CESTRIA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy and Guidance: Educational Visits, Off Site Activities and On-Site ‘Adventures’

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Educational Visits, Off Site Activities and On-Site ‘Adventures’

Policy and Guidance:

Children & Young People’s Services

Durham County Council

activities with the same high level of safety for children and young people in their care.

This document aims to provide clear guidance for organising educational visits and off-site

activities. It contains advice and guidance for CYPS establishments, and links with both

current Department for Education advice and notably the ‘National Guidance’ published by

the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel. Cross-references are made throughout this

publication.

It is not intended that this policy will reduce the number or range of educational visits and

off-site activities but encourage continued safe practice for, and by, all involved.

employees including school staff are encouraged to continue to organise visits and

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Head of Service – Education & Skills

September 2019

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**FOREWARD**

using their own grounds for ‘adventure’. Almost all take place without incident, and CYPS

visits and off-site activities each year. An increasing number of schools and settings are

Large numbers of children and young people in County Durham enjoy a wide range of

wide variety of settings including youth groups and nursery settings.

activities of course form an equally important and valued element of the programme for a

part of the school curriculum, are proven to contribute to the raising of achievement. Such

greater opportunities for learning outside the classroom. Such activities, when planned as

The range of opportunities is increasing, with many new and exciting locations to visit and

and young people to experience challenging, rewarding and exciting visits and activities.

In Children & Young People’s Services (CYPS) there are many opportunities for children

understanding of the environment they live in.

much greater knowledge about themselves, their own physical skills and a deeper

broadest sense. Children and young people may return stimulated, enthused and with

Learning outdoors is an important part of every young person’s development in the

Exchange visits

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reproduction can only be made with the express permission of the Authority.

establishments, or in other establishments where a specific agreement exists. Any other

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•

Produce a health and safety policy linked to risk assessment

•

require that employers:

Under the 1974 Act, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999

non-employees who are affected by their undertaking. This includes off-site activities.

reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of employees and

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to do all that is

**The Legal Framework**

Pupil referral Units.”

•

Maintained Nursery Schools

•

Community Special Schools

4

Monitor and review procedures and practice.

•

Develop emergency procedures

•

Appoint people competent to carry out specific tasks

•

•

information

Develop measures to control those risks including training and the provision of

•

Produce and implement risk assessments

•

Have in place systems for reporting accidents and incidents

•

in Council establishments including:

Information contained in this guidance document applies to all staff and volunteers working

employees in the management of visits and similar off-site activities within CYPS.

as possible. It summarises the procedures which should be followed by all Council

This Council guidance has been produced to make visits enjoyable, rewarding and as safe

while planning and enjoying off-site activities and outdoor visits.

Nursery schools, infant, junior and primary schools, secondary schools and special

Advisers Panel (OEAP) – www.oeapng.info for guidance in making essential decisions

The Council recommends the extensive advice offered through the Outdoor Education

benefits to the children and young people taking part.

should strive for high quality educational visits in order to maximize the educational

that are correctly planned, managed and conducted. We believe that all establishments

visits to children and young people, and fully supports and encourages all off-site activities

Durham County Council (The Council) acknowledges the immense value of educational

Voluntary Controlled Schools

•

Community Schools

•

premises or school activities taking place elsewhere in the following types of school:

2002, local authorities have powers to direct health and safety matters relating to school

and Duties for Schools’, November 2018) that “Under section 29(5) of the Education Act

**Background and Legal Information**

Schools are reminded (in accordance with DfE guidance ‘Health & Safety: Responsibilities

All CYPS services

•

All extended school provision;

•

schools;

care, the group leader, head teacher and/or The Council could be prosecuted. A key part

of any investigation would be whether the employers health and safety policy and

procedures are adequate and had been followed by its employees.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Extensive guidance on roles and responsibilities on educational visits can be found in the

OEAP National Guidance. The following is a summary of the main features relating to the

roles with key health and safety responsibilities.

**The Council (CYPS)**

The Council’s Health & Safety Team will:

take reasonable care. If the conclusion is that the organisation did not take reasonable

•

Make this document available to all Council schools, CYPS service areas and schools

with SLA agreements via Evolve. The Council will provide training, support and advice

related to the management of visits;

•

Give approval (or refuse approval) for proposed educational visits where the final

approval has not been delegated to the Head Teacher/Service Manager;

•

Operate a clear procedure for action in the event of an emergency;

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then those persons should provide a suitable and sufficient a risk assessment for those

maintained nursery schools, pupil referral units etc. the employer is The Council. These

establishments MUST adhere to the requirements contained in this document. For

foundation schools, foundation special schools, voluntary aided schools, academies, free

schools and independent schools, the employer is usually the governing body or

proprietor.

Those establishments that enter into a specific health and safety Service Level Agreement

(SLA) with The Council are welcome to use this guidance, but are not obliged to do so. If

not using the guidance, they should ensure that the systems in place are equally as

robust.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on the

organiser to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the various activities

undertaken, and to ensure that if other persons (e.g. instructors) take charge of activities,

For community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools,

activities.

Common law expects people acting ‘in loco parentis’ to take the same care as would a

reasonable and careful parent. This duty applies to all educational visits and off-site

activities and cannot be delegated. The principle applies to all young people in school and

youth settings.

In addition, there is a higher duty of care on teachers and other professional staff as a

consequence of greater knowledge they are assumed to have of children and of

specialised activities. The level of judgement expected of staff is related to that individuals

knowledge, experience and training.

In the event of an accident and any Health & Safety Executive (HSE) intervention

documentation will be assessed as evidence to establish if the organisation did or did not

•

Will undertake EVC Training and refresher training made available to them;

•

activities led by the school/service;

Will be involved in the planning and management of visits including adventurous

•

school/service;

Will be the principal contact with the Health & Safety Team over visits planned by the

•

senior management team of the school/service;

Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the

managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment;

Should be specifically competent, often having practical experience in leading and

•

Will be appointed by, and will act on behalf of, the Head Teacher/Service Manager;

•

Evolve;

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Adviser or other personnel where necessary.

Should seek advice from the Council’s Health & Safety Team, Outdoor Learning

•

role where The Council is the employer. The key tool for such record keeping is

Council Health & Safety Team where requested, as part of our statutory monitoring

Is required to keep appropriate records of visits, and make these available to the

•

including the OEAP National Guidance as a key planning tool;

policy, and/or any other relevant documentation is readily available for access by staff

Should ensure that the DfE advice, this CYPS guidance, the schools/services own

Where The Council is the employer the school adheres to the requirements contained in

•

National Guidance.

detailed in the DfE advice, and with significant and clear reference to the OEAP

formally adopted or a policy at least as robust is developed that meets the requirements

Where the governing body is the employer it must ensure that the CYPS guidance is

•

this guidance document;

All governing bodies should have a clear policy regarding where approval from

•

Governing bodies will ensure that:

**School Governing Body**

Establish procedures to monitor and review safety on visits.

•

The EVC:

(EVC). This is not a legal requirement, but is strongly recommended as ‘good practice’.

All schools and CYPS Services should nominate and Educational Visits Coordinator

**Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC’s)**

competence and experience.

Ensure that staff leading and accompanying visits have the required training,

•

Ensure the CYPS policy and school policy are adhered to at all times;

•

The Head Teachers and Service Managers will:

**Head Teachers/Service Managers**

governors is required and where approval has been delegated to the Head Teacher.

All visits should be approved by the EVC. The EVC will obtain approval from the Head

breach of the duty of care towards the injured party.

is likely to use failure to follow an employers policy and guidelines as evidence of a

Following a serious incident or tragedy a civil case for negligence against an employee

**offence.**

**employer is a breach of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and a criminal**

**Failure by staff to follow the health and safety policy and procedures of an**

Teacher/Service Manager. It may be required (on an individual school basis) to ensure

•

must be submitted **at least 3 weeks (21 days) before the visit**.

Details of all educational visits that require Council Health & Safety Team approval

•

records are kept in another format and maintained at the school/setting.

Where schools/service choose not to enter visits on Evolve, they must ensure that

**all visits not listed as requiring Council Health & Safety Team approval.**

7

Council Health & Safety Team as part of our statutory supporting and monitoring role.

The EVC must keep a record of these visits, details of which may be requested by the

This delegation is conditional upon compliance with this policy.

•

**CYPS delegates all aspects of the approval to the Head Teacher/Service Manager for**

approving visits, and expect advice to be sought from ourselves when necessary.

governing body (where applicable) to exercise appropriate professional judgement when

The Council Health & Safety Team expect the EVC, Head Teacher/Service Manager and

that the school governing body are made aware of visits taking place.

