

Off-Site Visits - using Evolve (Schools)

Document History

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Signed (Headteacher):	

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1. General

Wigan Council (the LA) acknowledges the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed. The purpose of this document is to provide concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of off- site visits and related activities.

The LA uses an internet based system called 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the efficient planning, management, evaluation and approval of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by their establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources and information, staff records and visit history.

2. Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

To help schools fulfill their health and safety obligations for visits, Headteacher's must appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who will support the Head of Establishment.

The EVC should have knowledge of and practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment. As part of their development, the EVC should attend update training at least once every 3 years.

The role of the EVC includes:

- Ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits.
- The EVC must ensure that a school policy is in place for off-site visits, and that this is updated as necessary, and readily available to staff.
- To check the planning documentation and provide advice to staff on the visits to be undertaken.

3. Approval of Visits

Approval is delegated to the Head of Establishment for all local and day return visits, (Level 1)

Overseas, residential and adventurous activities as defined in [Section 21](#) (Level 2) require approval by the LA on the EVOLVE system. In approving visits the Head of Establishment and EVC should ensure that the visit leader is competent to lead the visit.

A member of staff intending to supervise or instruct an adventurous activity must be competent, qualified and have had recent experience in that specific discipline. Staff who wish to lead adventurous activities must have the approval of the LA.

4. Outcomes

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Up to four 'intended' outcomes may be recorded on EVOLVE during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.

Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including: Relationships, Emotional & spiritual, Cross curricular, Individual, Teamwork, Environmental

Preparatory work should take place in advance of the visit where appropriate. This, in conjunction with the activity that will take place during the visit, can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place should feed into any follow up work.

5. Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. You are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

6. Responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety on educational visits with the employer:

For community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and statutory youth groups, the employer is the local authority. These establishments must adhere to this guidance document.

For Academies, Foundation schools, and Voluntary Aided schools, the employer is usually the governing body or proprietor. Although welcome to do so, these establishments are not obliged to use the guidance of the LA. If using LA guidance, this should be clearly stated. If not using LA guidance, establishments are advised to ensure that the systems in place are equally as robust as those of the LA.

It is the responsibility of the governing body or LA as employer to ensure that the visit leader is competent in all circumstances to lead the visit (Residential, Adventurous and Overseas visits) In line with your policy document and be mindful that this is not overlooked in any last minute changes to staffing.

7. Planning

EVOLVE provides a means of recording each of the planned phases, and enables the EVC and Headteacher to monitor, contribute and support the activity.

Planning should achieve a balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. Many aspects of planning will already be in place in the form of existing policies and guidance, such as the establishment's own policy, LA policy, etc. These, in conjunction with the EVOLVE Visit Form may be sufficient for a particular visit.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, a generic 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit, planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the EVOLVE visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes or attachments.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question: *'What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?'* It should focus on those issues that are individual to the specific event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the

experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event. Significant issues must be recorded on EVOLVE, either notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider (Section 29) and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. As such, the provider's risk assessment should be obtained by the establishment leader, and be attached to EVOLVE.

Alternative arrangements (Plan B) should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, and will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

8. Safety During the Visit

Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that all participants understand what is expected of them. This includes any 'rules' that will be in place. The code of conduct will ensure ownership and must be re-emphasized at appropriate times during the visit.

It is the responsibility of the visit leader to modify or curtail the visit or activity (eg Plan B) to suit the changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

Following the visit, the visit leader should record any significant issues in the evaluate section of EVOLVE, for both reference and to inform future visits.

9. Parental Consent

Section 35 of the Education Act 2004 states: *'Where a visit is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time, then parental consent is not necessary although it is recommended good practice to ensure that parents are informed'*.

Annual consent is appropriate for regular routine activities.

For all other visits, consent should be obtained on an individual visit basis. Information provided to parents prior to granting consent should include full details of the activities and any other significant information.

Parental consent must always be sought prior to any swimming activity.

10. Competence to Lead

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants. The EVC and/or Head of Establishment must therefore consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- What experience the leader has in accompanying similar or other visits? (Check Visit History on EVOLVE).
- Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- Is the leader an employee of the local authority?
- Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?

