



Education Visits Policy

Updated: May 2024
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**EQUALITY SCHEME
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR
EDUCATION VISITS POLICY**

Staff / Committee involved in development:	Health Safety Committee; Headteacher
For use by:	Staff, Governors and Parent/Carers
This policy relates to statutory guidance:	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Keeping Children Safe in Education Outdoor Activities Negligence and the Law Public Safety and Risk Assessment Policy for the management of learning outside the classroom (Halton 2011)
Key related Farndon Policies:	Whistle Blowing Safeguarding Risk Assessment Policy

Equality Impact Assessment: Does this document impact on any of the following groups? If YES, state positive or negative impact, and complete an Equality Impact Assessment Form or action plan, and attach.

Groups:	Yes/ No	Positive/Negative impact
Disability	No	
Race	No	
Gender	No	
Age	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
Religious and Belief	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage & Civil Partnership	No	
Pregnancy & Maternity	No	
Other	No	

Reviewed by	Leadership and Management
Agreed by	
Next Policy review date	May 2026

A copy of this form, and any related impact assessment form or action plan must be sent to the school office

1. Introduction

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

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

2. Aims and Purposes

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

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

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

3. Responsibilities

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

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

Specific responsibilities include:

- Local Authority – to approve overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Head teacher – to approve visits and assesses competence of visit leaders
- EVC – to approve visits, maintain records, provide advice and documentation, assess competence, produce and monitor a school policy, ensure DBS checks done, liaise with LA, and ensure emergency contacts in place.
- Visit leader – to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, ensure visit is suitable place, be approved by the Head, including liaising with the office and EVC, completing risk assessments and relevant forms and continually assess risks
- Supervising teachers and other adults – to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment
- Pupils – to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment and have a voice in drawing up the risk assessment itself.

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

4. Approval Procedure

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the head teacher and EVC. The Governing Body receives notification of trips off site and link Governor for health and safety goes through paper work and policy to ensure that it is being followed.

In addition, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential or
- Involving adventurous activity

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

If an external provider or tour operator is being used, they must complete the detailed Form EV4 at the time of the provisional booking.

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

5. Parental Consent

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

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

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

6. Staffing

a) Competence

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their ‘competence to lead’ assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the Head teacher and/or EVC. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities, the assessment is undertaken by the LA by means of Form EV3.

b) Ratio

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

School Years R – 3 Ratio: 1:6

School Years 4 – 6 Ratio: 1:10 / 15

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

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

- Nature of transport involved

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

c) Supervision

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

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

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

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

7. Pre-trip planning

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

- Make clear the aims and objectives of the trip.
- Seek Headteacher's and EVC approval.
- LA notification or approval (if necessary).
- Informing parents of details and trip.
- Parental consent, including information such as medical, SEN or allergies.
- Liaise with other members of staff going on trip so aware of any additional needs of pupils.
- Ensure those going on the trip meet the required ratio levels and training (e.g paediatric first aid)
- Devise itinerary and programme for the day.
- Liaise with the Office to set financial contributions from parents.

8. Risk Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. Plan B

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, bad weather, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of a Plan B. Not having a Plan B has been a common cause of accidents.

10. Transport

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

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

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the LA’s policy may drive a minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed / hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the head teacher or SMT. Additional checks should be made for longer journeys and each half term by the member of SMT with responsibility for the minibus.

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

11. First Aid

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

First aid kits are available from the school office. If the visit involves the party splitting up, a kit should be taken for each group. Staff must also take their medical red grab bag which may include inhalers, epi pens or regular taken medication.

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

12. Water ‘Margin’ Activities

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

13. Seeking Parental Consent

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

Where Parents request that they wish to accompany their child on a residential / trip and they, or intend to stay / visit near the venue, are not designated adults on the risk assessment, school will make clear this poses a significant safeguarding risk and that it should not happen. Should the parents ignore this request and visit / stay at the venue, staff are to hand over the child to their parents and therefore end their participation on trip.

14. Emergency Procedure

Visit leaders must take with them a copy of **the Emergency card**, which sets out the local authority's procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency.

School Contacts must hold a copy of **the Emergency Card** at all times, which details procedures for supporting visit leaders and liaising with the local authority. The Emergency card is available in credit card size.