•

•

controlled. Where necessary this will require a pre-visit;

Undertake a risk assessment identifying the main risks and how these will be

•

of medical requirements;

Inform parents in advance of the nature of the visit and gain their consent and details

Gain approval from the EVC and the Head Teacher/Service Manager as required;

•

young people on the visit. They will:

The group leader has overall responsibility for the supervision, conduct and safety of

& Safety Team.

planning and approval.

school/setting) are also recorded on EVOLVE, as this will provide good evidence of

risks (e.g. long distance travel, water margin hazards, extended time away form

EVOLVE. CYPS strongly recommend that other visits where there may be additional

All visits requiring Council Health & Safety Team approval must be recorded on

•

**The Group Leader**

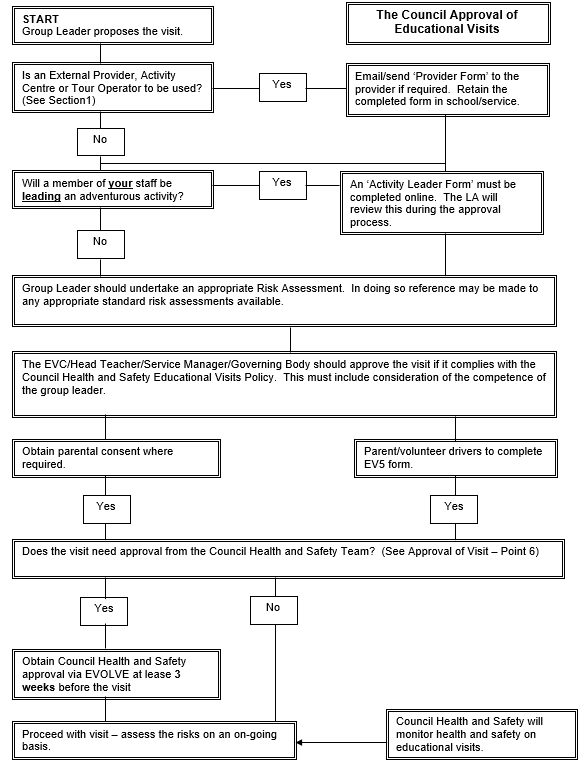
of approval outlined in this policy except where specifically agreed with The Council Health

All CYPS staff and schools/settings undertaking educational visits **must** follow the system

**Approval of Visits**

role in this process.

Continually risk assess during the visit and encourage young people to take an active



The process to be followed for all visits is detailed below:

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•

Underground exploration

•

Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing

•

scrambling

Rock climbing (outdoor) and related mountaineering activities, river/gorge walking or

•

Snorkel and aqualung activities

Off-site mountain biking and lowland trail riding

•

Water skiing

•

All other forms of boating (except commercial transport)

•

Use of powered safety/rescue craft

•

Sailing/windsurfing/kite surfing

•

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Water based activities

•

‘Extreme’ sports

•

High level ropes courses

•

Quad bikes, off-road buggies

•

Horse riding

•

Air activities (excluding commercial flights)

•

Skiing, snowboarding and related activities

•

Road cycling (except as part of Bikeability, cycling proficiency or similar programme)

•

•

•

Ski trips

•

World Challenge expeditions

•

Duke of Edinburgh’s Award expeditions

•

Adventurous activities (see definition below)

Other visits where the level of risk is similar to the visits listed above.

Overseas visits (including expeditions)

•

Residential visits

•

activities:

Specific approval from the Council Health & Safety Team is required for the following

should be clearly included in the school/settings own health and safety policy.

value which the school/setting places on the approval by The Council (or otherwise)

to Evolve may use the system to request approval for visits. The use of Evolve, and the

biking etc) on moorland (open uncultivated land) at any height or mountainous ground

Canoeing/kayaking/rafting/improvised rafting

•

Camping (including Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Expeditions)

•

Swimming (all forms except publicly life guarded pools)

•

can often be an arbitrary boundary which can be difficult to define.

Please contact the Council’s H&S Team if you are unsure if this definition applies. This

reach an accessible road or refuge

over 600 metres above sea level **or** at any height where it would take 30 minutes to

Schools/settings where the Council is not the employer, but who have been given access

All activities in ‘open country’ – any activity (hill walking, mountaineering, fieldwork,

•

Team approval (please note that this list is not exhaustive):

The following activities are regarded as ‘adventurous’ and require Council Health & Safety

**Definition of Adventurous**

current list.

Teacher/Service Manager by the Council. Please see the guidance notes on Evolve for a

There are a number of venues that have been assigned delegated approval to the Head

•

•

Killhope Lead Mine

•

Dry ski slope activities

•

Physical education and sports fixtures

•

Museums, libraries etc

Trampoline parks

Local traffic surveys

•

Farm visits

•

Ice rink skating

•

venue

Indoor rock climbing/bouldering provided by a leisure centre or similar commercial

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the role of the EVC and identify the Service Manager that will approve educational visits on

Each service will be required to identify suitably competent and qualified staff to undertake

nature to educational visits.

This policy applies to all non-school areas of CYPS that undertake activities similar in

**CYPS Service Areas**

contained in the OEAP publication ‘Group Safety at Water Margins’.

Note staff involved in water margin activities should be conversant with the guidance

•

water based and therefore adventurous.

shallow (up to the knees) water. If the activity exceeds this definition the activity is

paddling in the sea), collecting samples from streams and ponds or paddling in gentle

Water margin activities – such as walking along a riverbank or stream (including

•

Bushcraft

•

Tubing

•

•

the EVC or Head Teacher/Service Manager as competent to supervise the activity:

member of staff who has previous relevant experience and/or who has been assessed by

Health & Safety Team approval. These activities must however be supervised by a

The following visits are not regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require Council

**Approval for the above will only be given online via Evolve**

similar level of risk to participants or staff.

Any other activities involving skills inherent in any of the above or that may contain a

•

Snow mobile activities

•

Ice Fishing

•

Nordic Walking

•

Indoor sky diving

•

Adventurous activities with the armed services

Tourist attractions

Archery clubs

•

Paint balling and laser quest type activities

•

Motorised go-karts at commercial venues

•

Pedal go-carts

•

•

•

Theme parks (e.g. Alton Towers, Adventure Valley etc)

•

Swimming in publicly life guarded pools

•

Field studies (unless in the environments defined as adventurous)

•

Walking in parks or non-remote country paths

•

•

Safety Team?

If leading adventurous activities has the leader been approved by the Council Health &

•

level?

If appropriate, what is the leader’s personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness

Is the leader aware of, and able to comply with, all relevant guidelines?

Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?

•

What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?

•

or activities?

What experience has the leader in leading, or assisting in the leading of similar visits

**Adventurous Activities for Which There Are No Specific National Qualifications**

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Teacher/Service Manager, and the Council Health & Safety Team.

leaders wishing to lead such activities must seek full approval from their EVC and Head

of the qualification required needs to be matched to the levels of hazard and risk. Group

good practice for group leaders to hold qualifications in closely related activities. The level

In the absence of formal, recognised qualifications for some adventurous activities, it is

A matrix of recommended staff competency/qualification is available on Evolve.

lead, especially for adventurous activities.

access to independent technical experts to assist in making decisions on competence to

regarding the competence of a member of staff to lead an educational visit. CYPS has

The establishment should contact the Council Health & Safety Team if there is doubt

and this will be reflected in each services approval system and in some cases the level of

The EVC and Head Teacher/Service Manager should therefore consider the following

educational visit or activity is the competence of the group leader.

The single most important factor in ensuring the safety of participants involved in an

**Competence to Lead**

competence.

delegation to services will be increased (via the Evolve system) to reflect this additional

when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

It is recognised that some parts of CYPS have high levels of competence in leading visits

experts.

the Council Health & Safety Team will seek further advice from technical advisors or other

achieved using the Evolve system. Where required, especially for adventurous activities,

Where the policy requires the approval of the Council Health & Safety Team this will be

service.

Has the leader a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of the

•

Is the leader competent in risk assessment and risk management?

•

Does the leader possess the necessary organising ability?

•

subject to concern for the participants well-being?

behalf of the service. This person will usually be a senior member of staff within the

•

Is the leader an employee?

•

What is the leader’s reason for undertaking the visit?

•

-

Key Stage 3,4,& 5 pupils

•

1 adult to every 6 – 10 pupils

-

Key Stage 2 pupils

•

1 adult to every 2 pupils

Key Stage 1 pupils

•

Higher Risk / Adventurous / Residential Visits

1 adult to every 15 – 20 pupils

-

Key Stage 3,4,& 5 pupils

**educational needs, medical needs or disabilities**.

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Have the means to contact the group leader if help is required.

•

Regularly check the group (head count etc).

•

Carry a list/register of all group members and know who they are responsible for.

•

Possess prior knowledge of the venue.

•

Have a reasonable knowledge for the young people involved, including any **special**

•

Have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives.

•

It is good practice for each supervisory adult to:

**Remember – The group leader is responsible for the group at all times.**

1 adult to every 10 – 15 pupils

-

The following ratios are therefore **only a guide** and do not overrule or replace professional

appropriate level of supervision exists.

visit. A visit must not go ahead where any of the above persons are not satisfied that an

professional judgement regarding the appropriate level and suitability of staffing for every

We expect the group leader, EVC and Head Teacher/Service Manager to make a

The contingency or Plan B options.

