

Offsite and Educational Visits Policy

MARINE ACADEMY PRIMARY POLICIES

VERSION CONTROL SHEET

POLICY NAME: Off Site and Educational Visit Policy

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Document date	Filename	Meeting submitted	Summary of changes required
08-05-13	MAP2 Offsite and Educational Visits Policy	TBC	New policy

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Introduction

The Academy provides many opportunities to enrich the curriculum for students through off-site activities and educational visits.

The value of off-site activities and educational visits is well recognised by the Governing body and fully supported within the Academy. Safety is recognised as crucial and careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures is required. Off-site activities and educational visits must be well managed and responsibilities recognised.

This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for the Academy. It supplements and follows the guidance, regulations and advice contained within the following significant publications:

- Plymouth City Council Guidance
- The Health and Safety Executive, in conjunction with the DCSF, *Health and Safety : Responsibilities and Powers* statutory document (2001)
- The DfES reviewed their 1998 document *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits* and produced their supplementary guidance in August 2002:
- *Part 1 – Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits*
- *Part 2 – Standards for Adventure*
- *Part 3 – A Handbook for Group Leaders.*

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- ensure that arrangements are in place and the City Council regulations and guidance are being translated into working systems
- ensure that the Governing Body has systems in place to support this process.
- have the ability to act on behalf of the parents to ascertain if the specific event arrangements and risk assessments are in place and appropriate.

All off-site activities and educational visits will need the approval of the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher.

The Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher will:

- ensure that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the City Council, DfE and others, as well as conforming to the academy's own health and safety policy
- ensure that the Governing Body are kept appropriately informed and accreditation or verification of providers has been checked where applicable
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive and that issues identified in exploratory visits have been satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment.

All off-site activities and educational visits will need the approval of the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher and the information in Appendix A must be provided prior to approval.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will:

- be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that the City Council's guidance and regulations are followed and to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out
- to be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and check staff qualifications, this to include accompanying staff and volunteers
- organise the training of leaders and volunteers, and organise thorough induction of staff and volunteers new to the visit
- ensure that procedures for Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary
- ensure that liaison with Parents/Carers and obtaining consent are effective
- ensure that the establishment has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the City Council team should an emergency occur
- ensure that the establishment complies with the requirements for reporting incidents and accidents (including 'near misses')

- support the relevant members of staff in the management of and evaluation of educational visits
- use and apply suitable record keeping practices for both children and young people and leaders off-site
- learn from previous experience, recording successful practice and contacts, and be able to use them and move on, in particular where staff personnel change
- monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice
- be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement
- be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory

The Group Leader will:

- be approved to carry out the visit and suitably competent and knowledgeable about the Academy's policies and procedures
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks with the EVC prior to approval
- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do
- obtain the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher's approval for the visit
- have enough information on the pupils taking part in order to risk assess their suitability for the visit or specific activity
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- ensure the leaders have details of the Academy contact
- ensure the leaders and others have details of the pupil's special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively
- ensure that they and other accompanying staff understand that for residential or 'over hours' trips, any time above contracted hours is considered as voluntary and will not be paid or attract time off in lieu

Category of visits:

- The category of the visit must be assessed by the EVC.
- Parental consent is required for Category A, and some Category B visits. These are covered by the generic consent form which is when joining the school, but a letter should be sent home informing parents/carers that their child is going on a trip and giving them the opportunity to contact the school with any issues

For high Category B and all Category C visits, parents must:

- provide the EVC with emergency contact number(s)
- sign an additional, bespoke consent form
- give the EVC information about their child's emotional, physiological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit
- agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and who will meet the cost

The pupils/students must:

- not take any unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
- dress and behave appropriately and responsibly
- if abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten himself or herself or anyone in the group and inform the group leader or supervisor

Guidance Notes for off-site Activities and Educational Visits

To ensure good practice and to comply with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

All group leaders will familiarise themselves with the published guidance and attend training when appropriate which is available through the City Council's Outdoor Education Adviser.

The EVC should be involved in discussing plans for any off-site activity at an early stage. All off-site visits need to be planned including local and routine visits e.g. to businesses or for games matches. No non-returnable financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been gained. The approved centre list should be consulted and

if the provider for a hazardous activity is not listed, the Outdoor Education Adviser should be contacted.

Parental consent needs to be obtained and copies of the medical/dietary requirements and emergency contacts details should be taken on the visit by the group leader. A copy will need to be held by the emergency contact person for residential visits. See Appendix A.

