



Victoria Primary School

Procedures for Educational Visits Policy

Date of next policy review	2024
Name of person responsible for this policy	Christopher Fulton
Issued to	Staff, governors, parents,
Date of issue	September 2022

CATEGORIES OF EDUCATIONAL VISITS

CATEGORY 1 Basic

Visits which take place on a regular basis and occur largely within establishment hours e.g. sporting fixtures, swimming pool visits and outings

CATEGORY 2 One-off day /evening excursions (non-hazardous)

e.g. field study trips, theatre visits, business/education visits, regional sporting fixtures

CATEGORY 3 Residential visits of one or more nights within the UK or Ireland. (non-hazardous)

e.g. visits to residential centres, field centres and school exchanges

CATEGORY 4 Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland (non-hazardous)

e.g. international exchange visits, sporting events, cultural activities and international community work

CATEGORY 5 Hazardous activities – residential and non-residential as exemplified below:

- Hill walking
- Fieldwork
- Cycling/mountain biking
- Orienteering
- Rock climbing/abseiling
- Caving and potholing
- Kayaking
- Open canoeing
- Windsurfing
- Dingy sailing
- Sub-aqua
- Skiing/snowboarding
- Horse riding
- Angling
- Water-skiing
- Rafting rowing
- Surfing
- Bouldering/gorge walking
- Swimming in open water
- Coasteering
- Stand-up paddle boarding

Planning an Educational Visit

CATEGORY 1 OR 2

Step 1 Identification of Educational Visit - Objective

The **class teacher** identifies an area or areas of the curriculum for which an educational visit(s) may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Approval

Details of the proposed visit(s) are submitted, by **the class teacher** to the EVC and/or group leader, on the **FORM 1** for approval. They should be approved, and noted by the board of governors, before they proceed. **The EVC will e-mail the Board of Governors in order to be noted.**

Class teacher should submit the following to the EVC:

- FORM 1 – fully completed.
- Letter being sent to parents with consent form attached.
- Risk Assessments completed.
- FORM 2 – Planning Checklist – as completed as possible at this stage.

Step 3 Implementing Appropriate Risk Management

It should be ensured that all visits are organised in accordance with relevant school policies (e.g. Health and Safety and Child Protection) and take cognisance of best practice, as set out in this document.

Step 4 Informing the Parents

Once the EVC is happy that all appropriate documentation has been completed, the Principal will sign off on the visit and the class teacher will get approval to send out a letter and consent form to the parents.

Step 5 Maintaining Records

Copies of all forms (e.g. EVA and Consent Forms) and any other relevant information should be filed at the school.

In the case of an incident/accident occurring, all appropriate documentation from the Employing Authority must be completed.

Educational Visit Approval Form

(For use in relation to visits in categories 1 and 2 only)

Year 20 _____ Term _____ Dates _____ to _____

Activity	Educational Objective(s)	Frequency (dates)	No of Pupils	Year group(s)/ age range	Category (1 or 2)

Approved _____ / _____
Signed principal *Date:*

Approved _____ / _____
Signed chair of governors *Date:*

PLANNING CHECKLIST FORM

School: _____

Date of Visit: From _____ to _____

Venue: _____

Group Leader: _____

	Yes	No	N/A
The proposed visit has clear educational objectives			
The nature of the visit has been established			
The target group has been identified			
All the relevant information regarding the proposed educational visit has been presented to the management e.g. destination, itinerary, timescales etc			
The management has approved the proposed visit			
<i>An initial risk assessment has been undertaken for all aspects of the visit(s) and appropriate control measures have been put in place and recorded:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> hazards have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> people who may be at risk have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> evaluation of the risk has been undertaken			
<input type="checkbox"/> additional safety and/or control measures have been established			
<input type="checkbox"/> information has been disseminated to all relevant persons and appropriate records maintained			
Where residual risks (inherent in all visits) still prevail an appropriate contingency/emergency plan has been put in place and disseminated to all relevant persons			
<i>The number of leaders in attendance has been agreed:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> a staff member has been identified as group leader			
<input type="checkbox"/> accompanying staff have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> volunteers have been identified			

	Yes	No	N/A
<i>Leaders are made fully aware of:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> their roles and responsibilities (including Staff Code of Conduct)			
<input type="checkbox"/> the standard of conduct required of them during the visits			
Pupils and parents have been informed/briefed and understand the implications of their participation in the visit (including Pupils Code of Conduct)			
Parents/guardians have given their written consent to the young people participating in the educational visit			
All relevant information (medical, dietary and contact details) pertaining to the young people participating in the educational visit(s) has been obtained, recorded and appropriate action taken where necessary			
The transport arrangements for the group are appropriate for the nature / type of journey(s) planned			
Adequate insurance is in place to cover all aspects of the educational visit, including transport			
<i>Where a residential visit is planned, the overnight accommodation has been assessed as appropriate in terms of:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> its suitability for the group			
<input type="checkbox"/> its compatibility with the objectives of the visit			
<i>Where the educational visit involves outdoor or adventurous activities, the Education Visits Co-ordinator and group leader are satisfied that:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> appropriate management structures and systems are in place in relation to child protection / health and safety			
<input type="checkbox"/> staff are competent to provide the activities			
<input type="checkbox"/> risk assessments for the activities the group will partake in are in place			
<input type="checkbox"/> all relevant checks have been undertaken to ensure the above are in place			
The Educational Visits Co-ordinator has approved the operational arrangements for the visits.			
Final Approval is obtained, as appropriate.			

Consent Form

School Name: _____

Date: _____

I consent to my son / daughter*(Name in full) _____

taking part in the educational visit to be held on _____

I confirm to the best of my knowledge that he/she* is medically fit to participate.

Please give details of:

1. Any current medical condition

2. Post Medical Condition (e.g. following a medical procedure or illness)

3. Any medication being taken

4. Any other relevant information which may affect his/her participation in the visit (including allergy or dietary requirements)

5. Emergency contact numbers:

i) Name (parent) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

ii) Name (parent) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

iii) Name (next of kin) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

I accept the established code of conduct for the educational visit and agree to the arrangements relating to my son/daughter returning home from the visit due to unforeseen circumstances.

I agree to my son/daughter receiving emergency medical treatment, including anesthetic/blood transfusion, as considered necessary, by the medical authorities present. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided.

Signed (Parent/Guardian) Date

The information on this form is requested for the purpose of organising an educational visit. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the school to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

Planning an Educational Visit

CATEGORY 3, 4 or 5

Step 1 Identification of Educational Visit - Objective

The school identifies an area or areas of the curriculum for which an educational visit(s) may be an essential or relevant component.

Step 2 Initial Approval

Details of proposed visit should be submitted by the EVC and/or group leader to the principal for consideration in consultation with the board of governors. The EVP should be used for this purpose and any relevant information attached e.g. details of the residential centre to be used. It is the responsibility of the principal in consultation with the board of governors, to decide whether a visit should proceed. It is essential, therefore, that they are consulted at the earliest opportunity. Under normal circumstances, a minimum period of notice of not less than 4 weeks is recommended. Detailed planning can proceed once initial approval has been granted.

Step 3 Completion of Planning Checklist

The appropriate sections of the planning checklist should be completed by those with key responsibilities for the visit

Step 4 Briefings

Staff, volunteers, parents and pupils, should be briefed about all aspects of the educational visit. Once parents are fully aware of the visit details they should be asked to give their consent in writing. The exemplar Consent Form should be used for this purpose. In the case of young people over the age of 18, with severe learning difficulties or vulnerable adults, consent is also required.