•

The venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted environmental conditions

•

The experience and competence of staff and other adults

judgement of the group leader, EVC and Head Teacher/Service Manager.

•

special and additional needs

The nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including consideration of

•

The type, risk and duration of activity

•

will be determined by such factors as:

The level of supervision should be based on **risk assessment** for the specific visits, and

Young People on visits must be adequately supported and supervised at all times.

•

1 adult to every 10 – 15 pupils

-

Key Stage 2 pupils

•

1 adult to every 4 - 6 pupils

-

**Supervision & Staffing Ratios**

Key Stage 1 pupils

•

1 adult to every 4 - 6 pupils

-

Nursery and Foundation Stage pupils

•

Lower Risk Activities (where the risk is similar to everyday life)

when to meet supervising adults – at key locations and set times.

without direct supervision. Guidance in this document must be followed for all Duke of

and have the necessary experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement to be left

The group leader should be satisfied that young people have acquired the necessary skills

have appropriate qualifications and experience to provide clear guidance for each activity.

The training given to young people must be sound and thorough. The instructor should

**Remote Supervision during Adventurous Activities**

Edinburgh’s Award Expeditions.

In enclosed areas, such as theme parks, children and young people know where and

•

know how to summon help.

They have maps, plans and other suitable information for them to act effectively and

•

It is acknowledged that some employees and volunteers could not help in educational

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agreements are made to allow staff to bring their own children on a visit, this arrangement

those arrangements do not compromise the safety of other group members. Where

EVC’s/Head Teachers/Service Managers consider the implications of such requests and

consequences for supervision levels and group safety. It is therefore essential that

who bring additional children will have potential conflicts of responsibility, which could have

visits unless their own children accompany them. However, group leaders and helpers

contacting the group leader of lost, either by mobile or identified local telephones.

**Teachers and Other Employees Children Accompanying Visits**

**them.**

**responsible for all children and young people, even when not in direct contact with**

**NB For all educational visits and off-site activities the group leader remains fully**

•

periods and the evenings on residential visits etc.

supervised during ‘down time’ – before, between and after activities, including lunch

Group leaders should ensure that children and young people continue to be properly

**Down Time**

Group leaders should provide a full briefing to accompanying adults prior to the visit.

Clearly understand the emergency procedures and have access to a first aid kit.

•

conditions etc.

condition and abilities of the group and the suitability of the prevailing weather

Continually monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental

•

**Remote Supervision**

If the aim of visits for young people is to encourage independence and investigative skills,

some of the time on visits may be supervised from a distance. The group leader must

establish during the planning stage whether young people are competent in remote

supervision and must ensure parents have agreed to this part of the visit. The group leader

must ensure:

•

Children and young people are made aware of ground rules and are adequately

equipped to be on their own or in a small group.

•

Children and young people have telephone number or other suitable means of

•

for exchange visits.

Accommodation with address and telephone number, including details of host families

•

Method of travel including name of any travel company.

Emergency contact arrangements at home and away, if all young people are not at

•

Times of departure and return, including location for meeting parents.

•

Objectives of visit or activity.

14

specified.

Details of activities planned. Any activity involving special hazards must be clearly

•

responsibility during the visit.

Names and status (e.g. parent) of other accompanying adults who will exercise some

•

•

Name of group leader and accompanying staff.

•

with a large group of parents, e.g. regarding changed transport arrangements.

one centre. Consider the value of a ‘telephone tree’ to make easy and rapid contact

extra safety measures required.

or at the weekend).

activities for nursery schools which take place at any time (including during school holidays

activities, off site sporting fixtures outside the school day, residential visits and all off site

these types of activities throughout their time at the school. This includes adventure

parents when a child enrols at a school. This will cover a child’s participation in any of

those that take place outside school hours. A ‘one off’ consent form can be signed by

Written consent is requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or

Again, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety

at school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any

these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child’s education

activities organised by a school (with the exception of Nursery age children) as most of

Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site

**Information for Parents, Guardians and Carers**

risk assessment.

Dates.

•

Information to parents should include:

Consent.

should be communicated to the parents of the other young people and identified within the

Further guidance on parental consent can be found in the OEAP Document 4.3d Parental

form for a specific visit is available on Evolve.

visit, especially for residential visits and adventurous activities. The original EV4 consent

We strongly recommend that schools/settings seek consent separately for a particular

Consent is needed for all visits organised by establishments other than schools.

measures required.

Occasional volunteers who are known to the school/setting, and who will not work with the

DBS checks must be renewed every 5 years.

•

Planned contact takes place overnight between 2.00am and 6.00am.

•

Planned contact takes place on 4 or more occasions in a 30 day period.

pupils ‘frequently, intensively or overnight’ (as above) can accompany visits without DBS

•

Planned contact with the pupils/students will take place once a week or more.

•

people will require Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance where:

All employees and volunteers over the age of 16 involved in educational visits with young

**Child Protection / DBS**

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participants at risk in order to make reasonable adjustments. In all cases compliance with

However, the Equalities Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or

adjustments to avoid disabled participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

material and substantial to the particular case. You are required to make reasonable

and respective) because of their disability, without justification – which must be both

it is unlawful for any establishment to discriminate against disabled participants (current

Following an amendment to the Equalities Act by the Special Educational Need Act 2001,

**Equalities Act 2010 and Medical Needs**

DBS@durham.gov.uk.

applicants may be obtained by emailing the Disclosure Barring Service on

Copies of Disclosure Application Forms provided by the DBS and associated advice for

the children.

clearance. In this case those volunteers should not be allowed unsupervised contact with

•

Clothing/footwear and other items to be taken. Prohibited items.

•

parents or state that a copy of schedule may be obtained from the group leader.

cancellation and medical cover. Send a photocopy of the insurance schedule to all

Insurance for the group members in respect of baggage, personal accident,

•

Methods of payment and cancellation arrangements.

•

Charges or voluntary contributions; what they cover and do not cover.

•

put down in writing.

opportunity for all involved to be fully informed and to raise issues which may be difficult to

constitutes a ‘new direction’ for the group members or the establishment. There is then the

particularly where a residential experience is involved, visits abroad or where the activity

Group leaders should appreciate the benefits of inviting parents to a planning meeting,

consent for emergency medical treatment.

Parents should have sufficient information to give informed consent and give written

•

sexual behaviour, illegal substances and alcoholic drinks.

during the visit; including for example, rules on general group discipline, smoking,

Code of conduct; details relating to the standard of behaviour expected from the group

•

Money to be taken.

is appropriate in circumstances where it is likely that access by emergency services may

**First Aid**

The group leader should make a professional judgement as to the level of first aid required

for a particular visit. This decision could be influenced by factors such as the environment

and proximity to emergency services or professional care. However, as a minimum, we

recommend that for all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working

knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment. In the case of Nursery and

Foundation Stage pupils it is mandatory that at least one person in attendance on the visit

has a current paediatric first aid certificate.

The Emergency First Aid certificate is a basic qualification which may be suitable for

routine urban visits; however risk assessment may indicate that a higher level qualification

be delayed.

A First Aid Kit appropriate to the visit should be carried.

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1974 i.e. reasonable adjustments must not place employees or others at unacceptable risk

of injury or ill health.

Group leaders and other adults should be aware of all the children and young people’s

medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. If required, a member of staff

should be trained in administering medication and to take responsibility in a medical

emergency. If the young person’s safety cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to

ask the parent or carer to accompany a particular young person.

Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing

wheelchairs on transport and at residential centres. There is an all-terrain wheelchair for

use on educational visits in open countryside and similar environments. Please contact the

EWE Centre on 03000 260535 for more information.

the Equalities Act must not be achieved by breaching the Health & Safety at Work Act etc

The group leader should also assess whether client manual handling skills will be needed,

and if so, whether training should be sought. Group leaders concerned about whether they

can provide for a pupil’s safety or the safety of others on a visit due to the medical

condition of a pupil can seek further advice from the Council Health & Safety Team.

The group leader should check that any additional insurance policy taken out covers staff

and pupils with pre-existing medical needs. All medical conditions should be declared to

the insurance company regardless of whether they have been specifically requested.

Failure to declare a medical condition will often invalidate medical/travel insurance. If you

need advice/guidance covering the medical needs of participants please contact Helen

Perfect (Equalities and Intervention Manager) on 03000 267754 or email

helen.perfect@durham.gov.uk.

school or CYPS group undertake off site activities.

procedures regarding the reporting of accidents. These policies continue to apply when the

Both the school and Council Health & Safety Policy and Procedures Manuals contain

school life or elsewhere in CYPS activities.

been no evidence that accidents are more common on visits than they are in everyday

Accidents on educational visits are less common than most people think and there has

**Report without delay to the Council Health & Safety Team. Tel: 03000 263430**

24hrs

Resuscitation or admittance to hospital

•

injury or asphyxia

The group leader, in conjunction with the EVC/Head Teacher/Service Manager must be

17

cover while on school visits.

community. Academy schools will need to check with their insurance provider regarding

when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the

The Council’s Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance applies to the activities

**Employers Liability & Public Liability Insurance**

fully satisfied that adequate insurance cover has been obtained before approving any visit.

