area used by surfers and not suitable for swimming;

- ◆ designate a safe area of water for use by the group;
- ◆ brief the group about the limits of the swimming area;
- ◆ avoid crowded beaches where it is harder to see pupils;
- ◆ be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water;
- ◆ be aware of the dangers of paddling especially for young pupils;
- ◆ ensure that pupils have not eaten (at least half an hour) before swimming;
- ◆ ensure the activity is suitable for the pupils, especially any with special needs or disabilities;
- ◆ adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall;
- ◆ ensure that buoyancy aids, lifejackets etc. are used where appropriate;
- ◆ carry out regular head counts;
- ◆ be aware that it is not always possible to tell when someone is in difficulties.

Supervisors should

- ◆ have clear roles – at least one supervisor should always stay out of the water for better surveillance, even where lifeguards are on duty;
- ◆ take up a best position from which to exercise a constant vigilance;
- ◆ divide their careful watching between staff who stand in the sea and look landward towards the group and staff who stay on land and watch the group from that vantage point;
- ◆ give the children their full, undivided attention;
- ◆ always follow the advice or directions of a lifeguard;
- ◆ never swim themselves unless it is to help a child in distress;
- ◆ not join in any of the children's games;
- ◆ ensure that no child is allowed to wade out or swim further than his or her waist height;
- ◆ nevertheless, be aware that it is possible to drown in one's own depth, and to act immediately when a child appears to be in difficulties;
- ◆ ensure that children leave the water immediately if they get too cold, especially if toes and fingers look blue or feel numb - could suggest the onset of hypothermia;
- ◆ recognise that a child in difficulty is unlikely to wave or shout – all of their energies will be in trying to keep afloat.

It is good practice for the group leader, or another designated adult in the group, to hold a relevant lifesaving award, especially where lifeguard cover may not be available. For further advice contact the: The Royal Lifesaving Society UK, River House, High St, Broom, Warwickshire B50 4HN (Tel: 01789 773994) <http://www.lifesavers.org.uk/>

Farm Visits

"There is a seasonal increase in the number of cases of E.coli 0157 infection, and there is a link between farm visits and infection in young children. This means that some simple and sensible precautions should be taken." - Chief Medical Officer -12 April 2000

Group Leaders should check the provision at the farm to ensure that

- ◆ eating areas are separate from those where there is any contact with animals;
- ◆ there are adequate clean and well-maintained washing facilities;
- ◆ there is clear information for visitors on the risks and the precautions to take.

Ensure that

- ◆ there is adequate trained adult supervision wherever children can come into contact with animals and need to wash their hands;
- ◆ all children wash their hands thoroughly immediately after touching animals and before any eating or drinking;
- ◆ shoes are cleaned and then hands are washed on leaving the farm.

Never let pupils:

- ◆ place their faces against the animals;
- ◆ put their hands in their own mouths after touching or feeding the animals;
- ◆ eat or drink while going round the farm;
- ◆ eat or drink until they have washed their hands;
- ◆ sample any animal foodstuffs;
- ◆ drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- ◆ touch animal droppings - if they do then wash and dry hands;
- ◆ ride on tractors or other machines;
- ◆ play in the farm area, or in other areas that are out of bounds such as grain storage tanks, slurry pits etc.

The Chief Medical Officer's revised guidance suggests:

- ◆ individual supervision by an adult for every child younger than 12 months;
- ◆ a supervision ratio of one adult for two children for children between ages one and two;
- ◆ gradually increasing ratios up to one adult for eight children for children between ages five and eight;
- ◆ higher standards for washing facilities.

Appendix 2: Ratio Information

Ratios, where included, are recommended. If the number of young people per Leader is to be exceeded, it is recommended that the decision should be taken by a suitably qualified and experienced person. It may be appropriate to reduce the number of young people per Leader: for example, if group members have particular behavioural or physical needs, or if weather conditions are not favourable on the day. Ratios for specific outdoor and hazardous activities can be found in the **Safety in Outdoor Education** document.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES					
Activity	Age of young people	Group Leader	Recommended ratio	Qualification if necessary	Desirable
Local visit	Years 1 to 3	1	6	Previous experience	Adult helper
Local visit	Years 4 to 6	1	15	Previous experience	Adult helper
Local visit	Year 7 onwards	1	20	Previous experience	Adult helper
Residential visit	As above	1 (2 staff as a minimum)	10	Previous experience	Adult helper
Visits abroad	As above	2	10	Previous experience	
Swimming in public pool	All years	1	20	Previous experience	Adult helper
Swimming in recognised bathing location	All years	2	8	Lifeguard qualification	

Appendix 3 List of activities needing LA approval

Activity Name	
Multi Activities – led by External Provider	River/gorge walking or scrambling
Abseiling	Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
Air activities (excluding commercial flights)	Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
All activities in 'open' country (see guidance)	Shooting and archery
All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)	Skiing
Camping	Skiing - Indoor or Dry Slope
Canoeing	Snorkel and aqualung activities
Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing	Snowboarding
High level ropes courses	Swimming (all forms, excluding UK public pools)
Hill walking and Mountaineering	Underground exploration
Horse riding	Use of powered safety/rescue craft
Motor sport – all forms	Water skiing
Mountain Biking	'Extreme' sports (see LA guidance)
Pond/Stream Dipping	Multi Activities - led by School Staff
Rafting or improvised rafting	

Appendix 4: Evaluation of Visit Form

To be completed by the Visit Leader to inform future planning.

School: _____
Visit Leader: _____
Date(s) of visit : _____ Venue: _____
Purposes(s) of Visit: _____
Provider used: _____
Number in Group: Boys: _____ Girls: _____ Supervisors: _____

Please comment on the following features:

	Rating	Comment
Provider's pre-visit organisation		
Travel arrangements		
Content of education programme provided		
Quality of instruction and learning		
Equipment		
Suitability of Environment		
Accommodation		
Food		
Evening activities		
Courier/representative		
Other evaluation and comments including "close calls" not involving injury or damage		

If you feel that the Local Authority should know about any other issues, please send information to the Outdoor Education Adviser marking your envelope "Private and Confidential".

Signed: _____ Date: _____