- Does the leader exhibit sound decision making abilities?
- What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- If leading adventurous activities', has the leader been 'approved' by the LA?
- Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

11. Staffing and Supervision

There must be effective supervision on all visits that have been approved by the EVC and Head of Establishment. Ratios for Early Years are specified in the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) and must be adhered to.

For all other visits, the visit leader, EVC and Head of establishment will make a professional judgment regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following: the type, level, and duration of activity, nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs, experience and competence of staff and other adults, the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions, the contingency, or 'Plan B' options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the visit leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Ratios taken from National Guidance,

- School Year 1 – 3 1:6
- School Year 4 – 6 1:15
- School Year 7 – 11 1:20
- Residential/Out of Country 1:10

It must be remembered that the National Guidelines are just that, and staffing levels must be increased if the group or nature of the visit dictates.

Staff who are assigned to support the specific needs of an individual, cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio and their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Staff and volunteers who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DSB check as part of their recruitment process.

It must be remembered that you are in Loco-Parentis 24 hours a day and that alcohol, drugs or other substances must not be used at any time. The expectations of the school management of their staff are those stated in the schools policies, procedures and contracts.

11.1. Remote Supervision

Young people must be supervised throughout all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, eg. DofE expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision.

'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as, Prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility) venue and conditions, the activity taking place, preparatory training, the competence of the supervising staff and the emergency systems in place.

12. First Aid

For all visits there MUST be a named responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment (eg. urban, remote, water, etc).

'Basic Skills' is a level which may be suitable for routine urban visits, however the nature of the visit may indicate that a higher level qualification is appropriate, especially in circumstances where it is likely that access by the emergency services may be delayed.

Based on the nature of the particular visit, the EVC and/or visit leader should make a professional judgement regarding the level of first aid required. However, any residential visit or adventurous activity should be accompanied by, or have access to, qualified first aid provision (minimum 2 day award). For residential visits, the visit leader should ensure that first aid is available at all times.

A first aid kit appropriate to the visit should be carried, and there should always be someone who is nominated to deal with first aid issues. The first aid requirements relating to EYFS settings are specified and must be adhered to; see [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

13. Insurance

Advice regarding insurance may be sought from the Local Authority's Insurance section although Academies should in the first instance approach their own Insurers.

Except for Academies, schools may buy into Wigan Council's travel insurance scheme. This covers all educational visits and includes overnight stays, day trips, site visits and adventurous activities. The cover relates to all staff, pupils and helpers.

For all visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher and Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) to determine whether any additional insurance should be taken out. The responsibility for arranging adequate insurance cover rests with the Head of Establishment in conjunction with the organizer for each journey.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card).
<https://www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card>

14. Transport

Private cars: where a private car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Head of Establishment, all documentation having been checked. See appendix 3

Coaches: whilst UK legislation ensures that coach companies are fit for public use, the facilities available on coaches may vary. Liaising with other establishments within the LA that have used a particular company will help to determine the level of service that may be provided.

Minibuses: guidance document Operating School Transport (see Evolve resources). Establishments that own or hire a minibus must have an operational policy in place for the use of the vehicle.

In summary, all drivers of minibuses are recommended to undertake MiDAS training, keep that training current, have a category D1 Licence and for driving in Europe a section 19 permit.

15. Farm Visits

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken. There is a small chance that persons involved in petting animals can contract E-coli 157 and thorough handwashing after the event must take place. It is also unwise for pregnant women (particularly in the first three months) to visit farms.

16. Water-Margin Activities

Activities that take place near or in water – such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water (knee deep). It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft.

As with all visits, where appropriate there should be an approved alternative ‘Plan B’ that could be used where conditions dictate, and for which parental consent has been obtained.

LA approval is not required for water-margin activities, but the leader must have previous relevant experience, and must have been assessed as competent to lead the activity by the EVC and/or Head of Establishment.

17. Residential Visits

This is a Level 2 activity requiring the approval of the LA.

18. Overseas Visits

This is a Level 2 activity requiring the approval of the LA.

For all visits it is essential that consideration is given to the following:

- Culture: food and drink, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs.
- Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation.
- Transport systems have been assessed as safe for use.

The visit leader should consider the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk home page.

18.1 Exchange visits.

The LA has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel guidance document: *Young People's Exchange Visits* LA establishments are required to adhere to all relevant aspects of this guidance.