Step 5 Information Collated

It is important to gather together all relevant information about the pupils participating in the visit. This should be collated by the group leader and the originals retained by the school.

Step 6 Final Approval Secured

Visits in this category can only proceed once final approval has been secured from the principal and the board of governors. The EVP form should be signed by both the principal and the chair of the board of governors to confirm approval and endorsement of the arrangements for the visit.

Step 7 Maintaining Records

Copies of all forms and relevant information should be filed at the school.

Any changes to the original approved visit must be agreed, as appropriate, prior to the event taking place.

Step 8 Evaluation

On return it is important to undertake an evaluation of the key aspects of the visit. The completed evaluation should be forwarded to the relevant personnel and maintained by the school for future reference. A Post Visit Review Form (page 38) may be used for this purpose.

Educational Visit Proposal Form

(To be completed in relation to visits in categories 3, 4 and 5 only)

Name of School	
* Name and address of other school(s) involved (if applicable):	
Educational objective(s) of visit:	
Place(s) to be visited:	

KEY STAGE GROUP:	Nursery	Foundation	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3/4	Post 16
		[4-6 years]	[6-11 years]		[11-16 years]	[16+ years]
Tick						

Total Numbers of Pupils Involved	Your School Project	Male	Female
	*Other School(s) Project(s)	Male	Female

Category of visit		Circle as appropriate			
		3	4	5	
Proposed Dates(s)	From: .../.../....	To:	Number of Days (incl):		
Approx cost per pupil					

Activities to be undertaken:	
------------------------------	--

Staff & other adults involved Name:	M	F	School Visit	Date & Time of attendance

Transport Arrangements:	
Organising Company:	
Agency (if relevant):	
Other comments or information:	
Principal's Signature:	
	Date:
Chair of Governor's Signature:	
	Date:

The information on this form is requested for the purpose of organising an educational visit. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the school project to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

PLANNING CHECKLIST FORM

School: _____

Date of Visit: From _____ to _____

Venue: _____

Group Leader: _____

	Yes	No	N/A
The proposed visit has clear educational objectives			
The nature of the visit has been established			
The target group has been identified			
All the relevant information regarding the proposed educational visit has been presented to the management e.g. destination, itinerary, timescales etc			
The management has approved the proposed visit			
<i>An initial risk assessment has been undertaken for all aspects of the visit(s) and appropriate control measures have been put in place and recorded:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> hazards have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> people who may be at risk have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> evaluation of the risk has been undertaken			
<input type="checkbox"/> additional safety and/or control measures have been established			
<input type="checkbox"/> information has been disseminated to all relevant persons and appropriate records maintained			
Where residual risks (inherent in all visits) still prevail an appropriate contingency/emergency plan has been put in place and disseminated to all relevant persons			
<i>The number of leaders in attendance has been agreed:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> a staff member has been identified as group leader			
<input type="checkbox"/> accompanying staff have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> volunteers have been identified			
<input type="checkbox"/> vetting procedures have been undertaken (where necessary)			

	Yes	No	N/A
<i>Leaders are made fully aware of:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> their roles and responsibilities (including Staff Code of Conduct)			
<input type="checkbox"/> the standard of conduct required of them during the visits			
Pupils and parents have been informed/briefed and understand the implications of their participation in the visit (including Pupils Code of Conduct)			
Parents/guardians have given their written consent to the young people participating in the educational visit			
All relevant information (medical, dietary and contact details) pertaining to the young people participating in the educational visit(s) has been obtained, recorded and appropriate action taken where necessary			
The transport arrangements for the group are appropriate for the nature / type of journey(s) planned			
Adequate insurance is in place to cover all aspects of the educational visit, including transport			
<i>Where a residential visit is planned, the overnight accommodation has been assessed as appropriate in terms of:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> its suitability for the group			
<input type="checkbox"/> its compatibility with the objectives of the visit			
<i>Where the educational visit involves outdoor or adventurous activities, the Education Visits Co-ordinator and group leader are satisfied that:</i>			
<input type="checkbox"/> appropriate management structures and systems are in place in relation to child protection / health and safety			
<input type="checkbox"/> staff are competent to provide the activities			
<input type="checkbox"/> risk assessments for the activities the group will partake in are in place			
<input type="checkbox"/> all relevant checks have been undertaken to ensure the above are in place			
The Educational Visits Co-ordinator has approved the operational arrangements for the visits.			
Final Approval is obtained, as appropriate.			

Consent Form

School Name: _____

Date: _____

I consent to my son / daughter* _____ (Name in full)

taking part in the educational visit to be held on _____

I confirm to the best of my knowledge that he/she* is medically fit to participate.

Please give details of:

6. Any current medical condition

7. Post Medical Condition (e.g. following a medical procedure or illness)

8. Any medication being taken

9. Any other relevant information which may affect his/her participation in the visit (including allergy or dietary requirements)

10. Emergency contact numbers:

i) Name (parent) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

ii) Name (parent) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

iii) Name (next of kin) _____ Work: _____

Mobile: _____

I accept the established code of conduct for the educational visit and agree to the arrangements relating to my son/daughter returning home from the visit due to unforeseen circumstances.

I agree to my son/daughter receiving emergency medical treatment, including anesthetic/blood transfusion, as considered necessary, by the medical authorities present. I understand the extent and limitations of the insurance cover provided.

Signed (Parent/Guardian) Date

The information on this form is requested for the purpose of organising an educational visit. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorisation by you to allow the school to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

Educational Visit Incident Record Form

1 Name of School _____

2 Name of group leader _____

3 Date, Time and Location of Incident _____

4 Name and address(es) of witness(es)

(a)	_____	(b)	_____
	_____		_____
	_____		_____

5 (Please state in your own words what happened including details of names and status of those involved)

6 Describe what action was taken (e.g. details of First-Aid, police or medical involvement)

Signed _____ Date _____

Post Visit Review Form

Group Leader: _____

Visit to: _____

Dates: _____ To: _____

Please comment on the following:-

Issue	Response
Was the venue suitable?	
Was the accommodation / food / equipment of a suitable standard?	
Were the venue staff competent?	
Were the travel arrangements appropriate?	
Were the educational objectives met?	
Was the content of programme relevant to the group?	
Were the young people effectively briefed prior to the visit?	
Were agreed procedures followed by all in a supervisory capacity?	
Are there any specific issues which need to be addressed as a result of this visit?	

Other Comments:

Signed group leader: _____

Date: _____

The information on this form is requested for the purpose of organising an educational visit. The information is covered by the provisions of the Data Protection Act, 1998. Your signature to the form is deemed to be an authorization by you to allow the school to process and retain the information for the purpose(s) stated.

Overview of Planning Process

Whatever the visit it is essential that planning takes place to identify the major issues that need to be addressed.

This involves considering the educational aims, the programme and itinerary to support these aims, the risks that may arise and the measures necessary to reduce these.

The terms risk assessment and risk management are used to describe the process of addressing the risks of any visit/activity and the steps taken to counter them. The process of risk management is paramount in the overall planning of any educational visit.

The flowcharts overleaf will outline the major issues which should be taken into consideration when planning a visit:

- a) Overview of Planning Process;
- b) Planning a Visit – Key Questions.

a) Overview of Planning Process

Planning a visit

Identify/Propose Educational Visit

Submit and outline proposal to principal and the board of governors seeking approval in principle. Proposals might include:

- purpose of the visit;
- proposed date(s), duration, venue and activities;
- group – size and age range, staffing;
- resources required, estimate of costs.