Approval of residential, hazardous and overseas educational visits must be given by the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher and the EVC, and, wherever possible, details placed on the City Council's EVOLVE system 4 weeks prior to the date of the visit in order to allow sufficient time for approval by the LA. In circumstances less than 4 weeks, a courtesy call should be made to warn of the late submission.

Off-site Visit Risk Assessment forms should be completed for all aspects of the visit e.g. the journey, activities and down time if a residential. (See Appendix B)

Several example risk assessments are available for all types of transport and several frequently needed risk assessments; these are kept by the EVC.

External providers may have their own risk assessments that will need to be seen by the group leader and if necessary the group leader can refer to these and the Academy's example risk assessments, prior to being uploaded onto the EVOLVE system.

A pre-visit may be advisable to support the risk assessment process and should be carried out whenever possible.

If volunteers are being used for the visit, they will need to be fully briefed and a DBS check must be in place if they are used regularly and if the visit is residential. Partnership Agreements should be considered where appropriate.

NB. Unless a provider has a 'Learning Outside the Classroom Award', the existing inclusion of a provider on the EVOLVE system does not guarantee that checks have been carried out and so independent checks may be required. The party leader must be satisfied that the activity provider complies with the AALA licence standards.

Parents/Carers will be informed of the type of transport used. When private cars are used, various checks will need to be carried out and guidance provided to volunteer drivers. When coaches and minibuses are used, the leaders should ensure the pupils are wearing seat belts. A current City Council Minibus permit is required to drive a minibus.

If the visit is mainly within academy hours or for the curriculum, a voluntary contribution may be requested. Other visits may be charged for.

Staff should be informed, at least one week in advance, of the trip.

School Journey Insurance may need to be arranged depending on the nature of the visit e.g. if deposits are paid, the pupils are taking belongings and the visit is abroad. Parents should be informed of the insurance arrangements.

Staff may find it helpful to complete the Off-site Activities and Educational Visits Checklist (Appendix D). Students/Parents/Carers may find Appendix C helpful.

The supervision ratios need to meet the requirements summarised in the table below, although these are minimum ratios and the group leader must consider the pupils involved, the type of activities, the site and the experience and competency of the supervising adults (see table below).

Marine Academy Primary

Activity	Qualifications / Staffing	Minimum Ratios	Notes
Local visits in the local area, close to support at the base	<p>An experienced group leader</p> <p>Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required)</p> <p>Other responsible adult(s) in support</p> <p>A minimum of two leaders could be required, depending on circumstances</p>	<p>Reception 1:4</p> <p>Key Stage 1 1:6</p> <p>Key Stage 2 1:15</p> <p>(A minimum of two adults per group)</p>	<p>A minimum of one leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults.</p> <p>Leaders should reflect the gender of the group wherever possible.</p>
Day visits – more than 30 miles or 30 minutes from base	<p>An experienced group leader</p> <p>Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required)</p> <p>Other responsible adult(s) in support</p> <p>A minimum of two leaders required</p>	<p>Reception 1:4</p> <p>Key Stage 1 1:6</p> <p>Key Stage 2 1:10</p> <p>(A minimum of two adults per group)</p>	As above

<p>Residential visit, UK or abroad, and visits abroad</p>	<p>An experienced group leader</p> <p>Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required)</p> <p>Other responsible adult(s) in support</p> <p>A minimum of two leaders required</p>	<p>Reception NA Key Stage 1 1:4 Key Stage 2 1:6</p> <p>(A minimum of two adults per group)</p> <p>These ratios may include the centre/ residential base staff, especially if a partnership agreement is in place.</p>	<p>As above, however it is recommended that the ratio of qualified leader to responsible adult support is low.</p> <p>Leaders should reflect the gender of the group. Leaders can be remote, with a nominated person on the trip acting as leader or 'key person'.</p>
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When the group leader is not a member of MAP2 staff, but another responsible adult, Parents/Carers should be informed in writing.

The leaders need to know that in an emergency they should:

- Ensure the pupils are safe
- Contact the EVC at MAP2
- Contact their emergency contact person and give them the details
- Follow the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident/incident or fatality. (See Appendix E)

On off-site visits there should ideally be a trained first-aider where no first aiders are provided at the place of visit and a first-aid kit carried.

On return from the visit, the group leader should report to the EVC. Completion of an evaluation report on the EVOLVE system is valuable to others.

The planning of the visit may be supported by the use of the checklist Appendix C, a copy of which may be given to each pupil if deemed necessary by the EVC.

When students are regularly attending external training providers/off-site organisations, it is good practice to have a Partnership Agreement in place.

Sleeping arrangements

There should be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for children and staff.

Staff should supervise the children at night (and remain in gender specific rooms).

