

Section 1

Responsibilities

General

- 1) The aim of this Section is to clarify the major responsibilities of all parties involved in the visit. It should:
 - help to ensure that no vital issue is overlooked
 - clarify organisational responsibility
 - encourage awareness of the vital issues of safety and well-being
 - ensure appropriate support for leaders

The visit leader

- 2) In addition to the responsibilities implicit in the above paragraphs, the visit leader will have overall responsibility for management of the visit and must:
 - follow LEA and governing body regulations, guidelines and policies
 - recognise that whilst leading the visit he / she is representing the Headteacher, School, Senior Youth Officer, Youth Centre and LEA
 - ensure that all accompanying adults, whether employees or volunteers, are fully briefed on their roles and responsibilities
 - ensure the overall maintenance of supervision, order and discipline at all times
 - make adequate arrangements for the safety and well-being of all persons, particularly young people at all times
 - introduce appropriate child protection measures
 - make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies in conjunction with your EVC, (see Section 9) and ensure that all accompanying staff are familiar with these procedures
 - arrange for clearly understood delegation in the absence of the visit leader
 - ensure that persons instructing adventure activities are competent and properly qualified
 - ensure that the visit and activities are suitable for the group
 - ensure that accompanying adults are aware of any special educational or medical needs
 - prepare & organise a comprehensive risk management system including obtaining the Head's/EVC written approval

Leaders / employees

- 3) In addition to the general responsibilities outlined above, leaders must recognise that they act as employees, whenever the visit takes place. They have a responsibility for:
- maintaining order and discipline
 - safeguarding the health, well-being and safety of the young people in their care
 - informing the visit leader of any relevant incidents affecting, or likely to affect, group members

Adult volunteers

- 4) Volunteers who are not employees at the school/centre must:
- understand and agree to the expectations of them
 - understand their relationship to the young people, staff and visit leader
 - recognise the limits of their responsibilities
 - ensure they are not left in sole charge of young people unless this has been formally agreed through a risk assessment process
 - follow instructions from staff
 - raise concerns for young people's welfare with the visit leader
- 5) Adult volunteers must understand that the principle of 'duty of care' will apply to all who are in a supervisory capacity, though it is likely that courts would expect a greater level of care from staff than from voluntary helpers.

The educational visits co-ordinator

- 6) The functions of the EVC are to:
- work as delegated on behalf of the head/LEA/governors
 - support the headteachers and governors with approval decisions
 - ensure the competence of the staff and volunteers to lead or otherwise supervise a visit
 - organise the training of leaders and others accompanying a visit
 - ensure CRB checks are in place as necessary
 - ensure that parental consent (or refusal) is obtained
 - organise the emergency arrangements and ensures emergency contact for each visit
 - keep records of individual visits including accident/incident/near miss reports
 - review systems and monitor practice

The head teacher / senior youth officer

- 7) Each head of establishment is responsible for ensuring that governing body and LEA policy is implemented. Under his / her conditions of employment is a responsibility for ensuring that all activities are properly planned, appropriately supervised and risks assessed by a competent person.

In particular heads/senior youth officers must ensure:

- that they delegate tasks to EVC as appropriate
 - that the visit leader is an appropriately experienced and competent member of staff
 - the suitability, number and competence of all adults accompanying or instructing the party
 - that adequate child protection measures are in place
 - proper and effective support structures are in place in the event of difficulty or emergency, including means of contacting the Education Officer (schools) and the LEA
 - notification approval of the visit to the LEA, where required, and that appropriate insurance cover is in place
 - that visits are evaluated to inform future visits
- 8) Headteachers/senior youth officers are encouraged to review visit procedures with their governing bodies/ management groups on an annual basis in order to ensure that they reflect the current thinking of the governing body/management group and are up-to-date in relation to staff changes.

Governing bodies / management groups

- 9) As part of its responsibility for general conduct, each governing body / management group must:
- ensure that a policy exists for the co-ordination of visits and for their effective and safe management
 - assure itself that appropriate risk management procedures are in place
 - decide whether the school/centre or LEA will approve adventure activity (see Section 3) (applies only to Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools)
 - ensure that the LEA is notified when appropriate
 - determine what types of visit may require its specific attention
 - determine its procedures for responding to a major emergency
 - have a Charging and Remissions Policy (see Section 7)

For further advice please refer also to paragraphs 12 - 19

The LEA

- 10) As employer, the Local Education Authority (or governing body if a Voluntary Aided or Foundation school), is responsible for the actions of its employees whilst acting in the course of their employment. By association this includes responsibility for the safety and well-being of young people in its care and volunteers assisting in the delivery of educational visits.
- 11) To ensure these responsibilities are met, the Authority provides this guidance document as a statement of good practice and will continue to provide up-to-date advice, a system of monitoring certain activities, training opportunities for leaders and an emergency support service.