[Proposals for longer visits may need to be made well before the start of the relevant academic year.]

Please note that **overseas visits, adventure activities and demanding environments** run by an **independent provider** require the Board of governors approval in principle before any contracts are signed.

Planning checklist

- Exploratory visit/detailed research of place of visit;
- Suitability of independent provider;
- Appropriate staffing for the planned visit and group needs;
- Definitive staffing roles and responsibilities;
- Cost of the visit;
- Risk assessment – shared with all leaders and pupils, copy on file;
- Emergency procedures and contact arranged.

Full details of visit to principal and the board of governors

- Details of dates, venue, programme/itinerary, risk assessment, emergency procedures, transport, insurance, costs, group membership, staffing;
- Secure final approval from the principal and the board of governors.

Routine visits (Category 1 and 2)

- Inform parents of routine visits and obtain consent on termly or annual basis;
- Obtain approval from the principal for routine visits – termly or annual basis;
- Brief pupils/agree code of conduct;
- Continue to monitor risks at all times during the visit and be ready to change to a contingency plan if necessary;
- Collate relevant group information.

Residential and visits abroad (Category 3, 4 and 5)

- Information to and from parents;
- Briefing meeting for parents;
- Brief pupils/agree code of conduct;
- Deposits/full payments by parents.

Non-routine day visits (Category 3, 4 and 5)

- Obtain final approval from the principal;
- Obtain parent consent.
- Possible briefing meeting if necessary;
- Brief pupils/agree code of conduct;
- Continue to monitor risks at all times during the visit and be ready to apply to a contingency plan if necessary;
- Collate relevant group information;
- Maintain appropriate records.

- Obtain final approval from principal and the board of governors;
- Obtain parental consent;
- Collate relevant group information;
- Maintain appropriate records.

- Continue to monitor risks at all times during the visit and be ready to change to a contingency plan if necessary.

- Complete Evaluation Report.

b) Planning a Visit – Key Questions



- What are educational objectives?
- What is the nature of the visit?
- Target group identified?

- Does the venue/activity meet the educational objectives of the visit?
- Is the age profile of the pupils suitable for chosen venue/activity?
- What is the competence, experience of staff?
- What environmental factors do we need to consider eg. time of year, weather?
- Venue facilities?
- Venue accessibility?
- Clothing equipment requirements?

- Appropriateness of venue?
 - facilities
 - activities
 - location
 - access to tele communication
 - venue staff
 - first aid/medication/emergency action plan
 - accommodation in relation to security/emergencies
 - access to local services
- If visit is not possible how can we fully research the appropriateness of the venue?
- Has the independent provider all the appropriate insurances and risk assessments in place?

- Suitable detailed itinerary agreed?
- Appropriate supervision of qualified staff?
- Any proposed changes to the agreed programme to be agreed with the EVC to assess risk?

- Appropriate?
- Competent/qualified e.g. first aider?
- Staff/pupil ratios?
- Training?
- Clear roles and responsibilities?
- Volunteer staff considerations?
- Communications protocol in place and understood by all staff?

- Clear roles and responsibilities of main staff?
- First aider identified?
- Familiarisation with educational visit venue to include location/first aid equipment/ emergency procedures and the responsible staff identified?
- Arrangement of first aid/emergency procedures meeting with staff/pupils on arrival at venue?
- Immediate access to parental consent form information (telephone numbers etc.) especially for all pupils but especially for those with medical conditions?

RISK ASSESSMENT

Educational visits cannot be entirely risk-free. The aim, therefore, must be to contain risks within acceptable levels. This is achievable provided that organisers give careful consideration to this guidance document. Effective risk management will enable new experiences and will maximize the impact of educational visits, whilst poor risk management may suppress opportunities for learning.

Care must be taken not to expose the child to unacceptable physical or psychological risk, particularly on those occasions when the educational visit aims to exercise the individual's sense of adventure.

Fundamental to the planning process of any educational visit is the process of risk assessment.

Risk assessment enables schools to make a reasoned judgement about the level of risk involved and what actions need to be taken to reduce the risk to an acceptable level which permits the visit to go ahead.

This is achieved by either:

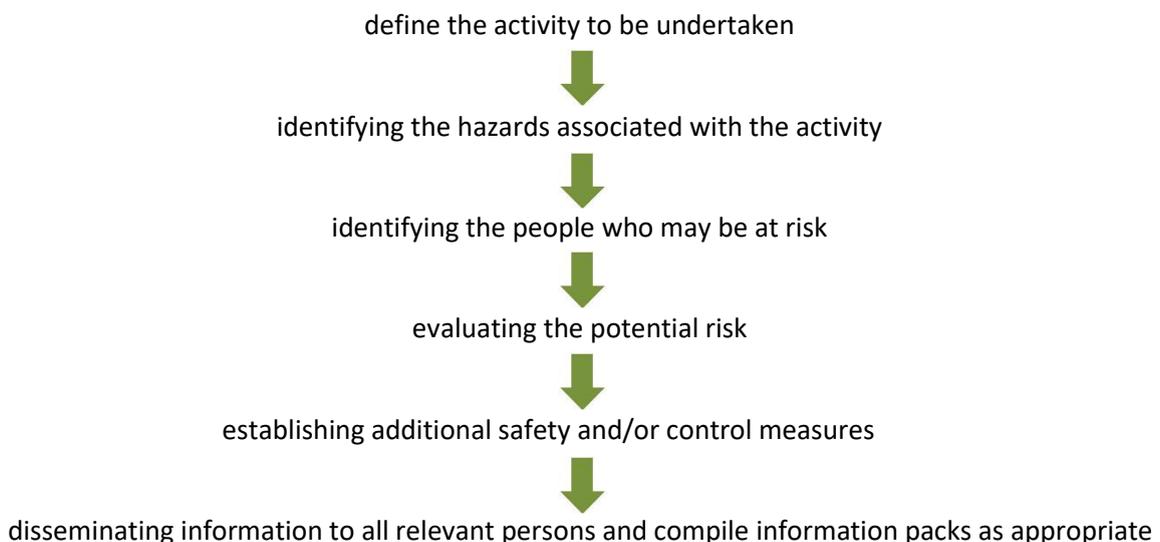
i) eliminating the identified hazards altogether: -

for example, by choosing not to use a water sports centre if the centre staff do not possess current life-saving qualifications or

ii) managing hazards by introducing effective control measures: -

for example, by ensuring that participants are led by competent and experienced instructors when participating in adventurous activities

Risk Assessment comprises the following steps:



The vital issue is whether the risk can be managed. If there are doubts that the risk is manageable, then it is advisable to change the activity and/or the location. Where there is considerable concern as to the outcome, it is better to abandon and redesign the educational visit than to expose pupils to an unacceptable level of risk.

Group leaders must fully record their risk management decisions on paper.

As with much health and safety legislation and regulations, the paper at the end of the process is of minor significance compared to the professional judgement of the group leader.

The group leader should understand that risk assessment is a dynamic process and therefore must carry out on-going risk assessments during an educational visit and ensure that appropriate action is taken as necessary e.g. cancelled public transport, pupils or staff illness, closed venue, adverse weather conditions. The ability to re-assess and manage changing risks whilst the visit is taking place is a key element of the competence for leaders of educational visits.