A rota should be devised to enable the maximum supervision possible. The on call person should not retire until the children have been settled.

Individual/group needs must be taken into consideration at night e.g. a child may prefer not to sleep in a dormitory setting, child protection issues etc. Sleeping arrangements must reflect the fact that staff have considered the individual needs of and associated risks to children on the activity. Sleeping arrangements must be detailed in the plan and approved by the EVC.

Security arrangements must be implemented at night. Wherever possible, a child should be prevented from absconding.

Appendix F provides a handbook for group leaders and other staff.

Appendix A

Marine Academy Primary (MAP2)
 Trevithick Road
 St Budeaux
 Plymouth
 PL5 2AF
 Tel: (01752) 213939



Parent/Carer Consent Form

VISIT:	
DATE(S) AND TIMES:	
STUDENT NAME:	
CLASS:	
MEDICAL INFORMATION: (including any medication)	
SPECIAL DIET:	
IS YOUR CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS?	YES / NO (please indicate)
CAN YOUR CHILD SWIM 50 METRES UNAIDED?	YES / NO (please indicate)
STUDENT PHOTOGRAPH PERMISSION:	Do you give permission for photographs to be taken during the visit that could be used for recording, marketing and promotional purposes? YES / NO (please indicate)

<p>COSTS INVOLVED:</p>	<p>I enclose / do not enclose a parental contribution of £____.____</p> <p>OR</p> <p>I understand that the total cost of the activity will be £____.____ per student. I enclose a non-refundable deposit of £____.____.</p> <p>I understand that the full amount is due by_____.</p>	
<p>DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES TAKING PLACE:</p>	<p>1. TRANSPORT: minibus/coach/on foot/other</p> <p>2. ACTIVITY 1:</p> <p>3. ACTIVITY 2:</p> <p>4. ACTIVITY 3:</p> <p>5. ACTIVITY 4:</p>	
<p>PARENT / CARER EMERGENCY CONTACTS:</p>	<p>Name:</p>	<p>Name:</p>
	<p>Contact Number 1:</p>	<p>Contact Number 1:</p>
	<p>Contact Number 2:</p>	<p>Contact Number 2:</p>
	<p>Relationship to Pupil:</p>	<p>Relationship to Pupil:</p>
<p>CONSENT:</p>	<p>I have read the description of the activities involved in this offsite visit and I give my consent for my child to take a full part in all activities described above.</p> <p>Parent/Carer Signature: _____</p> <p>Name in Capitals: _____</p> <p>Date: _____</p>	

Please return this consent form with any payments due to the school office at Marine Academy Primary.

THIS FORM OR A COPY MUST BE TAKEN BY THE GROUP LEADER ON THE VISIT. A COPY SHOULD BE RETAINED BY THE SCHOOL CONTACT

Appendix B

EXAMPLES OF RISK ASSESSMENTS ARE AVAILABLE FROM HEADTEACHER/ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER.

STEPS TO FOLLOW WHEN ASSESSING RISKS

1. Place to be visited & potential hazards:

e.g.:

- Attractions (activities available, weather conditions etc), visitor centres (pupil ratios, members of the public etc), adventurous activity centre (hazards from water based/adventurous activities etc).

2. List groups of people who are especially at risk from the significant hazards you have identified:

e.g.:

- pupils
- support staff
- students
- teachers
- group leader

3. List existing controls or note where the information may be found:

4. How will you cope with the hazards which are not currently or fully controlled under (3)?

List the hazards and log on action plan

5. Continual monitoring of hazards throughout visit – dynamic risk assessment:

Adapt plans and then assess risks as necessary.

Appendix C

Pre visit briefing - CHECKLIST FOR PUPILS GOING ON A VISIT TO ANSWER

- Who is the group leader?
- Where am I going to visit?
- How can I contact my group leader?
- What will be done to keep me safe and secure on the visit?
- What should I do if I get lost or into difficulties when not with the group leader?
- What is written in the code of conduct for my visit?
- What do I do to keep my money and valuables safe?

FOR RESIDENTIAL VISITS:

Do I know;

- The address(es) and telephone number(s) of the place(s) where I shall be staying?
- How should I behave where I am staying?
- Where am I to sleep and where am I to dress?
- What do I do if I am worried/unhappy about anything?

Appendix D

Off-site Activities and Educational Visits Checklist – all of these details will need to be provided before the trip can submitted via the EVOLVE system.