Loss of consciousness caused by head

**Insurance**

online accident report form.

telephone (03000 263430), fax (0191 3898160) or email (hsteam@durham.gov.uk) or the

table above), the Council Health & Safety Team should be notified without delay i.e. by

Should an accident occur that would be reportable to the Health & Safety Executive (see

Health & Safety Team.

via the online system upon return to school/office) and a copy forwarded to the Council

All accidents should be recorded on a Council Accident/Incident Ill Health Report Form (or

Clients

•

Death or specified injuries including:

Children and young people

Type of accident –

•

**Non-employees including** –

**Employees**

•

Accidents to be reported without delay to the Council Health & Safety Team

If the person in our care is killed or taken

•

treatment

Scalping which requires medical

•

Serious burns (including scalding)

transported to hospital.

•

the visit regardless of how they were

or internal organs

directly to hospital for treatment during

Crush injury causing damage to the brain

•

**Accidents on educational visits**

Permanent sight loss or reduction in sight

•

•

Type of accident –

Amputations

•

and toes

Volunteers

•

Fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs

both. This will ensure that the operator is licenced and falls within the checks provided

**Guidance for Hiring Coaches and Minibuses**

**Local Journeys**

The following are a number of simple checks that can be carried out which will assist in

deciding whether an operator is suitable to carry out your trip:

•

Identify if the transport operator currently work for the Council on home to school

transport (a list is available in the Resources section of Evolve). All operators engaged

in this work have to regularly provide details of operator’s licence and current

insurance documentation to the Transport Monitoring Officer. If not ask for copies of

informed consent.

by Vehicle and Service Operators Agency, who regulate standards of maintenance

and drivers hours compliance.

•

Ask the operator if the driver of your trip has been checked by our Disclosure Barring

Service. All drivers engaged on home to school transport for the Council should have

been checked through the Council in house system. An operator engaged on home to

school transport will have suitably checked drivers working for them, although this

does not mean you will get one for your trip. If in doubt ask!

•

Does the operator check the driving licence of their drivers at least annually?

18

Young people and staff **are not** insured for personal accident benefits while on education

premises or during educational visits. Similarly there is no automatic insurance cover for

the loss of personal property or belongings.

Group leaders may feel it appropriate to arrange this type of insurance cover for young

people as well as accompanying staff and adult volunteers.

Group leaders and individuals who feel that the cover from the Council insurers may be

inadequate to meet their needs are advised to obtain, at their own expense, a Personal

Accident/Travel Insurance Policy.

Some national governing bodies of sport offer personal accident insurance for groups

participating in certain sports.

**Personal Accident / Travel Insurance**

If the educational visit has been arranged via a travel company this cover can often be

negotiated at reasonable additional cost as part of the travel package. If so, care should be

taken to check the terms and conditions of the insurance and the activities that are

covered or excluded.

For overseas visits additional travel insurance needs to be arranged – overseas visits are

not covered by DCC insurance.

Further details on general Council insurance policies can be obtained by contacting the

Insurance Team on 03000 269648.

**Transport and Travel Arrangements**

Parents and carers must be aware of the intended form of transport in order to give fully

•

•

inspections are carried out.

least every 6000 miles or 6 months whichever is the sooner, and regular safety

Mini buses are serviced in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations or at

•

unlimited liability cover in relation to property or death and bodily injury)

independent insurance cover (fully comprehensive, to include passenger liability with

Mini buses are fully insured under the Council insurance policy or have similar

Council mini buses can be used by staff if the following conditions are met:

**School/Centre Mini Buses**

and Contract Services Team on 03000 268530.

journey. Further information on reputable companies can be obtained from the Transport

your driver is qualified, insured and will be sufficiently rested before carrying out your

are going to use for your trip. They will also enable you to satisfy yourself as to whether

These simple checks will give you an indication of the standard of the company which you

•

19

A first aid box and fire extinguisher are carried on the vehicle.

•

Seat belts are fitted to all forward facing seats.

•

Drivers are volunteer and no profit is made.

Drivers are over 21 years of age and have been driving for longer than 2 years.

•

be renewed every 5 years)

and possess a certificate of competence issued by the MIDAS assessor. This should

Drivers are trained under the Council Minibus Drivers Awareness Scheme (MIDAS)

•

B + D1 – mini buses over 8 passenger seats)

Drivers possess a current, full UK driving licence appropriate for the vehicle (category

operators must have an international operator’s licence – Do they have one?

Obtain a copy of the operators licence and insurance details. For continental trips,

•

booked for your trip? Ask for a copy. If not, then ask a few simple questions.

Does the tour company carry out ‘quality audits’ on the coach operator they have

•

companies do not operate their own coaches but use sub-contracted coach operators.

If booking through a tour company, ask who the coach operator will be. Tour

•

•

continental journeys:

The following are a number of simple checks that can be carried out on long distance and

**Long Distance and Continental Journeys by Coach**

coach break down during the trip. Ask for details if in doubt.

Does the operator have a procedure that will provide a contingency plan should the

doubt.

some examples of previous trips operated.

On continental journeys, if you are unsure of the capability of the operator ask for

•

section of your trip?

Will the main driver(s) have had the statutory hours of rest before driving the main

For long journeys, operators may use a feeder driver for the first part of the journey.

On a long distance journey, will the driver comply within EU drivers hours regulations?

•

•

coach break down during the trip, particularly on the continent? Ask for details if in

Does the operator have a procedure that will provide a contingency plan should the

•

Will the driver(s) of your tour be DBS checked?

•

Does the operator check drivers licence at least annually?

the fitment of a third.

restraints prevent

Children over 12 or

Seatbelt must be

Seatbelt must be

Driver

more than 135cms

reach first)

135cms in height (or

used

restraint must be

th

12

birthday,

used.

whichever they

worn if available.

An adult belt must

be used if the

correct child

restraint is not

available for a short

distance for reasons

of unexpected

necessity or two

occupied child

14 years and older

worn if available.

worn if available.

\*children under 3 years must use the child restraint appropriate for their weight in all cars,

vans and other goods vehicles. They cannot travel if a vehicle does not have seatbelts

installed.

20

worn if available.

tall

Adult passengers –

fitted, correct child

Seatbelt must be

Seatbelt must be

Passenger

Front seat

Rear seat

Who is responsible

Child up to 3 years\*

The risk assessment for the visit should consider the suitability of the supervision

A risk assessment is carried out prior to all journeys.

Further advice regarding use of mini buses is available from: the Fleet Team Manager,

Fleet Office, Environmental Services, St Johns Road, Meadowfield, Co. Durham. Tel:

03000 269349.

**Parents and Volunteers Cars**

Where parents and/or volunteers cars are to be used to transport children and young

people on a visit, form EV5 (Volunteer Driver Agreement) should be completed and

retained by the school/service. This could be done on an annual basis.

arrangements in private vehicles and the need for DBS clearances. The Council Health &

Safety Team would also recommend the completion of the Driving at Work risk

assessment.

**Car Seats**

When using staff or parents cars, the law regarding car seats will apply:

rd

Child from 3

Correct child

Where seatbelts are

Driver

birthday up to

restraint must be

Correct child

Correct child

•

Driver

restraint must be

restraint must be

used

used

Youth hostels where accommodation only is used

Tourist attractions

•

Museums, galleries etc

•

Camp sites

•

Hotel, B&B accommodation etc

•

•

•

Badge

Establishments/venues which hold a Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality

•

An External Provider Form is **not** required for:

Voluntary organisations e.g. scots where instruction is provided.

•

Youth hostels where instruction is provided

•

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is made.

the proposed visit and before any contractual agreement is signed or financial commitment

Where an EV6 is required this should be sent to the external provider well in advance of

Volunteer instructors of adventurous activities.

•

Climbing walls where instruction is provided by a member of your own staff

Swimming pools

•

Coach, train or airplane companies

•

Farms

•

Theme parks e.g. Adventure Valley, Alton Towers and similar

•

element of instruction, staffing and guiding on educational visits. In such cases an External

Schools and CYPS Services will regularly employ other organisations to provide an

**Use of External Providers**

36kg.

Group 3. High backed booster seats or cushions – for children from 22kg and up to

•

Group 2. High backed booster seats or cushions – for children from 15kg to 25kg.

•

Group 1. Child seats – rear or forward facing for children 9kg to 18kg.

Provider Form (EV6) must be completed unless they hold the Learning Outside the

Group 0 and Group 0+. These are baby seats – rear facing for a child up to 13kg.