It is recognised that there are other examples of good practice that already exist in schools, for example the five step qualitative approach. Existing good practice should be built upon and disseminated across the whole school.

SUPERVISION AND STAFF RATIOS

Supervisory roles should be closely aligned to the roles and responsibilities undertaken by staff on a visit. **Pupil to staff ratios for educational visits are not prescribed in law.** Those planning visits, on the basis of risk assessment, should decide the ratios taking into account the range of variables which are determined through an informed risk assessment. Supervision ratios should relate to:

- the category of the educational visit;
- the specific educational objective(s) and;
- the outcome of a risk assessment.

On the basis of a risk assessment, it is likely that additional supervision may be required, particularly in relation to categories 3, 4 and 5 with reference to residential visits and hazardous activities.

Risk assessment may include the assessment of individual pupils, particularly within the special schools sector, and those with behavioural considerations in receipt of a medical care plan. This will have a direct influence on supervision ratios.

The key factors which should be taken into consideration in the establishment of appropriate ratios are as follows:

- nature and location of activities to be undertaken;
- age and ability of the group;
- pupils with special educational and/or medical needs;

- day visit or overnight stay;
- mixed or single gender group;
- experience of supervisory staff in off-site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey type of any accommodation;
- competence of supervisory staff, both general and in relation to specific learning activities;
- requirements of the organisation/ location to be visited;
- competence and behaviour of the pupils;
- prevailing weather conditions and time of year;
- duration and location of planned activities;
- first aid cover.

The following issues should also be considered when establishing ratios:

Under normal circumstances in post primary schools and where it is possible in primary schools, at least one male and one female leader should accompany mixed sex groups, where an overnight stay is involved. Where this is not possible, parents must be made aware and give their consent to the proposed arrangement prior to the visit.

Arrangements should be made to ensure that appropriate ratios are maintained if a staff member needs to leave the group e.g. to accompany a pupil to hospital, escort a pupil home, personal illness or attend to a personal emergency.

Supervision can be close or remote but it is always for the duration of the visit.

Close (direct) supervision occurs when the group remains within sight and contact of the supervisor.

Remote (indirect) supervision is planned and is subject to stringent controls, while the group is not necessarily within direct contact or vision of the leader at all times. Both the leaders and the group will know of each other's whereabouts and clear lines of communication including rendezvous points will have been established. Leaders are required to remain in the area, in which the indirect supervised activity takes place, throughout period.

The need to involve volunteers e.g. parents or governors with clearly defined roles and responsibilities is an accepted practice.

Ratios – Suggested Starting Points

	AGE GROUP	RATIOS
PRE-SCHOOL	Nursery	one adult for up to a maximum of six young people
PRIMARY	Foundation Stage (P1/P2)	one adult for up to a maximum of ten young people
	Key Stages 1 and 2 (P3-P7)	one adult for up to a maximum of fifteen young people
POST-PRIMARY	Key Stages 3 and 4 (Yr 8-12)	one adult for up a maximum of twenty young people
	Post-16 (Yr 13/Yr 14)	one adult for up to a maximum of twenty young people

Where no employer requirements are set, supervision should be determined through an informed risk assessment, taking account of the range of variables. There are a number of different approaches to such an assessment. The OEAP provides one example using the acronym SAGED as a way of remembering the issues to consider:

Staff requirements – Training? Experienced? Competent? Ratios?

Activity characteristics – Specialist? Insurance issues? Licensable?

Group characteristics – Prior experience? Ability? Behaviour? Special and medical needs?

Environmental conditions – Urban, rural, remote? Impact of weather? Ease of communications?

Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – Transport? Residential?

VETTING

In the context of educational visits, it is essential that the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures are followed.

This includes the requirement to ensure that staff who work with, or have access to pupils have been subject to appropriate vetting procedures through Access NI.

The need to vet volunteers should be made on the basis of their having 'substantial access to children'. Participation in an educational visit, particularly those with a residential element, would provide such access. Schools should refer to the DE Circular 2012/19 regarding the vetting requirements for school volunteers as part of the new Access NI Disclosure and Barring Arrangements. Also refer to DE Safeguarding and Child protection – A Guide for Schools (April 2017) document.

Therefore, it is required that all adults, who accompany groups of pupils under the age of 18 are vetted in line with DE Circular 2012/19 with regards to vetting checks for volunteers working in schools.

The procedure is relatively straightforward. The adult in question provides relevant details and gives permission for relevant checks to be carried out. The school should deal with this information in the normal manner.

In addition, schools need to be satisfied that places to be visited, particularly residential centres, have similar procedures in place for their own staff, who also have substantial access to pupils.

TRANSPORT

The management of the school, must be satisfied that all the transport arrangements meet the legal statutory requirements for the type of journey proposed.

Areas to Consider:

- that the operator holds a valid Operator's Licence (this can be checked out by contacting the Department of Infrastructure or looking at their web site);
- the mode of transport is appropriate to the needs of the pupils;
- there is adequate supervision during transit;
- those involved in driving hold the relevant licence to drive the vehicle;
- those involved are insured appropriately;
- guidance on the transport arrangements relevant to the particular group, e.g. age and/or developmental needs.

Where schools require the use of outside operators to provide transport, it is crucial that they are satisfied that the operator(s) can demonstrate how they meet the above criteria.

Where leaders or parents choose to transport pupils in their cars, organisers of the visit should:

- satisfy themselves that the vehicle is licensed and insured for purpose – this could involve asking for a copy of the insurance details;
- seek the agreement of the parents of the pupils involved – this should be in writing;
- satisfy themselves that private car users do not carry more passengers than the number of seat belts available;
- do so in accordance with the organisation's Child Protection Policy.

INSURANCE COVER

The school must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

The Education Authority will cover the legal liability of controlled and maintained schools in respect of personal injury claims. It is however, recommended that schools should take out additional travel insurance in relation to educational visits outside of Northern Ireland. Other schools should check with their insurance broker as to the extent of cover provided under their public liability insurance policies. Parents should be advised as to the extent of any additional insurance taken out by the school.

The Education Authority or insurance broker can advise on particular types of insurance requirements and other arrangements:

- medical cover for leaders and group members;

- specialised risk activities;
- activities abroad;
- participants with medical conditions;
- cancellation or other emergency situation.

The group leader should scrutinise carefully the conditions, list of exclusions, and limits on cover in any policy provided by an outside organisation. If there is any doubt, the insurer should be asked for clarification before departure. The group leader may need to seek further advice from the employing authority or insurance company if not completely satisfied with the insurance cover.

No person acting on behalf of a school should sign an indemnity for any outside body against liability without it first being checked and approved by the relevant employing authority.

USE OF INDEPENDENT PROVIDERS

The term independent providers refers to other organisations or companies which provide a service that is outside the direct control of the employing authority e.g. tour operators, specialist activity providers, residential cent res etc.

Where a school has opted to use the services of an independent provider the principal must ensure that:

- employing authority policy and procedures are followed in relation to the use of such providers;
- providers are reputable and have the necessary insurance in place for the services they provide;
- staff involved in the delivery of the service are competent and are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to the group and child protection;
- risk assessments are available for the activities the group will partake in;
- adequate emergency and contingency plans and procedures are in place in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

These prerequisites should be ascertained in writing from the external provider as part of the school risk assessment.