19. Weather, Clothing & Survival

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;
- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signaling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, to undertake dynamic risk assessments and modify or curtail the visit or activity (Plan B) due to changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

20. Swimming

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and lifeguarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available. Parental consent must be obtained for all swimming activities.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, ie. Is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

Open Water Swimming

LA Approval (Level 2 activity) is required via EVOLVE.

The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.

Swimming pools (lifeguarded)

LA Approval is not required

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly lifeguarded pools abroad, the establishment's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.

Hotel (and other) Swimming pools

If lifeguarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the visit leader must ensure the suitability of the venue and that competent staff are available and present during all water activities approval to lead the activity will be required via EVOLVE.

Staff must be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the venue will provide back up. Staff should also know if they have exclusive use of the pool, as other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

21. Definition of an 'Adventurous Activity'

The following activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and require LA approval:

- All activities in 'open country'
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Water skiing
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Gill Scrambling
- Abseiling
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration
- Shooting and archery
- Snow sports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including dry slope
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Horse riding
- Motor sport – all forms
- High level ropes courses
- Off road cycling

The following activities are not regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require approval. However, these activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the EVC and Head of Establishment is competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or on non-remote country paths
- Field studies - unless in the environments stated in 'open country'
- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions
- Ice skating. (Ring)
- Pedal go-karts
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.
- Farm and Zoological garden visits
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities

Please contact the local authority if there is uncertainty over whether a particular activity requires LA approval.

22. Adventurous Activities

An external provider must hold LOtC Quality Badge or complete a [Provider Form](#) If a Provider holds an AALA license (and/or any other accreditation) but not a LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required. Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

or

A member of your establishment's staff, This person must be specifically approved by the LA to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

23. Water-Based Activities

The provider must hold a LOtC Quality Badge or complete a [Provider Form](#) If a Provider holds an AALA license (and/or any other accreditation) but not a LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required. Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continues to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

Or

A member of your establishment's staff. This person must be specifically approved by the LA to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

In order to participate in water-based activities, participants should normally be water confident. Participants who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to consideration of all factors, including the activity itself and supervision arrangements. The level of water confidence of all participants must be known by the activity leader prior to the commencement of water-based activities.

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

might be encountered, and prepare accordingly. Local advice must be sought where appropriate, e.g. coastguard, harbour master, other site users, etc.

Personal buoyancy conforming to the appropriate National Governing Body must be worn at all times by all participants in water based activities.

24. Open-country Activities

For the purposes of LA approval, 'open-country' is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access. However, this is an arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Open-country activities are regarded as 'adventurous' requires LA approval.

The provider must hold a LOtC Quality Badge or complete a [Provider Form](#) If a Provider holds an AALA license (and/or any other accreditation) but not a LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required. Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continues to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

or

A member of your establishment staff. This person must be specifically approved by the LA to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

- For leaders of walking groups outside the UK or Ireland, please contact the LA for further guidance.
- For leaders of walking groups in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland
- Mountain Leader Award (Summer or Winter as appropriate) www.mltuk.org **or**
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser
- For leaders of walking groups in summer conditions in non-mountainous hilly terrain (Known variously as upland, moor, bog, hill, fell or down), with well defined obvious boundaries, such as roads and coastlines, and where any hazards within it are identifiable and avoidable, and where wild camping or movement on steep ground is not involved.
- Hill and Moorland Leader Award

or

- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser
- For leaders of walking groups in terrain 'easier' than that defined above:

The leader must demonstrate an appropriate level of competence. This may include one or more of the following:

- Sports Leaders UK Level 2/3 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL). This is appropriate for leading groups in lowland areas, and for organising base and mobile camps. See www.bst.org.uk
- Lowland Leader Award
- Completion of a 'Leader Training' Course.
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser
- Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated.

- An assessment of competence (written or implied) by the Head of Establishment.

25. Snow Sports

Snow sports (e.g. skiing and snowboarding) are regarded as adventurous activities, (Level 2) and the visit therefore requires LA approval.

A member of staff intending to organise a snowsport visit (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) must hold the Snow sport Course Organizer Award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England www.snowsportengland.org.uk and must have previously accompanied at least one educational snowsports visit.

Young people may only participate in snow sports when under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent person. This would normally be an instructor employed by the local snowsports school. Establishments should therefore consider the merits of fully instructed lessons of 4/5 hours duration per day.