•

The type of child restraint to be used is determined by the weight of the child:

child seats and booster seat cushions.

‘Child restraints’ is a collective term in the seatbelt wearing legislation for baby seats,

•

also under 12 years of age) cannot travel in the front.

If no seatbelts are fitted in the front, then children under 135cms in height (who are

•

Freelance instructors of adventurous activities

•

Climbing walls (where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff)

•

Overseas expedition providers

•

Educational tour operators

•

•

Ski companies

•

Activity centres

•

An External Provider Form is required for:

Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge.

**2.**

These will apply to all visits of a particular type as the nature of the visit remains constant

and the same general controls will apply each time. Typically schools/services and venues

will have generic risk assessments for routine visits to avoid unnecessary repetition when

organising visits and to ensure that there is a consistent approach to managing risk.

The Council Health & Safety Team have produced a series of generic risk assessments.

These are available on the Resources section of Evolve.

When using generic risk assessments the group leader must ensure that the risk

assessment is relevant to the proposed visit. The group leaders should ensure that the

controls in the generic risk assessment are in place and evaluate if this is suitable and

sufficient, or if further action is necessary. This should then be signed and dated by the

group leader.

**Event Specific Risk Assessment – (carried out before the visit takes place)**

This considers any significant hazards or risks relating to a visit that are not covered within

the generic risk assessment, and should take into account the venue, activities, group,

transport, plan B etc. ‘Significant’ implies those hazards that could result in serious harm or

affect several people. The process should identify the hazards, who might be affected by

them, and the measures in place to control the risks.

The risk assessment must be recorded (normally by the Group Leader), using the risk

assessment form EV2 (or alternative) and approved by the EVC/Head before the visit

takes place.

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the person carrying out the risk assessment, is deemed to be acceptable. The process is

Teacher/Service Manager. Completion of the EV6 does not necessarily signify that the

venue meets the needs of your group. A pre-visit and further information, such as

references, should also be used to judge a providers suitability. Information on whether

providers hold the LOtC Quality badge can be found at www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk.

If the external provider makes any alterations to the wording of the form or is unwilling to

comply, then you must discuss this with the provider and if necessary the Council Health &

Safety Team. Upload a copy of the completed External Provider Form to your Evolve

submission

**Risk Assessment**

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause real

harm and suffering to people, together with an identification of the control measures

necessary in order to reduce the risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of

The decision to select an external provider is the responsibility of the EVC and Head

applicable to **all** visits. As with all areas of health and safety you need to adopt a sensible

and proportionate approach to the management of risk while planning and undertaking

educational visits. For further advice please see the Health & Safety Executive website.

There are three ‘levels’ of risk assessment. (Further guidance can be found in the risk

assessment section of the Health & Safety Executive website -

www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm):

**Generic and Venue – (normally already in place)**

**1.**

•

Manages risk effectively.

•

Reviews the experience with you and acts on feedback

•

Offers activities, experiences and resources which meet learners needs

Provides accurate information about its offer

•

Has a process in place to assist users in planning the learning experience effectively

•

the classroom

Has pledged to engage in an ongoing process to sustain high quality learning outside

Further information on the Quality Badge scheme can be found on the LOtC website at

www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk.

**Adventurous Activities**

**When provided at an outdoor centre or by a contractor**

The Activity Centres (Young Person’s Safety) Act 1995 and the Associated Adventure

Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 are in place to ensure the safety of young people

involved in adventure in hazardous environments. Schools and youth group planning to

visit an adventure centre or employ a provider in the UK should check with the Adventure

Activities Licencing Authority (AALA) on the licence status of the provider to ensure they

23

any control measures is deemed to be acceptable.

leader and/or supervising members of staff, the residual risk following implementation of

An activity should only take place/continue if, in the professional judgement of the group

accident.

significant events or decisions can assist the post-visit review following an incident or

It is not necessary to record on-going risk assessments during the visit, although notes of

Relevant aspects of the risk assessment process should be shared with staff and helpers

**responsibility of all involved in the visit, not just the visit leader.**

modified or curtailed (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances. **This is the**

should be monitored throughout the visit, and where appropriate activities must be

the single most important aspect of risk management of visits, and hence safety. Risks

The on-going monitoring of all aspects of the visit by the Group Leader and other staff is

**On-going – (carried out continuously throughout the visit)**

**3.**

involved in the visit, as well as participants and where appropriate parents.

Participants who are involved in a visit’s planning and organisation, and who are well

prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. It is therefore good

practice to involve participants in the risk assessment process.

**The Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge**

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom has developed a badging scheme for

provider organisations, which is respected by the DfE and the OEAP.

A Quality Badge will be awarded to LOtC provider who –

•

**regardless of whether the group will be led by a school, service or another licensed**

level when it would take 30 minutes to reach an accessible road or refuge. Off-piste skiing

also requires a licence.

**Caving** – the exploration of underground passages, disused mines, or natural caves which

requires the use of special equipment or expertise.

**Watersports** – sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and windsurfing, on the sea, tidal

waters including estuaries, the tidal reaches of rivers, sea lochs and harbours, inland

waters at a location where any part of those waters is more that 50 metres from the

nearest land, and turbulent inland waters such as weirs, rapids, waterfalls and fast flowing

currents. Rowing is exempt.

**All AALA licence visits require approval via the Council Health & Safety Team**

moorland (open uncultivated land) at any height, or on ground over 600 metres above sea

**provider.**

The armed forces who offer adventure activities are not licensed by the Adventure

Activities Licensing Authority. Schools and youth groups planning such a visit should

ensure adequate safety standards are observed in all activities and public liability

insurance is in place.

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years of age are not exempt from licensing regulations and the school **must** conform with

(www.hse.gov.uk/aala).

**When provided by a schools own staff**

Single school groups consisting of children and young people under 18 years of age and

over 18’s in full time education are exempt from licensing regulations and therefore do not

require an AALA licence. However, such groups should follow the AALA criteria for

managing safety during adventurous activities. Group leaders of single school groups are

required to complete an Activity Leader Form (ALF) via the Evolve system to gain Council

Health & Safety approval.

Groups of young people from different schools, or with other group members under 18

are licensed to deliver the particular adventurous activities to young people

AALA requirements, including holding a licence or working under the Council Licence

where one exists.

The following activities (where undertaken by young people from different schools under

18 years of age and over 18’s in full time education in Durham Schools and

unaccompanied by a parent), need an Adventure Activities Licence:

**Climbing** – climbing, sea-level traversing, abseiling or scrambling over natural terrain or

certain man-made structures requiring the use of special rock-climbing or ice-climbing

equipment or expertise, gorge walking and ghyll scrambling.

**Trekking** – going on foot, horse, pony, pedal cycle, skis (not piste), skates or sledges over

**Criteria for approval**

Approval will normally be granted where the leader of the activity has recent relevant

experience, and:

•

Is appropriately qualified through the relevant national governing body, or

•

Has a ‘statement of competence’ from an appropriate ‘technical advisor’. For most

activities the competence required by a technical advisor is stipulated by the activity’s

national governing body. For further clarification regarding a technical advisor

‘statement of competence’ please contact the Council Health & Safety Team.

In some cases approval may be granted where no qualification is held, but the person

concerned is deemed by the Council Health & Safety Team to have a sufficient level of

competence, past experience, attendance at training courses etc.

Approval will always be subject to a requirement that the leader must operate at all times

within the remit of his/her qualifications and competence, and in accordance with national

governing body guidelines where these exist. Approval may also be subject to other

conditions which will be specified by the Council, specific to the visit.

Where there is insufficient information for us to make a decision regarding approval, then

the applicant may be asked to provide further information (e.g. evidence of awards,

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which will request further details regarding the proposed venture (e.g. dates, venues,

Approval for CYPS staff to lead an adventurous activity can be gained using the online

Activity Leader Form as below.

Staff who wish to **lead** (i.e. supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity must obtain

approval from the Council Health & Safety Team before the activity takes place.

The proposed leader must have their own account on Evolve (obtainable via their EVC). In

the ‘My Details’ section of their account the leader must enter details of any adventure

activity awards held, including dates, and upload copies of these awards.

The EVC (or Group Leader) should request approval for the visit via Evolve as usual.

During this process Evolve will ask for an Activity Leader Form (ALF) to be completed,

**Procedure for obtaining approval**

numbers etc). The ALF will then be embedded within the approval request for that

particular visit.

On receipt of an approval request (and embedded ALF), the Council Health & Safety

Team will consider the proposed activity relative to the leader’s stated competencies and

qualifications.

Where approval is granted for the member for staff to lead the activity, the visit will be

approved by the Council Health & Safety Team via Evolve.

Where approval is not granted, the approval request will be returned to the EVC with an

attached note. Where this is the case the member of staff concerned **must not** lead the

activity.

A local pre check of the group is required approximately 2 weeks before qualifying

•

Ventures that are fully accompanied do not need to notify the Wild Country Network

Co-ordinator.