Note:

A compulsory licensing scheme for Outdoor Activity Providers, which endorses the provider's competence to deliver activities to young people (under 18s) exists in England, Scotland and Wales. Group leaders should therefore take cognisance of their chosen provider's licence and note the activities which they are licensed to offer. Not all activities require a licence. Further details can be obtained from the Adventure Activity Licence Authority.

There is no such requirement or structure in place at present for the licensing of outdoor activity providers in Northern Ireland

CODE OF CONDUCT

The establishment of a code of conduct for all pupils participating in educational visits is an effective basis upon which to ensure the achievement of safe and successful outcomes.

The code, which would apply equally to all pupils, should be drawn up by the school, in consultation with staff, if appropriate, and be agreed by the board of governors.

In advance of an educational visit, accompanying staff, volunteer supervisors, pupils and parents should all be made fully aware of the code, including possible sanctions. All pupils participating in an educational visit must agree to abide by the code of conduct at all times during the visit.

The code should aim to ensure that respect for the individual is maintained at all times and that neither peers nor others expose the pupils to risk of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment.

It is the responsibility of the leaders to maintain standards of behaviour and discipline while on educational visits. Leaders cannot avoid setting an example to group members in everything they do or say.

While on a residential, leaders remain responsible for the conduct and safety of pupils 24 hours a day. This should be taken into consideration when deciding on appropriate behaviour, practice and supervisory arrangements.

It may be necessary to devise a duty rota in order that staff can have a break away from supervisory duty, while ensuring that an appropriate level of supervision is maintained at all times.

In developing and agreeing a code of conduct, the aim should be to reflect the ethos of the school, the nature of the place(s) visited and/or the activities undertaken.

The code of conduct should address issues relevant to the age and development level of the group members.

After carrying out a behavioural risk assessment, the school has the right to refuse any pupil from participating in the visit, whose involvement may be considered to be a danger to him/herself or to the group.

Under no circumstances should persons other than official group members join the party.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

An effective, two-way communication process between the school, centre and parents is important for all visits. Effective communication will ensure that parents are made aware of the purpose and nature of the visit and will ensure that parents inform the school about any particular needs and issues of their child relevant to the visit.

Information to parents may include:

- the aims and benefits of the visit;
- dates of the visit or series of visits;
- destination details;
- times of departure and return and whether parents will be required to meet their children on return;
- the location where the pupils will be collected and returned;
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
- the size of the group and the level of supervision;
- details of accommodation;
- details of provision for special educational or medical needs;
- names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- the planned programme of activities;
- agreed arrangements for non-emergency contact during the visit;
- arrangements/protocols for parents to make contact with the child;
- arrangements/protocols for the school or pupils to make contact with their parents;
- a list of potential circumstances when a parent will be contacted by the school e.g. when a pupil:
 - reports feeling unwell and the symptoms/condition is giving cause for concern;
 - requires medical attention;
 - is injured as a result of an accident or emergency;
 - is involved in a serious breach of the established code of conduct for the educational visit.
- the code of conduct for the visit detailing expected standards of behaviour and sanctions;
- arrangements for the early return of a pupil for any reason during the visit;
- details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- what pupils should not take on the visit or bring back;
- advice on pocket money and how it is allocated during the visit;
- the information required from parents about their child;
- details on the cost of the visit;
- the risks associated with the visit (but tempered with information about the school's good safety record, and the overall benefits to the participants).

Information should (where relevant):

- be sent as far in advance of the visit as practicable;
- involve convening a meeting to clarify detail if appropriate. This is particularly important for residential visits, or when the pupils are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities or visits to demanding environments. Where a briefing meeting is required, alternative arrangements might need to be made for parents who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication.

Parent Consent

Parental consent must be obtained for educational visits. This may be done on a blanket basis for regular visits or on a one-off basis for non-regular visits. The contents of a consent form for a parent to sign will vary according to the type of visit.

Medical Consent

For visits that require parental consent, parents should be asked to agree to the young person receiving emergency treatment, including anesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If parents do not agree to this, the principal may decide to withdraw the child from the visit given the additional responsibility this would entail for the group leader.

Contact with Parents during the Visit

All parents of pupils taking part in an educational visit should be briefed (category 3, 4 and 5 visits) or provided with (category 1 and 2 visit) with a copy of the communication procedure in advance of the visit. These should be clearly defined arrangements/protocols for parents to make contact with their child.

Parents should therefore:

- know the destination details;
- be aware of the emergency contact arrangements.

Pupil Contact with Parents

There should be clearly defined arrangements/protocols for pupils to make contact with their parents.

Parents should be made aware of and consent to the mobile phone protocol if applicable.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful planning and implementation of an educational visit requires a contribution from a number of key personnel and groups. Careful co-ordination and clarity of roles are vitally important.

The duties, roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly defined in advance of any educational visit, articulated, recorded in writing and understood by all those leading and/or assisting with such visits. This includes those responsible for the provision of first aid, administration or medication and communication with parents.

This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of each.

School

The responsibility for any educational visit rests with the school organising the activity.

The Principal

It will normally be the principal, with the agreement of the board of governors, from whom permission must be obtained before a visit takes place.

Senior Leadership Team

Under the direction of the senior leadership a designated Educational Visits' Co-ordinator (EVC) will have a central role to play in endeavouring to ensure that the best practice, in relation to educational visits, is developed and implemented within the school.

In pursuance of this aim the EVC should:

- ensure that visits have specific educational objectives;
- be satisfied that risk assessment has been carried out and that appropriate safety measures are in place;
- ensure that all arrangements comply with the organisation's Child Protection and Health and Safety Policies;
- ensure that the principal demonstrates how proposals comply with best practice;
- assess and submit visit proposal for board of governors approval;
- ensure that an acceptable code of conduct for pupils is in place.

Educational Visits' Co-ordinator (EVC)

The principal may assume the role of the EVC or designate this role to a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The EVC should assume the role of, or designate an appropriately competent member of staff, to act as the group leader for any educational visit. This person

will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, the health and safety of the group and ensure that clear lines of accountability are established.

This may be addressed in a number of ways depending on the size and nature of the school, for example in a larger school another member of the senior leadership team may be designated as the EVC for all visits e.g. vice principal.

Whichever the case, it is recommended that the responsibility for ensuring that the criteria outlined below are addressed, rests with the person designated as the EVC.

Ultimately, it is the principal, with agreement of the board of governors, whose permission must be obtained before a visit takes place.

The EVC should be satisfied that:

- there is an acceptable code of conduct pupils;
- the visit complies with best practice as outlined in this guidance document;
- a competent group leader is selected;
- child protection procedures are adhered to in the planning process, including the vetting of volunteers;
- all necessary arrangements and preparations have been completed including risk assessment, before the visit begins;
- all relevant checks have been undertaken if an independent provider is to be used;
- the group leader has experience in supervising pupils of similar age and ability to those participating and will organise and manage the group effectively;
- where relevant, the group leader or one of the leaders is suitably qualified and competent to supervise and/or instruct the pupils during specific activities;
- the group leader has taken reasonable steps to familiarise him/ herself with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- prior to any educational visit, all volunteers should be clearly advised of their role and responsibilities during the visit and this should be communicated in writing to them and all accompanying staff;
- the ratio of leaders to young people is appropriate;
- proper procedures have been followed in planning the visit;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- the group leader has the address and phone number of the venue to be visited and has a contact name;

- a school contact has been nominated (normally the principal or EVC) and the group leader has details;
- that an emergency contingency and critical incident plan has been created and that the group leader, accompanying staff, volunteers and nominated school contact are aware of the agreed emergency contingency arrangements;
- the group leader, leaders and nominated contact have all relevant information on the group members;
- establish any arrangements which may be required for the early return of individual participants.