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

15. Educational Visits Checklist

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

16. Evaluation

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

17. Booking Procedure

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

- Headteacher
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- School Bursar

Procedures:

1. Inform the headteacher, check that proposed dates are convenient and put in diary.
2. Complete transport booking form from admin office at least 2 months in advance or as early as possible, and copy to EVC.
3. Complete LA approved form (EV2 & 4) (residential trips and adventurous activities only)
4. Liaise with the Bursar with regards to booking transport, cost, letter to parents and, if necessary, additional insurance
5. Inform parents using standard letter Bursar.
6. Complete details of visit on Evolve
7. Attach Risk Assessment and letter to parents to Evolve
8. Carry out pre-visit if possible and necessary

9. Keep record of contributions made by parents using class list on A4 envelope, ensuring money is checked and then send to office daily for safekeeping
10. Use the educational visits checklist as an aide memoir before and on the day of the visit
If the headteacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**
11. Evaluate the trip with the EVC and attach to the EVOLVE paper work.

18. During the Trip

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

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

19. After the Trip

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

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

20. Farm Visits

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

21. Review

This policy is reviewed biannually. It is next due for review in May 2024. Within the policy we follow the guidance as set out by the OEAP national guidance: <https://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>

Signed: 

Dated: May 2026



**Cheshire West
and Chester**

**Educational Visits & LOtC Risk Benefit
Assessment**

Visit to:

Leader in Charge of Visit

Carried out by:

Dates of Visit

Persons considered in the assessment:

Date of Assessment

GENERIC BENEFITS - WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES
EG Comparing and contrasting environments	EG Young people experience an environment they may never otherwise access

POTENTIAL HAZARDS	CONTROL MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED	ESTABLISHMENT SPECIFIC CONTROL MEASURES, ARRANGEMENTS AND/OR ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY

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

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

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

Signed

Date

Please ensure that the risk benefit assessment actually relates to this visit or Learning Outside the Classroom activity.

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

SUPERVISION

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

Responsibility

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

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

It is good practice for each supervisor to:

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

Each pupil should:

- ◆ know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her;

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

Head counts etc.

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

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

'Buddy' system

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

Remote Supervision

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

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

expectations.

When supervision is remote:

- ◆ groups should be sufficiently trained and assessed as competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and emergency procedures. Remote supervision will normally be the final stage of a phased development programme;
- ◆ pupils will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous;
- ◆ clear and understandable boundaries will be set for the group;
- ◆ there must be clear lines of communication between the group, the supervisor and the school. Do not rely exclusively on mobile phones;
- ◆ the supervisor should monitor the group's progress at appropriate intervals;
- ◆ the supervisor will be in the expedition or activity area and able to reach the group reasonably promptly should the group need support in an emergency;
- ◆ there should be a recognisable point at which the activity is completed;
- ◆ there should be clear arrangements for the abandonment of the activity where it cannot be safely completed.

Rearranging Groups

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

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

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

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

Down Time

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

It is good practice to:

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

Night Time

Group leaders should ensure that:

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

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

Travel

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

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

ONGOING RISK ASSESSMENT

HASPEV chapter 2 paragraphs 37-46, and *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits* deal with risk assessment. Risk assessment does not end when the visit begins. Changes to the itinerary, changes to the weather, incidents (whether minor or major), staff illness – all or any of these may bring pupils face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk.

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

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

Check the local weather forecast

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

Seek local knowledge of potential hazards, e.g.

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

Plan B

- ◆ good forward planning will always include alternative plans in case the itinerary needs to be changed;
- ◆ a flexible itinerary can allow activities from later in the visit to be substituted for earlier activities if those are prevented by unexpected circumstances;
- ◆ group leaders faced with potential difficulties will feel more confident to change the itinerary if a pre-assessed alternative is available;
- ◆ regardless of whether alternatives have been pre-assessed, always take time to reassess risks if the itinerary changes;
- ◆ on arrival at an alternative site or activity that has not previously been risk assessed, we

recommend that the group leader should risk assess the situation before allowing the pupils to disembark from the transport;

- ◆ an unknown location might involve hazards not covered in the original risk assessment, for example if the original intention to visit a land-only site has to be changed at short notice to a lake or seaside location.