•

Ventures that are unaccompanied for part of the venture or wholly unaccompanied,

(practice or qualifying) do need to notify the Wild Country Network Co-ordinator.

•

Notification needs to be received 6 weeks prior to the venture if assessment is

required or 4 weeks if assessment is not required. Route cards and route tracings

must accompany the green notification forms.

•

ventures to confirm the competence of the group. The High Pennines and Durham

Dales Wild Country Network Assessor will carry this out.

•

A copy of the green expedition notification form (green form) must be sent to the DofE

Awards Officer.

Those organising expeditions need to be aware of the conditions and guidance in the

Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Handbook, Programmes File and Expedition Guide.

Details of the Wild Country Expedition Areas and Co-ordinators can be found on the Duke

of Edinburgh website – www.dofe.org.

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The Head Teacher/Service Manager is responsible for ensuring that employees are fully

requested by the Council Health & Safety Team.

The approval granted is solely in respect of a member of staff’s competence to lead the

technical aspects of the specific adventurous activity detailed. It is not an indication in

respect of other aspects of the visit such as general management and supervision skills,

the assessment of which may be the responsibility of head teacher/service manager

and/or EVC.

**The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award**

The guideline in this document must be used when managing expeditions and other

activities relating to the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award.

**Responsibility for Safety**

experience, log book details, etc). In some cases a meeting with the applicant may be

qualified and experienced and hold the relevant national governing body qualification for

work in the outdoors.

The qualified and experienced leader has full responsibility for the safety of the young

people whilst out on expedition. Suitably experienced and competent assistant leaders and

other adults should work under the direction of the group leader and must be competent in

the task they are asked to undertake.

**Notification/Approval Procedures for Expeditions**

All Duke of Edinburgh’s Award (DofE) expeditions are regarded as ‘adventurous’ and

require Council approval.

In addition, if groups venture into Duke of Edinburgh’s Wild Country Areas then the

appropriate Network Co-ordinator must be notified in line with the following guidance:

of a Department of Trade approved bonding body; such as ABTS (association of British

windows should be made secure to prevent unauthorised visitors or intruders.

All staff and young people should be aware of the emergency procedures and escape

routes in the event of fire.

**Visits Abroad**

Visits abroad provide valuable and rewarding educational experiences. Such visits require

detailed planning and preparation. Group leaders should seek to ensure they use the

services of a reputable tour operator experienced in group travel. Air travel organisers may

be licensed through ATOL (Air Travel Organisers License) for all or part of a package. This

licence is a legal requirement and provides security against a licence holder going out of

business. It is recommended that establishments use tour companies which are members

In the absence of 24 hours staffing of hotel/hostel reception areas, external doors and

Travel Agents) or AITO (Association of Independent Tour Operators). Ensure you have

ready access to your insurance company telephone number. The Package Travel

Regulations 1992 may apply. Where schools independently provide a package they should

ensure they act within the regulations.

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EVC, Head Teacher, parents and staff involved are fully satisfied with this arrangement.

All residential visits (apart from those venues with delegated approval status) must be

submitted for Health & Safety approval, using Evolve, at least 3 weeks before the visit is

due to take place.

The External Provider Form (EV6) must be completed if there is an element of instruction,

staffing or guiding as part of the agreement with the accommodation provider, where they

do not hold the LOtC Quality Badge.

Mixed Groups should, where possible, be accompanied by at least 1 male and 1 female

member of staff. If a responsible adult is used such as a partner, parent or student, the

relevant disclosure barring service checks must be obtained. For primary aged children it

may be acceptable for female teachers only to accompany mixed groups, provided the

**Residential Visits**

If the residential accommodation has not been used before, a preliminary visit is strongly

recommended. If this is not practical, for example due to distance, the group leader should

make sufficient enquiries with the accommodation to be satisfied that it will be suitable for

the group involved.

On arrival it is advised that staff check out the accommodation, rooms, campsites etc and

report any damage to the head of the centre/manager before pupils access the rooms.

Teachers should be accommodated on every floor where there are children or young

people.

•

group.

approach a police official and show the card if he/she becomes separated from the

becomes lost. Children and young people should be instructed to go to a local shop or

contact telephone number of the group leader or residential base, to call if he/she

Follow good practice and each child or young person should carry a card with a

•

telephone number of the hotel or hostel in case of separation.

classed as non-UK residents. Ensure all members of the party carry the address and

Check visa and passport requirements including those children and young people

•

Agree codes on conduct with children and young people.

•

Discuss any local customs and cultural issues.

•

adventurous activities.

Risk assess all activities planned for the visit, particularly hotel swimming pools and all

•

Visit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for the latest travel advice –

28

itinerary due to unforeseen circumstances.

alternative arrangements so they are prepared should the need arise to change the

weeks in advance of the visit. Group leaders are encouraged to have a Plan B, making

Approval should be sought from the Council Health & Safety Team via Evolve at least 3

www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

including the use of telephones.

Seek advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

•

should also be held by the emergency contacts in the UK.

Photocopies of passports and other essential documentation may prove useful. Copies

•

Consider language ability as part of the risk assessment.

Enquire about insurance cover should a parent need to travel out to the resort as a

•

Ensure the group has comprehensive travel insurance covering all proposed activities.

•

insurance-card.

countries of the European Union, available online at www.gov.uk/european-health-

Ensure a European Health Insurance Card is obtained for all visits to member

result of an accident/incident involving their child. Some policies provide cover for only

•

Identify whether there are medical requirements imposed by the country to be visited.

•

operator.

element of instruction, staffing or guiding as part of the agreement with the tour

Ensure the External Provider Form (EV6) is completed, where required, if there is an

•

•

Brief children and young about any local hazards and emergency procedures,

•

could travel out to the area to support the group leader in the event of an emergency.

Identify an emergency contact at home/back at base who holds a valid passport and

•

significant events.

Make regular contact with the school throughout the visit to keep contacts informed of

In addition to Planning Checklist group leaders should:

emergency contact needs to be informed.

Know the international dialling code in the event of a serious accident or the

•

are current and suitable to enter the destination country.

Ensure all children and young people, teachers and accompanying adults passports

•

with parents prior to the departure of the group.

1 parent to travel whilst others will pay for both parents. These details must be shared

www.snowsportengland.org.uk or a statement of competence by an appropriate technical

instructor) must:

•

be qualified as below, *and*

•

have been approved by the Council Health & Safety Team, *and*

•

operate at all times within the remit of their qualifications and competence.

**Skiing.**

The minimum qualification to **lead** skiing on snow is:

The Alpine Snowsports Course Leader Award (ASCL) from Snowsport England –

A member of staff intending to **lead** skiing or snowboarding (i.e. not using a ski school

adviser.

**Snowboarding.**

The minimum qualification to **lead** snowboarding on snow is:

The Alpine Snowsports Course Leader Award (ASCL) from Snowsport England –

www.snowsportengland.org.uk or a statement of competence by an appropriate technical

adviser.

An increasing number of resorts and ski schools make the wearing of a properly fitted ski

helmet mandatory for young people. In some countries this is a legal requirement and in

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allowing more young people to participate), etc.

whom should be a member of staff. Further advice can be provided by the Council Health

& Safety Team 03000 265781.

**Snow**

Snow sports (skiing and snowboarding) are regarded as adventurous activities, and the

visit must therefore be approved by the Council Health & Safety Team.

Group leaders are particularly encouraged to consider the benefits of snow sports visits

taking place during term time as opposed to during holiday periods. These benefits

include: greater choice generally, less queuing for lifts, less crowded slopes therefore less

chance of collisions occurring, less crowded resort, higher possibility of ‘sole use’ of

accommodation, lessons more likely to be conducted by permanent snow sport

establishment instructors (as opposed to ‘casual’ instructors), greater likelihood of English

speaking instructors, considerable cost savings through avoiding high season (possibly

In normal circumstances each party should be accompanied by two adults, at least one of

It is recommended that a member of staff intending to organise a snow sport visit (but not

instruct, lead or supervise on snow) holds the Ski Course Organiser Award, and must have

previously accompanied at least on educational snow sports visit.

Young people may only ski or snowboard when under the direction of an appropriately

qualified and competent person. This would normally be an instructor employed by the

local snow sports establishment. Visit organisers should therefore consider the merits of

fully instructed lessons of 4/5 hours duration per day.

Where a travel company or ski tour operator is providing an element of instruction, staffing

or guiding, the External Provider Form (if they do not hold the LOtC Quality Badge) should

be completed.

Expeditions and Fieldwork’ course organised by the Royal Geographical Society and

•

and communication with staff in the host school. In particular group leaders should ensure:

The success of a foreign exchange is largely dependant on good relationships, planning

**Exchange Visits**

endorsed by the national Outdoor Education Advisers’ Panel.