The principal should be clear concerning their role if taking part in the visit as an accompanying staff member. **The group leader should remain in overall charge of the visit.**

Group Leader

A member of staff should be designated by the principal or EVC as group leader. This role should be allocated to a senior member of staff.

The group leader will have overall operational responsibility for the supervision, discipline and conduct of the participants for the duration of the visit and should be experienced in organising such visits, the supervision of pupils, and all relevant health and safety matters.

They should be able to direct and supervise pupils, and be suitably qualified/competent to instruct them in activities, as appropriate.

The group leader has a crucial role to play in the successful and safe completion of an educational visit.

The group leader should:

- obtain prior agreement and approval before any off-site visit takes place;
- appoint a deputy, if appropriate, with the consent of the principal;
- adhere to best practice as outlined in this guidance document;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit including the briefing of leaders, pupils and parents;
- ensure that all relevant checks have been undertaken if an independent provider is to be used;
- take steps to become familiar with the location/establishment where the activity will take place;
- inform parents as to the terms and conditions of any additional insurance cover taken out by the school;

- undertake and complete an appropriate risk assessment;
- collect relevant information on the pupils proposed to participate in the visit to assess and confirm their suitability;
- ensure the ratio of leaders to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group and the nature of the activity to be undertaken ;
- clearly define the role of each member of accompanying staff and volunteers and ensure that all tasks have been clearly assigned;
- have proper regard to the health and safety of the pupils and ensure that adequate supervision is provided at all times;
- ensure that the established code of conduct for both staff and pupils is adhered to;
- ensure child protection procedures are followed;
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- ensure that, during the visit, leaders have up-to-date emergency contact details of:
 - nominated contact
 - parents
- ensure that accompanying staff and volunteers and the nominated contact are aware of the emergency procedures;
- ensure that the group leaders have the details of group members' special educational or medical needs, which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- regularly review visits/activities.

Accompanying Staff

Accompanying staff on educational visits are responsible to the school whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours.

Accompanying staff must endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

'In Loco Parentis' applies to all adults who work with pupils.

Accompanying staff should:

- accept the authority and follow the instructions of the group leader;
- under direction of the group leader, assist with the organisation of activities and discipline of the pupils;
- ensure that the established code of conduct, for leaders and participants is adhered to;
- consider stopping the activity and notify the group leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the group members in their charge, is unacceptable.

Volunteers in a Supervisory Role

To satisfy staffing ratios, it may be necessary to involve persons other than staff members as volunteers, e.g. parents. These adults can play a very valuable part in ensuring the safety of group participants while on a visit. However, prior to any visit they should be clear about their role and responsibilities during the visit.

Volunteers should:

- be vetted on the basis of having substantial access to children;
- participation in an educational visit, particularly those with a residential element, would provide such access;
- endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- not be left in sole charge of group members except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- follow the instructions of the group leader (which may be provided in writing) and other accompanying staff, and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the group leader or accompanying staff if concerned about the health or safety of the pupils, at any time during the visit;
- endeavour to ensure that the established code of conduct, is adhered to (see section 12).

Nominated Contact at School Base

Dealing with unexpected situations can be aided by a central figure, (possibly the principal/EVC, if not on the visit, or another senior member of staff if not on the visit) who will act as the contact person for both the group and the pupils' families.

Nominated contact should:

- retain details of the place to be visited, contact personnel and telephone and mobile numbers as appropriate;
- retain a copy of the contact details of all the pupils' parents;
- retain a copy of the contact details of the principal/group leader;
- be fully briefed and aware of his/her responsibilities including the action to take in the event of a serious incident.

Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the visit. However, in the interests of the overall safety and success of the visit the ultimate decision as to who participates rests with those involved in organising the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to a briefing session, where appropriate.

Parents should:

- sign the consent form;
- provide the school with an emergency contact number(s);
- provide the school with relevant medical/dietary details, including any medication currently being taken in writing (by means of the consent form) and any other relevant information (about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health) which may affect their participation in the visit);
- help prepare their child for the visit, for example, by reinforcing the visit's code of conduct;
- agree the arrangements established for a member of the group returning home due to unforeseen circumstances.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents who have particular or special needs, for example, those who are hearing impaired or whose first language is not English.

Responsibilities of Pupils

The group leader should, when briefing the pupils, make it clear that they have to act in accordance with the code of conduct at all times.

Where appropriate, pupils should be fully involved in the planning process.

Please refer to the Model Code of Conduct in Appendix 5. Further consideration may need to be given to this matter when dealing with pupils with behavioural issues.

Responsibilities of Employing Authority

The employing authority will generally retain a number of responsibilities:

The employing authority may provide:

- advice and support for governors, principals, teachers and other appropriate staff;
- guidance on best practice;
- training, as appropriate;
- insurance cover, as appropriate.

EMERGENCY/CONTINGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Establishing emergency procedures is an essential part of planning an educational visit. Everyone involved in the educational visit should be aware of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Such procedures should outline clearly what is to be done during the actual emergency and after the event.

Contingency planning relates to areas and circumstances which should be anticipated in advance of an educational visit, e.g. unsuitable weather, transportation problems, cancellation of an event, illness or injury etc. It should also define roles and responsibilities for all staff involved in the organisation of the trip including senior managers remaining in school.

Those responsible for organising educational visits should familiarise themselves, and others involved, with relevant contingency arrangements.

Visit organisers should ensure that a clear communications plan is established with key contact numbers available. All staff members and parents of those taking part in the visit should be briefed and be provided with a copy of the procedure. It should clearly define the circumstances where contact should be made.

In the event of a medical emergency designated staff responsible for managing first aid/ medical emergencies should have knowledge of:

- medical conditions;
- parental advice relating to a medical condition;
- an emergency contact number for parents;
- how to access any medical equipment e.g. the defibrillator at the facility;
- the emergency procedures within the facility.

Critical Incidents

“A critical incident may be defined as any sudden and unexpected incident or sequence of events which causes trauma within a school community and which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of that school.” (iMatter Every School a Good School. A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools).

In the event of a critical incident (as defined above) occurring during a school visit the school’s critical incident management plan should be implemented. Advice and guidance on the development and implementation of such a plan can be found in the Department of Education’s document, “Every School a Good School. A Guide to Managing Critical Incidents in Schools”. The local critical incident response team may also be contacted for additional advice and support. Contact details for each team can be found on the Education Authority website.

CONTACTS

General Advice and guidance on the planning and implementation of educational visits can be accessed from the following personnel and organisations.