A member of staff intending to lead skiing or snowboarding (ie. not using a ski school instructor) must be qualified as below and have been approved by the LA via EVOLVE

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

- The Alpine Ski Course Leader Award (ASCL) **or**
- The Alpine Ski Leader Award (ASL) **or**
- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'

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

- The Snowboard Leader Award (SBL) administered **or**
- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'

See EVOLVE for the current good practice guidance on helmets for snowsport activities.

Young people must not participate in off-piste activities.

Important: Owing to liability waiver requirements, for resorts in USA or Canada, the establishment must check the liability position prior to making a commitment.

26. Overseas Expeditions

Overseas Expeditions (for the purposes of this document) are defined as those which typically involve journeying in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries.

There are stringent requirements on Overseas Expedition providers, and establishments may therefore need to allow up to 18 months for LA approval to be granted. A 'Note' (for the attention of the LA) should be added to the EVOLVE Visit Form as soon as possible during the planning stages.

Overseas Expeditions will only be approved by the local authority if the provider either:

- a) Holds an LOtC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk **or**
- b) Provides a statement of compliance with [Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3](#)

For providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge, 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3' should be referred to when the proposal is initiated. This document contains information for both establishments and providers, and includes a checklist of vital aspects that **must** be considered prior to the establishment making a commitment with an external provider. Overseas expedition providers are required to comply with the minimum standards specified in this document.

When planning an expedition and selecting a provider, establishments should particularly consider the educational aims of the venture, that appropriate progression takes place, and that the requirements relating to 'Best Value' are met.

Visit leaders may find it beneficial to attend the one day course entitled 'Overseas Expeditions and

Fieldwork: a Course for Teachers and Youth Leaders' organised by the Royal Geographical Society - <https://www.rgs.org/about/the-society/what-we-do/fieldwork-and-expeditions/>

27. Emergency Procedures

Establishments should ensure that their Health and Safety policy includes off-site visits. Staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to their establishment's policy on emergency procedures.

For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours:

- A completed *Emergency Card – Visit Leader* (or equivalent) must be with the Visit Leader at all times, **and**
- A completed *Emergency Card – Home Contacts* (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times, where access to EVOLVE is not possible.

In an emergency, if it is not possible to reach any of the designated establishment emergency contacts, the leader should call the LA 24 hour emergency number.

28. Approval of Staff to Lead an Adventurous Activity

PROCEDURE FOR OBTAINING APPROVAL

Staff who wish to lead (ie. supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity, must first upload details and scanned copies of all relevant qualifications (eg instructor certificates, first aid, etc) to the 'My Details' section of their EVOLVE account.

The visit leader should complete the Visit Form on EVOLVE as usual. During this process EVOLVE will ask for an Activity Leader Form (ALF) to be completed, which will request further details regarding the proposed venture (eg dates, venues, numbers, etc). The ALF will then be embedded within the Visit Form for that particular visit and checked by the EVC.

On receipt of a Visit Form (and embedded ALF), the LA will view the proposed activity in the context of the leader's competencies and qualifications.

Where approval is not granted to lead the activity, the Visit Form will be returned to the EVC via EVOLVE, with an attached note. Where this is the case the activity must not take place.

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL

Approval will normally be given where the leader of the activity has recent relevant experience, For most activities the competence required of a technical adviser is stipulated by the activity's National Governing Body.

In some cases approval may be granted where no qualification is held, where the person concerned is deemed by the LA or competent technical advisor to have a sufficient level of competence in addition to recent relevant experience.

Where no National Governing Body exists, the LA will make a decision based on factors which may include: technical advice, the leader's stated competence, observed competence, past experience, and attendance at training courses.

Approval will always be subject to a requirement that the leader must act at all times within the remit of his/her qualifications, and in accordance with National Governing Body Guidelines where these exist. Approval may also be subject to other conditions which will be specified by the LA on the Visit Form.

Where there is insufficient information for the LA to make a decision regarding approval, then the applicant may be asked to provide further information (eg evidence of awards, experience, and log

book details, etc). In some cases a meeting with the applicant may be requested by the LA.

Approval to lead an adventurous activity is specific to the technical aspects of the adventurous activity detailed. It is not an indication in respect of other aspects of the visit such as general management and supervision skills, the assessment of which may be the responsibility of Head of Establishment and/or EVC.