Advice to governing bodies

General

- 12) To assist governing bodies meet the responsibilities detailed in paragraph 9, the LEA provides the following guidance:
 - It is not practicable for the LEA to ensure compliance with this guidance. However, failure to ensure compliance, on the part of local managers and responsible bodies, could constitute criminal and/or criminal negligence in circumstances where it is clear that this failure contributed to serious injury or loss of life. Governing bodies /management groups, headteachers and EVC's are must ensure that local procedures comply with the guidance in this manual
 - Health and Safety Responsibility and Powers 2001 (DfES) defines the responsibility of the LEA and that of governing bodies. Within a Community or Voluntary Controlled school the LEA is the employer and holds the responsibility for Health and Safety on all matters including educational visits. Therefore for these category of schools, opting out of any part of this guidance is neither possible or permissible
 - In January 2003 the LEA invited governing bodies of Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools to decide to opt in to the LEA Approval system or to remain separate. This offer still remains but schools that opt in must comply with all requirements of the educational visits policy

Insurances

- 13) Governing bodies/management groups that have chosen to insure with providers rather than the LEA's insurers must ensure that the procedures in this manual satisfy their insurers underwriters.

Management of educational visits

- 14) Governing bodies/management groups are encouraged to review visit procedures with their headteachers/senior youth workers and EVC's on an annual basis in order to ensure that they reflect the current thinking of the governing body and LEA and are up-to-date in relation to staff changes.

- 15) Each body/group will be expected by parents to adopt policies for the management of visits, which are based on good and proven practice. The detail of the policy adopted will reflect, in part, the size and type of school/centre and the range of visits undertaken but will need to incorporate some or all of the following elements:
- the nomination of an individual member of staff as an EVC
 - a familiarity with appropriate local and national documentation and guidance
 - the adoption of a clear, simple set of procedures for the management of all visits, other than those of a routine nature, which involve groups leaving the premises
 - a procedural checklist against which leaders can comprehensively plan each visit (see Visits Checklist - Section 2, Adventure Checklist - Section 3, Visits Abroad Checklist - Section 5)
 - a system by which visits in certain categories are notified to the Governing Body. Such categories might include:
 - visits involving overnight stays
 - foreign visits
 - visits incurring substantial, non-returnable deposits or other significant financial commitment
 - visits involving potentially hazardous activities
 - those visits for which LEA notification is required
 - note however, that the governors or the management group would not normally be expected to “approve” visits. This should be undertaken within the school’s normal management arrangements
- 16) Such a system will enable governors to give guidance and make decisions, and must be able to accommodate activities occasionally arranged at short notice. The timing of notifications should recognise:
- the implications of non-returnable deposits
 - the possible need to amend programmes
 - the need for LEA approval notification, where necessary
- 17) Governing bodies/ management groups will need to be aware of:
- the legal implications of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, 1996. These regulations are dealt with in Section 4
 - the contractual and financial obligations inherent in the Package Travel Regulations, 1992 where school-organised “packages” are involved (Section 7 paragraphs 12 - 19)

Planning for emergencies

- 18) Governors/Management group must satisfy themselves of the adequacy of their arrangements to cope with the implications of a major emergency affecting a group on a visit, whether in Britain or abroad.

Such arrangements should ensure:

- efficient communication between the affected party, senior management, the governing body and, where applicable, the LEA
 - effective communication with parents
 - the management of information
 - dealing with the media
- 19) Certain emergencies may be classed as 'critical incidents'. Governors should assure themselves that the guidelines detailed in the document "Responding to Critical Incidents: Guidance Procedures for Schools", issued by the LEA in January 2004, are considered and that appropriate procedures are adopted.

More advice is given in Section 9: EVC Role 'Emergency Procedures'. Governing bodies / management groups are strongly advised to apply in full the guidance of that Section.