Organisation	Contact details
EA Dundonald Office	Grahamsbridge Road Dundonald BELFAST BT16 2HS Tel: 028 9056 6200 Fax: 028 9056 6266/7 e-mail: info@seelb.org.uk
EA Omagh Office	1 Hospital Road OMAGH BT79 0AW Tel: 028 8241 1411 Fax: 028 8241 1400 e-mail: info@welb.org.uk Emergency Number: 07833 668868
EA Belfast Office	40 Academy Street BELFAST BT1 2NQ Tel: 028 9056 4000 Fax: 028 9033 1714 e-mail: info@belb.org.uk
EA Ballymena Office	County Hall 182 Galgorm Road BALLYMENA Co Antrim BT42 1HN Tel: 028 2565 3333 Fax: 028 2564 6071 e-mail: info@neelb.org.uk
EA Armagh Office	3 Charlemont Place ARMAGH Co Armagh BT61 9AX Tel: 028 3752 3811/028 3751 2200 Fax: 028 3751 2490 e-mail: info@selb.org.uk Emergency Number: 028 3751 2345
CCMS	Lisburn Office Linen Hill House 23 Linenhall Street Lisburn Co Antrim BT28 1FJ Omagh Office 1 Hospital Road Omagh Co Tyrone BT79 0AW Tel: 028 9201 3014 e-mail: info.ccms@nics.gov.uk
NICIE	Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education 25 College Gardens BELFAST BT9 6BS Tel: 028 9097 2910 Fax: 028 9097 2919 e-mail: info@nicie.org.uk
CnaG	Foras na Gaeilge Westgate House 2-4 Queen Street BELFAST BT1 6ED Tel: 028 9089 0970 email: eolas@forasnagaeilge.ie
CSSC	Controlled Schools' Support Council Second Floor Main Building Stranmillis University College Stranmillis Road BELFAST BT9 5DY Tel: 028 9531 3030 e-mail: info@csscni.org.uk

Emergency Procedures

Despite risk assessments in place and careful planning, things sometimes go wrong. To mitigate any further risk and recover the situation to normality as soon as possible, the following guidelines must be applied:

- emergency procedures must be established by the group leader and must be communicated to and understood by all members of the party;
- the group leader should ensure that adequate First Aid provision is available. A list of contents for a First Aid Kit;
- in the event of a young person becoming ill or being injured, specialist help must be sought as appropriate and parents informed as soon as possible. Where the illness/accident/injury is serious the principal should be contacted. Responsibility for informing relevant authorities rests with the principal;
- if it is necessary due to the seriousness of the circumstances for the parents to visit the young person(s), the principal in conjunction with the governing body should make arrangements for them to do so.

A 'missing pupil policy' should be known in advanced by every member of the group including:

- action to be taken if separated from the group or lost;
- advice on where assistance may be sought;
- notifiable personnel and contact details;
- notification of safe return.

If any leader has cause to believe that a young person has been abducted or has absconded the Police must be notified.

Contingency Planning

Group leaders must create a contingency plan for each visit/trip. All leaders and supervisors must be aware of the plan and senior staff remaining in school must also be aware and hold a copy of the contingency plan. The contingency plan should be informed by the risk assessment.

The group leader should initiate the contingency plan if any of the following circumstances arise or there is a high likelihood of them occurring before the trip returns to school or home:

- an **immediate threat to the physical and emotional safety and well-being** of the pupils and staff on the visit;
- an **unplanned closure** of the venue/destination for a period of time;
- a **significant disruption to travel arrangements** due to unforeseen circumstances (eg cancelled flights, mechanical breakdown etc.)
- an **injury, illness or fatality involving a pupil or member of staff on the visit** ;
- a sudden **serious illness, injury or fatality** of a pupil, member of staff or close relative **back at school or home**;
- a **criminal incident** involving group members or leaders;
- involves the school/organisation having to provide a **response to the media** relating to any of the above.

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and group leaders should liaise with their School Principal if in any doubt about a situation.

Contingency plans should provide prompts for actions to be taken in the event of an identified situation arising. As part of the planning process group leaders should identify possible situations that could impact on the visit and then create a list of possible actions and contacts to be consider if the identified situation were to arise.

As an example if a member of staff was required to return home during the trip the contingency plan should identify how this would be accommodated and should identify a member of staff who can be released at short notice to join the visit.

Where an incident involving a pupil or group of pupils arises (eg illness, injury, criminal) their parents/guardian must be directly contacted as soon as possible to inform them of the situation. Where possible all efforts should be made to enable the pupil to talk directly with their parents/guardian in a private setting. The contingency plan should identify who will initiate this contact and this person should have immediate access to the emergency contact numbers for all pupils and staff on the trip.

Once a contingency plan has been activated the situation should be monitored continuously until it is resolved or until the group has returned home.

The CitizenAid App, available for Windows, Apple and Android mobile phone operating systems, is available at: <http://citizenaid.org/> All leaders and staff accompanying educational visits should download this key resource for use in emergency situations.

FIRST- AID KITS

First-Aid kits should contain sufficient quantities of suitable First-Aid material appropriate to the visit environment. For most First-Aid kits, sufficient quantities could be considered as:

- a general guidance card on First-Aid;
- twenty individually wrapped sterile adhesive plasters (assorted sizes) appropriate for the environment (you can provide hypoallergenic plasters, if necessary);
- two sterile eye pads, with attachments;
- four individually wrapped triangular bandages;
- six safety pins;
- six medium sized individually wrapped sterile, un-medicated wound dressings (approximately 10cm x 8cm);
- two large sterile individually wrapped, un-medicated wound dressings (approximately 13cm x 9cm);
- two extra-large sterile individually wrapped, un-medicated wound dressings (approximately 28cm x 17.5cm);
- sterile water or sterile saline solution in sealed disposable containers for use in situations where mains tap water is not available. (Each container should hold 300ml and at least 3 containers should be provided. Once opened, the containers must not be re-used.);

- It may also be useful to carry first-aid scissors and medical tweezers.

As an alternative, a number of smaller 'travelling' first-aid kits can be carried containing the same amount of equipment overall, but spread throughout the group.

What should we do about visits given the current threat of terrorist attacks?

The current global situation means that the possibility of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk faced by us all. Like all risks this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way. To provide some perspective - the UK government identifies five levels of threat from 'low' to 'critical'. Since 2006, when this level was first published, it has never been below 'substantial' – the middle level.

The understandable anxiety of parents, teachers, children and young people is particularly heightened following an incident. As part of the response to staying vigilant and carrying on as normal, it is important to decide about each visit on its merit. The following guidance for visit planning explains how we may reduce our vulnerability while carrying on as normally as possible.

When planning any visit consider the likelihood of the destination, venue or transport hubs being at risk of a terrorist attack. It is sensible to:

- Be aware of the latest news relating to your destination.
- In the UK know the current threat level (available at: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>.)
- When travelling abroad check the FCO website www.fco.gov.uk in the early stages of visit planning, at regular intervals and immediately prior to leaving.
- Consider the threat of terrorism as part of visit risk management and include it within visit emergency plans.
- When visiting crowded places such as a major city, venue or event, where the risk of attack may be greater, consider within your planning:
- Possible safe areas or venues, near where you intend to be, that you could use as an emergency shelter.
- How to minimise waiting time at busy venues. Where to wait and gather for head counts.
- How to minimise queuing times (such as not carrying unnecessary items) to speed up search and entry.
- Are staff phones charged and numbers shared?
- Do all leaders have all group information? Will they be spaced apart?
- A contact card for all participants giving a number to call if separated from the group, and the name and telephone number of the establishment
- How you would get away in an emergency, bearing in mind that the direct route and planned transport might no longer be an option. Are you aware of alternatives and can you access emergency funds to pay for them?
- Do you need to leave the site immediately with the crowd at the end of the visit event?
- The possibility of an enforced overnight stay and what this might entail – for example do you need a reserve of any critical medication?
- How the leadership team might manage an enforced group split.

During the visit:

- Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings – know where the exits are and where you would run to.
- Be aware of the possibility of suspicious items. (See point 5 the 4Cs - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorismsecurity-office>).