29. Using an External Provider

An 'External Provider' is defined as where there is an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding, for example:

- Activity Centre
- Ski Company
- Educational Tour Operator
- Overseas Expedition Provider
- Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff
- Freelance instructor of adventurous activities
- Youth Hostel (where instruction is provided)
- Voluntary organisation (e.g. Scout Association), where instruction is provided

To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, the establishment must ensure that either:

The Provider holds a LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom) Quality Badge

www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk.

If so no further action is necessary, other than to check the suitability of the provider/venue in relation to the intended aims or learning outcomes for the particular group.

For Providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge

- Download a [Provider Form](#) from EVOLVE.
- Complete the top section.
- Send Provider Form to the provider (email, fax, post).
- On its return check that it has been satisfactorily completed.
- Keep Provider Form on file together with all other relevant documentation.
- It is not necessary to attach the Provider Form to EVOLVE.

Important: If the Provider has made any alterations to the wording of the Provider Form or is unable to comply, then you must discuss this with the Provider, and if necessary seek advice from the LA prior to making a commitment with the Provider.

The Provider Form should be sent to the provider at the time of making a provisional booking and no deposits should be committed prior to its satisfactory completion and return.

The satisfactory completion of a Provider Form does not necessarily signify that the service on offer will be appropriate for the young people from your establishment. A pre-visit and recommendation from previous users will help you decide on its suitability.

30. The use of Alcohol

If a member of staff is off duty, ensuring there is sufficient cover and effective supervision for the rest of the group there is no reason why a member of staff cannot have a moderate amount of alcohol. Those who do drink must be in a fit state when returning to duty. Please remember we have a non-delegable duty of care whilst in loco parentis and we can not deligate that duty to a third party. When travelling abroad all leaders and participants should be aware of Local laws and customs relating to alcohol. Local Laws should always be followed where they are more restrictive than the laws of the UK or agree visit rules.

31. Trampoline Parks and Bouncy Castles

Wigan Council and its insurers does not condone the use of Trampoline Parks or Bouncy Castles – this is due to the number and severity of accidents that occur at these venues, the staffing ratios, and the potential for public liability claims.

Visit Leaders Planning Checklist.

This checklist is a tool to assist the EVC and Group Leader to plan a proposed visit and can be used as a formal record for the Head of establishment to ensure;

- The health, safety and wellbeing of young people and staff.
- The maximum educational value to children and young people.
- Effective management, planning, organization and leadership.

Visit Leader.

Is there a clearly identified Visit Leader, sufficiently experienced and competent to assess the risks and manage the proposed visit activity?

If required, is there a named deputy leader?

Has the visit leader retained copies of all relevant information, medical needs, documents and forms and copies passed to the Head of establishment?

Purpose.

Is there a clearly defined purpose for the whole program and any of its constituent parts appropriate to the age and ability of the young people?

Risk assessment

Has the group leader assessed the risks involved in all aspects of the visit/activities including travel, the venue, relaxation time, environmental, ability of the young people and recorded the significant findings?

Location.

Is the proposed location of the visit suitable for the activity to be undertaken and manageable for the group?

Advice.

Have you sought advice from someone with expertise or technical competence where there is uncertainty about safe practice?

(This may be via the LA or a member of staff who has a co-ordinating role for off-site activities within your establishment)

Approval.

Have the Head/Governors/Manager been given all relevant information and their approval obtained?

Does the proposed activity fall within Category 2?

(You will need to notify the LA's EVA for approval to proceed.)

Venue.

Does the visit involve hazardous activities booked through commercial, charitable or other external providers?

Has the group leader made a preliminary visit to the venue/center to check arrangements?

If this is not possible, the group leader must gather as much information as possible in the

area to be visited from reliable sources.

Is there a contact name, address and contact number known for the proposed venue?

Staff.

Are members of staff, instructors or adult volunteers leading hazardous activities suitably qualified and experienced/competent to do so? Have qualifications been checked?

Have members of staff or adult volunteers been vetted, (DBS) regarding child protection?

Does the number of staff where necessary include both male and female supervision?

Staff/Pupil Ratio.

Does the group ratio have an acceptable staff/pupil ratio for the proposed activity?

Do management plans and staffing ratio's reflect the support of those pupils with specific needs?