- 1. Is there an identified group leader?
- 2. Is there a clearly identified purpose and specific objectives for the visit?
- 3. Is there an identified location for the visit which suits the purpose?
- 4. Have the risk assessments been written for:
 - a) the journey(s)
 - b) the down time if necessary
 - c) the activities if necessary
- 5. Have the risk assessments for the activities provided by the centre/venue been seen by the group leader and EVC?
- 6. Have the plans been discussed with your EVC and approved by the Academy Headteacher?
- 7. If the visit is hazardous according to the OAaEV, and/or residential and/or abroad, have the plans been approved by the Headteacher/Assistant Headteacher and the EVC and submitted via EVOLVE, four weeks before the visit?
- 8. Are the staff and volunteers suitably qualified and competent?
- 9. Have DBS checks been carried out if required (essential for residential visits)?
- 10. Are the staff/pupils ratios acceptable and for the activities proposed?
- 11. Does the gender of adults reflect the pupils' gender (essential for residential trips)?
- 12. Has a preliminary visit been made?
- 13. Has parental consent been obtained?

- 14. Have the staff and volunteers been made aware of the pupils' dietary and medical needs?
- 15. Is a first aider and first aid kit available?
- 16. Is insurance arranged where necessary?
- 17. Have European Health Cards been acquired for visits to Europe?
- 18. Has appropriate legal transport been arranged?
- 19. Have adequate arrangements been made to finance the visit?
- 20. Have all the pupils been properly briefed e.g. clothing, significant hazards, rendezvous points, groups, behaviour?
- 21. Have all the staff and volunteers been properly briefed e.g. roles and responsibilities, supervision styles, significant hazards and their management, groups, emergency procedures?
- 22. Has an emergency contact person been arranged through the Academy who has copies of the pupils and visit information?
- 23. If the visit high Category B or Category C (ie considered to be hazardous) have the plans been approved by the Outdoor Education Adviser prior to the visit?
- 24. Have other staff who will be affected by the visit been notified?
- 25. Have arrangements been made for an evaluation after the visit to be shared with the Academy Headteacher/Outdoor Education Adviser?

Appendix E

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- assess the situation;
- safeguard the uninjured members of the group;
- attend to the casualty;
- inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

Who will take charge in an emergency?

The **group leader** would usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged. The group leader should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used.

Pre-arranged school home contact.

The Academy contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the Academy and Parents/Carers, and to provide assistance as necessary. The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit.

Emergency procedures framework

All those involved in the Academy trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on an Academy visit the main factors to consider include;

- establishing the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- ensuring that all the group are safe and looked after
- establishing the names of any casualties and getting immediate medical attention for them
- ensuring that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- ensuring that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- notifying the police if necessary
- notifying the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
- informing the Academy contact. The Academy contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Details of the incident to pass on to the Academy 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);

Other actions include;

- notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the Academy contact)
- notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the Academy contact)
- ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures
- 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. Media enquiries should be referred to a designated media contact in the home area;

No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

Appendix F

A HANDBOOK FOR GROUP LEADERS

This is Part 3 of a 3-part supplement to *Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide (HASPEV)*. See also *HASPEV; Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers*; and the other parts of this supplement: *Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits* and *Standards for Adventure*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide practical information that might be helpful to group leaders and others, day to day, whilst taking part in an educational visit. It adds to and brings together in one place, the advice for group leaders that is spread throughout the Good Practice Guide "*Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*" (*HASPEV*). It does not cover planning arrangements before the visit, which can be found in *HASPEV*.

The handbook is not a substitute for training. We recommend that all group leaders have access to training before taking pupils on educational visits.

The handbook does not seek to replace local or other professional guidance or regulations. Community and voluntary controlled schools should follow LEA guidance as a first recourse. No guidance should be taken as an authoritative interpretation of the law. That is for the courts.

The handbook includes advice on supervision, ongoing risk assessment, emergency procedures, and some specific types of visit. The printed version of the handbook will be in loose-leaf style, which will allow for easy amendment when new information comes to light and for additional pages to be added on new topics.

Like *HASPEV*, the supplement can be adopted or adapted by LEAs or others for their own purposes. Please acknowledge the Department as the source for any such use and declare any local variation of the text.

Enquiries about the contents of this Supplement should be addressed to the Department's Pupil Health and Safety Team on 020 7925 5536.

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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. 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, or alternate arrangements for a proxy group leader have been made;
- ◆ 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, whenever possible:

- ◆ 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.

MAP2 additional note: In the case of a residential sailing trip, where staff and pupils sleep on board, all parties should follow the safety briefing of the Captain.