- When staying at any place for more than 30 minutes, identify emergency meeting points in case the group is forced to move and becomes split.
- Avoid congregating too long around entrances to major public sites.
- At ports and airports don't linger unnecessarily on the public side of security screening.
- Be aware of the 'Stay Safe' principles: 'Run, Hide, Tell' and know what to expect if you encounter armed response officers (see point 2 in 'recognising the terrorist threat': <http://tinyurl.com/pp4fxmu>)
- The experience of the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office is that **decisive leadership is key**.

The website of the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorismsecurity-office>. If this link doesn't work, try <http://tinyurl.com/o5qjkvs>, or copy and paste the link into your browser.

The CitizenAid App, available for Windows, Apple and Android mobile phone operating systems, is available at: <http://citizenaid.org/> All leaders and staff accompanying educational visits should download this key resource for use in emergency situations.

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PUPILS

For the visit to be both beneficial and enjoyable for all, pupils are expected to:

- behave responsibly and show consideration for others, including fellow pupils, staff and members of the public;
- comply with the instructions given by school staff;
- look after your own possessions and anything you borrow;
- keep all facilities clean, tidy and undamaged;
- abide by any rules and regulations of the places we visit;
- in the event of an emergency, follow emergency procedure instructions;
- understand and follow the rules about the purchase, possession and consumption of alcohol;
- understand and follow the rules about the purchase, possession and use of tobacco;
- understand that the possession and use of non-prescribed drugs and/or illegal substances is strictly forbidden;
- inform staff if you have any medical conditions or injuries;
- inform a member of staff if you have any concerns about safety or security;
- report any damaged or unsafe equipment;
- wear appropriate clothing;
- comply with any restrictions on the access to and use of social media and online services including agreement on the safe sharing and posting of photographs, videos and other information.

On a coach or minibus

- remain in your seat, unless given permission to do otherwise;
- wear your seat belt;
- do not distract the driver – no shouting out, no flash photography etc;
- if you begin to feel travel sick, inform a member of staff;
- when disembarking, be aware of traffic movement and direction.

On a ferry, at an airport and at a railway station

- remain in your group at these busy locations;
- be aware of and comply with all timings and meeting places;
- understand and comply with security arrangements and limitations;
- follow instructions from transport operator staff;
- follow all instructions about being on boat decks;
- visit shops in pairs or groups - never alone;
- stay back from the edge of railway platforms;
- be sure you know where the group is based and how to locate staff.

Staying in a hotel

- read and understand all instructions about fire and safety procedures;
- know the location of duty staff;
- comply with any instructions about permission to leave the hotel;
- comply with any instructions about access to parts of the hotel, e.g. bar, casino, swimming pool;
- understand the dangers of balconies and comply with any instructions about access to them;
- comply with instructions about access to other people's bedrooms;
- comply with any instructions about appropriate relationships amongst participants;

- comply with any instructions about appropriate relationships with others they may come in contact with;
- arrive on time for meals and meetings;
- comply with any restrictions on the use of mobile phones, smartphones, tablets, cameras, music players, etc;
- comply with any restrictions on internet access, and viewing TV, videos and DVDs, etc.

Excursions

- remain in your designated group;
- know which member of staff is your nominated leader;
- when unaccompanied by staff, ensure that you understand any instructions and limitations;
- always carry your emergency contact card.

I agree to abide by the above Code of Conduct.

MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL LEADERS, STAFF AND SUPERVISORS

Adult supervisors leading and accompanying a group of students are at all times bound to follow the Child Protection Policy.

Given the particular circumstances of educational visits, adult supervisors must adhere to the following additional guidelines:

- supervisors must discuss and agree supervisory duties in advance of the trip and carry out all duties so assigned throughout the period of the trip;
- supervisors must ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender of the pupil, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation;
- supervisors must not enter the bedrooms or sleeping accommodation of pupils unless accompanied by another supervisor except in an emergency or when such action is completely unavoidable;
- a supervisor should avoid situations in which he/she is alone with a pupil. If such a situation is unavoidable, the supervisor should as far as possible ensure that he/she is in a public place with the pupil;
- supervisors must avoid all physical contact with pupils, unless engaging in administering first aid or as part of the college's Reasonable Force policy;
- supervisors must not consume alcohol during the trip;
- supervisors must not smoke in the presence of pupils during the period of the trip;
- supervisors must ensure that their own conduct is appropriate in the circumstances and would not give rise to comment or speculation;
- if any incident occurs during the trip where a supervisor feels that his/her actions may have been misconstrued, the supervisor should report the incident to the group leader immediately and should, on return, provide a written and verbal report of the incident to the principal.

AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED DURING BRIEFING OF LEADERS, PUPILS AND PARENTS PRIOR TO VISIT

Prior to any educational visit (categories 3-5) the group leader should brief all leaders, pupils and parents.

Leaders

Supervision of pupil is paramount. The roles, responsibilities and detailed duties of all leaders must be worked out well in advance of a visit. Unless otherwise agreed, it must be assumed that leaders are on supervisory duty at all times. It is essential that all accompanying staff and volunteers should be fully briefed before agreeing to participate in an educational visit.

The briefing should include the following key areas:

- educational purpose;
- make-up of participating group;
- details of all planned activities, including any that are hazardous;
- expected level of participation in activities;
- arrangements for supervision, including details of rotas;
- roles and responsibilities of leaders and pupils;
- an agreed code of conduct (including the use of mobile phones and social media);
- health and safety rules;
- procedures e.g. emergency, First-Aid etc;
- cash handling arrangements, where necessary.

Parents of all pupils must be asked to sign a consent form giving:

- permission for their son/daughter to participate in activities;
- details of any medical or behavioural condition which may affect their participation including medications, allergies etc;
- emergency contact number;
- advance permission for urgent medical treatment if this is judged to be necessary by medical authorities.

The briefing of volunteers is particularly important as they are not part of the everyday life of the school and may not fully understand normal practices.

Therefore, volunteers must be:

Notified of and complete, vetting procedures prior to participation

Provided with guidance on the expectations and boundaries of their behaviour whilst participating in the educational visit.

Pupils and Parents

Pupils should be fully briefed before participating in an educational visit.

Information regarding the following should be provided:

- educational purpose(s) of the visit;
- date(s);
- departure and return times;
- transport arrangements;
- address/location/accommodation;
- details of all planned activities, including any that are hazardous;
- health and safety rules;
- responsibility for themselves and others
- arrangements for supervision;
- role and responsibilities of leaders and pupils;
- an agreed code of conduct (including the use of mobile phones and social media);
- procedures e.g. emergency, First-Aid etc;
- any special clothing or equipment needed;
- recommended maximum pocket money, if appropriate;
- liaison arrangements with school including an emergency telephone number;
- details of arrangements relating to any participant returning home early cash handling arrangements, where necessary;
- procedures in the event of a pupil getting lost or separated from the rest of the group.

At an early stage parents should be informed of the proposed visit. Where a visit includes a residential element, parents should have an opportunity to meet with accompanying staff and other volunteers.

Parents of pupils must put in place suitable arrangements for the pick-up and set down of their son/daughter prior to and after the educational visit. These must be agreed with the school in advance.

Only by direct contact with a parent and with the agreement of the school may an alternative to the scheduled pick up or set down locations be arranged.

The group leader or leaders of an educational visit must not make ad hoc pick up or set down arrangements with a member of the group.