Parental Consent.

Have parents been fully informed on all aspects of the visit through written communication and/or formal briefing meetings?

Has parental consent been obtained for the visit as a whole and for any hazardous activities that are planned?

The Itinerary Program

Do young people and staff have the appropriate clothing and equipment necessary for the proposed activities and allowing for a range of weather conditions?

If not, will the provider be offering additional suitable clothing and equipment to undertake the activity?

Are the young people prepared for and physically capable to take part in the activity?

Organisation.

Are sufficient staff aware of special dietary and medical needs for the young people and/or staff within the group, attending the visit?

Have all relevant people within the school/organization been informed/considered with regards to the visit?

Have staffing implications been considered; Lesson cover? Duty cover?

Have suitable and sufficient first aid arrangements been made?

If relevant, have the kitchen staff been informed of the visit?

If required have lunches been booked?

Has the trip been entered into the school/projects calendar?

Have you informed the EVC and added a notification onto the EVOLVE system?

Transport.

Is appropriate and road worthy transport available?

Are there suitable and sufficient drivers for the duration of the planned journey?

Are drivers licensed to drive the type of vehicle? (School Minibus - **License D1 required**)

Will departure and return times be made known to staff, young people and parents?

Is there a contingency plan (**Plan B**) in the event of a delay, incident or early return?

If using a travel agent or company have appropriate checks been undertaken to validate them?

If the visit is to be self-drive, can the vehicle be secured?

If self-drive, has the vehicle been inspected, documentation checked to prove its road worthiness?

Is the vehicle suitable for its purpose?

Is a trailer or baggage vehicle required? (If so does the driver have the correct license?)

Finance and Insurance.

Have adequate arrangements been made to finance the visit and manage the finances?

Have the following financial implications been considered;

- Insurance.
- Transport.
- Toll fees.
- Accommodation and food.
- Activity passes.

Has permission been obtained from the Headteacher/Governors/management to proceed?

Have suitable and adequate insurance cover been obtained to cover all possible

situations. Including medical repatriation?

Have all members of the party been considered including medical history, when obtaining insurance cover?

Briefing for Young People

Have a briefing(s) been given to the young people and staff involved to raise their awareness and develop ownership of the visit.

Briefing to include;

- Code of conduct. personal behavior, music equipment and mobile phones, etc.
- Appropriate clothing and equipment
- Rendezvous procedure.
- Safety of the activity. Personal. Personal items, etc.
- Significant hazards.
- Groupings for study or supervisory purposes.
- Recall and emergency procedures
- Relevance to prior and future learning.

Briefing for Staff.

Will the group leader also brief adults and voluntary assistants?

Briefing to include;

- Purpose of the visit.
- Defined roles and responsibilities of the named staff.
- Standards of behavior from the young people.
- List of names pupils allocated to each group.
- Careful supervision, to cover the whole period of the visit.
- Regular checking of participants.
- How much help to be given to the young people in their tasks.
- Communication procedures.
- Anticipation of hazards and the nature of the activities.
- Option to STOP an activity if they feel it is unsafe/not within the ability of the pupil.
- Emergency procedures in the event of a serious incident.

Emergency Contacts.

Have the named points of contact been identified at the school in the event of an emergency. Who has a list of group members, including staff and a program of events?

Are sufficient people aware of the procedure and relevant phone numbers in the event of an emergency?

Preparation and Communication

Is there adequate time and opportunity to prepare for the visit and the activities to be undertaken?

Have other staff and colleagues whose work may be affected been notified of planned arrangements?

Crisis Management.

Is there a contingency **Plan B** in place?

Consider the following:

- Bad weather preventing activity going ahead.
- Change in accommodation.
- Change in transport arrangements.
- Change in timetable.
- Illness amongst the party requiring a visit to hospital/return home.
- Poor or bad behavior of students resulting in police action.

Are the relevant SMT/Governors and others familiar with the establishment's crisis management procedure?

Does the establishment's emergency procedure include telephone numbers for those contacts in the Peoples Directorate. Risk management & CCTV and Public Relations?

Providers that do not hold a LOTC Quality Badge and that are to be used by school establishments, are required to complete and return this form in advance of the establishment making a commitment.