Health & Safety Team recommends that the group leader attends the one day ‘Overseas

The Group Leader should hold an appropriate First Aid qualification and the Council

to comply with the minimum standards specified in this document.

requirements relating to ‘Best Value’ are met. Overseas expedition providers are required

educational aims of the visit, that appropriate progression takes place, and that the

commitment with an external provider. In particular, establishments should consider the

checklist of vital aspects that must be considered prior to the establishment making a

Appropriate pairing arrangements are made.

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There are clear arrangements for collecting and returning children and young people.

•

Host families are aware of any medical or dietary needs.

•

proposal is initiated (normally 18-24 months before the venture). This document includes a

•

leader and the host family.

Children and young people are aware of the ground rules agreed between the party

•

by telephone, with a member of their own staff.

All group members have easy and accessible contact in the host country, preferably

visited.

when required by an individual resort or local/national legislation in the country being

•

aged under 14 in Italy *or*

•

racing *or*

•

aged under 8 *or*

•

Suitable helmets must be worn by participants at all times when:

snowboarding.

the National Library – other documents – on Evolve). This should be referred to when the

Further guidance is contained within ‘Guidance for Overseas Expeditions’(download via

an element of instruction, staffing or guidance.

External providers should complete the ‘External Provider’ (EV6) form if they are supplying

typically take place in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries.

Overseas Expeditions (for the purposes of this document) are defined as those which

most it is strongly recommended that all students wear helmets for skiing and

correctly planned, managed and conducted.

young people, and CYPS fully supports and encourages overseas expeditions that are

Overseas expeditions can potentially bring immense educational benefits to children and

**Overseas Expeditions**

Young people must not participate in off-piste activities.

such as a walk along a riverbank or sea shore, collecting from ponds and streams, or

paddling/walking in gentle, shallow water. It does not apply to swimming and other

activities that require water safety qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft. Note

that ‘shallow’ generally means up to the knees.

As with all activities the group leaders judgment will be paramount. The activity or journey

should be matched to the party in terms of aims, terrain, distance, equipment available,

clothing worn, weather conditions (both current and forecast), degree of supervision and

time available.

Water margin activities are not classed as adventurous and so do not require specific

approval from the Council Health & Safety Team.

Water margin activities should be approved by the Head Teacher/Service Manager and

recorded on Evolve.

Water margin activities are defined as learning activities that take place near or in water –

If the planned activity exceeds the above definition, the visit is ‘water based’ and will

therefore require approval from the Council Health & Safety Team.

The Royal Life Saving Society (RLSS) has developed a ‘Water Safety Management

Programme’ to help leaders gain confidence in managing risk and reacting to emergencies

on the water margin. Contact: www.rlss.org.uk/national-water-safety-management-

programme.

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time), the requirement for DBS checks are lifted: the host parents (UK or abroad)

The school retains a list of all children and young people involved (including host

children) and their family names and addresses.

•

Children and young people living with host families should have easy access by

telephone to their teachers.

•

Children and young people are briefed regarding emergency arrangements and

encourage contact with their staff in case of anxiety or concern.

•

Where foreign exchanges are organised by a UK school, and are of less than 28 days,

or where private arrangements are made directly between parents (for any length of

•

would not need to be DBS checked. However, the staff that take the children and are

responsible for their supervision on the trip would need to be DBS checked.

Host families will not be subject to UK law. Group leaders should seek reassurances from

the host school regarding procedures for vetting the suitability of host families. The host

school or placing agency should have appropriate measures in place for carrying out

checks to ensure the health, safety and welfare of exchange children and young people. If

these are not in place the group leader should seek further assurances and/or reconsider

whether the visit should take place.

**Water Margin Activities**

Further information can be found in the OEAP publication ‘Group Safety at Water Margins’.

**Beach Safety**

The beaches and coastal areas of Durham and elsewhere offer a wide range of

opportunities for both study based and activity based use. However, whilst presenting

many challenges and interest, areas where the land meets the sea present their own

inherent hazards. A high level of vigilance and supervision is needed when close to any

stretch of water, even shallow water. The sea needs extra care and attention. Group

leaders planning activities in coastal areas should consider the following points

•

Tides, swells, wind, currents, sandbanks and cliffs can present difficulties. Exit routes

must be checked well in advance and at all times during the visit or activity.

•

the leader in swimming activities).

The group leader should be aware of the prevailing local conditions: surf and tide,

currents, wind, cold water, weeds, polluted water and stability of the sea or river bed

may all affect safety. Gain access to local information where possible.

•

Swimming is inadvisable no matter how inviting the sea may seem and should never

be allowed as an impromptu activity. Group leaders who decide to allow swimming

should ensure this is part of a carefully supervised activity conducted by suitably

qualified leaders, with adequate lifeguard provision and experienced adults in the

group who are qualified to enter the water to rescue a swimmer in difficulty. The group

leader must be fully confident of undertaking a rescue of any member of the group and

remain in control of the whole group, including those in and out of the water.

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activity.

‘Water based’ activities are regarded as adventurous and therefore require approval from

the Council Health & Safety Team via the Evolve system.

The responsibility for safety will therefore rest with either:

•

An external provider – in which case the External Provider Form should be completed

(if they do not hold the LOtC Quality Badge), or

•

A member of school/service staff – in which case the Activity Leader Form must be

completed via Evolve stating the persons qualifications and experience to lead the

**Water Based Activities**

In order to participate in ‘water based’ activities, participants should normally be water

confident. Participants who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to

risk assessment, and taking into account factors such as the activity taking place, staff

competence and supervision arrangements. Reference to national guidelines may help in

this process. The level of water confidence of all participants must be known by the activity

leader prior to the commencement of ‘water based’ activities.

Leaders should have a knowledge of the water conditions/hazards (and potential changes)

that might be encountered, and prepare accordingly. Local advice must be sought where

appropriate in unfamiliar locations.

Personal buoyancy conforming to the appropriate national governing body standard must

be worn at all times by all participants in water based activities (except at the discretion of

Society UK (RLSS) (or equivalent in the country visited). See www.rlss.org.uk/national-

A valid National Beach Lifeguard Qualification administered by the Royal Lifesaving

•

For free swimming activity:

Note: Council Health & Safety Team approval **is** required for this activity.

vocational-beach-lifeguard-qualification.

**Open water swimming**

undertaking swimming activities. The following criteria apply:

Children and young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst

**Swimming**

the necessary experience and competence to undertake.

Health & Safety Team. Only undertake those activities and projects which you have

A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.

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website for further detail – www.rlss.org.uk.

location used must fall within the RLSS definition of a ‘safer bathing area’. See the RLSS

In addition, the designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the

from the Coastguard, Lifeguards, the District Council, the Met Office or the Council

•

A valid RLSS UK Emergency Response (Activity Supervisor) Award or

•

For structured or programmed activity:

•

•

sewage, jelly fish, barbed wire or marker flares.

Be aware of the possible presence of dangerous debris such as glass, syringes,

•

separated from the rest. Look out for warning notices and flags.

public are present. Establish a ‘base’ to which members of the group must return if

Beaches present their own problems, particularly when large numbers of the general

possibility of children who suddenly panic in cold water.

Risk assessments for outdoor water-based activities should take account of the

•

the water.

leader must be able to remain in full control of all pupils, including those in and out of

with sudden drops, submerged rocks, sandbanks or large waves. Again, the group

Paddling in very shallow water needs to be strictly supervised, especially on coasts

management should reflect this on very exposed paths. Be prepared to seek advice

experience rapid changes in weather conditions. Clothing, route choice and group

between pupils and the edge of the cliff. Cliff tops are exposed areas and may

responsible adult at the back. Accompanying adults should act as a ‘buffer zone’

On cliff tops remain on the path. The group leader should be at the front and a

•

sunburn and heat stroke. This should be considered as part of the risk assessment.

Children, young people and staff on beach related visits should be made of the risk of

•

•

Weed covered rocks may make surfaces very slippery.

•

groups under such sites or allow young people to knock down or throw stones.

Climbing on rocky beaches and cliffs should be discouraged. Do not work or base

•

Digging in the sand, particularly in cliffs or dunes could cause cave-ins.

•

Intervene to prevent behaviour which is unsafe.

•

Anticipate problems and prevent accidents.

•

Communicate effectively with pool users.

•

If necessary, brief pool users in advance regarding ‘rules’ (e.g. no diving, running etc).

•

case of an emergency)

control. (Note: the lifeguard should remain on the poolside at all times except in the

Keep a close watch over the pool and the pool users, exercising appropriate levels of

Full familiarisation of the systems described should be walked through at the pool, and

34

increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

other persons (e.g. guests) are able to swim at the same time. Other pool users may

Staff will also need to ascertain whether they have exclusive use of the pool or whether

venue will provide back up for the lifeguard during an emergency.

staff should be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the

pool and the emergency plan, which should be considered before swimming takes place.

The above must be accomplished in the context of the normal operating procedures for the

Give immediate first aid to any casualty.