Behaviour problems, illness or injury

- ◆ poor behaviour may be reduced by ensuring that all pupils are signed up to agreed standards of behaviour before (or at least at the beginning of) the visit;
- ◆ educational visits can be a good opportunity for school staff to get to know pupils away from the confines of the school. But the group leader should resist any temptation to accept lower standards of behaviour. The different hazards that pupils may be exposed to away from the school will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as, or higher than, in the classroom;
- ◆ if one adult has to give prolonged attention to one group member, the group leader should reassess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all members of the group know who is responsible for them. Activities may need to be amended until the other adult returns all of his or her attention to the group;
- ◆ group leaders should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement;
- ◆ this may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Preparation

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

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

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

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

- ◆ establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;

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

ADVICE ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

Coastal visits

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

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

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

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters

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

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

The group leader should:

- ◆ be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers;
- ◆ ascertain for themselves the level of the pupils' swimming ability;
- ◆ check the weather;
- ◆ be aware of the local conditions – such as currents, weeds, rip tides, a shelving, uneven or unstable bottom – using local information from the lifeguard, coastguard, harbourmaster, police or tourist information office;
- ◆ beware of rocks, breakwaters and other potential hazards;
- ◆ look out for warning signs and flags: a red flag means it is unsafe to swim; yellow flags mean that lifeguards are on patrol in the area between the flags; a black and white flag means it is an area used by surfers and not suitable for swimming;
- ◆ designate a safe area of water for use by the group;
- ◆ brief the group about the limits of the swimming area;
- ◆ avoid crowded beaches where it is harder to see pupils;
- ◆ be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water;
- ◆ be aware of the dangers of paddling especially for young pupils;
- ◆ ensure that pupils have not eaten (at least half an hour) before swimming;
- ◆ ensure the activity is suitable for the pupils, especially any with special needs or disabilities;
- ◆ adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall;
- ◆ ensure that buoyancy aids, lifejackets etc. are used where appropriate;
- ◆ carry out regular head counts;
- ◆ be aware that it is not always possible to tell when someone is in difficulties.

Supervisors should

- ◆ have clear roles – at least one supervisor should always stay out of the water for better

surveillance, even where lifeguards are on duty;

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

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

Farm Visits

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

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

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

Ensure that

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

Never let pupils:

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

The Chief Medical Officer's revised guidance suggests:

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

Appendix 2: Ratio Information

CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL

RATIOS

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

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

Appendix 3 List of activities needing LA approval

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

Appendix 4 Evaluation Form

Evaluation of Visit Form

To be completed by the Visit Leader. This form should also be used to inform future planning.

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

Please comment on the following features:

	Rating Out of 10	Comment
Provider's pre-visit organisation		
Travel arrangements		
Content of education programme provided		
Quality of instruction and learning		
Equipment		
Suitability of Environment		
Accommodation		
Food		
Evening activities		
Courier/representative		
Other evaluation & comments including "close calls" not involving injury or damage		

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

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Visit Leader's full name: _____

Appendix 5 Critical Incident Contacts for CWAC

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM – 2010/2011

CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENTS IN SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN'S CENTRES INVOLVING A CHILD, PUPIL OR MEMBER OF STAFF

Critical incident involving a child, pupil or member of staff should be reported by the School/Children's Centre or Emergency Services to your Area School Liaison Manager

Area	Officer	Office	Mobile	Home
Alternatively	Caroline Davies	01244 729936		

N.B. Do not use the above contact numbers for property related critical incidents. Contact details for such incidents are available at: -

<http://www.cccnet/Services/Education/INTRANET/critincid/crit0.htm>)

Other Contacts (*on a selective basis according to the situation*)

			Office	Mobile	Home
STRATEGIC LEAD CIRT	Jeanette Cain		0151 337 6854	079202 95078	07525 753938

CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL CONTACTS			Office	Mobile	Home
CIRT Co-ordinators	Jeanette Cain		0151 337 6854	079202 95078	07525 753938
	Norma Goodwin		0151 357 6880	07840 060 285	01244 336962
Director of Children & Young People's Services	John Stephens		01244 977828		
Senior Health and Safety Adviser	Rob Mason		01244 973306	07786 447839	
Transport	Jackie Speakman		01244 976044		
Transport <i>Out of Hours</i>	Out of Hours Duty Officer			07702 119642	
Social Services			0151 337 4500		
Social Services <i>Out of Hours</i>	Out of Hours Duty Team		01606 76611		
Lead HR Business Partner	Janis Maloney		01244 972024		
Insurance Team	Cyril Mootooveeren		01244 975914		
Media Relations Manager	Ian Callister		01244 972216	07802 582714	
Attendance & Welfare	Helen Clarkson Jan Worrall		0151 337 6859 01606 274301		

Emergency Card (Visit Leader)

This 'card' must remain with the Visit Leader at all times

In the event of an incident or accident that does not involve serious injury or fatality, and/or is not likely to attract media attention, the Visit Leader should seek advice from the school emergency contact(s). This should normally include a member of staff on the Senior Management of the school.