Establishment..... Staff member in charge
 Date(s) of visit Name of provider

The provider or tour operator providing services to the establishment named above is asked to give careful consideration to the statements below and sign in the space at the end of the form to indicate that the standard of service will meet the conditions listed. Please tick all specifications you can meet, indicate by a cross any you cannot meet, and write N/A against any specifications which do not apply to your provision.

Section A should be completed for all visits. Sections B (adventure activities), C (tour operators) and D (expeditions) should also be completed if applicable.

SECTION A - ALL VISITS

Health, Safety, and Emergency Policy

- 1. The provider complies with relevant health and safety regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations for visits taking place in the UK, and has a health and safety policy and recorded risk assessments which are available for inspection.
- 2. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained and records are available for inspection.

Vehicles

- 3. All vehicles are roadworthy and meet the requirements of relevant regulations in the country in which they are being used.

Staffing

- 4. All reasonable steps are taken to check staff that have access to young people for relevant criminal history and suitability to work with young people.
- 5. There are adequate and regular opportunities for liaison between establishment staff and the provider's staff and there is sufficient flexibility to make changes to the programme if necessary and the reasons for such changes will be made known to establishment staff.
- 6. The provider has never been dismissed from any employment or had a contract ended

Insurance

- 7. The provider has public liability insurance for at least £5 million with a clause giving 'indemnity to principal'.

Accommodation (if provided)

- 8. UK accommodation is covered by a current fire certificate or advice has been sought from a fire officer and implemented, and a fire risk assessment has been completed.
- 9. If abroad, the accommodation complies with fire, health and safety regulations which apply in the country concerned.
- 10. There are appropriate security arrangements to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation.
- 11. Separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities are provided and staff accommodation is close to participants' accommodation.

SECTION B - ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES AND FIELD STUDIES IN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

- 12. Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) Licence covering dates of visit YES OUT OF SCOPE
- 13. If YES, AALA Licence number R

For AALA licensable activities in the UK, the specifications in this section are checked as part of the AALA inspection. However, providers licensed with AALA are asked to consider these specifications with respect to any activities or aspects of provision not covered by the licence.

Activity management

- 14. The provider operates a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for participants are competent to undertake their duties.
- 15. The provider maintains a written code of practice for activities which is consistent with relevant National Governing Body guidelines and/or, if out of the Country, the relevant regulations of that country concerned.
- 16. Staff competencies are confirmed by appropriate National Governing Body qualifications for the activities to be undertaken, or staff have had their competencies confirmed in writing by an appropriately experienced and qualified technical adviser.
- 17. Where there is no National Governing Body for an activity, the provider has a Code of Conduct for that activity which is in line with current good practice within the UK, and this includes appropriate instructor competencies.
- 18. Participants will at all times have access to a person with an appropriate First Aid qualification. Staff are practiced and competent in accident and emergency procedures.
- 19. There is a clear definition of responsibilities between providers and visiting staff regarding supervision and welfare of participants.
- 20. All equipment used in activities is suited to task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary.

SECTION C - TOUR OPERATORS

Where a tour operator delivers services to establishments using other providers eg. ski establishments, transport operators or accommodation, the tour operator must ensure that each provider meets the relevant specifications outlined in Sections A and B of this form and that these providers operate to standards which meet the relevant regulations which apply to the country of operation.

- 22. Sections A and B of this form, as appropriate, have been completed to show that checks have been made. Records are available for inspection.
- 23. The Tour Operator complies with the package travel regulations, including bonding to safeguard customers' monies.
- 24. ATOL, ABTA or other bonding body name and numbers

SECTION D - OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONS

- 25. The provider complies with 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3' (GOE3).

If any of the above specifications cannot be met or are not applicable, please give details:
Details of any other accreditation, eg with National Governing Bodies, tourist boards, etc.

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that I am an authorised signatory to enter into this Agreement and to bind the said company, firm, person or corporation to the terms and conditions herein.

Signed Date

Name (print) Position in organisation

Full name and address of company, firm, person or corporation.....

.....