•

Carry out a rescue from the water.

appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.

according to the guidelines given in the Hotel (and other) swimming pools section below.

other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified

For swimming lessons, the group leader should ensure that swimming teacher in charge or

‘remote’ supervision.

However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or

Unless suitably qualified, School/CYPS staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding.

For publicly lifeguarded pools abroad, the group leaders must seek assurances that

to ensure teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.

Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures

UK swimming pool safety is guided by various Health & Safety at Work Acts and

Note: Council Health & Safety Team approval is **not** required for this activity.

**Swimming pools (lifeguarded)**

Staff leading structured swimming lessons should hold an ASA level 2 Swimming Teacher

qualification or higher. The current Council teacher to pupil ration (as recommend by the

ASA) for swimming lessons is 1:20.

**Hotel (and other) swimming pools**

Note: Council Health & Safety Team approval is required for this activity if lifeguarding

arrangements are not provided at the venue.

**If lifeguarding arrangements are not provided at the venue then the group leader will**

**bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety.**

The role of the lifeguard is to:

•

•

Visits to private working farms, agricultural college farms, ‘model’ farms and rural studies

**Farm Visits**

location/behaviour of the group at all times.

the swimming activity safely, including regular headcounts and attention to the

The presence of a lifeguard does not reduce the duty of the group leader to manager

centres are a regular feature of education for children and young people from both rural

undertaken the ‘Beach’ module of the RLSS Water Safety Management Programme.

the RLSS UK National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches, or has

Whilst it is not essential, the Council strongly recommends that the activity leader hold

•

boards etc.

written or verbal safety advice provided by the on-duty lifeguard or local information

The group leader must ensure that swimmers and non-swimmers are aware of any

acquiring infection, particularly gastroenteritis. Several micro-organisms are commonly

35

to their mouths when eating or simply sucking their fingers or thumbs.

In addition, fingers may become contaminated with animal faeces which is then transferred

of transmitting infection directly because the substance eaten is infected or contaminated.

in faecal droppings and elsewhere in the farm environment. Farm visits may result in a risk

present in livestock animals and may cause gastroenteritis in humans. They may be found

Experience shows that visits can carry a small risk for the children and young people of

**The Risks**

feedstuff and raw milk.

touch livestock, help bottle feed calves and lambs, and taste things such as animal

them to appreciate aspects of rural life. Children and young people are often invited to

and urban environments. Such visits are usually highly beneficial to children in helping

by RLSS UK (or equivalent in the country visited). See www.rlss.org.uk/national-pool-

Swimming Teachers and Coaches (or equivalent) **or** a valid RLSS UK Emergency

For structured or programmed activity – a valid RLSS UK National Rescue Award for

•

lifeguard-qualification.

Response (Pool) Award. See www.rlss.org.uk/national-rescue-award-for-swimming-

For free swimming activity – a valid National Pool Lifeguard qualification administered

•

The following awards/qualifications apply:

staff.

lifeguard action, and supervision should remain the responsibility of the school/service

Public open water venues (beaches, lakes etc) with an active lifeguard service:

•

duty.

Swimming may only take place in designated, marked areas, and with the lifeguard on

•

**The group leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety.**

If a senior student holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency

A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.

•

teachers-coaches-nrastc **or**

Keep their fingers out of their mouths and do not eat their sandwiches etc until they

is likely. If this happens they should be made to wash their hands afterwards.

Children and young people should be closely supervised if direct contact with animals

•

Do not drink from farm taps.

•

Do not sample, taste or take away and animal feed stuff, raw milk etc.

•

have washed their hands.

•

•

points in these guidelines should be covered.

There should be a briefing for children and young people at the farm at which the

•

dressing.

Ask children and young people with cuts or abrasions to cover them with a suitable

•

**Other Hazards**

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The dangers of moving machinery and mechanised tools such as chain saw etc.

•

experience difficulty.

At harvest time some children and young people with asthma or hay fever may

•

need to be aware of:

Modern farms can present hazards to children, young people and adults. Group leaders

Carry out a pre-visit to identify specific hazards.

pits) other than designated play/rest areas.

Do not let children or young people play in the farm area (grain storage tanks, slurry

•

machines.

Consider the risks of allowing children or young people to ride on tractors or other farm

•

Never let children or young people place their faces against the animals.

•

with dung. Areas should be hosed where appropriate.

Plenty of fresh bedding should be provided for stock to minimise the risk of contact

•

visited by children and young people.

A high standard of physical and general cleanliness is required in all areas to be

•

young people and teachers on their arrival.

The hazards that farms can pose to personal safety should be stressed to children and

•

*For the Farmer*

be re-emphasised before and during the visit. To this end the following advice is given:

Parents, teachers and children should be made aware of these measures and they should

environment. Therefore prevention depends primarily on simple hygiene measures.

infection from the farm environment and its products than those who live in that

Farmers and visit organisers need to be aware that visitors may be more susceptible to

•

*For Group Leaders/Teachers/Parents/Volunteers*

Further advice/training is available from www.farmsforschools.org.uk.

•

Children and young people must not be encouraged to taste animal feed or raw milk.

**Health Precautions**

•

taken on site.

A separate clean area must be set aside for eating purposes of refreshments are

•

and disposable hand towels (not roller towels). Toilet facilities should also be available.

Adequate hand washing facilities must be provided for visitors, i.e. soap, running water

•

Sick animals must be isolated well away from visitors.

Do carry out and record a risk assessment for new activities. This should not be an

capacity of the visit leader and school/service emergency contacts.

**‘Adventures’ on the school/setting site**

An increasing number of schools now utilise their own sites for a range of activities. The

Council strongly encourages this approach due to its low cost and frequent accessibility.

Activities range from gardening/growing activities, forest school activities, Team Building,

mobile climbing walls, geo-caching, camping/sleepovers etc.

The Council does not operate an approval system for most on site activities. However, the

following advice should be followed when developing ‘in house’ activities or by employing

external providers:

•

for serious incidents – where the scale/seriousness of the event may be beyond the

onerous task, and should always form a key element when developing new activities.

The risk assessment should be reviewed on every occasion that the activity is

repeated, and a note made of any amendments (e.g. additional hazards presented by

the special needs of a particular pupil).

•

Do consider your choice of materials, how they are used for ‘team building’ and

‘problem solving’ type activities, and how closely the group should be controlled while

using the equipment.

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All staff involved in a visit should be aware of the action to be taken in the event of an

Some farms hold stocks of highly toxic chemicals, used in spraying etc contact with

which presents a clear hazard.

•

The possible risk of diseases being transmitted to pregnant women during lambing

time.

Although the above guidelines have been written with farms in mind, the general principles

should be followed when visiting other similar establishments (zoos, wildlife reserves, etc).

**Emergency Procedures**

All schools and services should consider the need for robust emergency arrangements as

part of the visit planning and risk assessment process.

•

emergency.

It is vital that **all staff** understand the first aid and emergency procedures, not just the visit

leader. Particular consideration should be given to participants that have special

educational needs or medical conditions.

For all visits:

A completed: **‘Emergency Card - Group Leader’ (EV7)** form must be with the Group

Leader at all times.

Where the emergency contacts will not be at their workplace during the visit – A completed

‘**Emergency Card – Emergency Contacts**’ (EV8) form must be with the Emergency

Contact(s) at all times.

CYPS uses the Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU) for out of office hours emergency support

•

**School Climbing Walls – Record Keeping**

Where a school or setting has an on-site climbing wall where either top roping or lead

climbing is undertaken then it is essential that clear records are kept of:

•

Operating procedures.

•

Safety equipment purchase dates and inspection dates.

Staff qualification and training and training updates.

•

Belay point inspection dates.

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When gardening and growing, remember the need for simple hygiene, and take advice

Do consider staff training for grounds based activities, especially for those which may

offer more significant risks such as fire-lighting, outdoor cooking, using hand tools for

conservation work etc.

•

Ensure that any contractor has adequate third party liability insurance, and you are

absolutely clear about your contractual obligations, including any costs you may have

to bear in the event of cancellation.

•

•

on suitable plants/animals for a school/setting environment.

•

When considering larger scale developments (e.g. school climbing walls, on-site MTB

tracks, high ropes structures etc) seek further advice with reference to their safe

installation, maintenance and staffing/supervision needs.

On-site activities that would require Council Health & Safety approval (via Evolve) are

those that would fall into the category residential (camping etc) The normal approval

process should be followed for his kind of activity.

section of Evolve.

Telephone: 03000 260535

DCC Press Office

Telephone: 03000 268070

DCC Insurance

Resources

Telephone: 03000 269648

Email:

Outdoor Education

The EWE Centre

Service

**Technical Experts**

We occasionally require the services of an agreed ‘technical expert’. Experts have

been identified for canoeing/kayaking and improvised rafting, rock climbing/

mountaineering and off-road cycling. Further details can be found in the Resources

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