In the event of an incident that does involve serious injury or fatality, and/or is likely to attract media attention, the Visit Leader should adopt the following protocol:

1. Assess the situation;
2. Safeguard uninjured members of the group (including self);
3. Attend to the casualty/ies (if applicable);
4. Call emergency services (999 or appropriate local number if abroad), if appropriate.

Then:

- Contact the School Emergency Contact (see below) and seek further advice. The School Emergency Contact will request the help of the Educational Visits Emergency Response Team (EVERT),- or you may do this yourself directly (see below);
- Contact the British Consulate / Embassy if abroad;
- If practicable, delegate party leadership to the Deputy Leader, in order that you can be contactable at all times, and to enable you to coordinate all necessary actions;
- Seek further and full details of the incident, how and why it happened so far as can be established at this stage;
- Maintain a detailed written log of all actions taken and conversations held, together with a timescale;
- Prevent group members from using telephones or mobiles, or going on-line until such time as this has been agreed by the LA;
- Refer all press, media, parental, or other enquiries to the LA on 020 8496 3000.

If you are unable to make contact with the School Emergency Contact(s), phone the LA Emergency Call Centre on 020 8496 3000 and state:

This is (your name) from (your school). This is an emergency, my phone number is (give a number you can be immediately contacted back on). I am requesting help from the Educational Visits Emergency Response Team (EVERT). Give brief details of the incident.

- The LA Call Centre will immediately contact a Senior Education Officer, and EVERT will be mobilised. Depending on the severity of the incident the Call Centre may call you back to reassure you that your initial call is being acted upon.
- If after 30 minutes you have no response from anyone to your initial call please phone again. If this form of communication appears to have failed then, as a last resort, contact Waltham Forest Police on 020 8345 2321 and explain the position.

Name	Home	Mobile
School		
LA Emergency No.	020 8496 3000	

If the visit will be outside normal school hours:

Headteacher		
Chair of Governing Body		
Other		

Emergency Card (School Contacts)

This 'card' must remain with the school emergency contact(s) at all times

The School Emergency Contact(s) should have all Visit information, including itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff, etc.

In the event of being contacted by the Visit Leader (or other member of staff involved in a visit), you should:

- Confirm the phone number at which the caller can be contacted back on;
- Note their location;
- Determine the nature of the emergency;
- Determine the type of help required.

If the incident does not involve serious injury or fatality, and/or is not likely to attract media attention:

- Provide the required assistance if possible;
- Seek further advice or pass on details to other school contacts who may be able to assist.

If the incident does involve serious injury or fatality, and/or is likely to attract media attention:

- Inform the Visit Leader that someone will phone him/her back within 30 minutes;

Contact the LA Call Centre 0208 496 3000 and state that you require immediate assistance from the Educational Visits Emergency Response Team (EVERT). Give brief details of the incident.

- Your details will be taken and you will be phoned back within 30 minutes;
- You should also contact the Headteacher (if this is not you);
- EVERT will be brought into action to support the party, the school, and the parents. Teams of senior officers are briefed for this role and will provide continuous support from the moment the emergency occurs. The team would operate from the Education Centre and the Headteacher or a senior member of staff would be asked to join the team immediately;
- EVERT will form a continuous link with the affected group, and depending on the level of emergency will send a senior officer to the incident location. EVERT will direct all actions, provide links with the media, rescue agencies, tour operators, insurance companies, etc. As appropriate EVERT would arrange for the return of the party or arrange transport for parents where pupils were unable to travel home soon after the incident;
- The LA (020 8496 3000) will give accurate and periodic information through press releases, will arrange interviews, and will attempt to reduce media pressure from the incident, school, and parents. All enquiries should be referred to this telephone number;
- If appropriate, support and counselling will be arranged for families, pupils and staff.

Name	Home	Mobile
Headteacher		
Deputy Headteacher		

Chair of Governing Body		
LA Emergency Call Centre	020 8496 3000	