Tel Fax..... E.mail

Use of a Private Car to Transport Young People

If a school wants to transport pupils in private cars for a school trip they **must**:

- 1) Ensure that the driver is not alone with any children. These are for safeguarding reasons, but also because a driver cannot supervise children and drive.
- 2) Ensure the driver understands their legal obligations when transporting pupils.
- 3) Evidence that drivers (teachers and parents) have a clean and valid driving license without points for speeding, drink/drug driving, talking on a mobile whilst driving, careless or dangerous driving. A copy of the driver's license should be taken and kept on file and reviewed every three months.
- 4) Evidence that adequate insurance cover is in place.
- 5) Evidence that the car is road worthy by taking copies of the MOT certificate, records of how often the car is serviced, checking tyres are safe and correctly inflated.
- 6) Evidence that drivers (teachers and parents) are medically fit to drive and that they have had eye tests to determine if driving glasses are required.
- 7) Ensure that each driver knows how to get to the destination and not drive in convoy.
- 8) Ensure that each driver is equipped with a mobile telephone for emergencies.
- 9) Ensure that drivers are given an emergency plan to follow in the event of breakdown or road traffic collision.
- 10) Ensure that drivers understand and are familiar with seat belt legislation and that all passengers will be secured properly.
- 11) Ensure that all children will be provided with child or booster seats if they are under 12 years of age or under 135cms in height, whichever they reach first.
- 12) Ensure that no child is carried in the front seat of a vehicle where an active airbag is fitted.
- 13) Ensure that specific written permission is given by each parent for their child to be transported in private cars.

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

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

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

- Assess the situation;
- Safeguard uninjured members of the group (including self);
- Attend to the casualty/ies (if applicable);
- Call emergency services. (999 or appropriate number if abroad) Then:
- Contact the School Emergency Contact. The School Emergency Contact will request the following information: Nature, date, time and location of incident, names of casualties and the nature of their injuries, names of others involved, the action that has been taken so far, and the action yet to be taken and by whom;
- Contact the British Consulate/Embassy if abroad; (Tel:)
- Agree with the School Emergency Contact who will notify the parents/carers of the casualty/ies. (This should normally be the School Emergency Contact.)
- If practicable, delegate party leadership to the Deputy Leader, in order that you can be contactable at all times, and to enable you to coordinate all necessary actions;
- Seek further and full details of the incident, how and why it happened so far as can be established at this stage. Write down all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence.
- Maintain a detailed written log of all actions taken and conversations held, together with a timescale;
- Prevent group members from using telephones or mobiles, or going on-line until such time as this has been agreed by the LA/headteacher;
- Refer all press or media enquiries to the Media Team on 01942 827222
- Keep receipts of any expenses incurred- insurers will require these;

If you are unable to make contact with the School Emergency Contact(s), phone the Risk Management & CCTV Center on Tel: 01942 404040 and give a brief summary of the situation and request assistance.

Name	Office Hours	Out of Hours
Headteacher		
Deputy Headteacher		
Chair of Governing Body		
Education Visits Advisor	01942	
Health Safety and Wellbeing	01942 827857	N/A
Director of Children's Services	01942 486000	

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

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

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

- Confirm telephone numbers for future calls, providing alternatives to mobile phones where possible;
- Note their location and the location of incident;
- Determine nature, date, time of incident;
- Note names of casualties and nature of injuries;
- Note the names of any others involved in order to be able to reassure parents;
- Determine action taken so far;
- Agree with the School Emergency Contact who will contact the parents/carers of the casualty/ies. This should normally be the School Emergency Contact;
- Determine action yet to be taken-and by whom.

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

- If possible, provide the required assistance;
- Seek further advice and pass on details to other school contacts that may be able to assist.

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

- Establish whether emergency services have been informed;
- Establish if any assistance is required from the school base;
- Establish that the rest of the group is being adequately supervised and cared for;
- Contact the Headteacher (if this is not you) and provide a briefing of the situation;
- Contact parents. You may need to make school facilities available.

Contact the Local Authority Risk Management & CCTV Center on 01942 404040. State your name, your school and that you require immediate assistance. Give brief details of the incident.

- Liaise with LA and school Governors;
- Notify the Provider or Tour Operator if appropriate;
- Notify your Insurers, especially if medical assistance is required;
- The LA will make personnel available to assist as necessary;
- All media enquiries should be referred to the Media Team.

Name	Office Hours	Out of Hours
School/Establishment.		
Headteacher		
Deputy Headteacher		
Chair of Governing Body		
Education Visits Advisor	01942	
Health Safety and Wellbeing	01942 827857	N/A
Director of Children's Services	01942 486000	