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;
- ◆ ensure that all pupils' medical needs (e.g. asthma, diabetes, anaphylaxis) are known and that staff are competent to handle them;
- ◆ 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 LA;
- ◆ 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Department for Education and Skills

Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV), and supplement
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits>

Health & Safety: Responsibilities & Powers –
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/responsibilities>

Guidance on First Aid for Schools <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/firstaid>

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: A Good Practice Guide
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/medical>

Child Protection: Preventing Unsuitable People from Working with Children and Young Persons in the Education Service. DfES May 2002.

Safety Education Guidance Leaflet
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/safetyeducationguidance>

Chief Medical Officer Advice on Farm Visits: A Department of Health Press Notice 12 April 2000.

HSE

Guidance to the Licensing Authority on the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 (HSC £9)

A Guide to Risk Assessment Requirements –
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg218.pdf>

Avoiding ill health at open farms: Advice to teachers AIS23 new edition 28 June 2000 of advice mentioned in HASPEV).

Five Steps to Risk Assessment . (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>)

Adventure activities centres; five steps to risk assessment (£4.50)

The New General Teaching Requirement for Health and Safety, QCA/HSE, 1999

Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools revised edition 1999. HSG 179 £10.50

Reducing Risk Protecting People 2001

Preparing Young People for a Safer Life (issued with Cheshire County Council and The Institute of Occupational Safety and Health – tel 0116 257 3100). This has a model risk assessment for a sponsored walk.

Adventure activities centres; five steps to risk assessment (£4.50)

Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC): Statement of Risk Perception in Adventure and Outdoor Activities

Others

Information about adventure activity providers covered by the Adventure Activities Licensing Scheme <http://www.aala.org.uk>

The Wales Tourist Board, the Scottish Tourist Board and the British Activity Holiday Association (see next) provide voluntary inspection schemes to complement licensing for providers of activities that are out of scope of licensing

The British Activity Holiday Association, 22 Green Lane, Hersham, Surrey, KT12 5HD. Tel/Fax: 01932 252994. www.baha.org.uk

Get Safe for Summer - Amateur Swimming Association. www.asa.-awards.co.uk

Safe Supervision for Teaching and Coaching Swimming. Amateur Swimming Association and others. 2nd edition 2001 Tel: 01509 618700. Advice on ratios in HASPEV paragraph 187, which are pupil year-based, should be read in conjunction with the competence-based ratios in *Safe Supervision*

The Royal Lifesaving Society UK, River House, High St, Broom, Warwickshire B50 4HN (Tel: 01789 773994) <http://www.lifesavers.org.uk/>

Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice - RoSPA and others 2002
www.rospa.com/pdfs/road/minibus.pdf

Safety on School Trips A Teachers and the Law Booklet - The Professional Association of Teachers. Revised edition 2002

Educational Visits - NASUWT 2001

Guidance published by the National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for various adventure activities as in HASPEV. NGBs also maintain leader training and assessment programmes.

Safe and Responsible Expeditions and Guidelines for Youth Expeditions - Young Explorers' Trust, c/o RGS-IBG Expedition Advisory Centre. £5 inc. p & p or free from website:
<http://www.rgs.org/eacpubs>

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)'s Expedition Advisory Centre, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR provides advice, information and training to anyone planning an overseas expedition. Tel 020 7591 3030 <http://www.rgs.org/eac>

The Independent Schools' Adventure Activities Association (ISAAA) offers help, support and technical advice to any Independent School www.malcol.org/isaaa/

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award has its own clear structure, procedures and guidelines
<http://www.theaward.org/>.

Guidance is produced by many of the voluntary youth organisations
Guidelines for Off-Site Educational Visits and Activities in the United Kingdom
Nottinghamshire CC September 2001 has a section on camping pages 75-79.

Safe Kids Campaign Report 2000, Child Accident Prevention Trust

Transport for London provides free transport for school groups on the underground, buses, Thameslink and the Docklands Light Railway. The advice line for the scheme is 0207 918 3954 and the website is at www.tfl.gov.uk/schoolparty. The general travel advice line can

offer information on route planning and station layouts. Apart from its commitment to the safety of its passengers Transport for London does not offer specific advice on health and safety for school groups but refers them to *HASPEV* and HSE risk assessment guidance.

The Waterways Code (leaflet) and *The Waterways Code for Boaters* (video) are available from British Waterways - hq@britishwaterways.co.uk - tel: 01923 201120

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust has produced a range of guidance on personal safety, including booklets, videos and training courses <http://www.suzylamplugh.org>

The OCR (Oxford Cambridge RSA) 'Off-Site Safety Management Scheme' provides a training course aimed at those who organise off-site visits. It is exam-based and teachers can combine it with practical experience:
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/schemes/ownbrand/examined/offsite/Offindex.htm>