



Educational Visits & Journeys

Policy Document, Legislation and Guidance

September 2025



Security classification:
Not Protected

This guidance document has been produced in conjunction with the Outdoor Education Adviser Panel's. This guidance is reviewed at least annually in response to developments in outdoor education and government guidance.

OEAP is the working name of The Association of Advisers for Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits. Charity number 1209654, The OEAP became a charity in 2025, for various opportunities to build awareness and engagement from a much wider audience.

'National Guidance' document and is also available electronically from EVOLVE and from the 'Educational Visits and Journeys' page of Central Bedfordshire Council's [Schools' Portal](#).

It is advised that this guidance is best accessed electronically to enable easy access via hyperlinks to a wide range of supporting materials.

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1 General

Central Bedfordshire 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.

This document provides concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of off-site visits and related activities.

The LA uses the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is typically set up by their establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including search and report facilities, downloadable resources and information, staff records and visit history, gateway access for parents, etc.

EVOLVE: www.centralbedfordshirevisits.org.uk

This policy is underpinned by several key sources of information relating to advice, guidance and legislation. Reference is therefore made to a number of separate sources, including, but not limited to those of:

Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP)	www.oeapng.info
OEAP National Library	www.national-library.info
Department for Education	www.gov.uk
Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LoTC)	www.lotc.org.uk

Outdoor Education Advisers Panel, OEAP is the working name of **The Association of Advisers for Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits**, charity which came about early 2025. Charity number 1209654.

In order to be concise, hyperlinks are used throughout this document, all documents are also available on EVOLVE.

2 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, pupil referral units, and statutory youth groups, the employer is the Local Authority (LA). 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.

All persons involved in a visit have a specific responsibility which they should be clear about prior to the visit taking place, see checklists below:

Refer to OEAP checklists: [Visit Leader](#)
[EVC](#)
[Head/Manager](#)
[Parent/Guardian](#)
[Management/Governor](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [Good practice](#)

3 Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

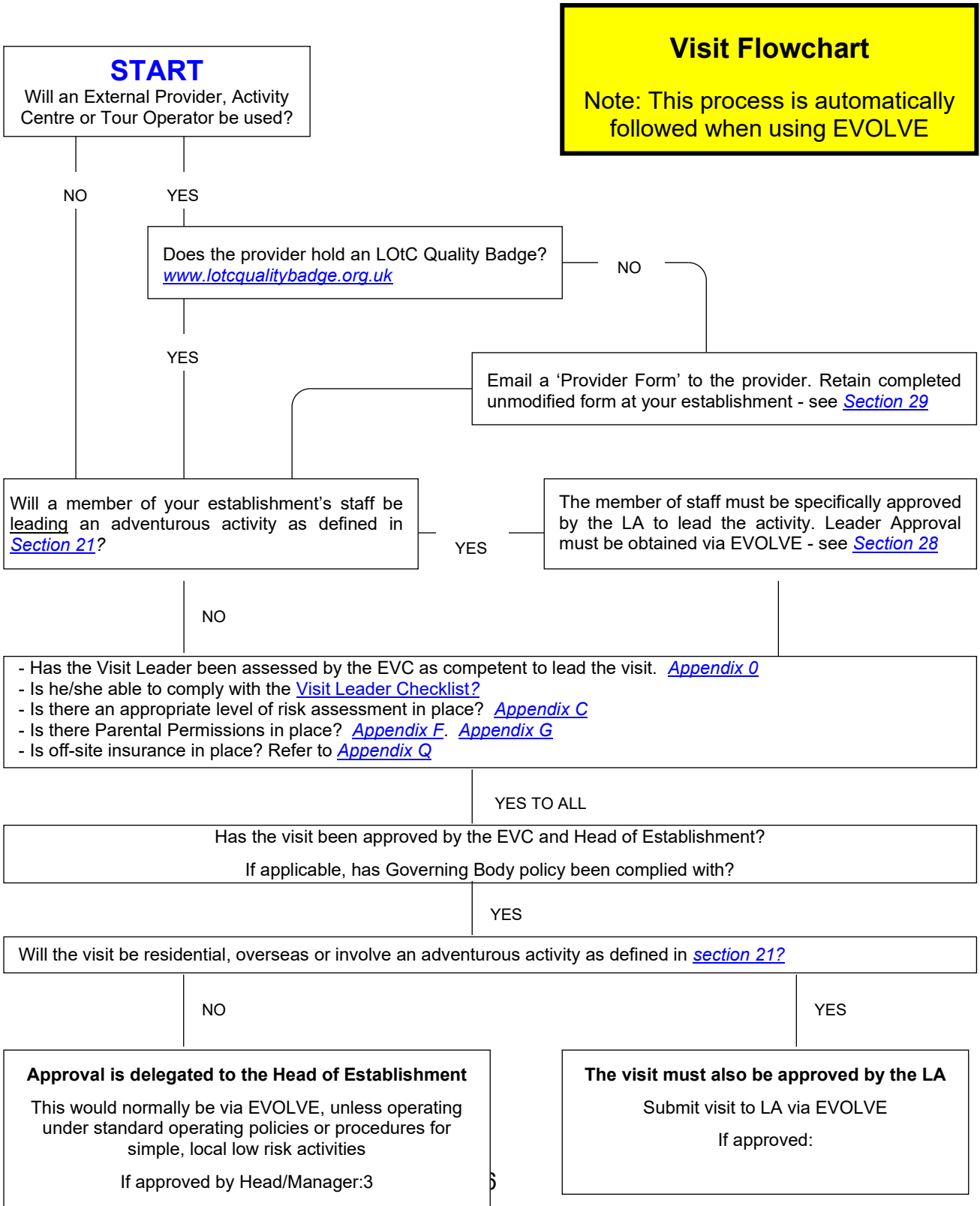
To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, establishments must appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who will support the Head of Establishment. (In small establishments the EVC may also be the Headteacher or Manager).

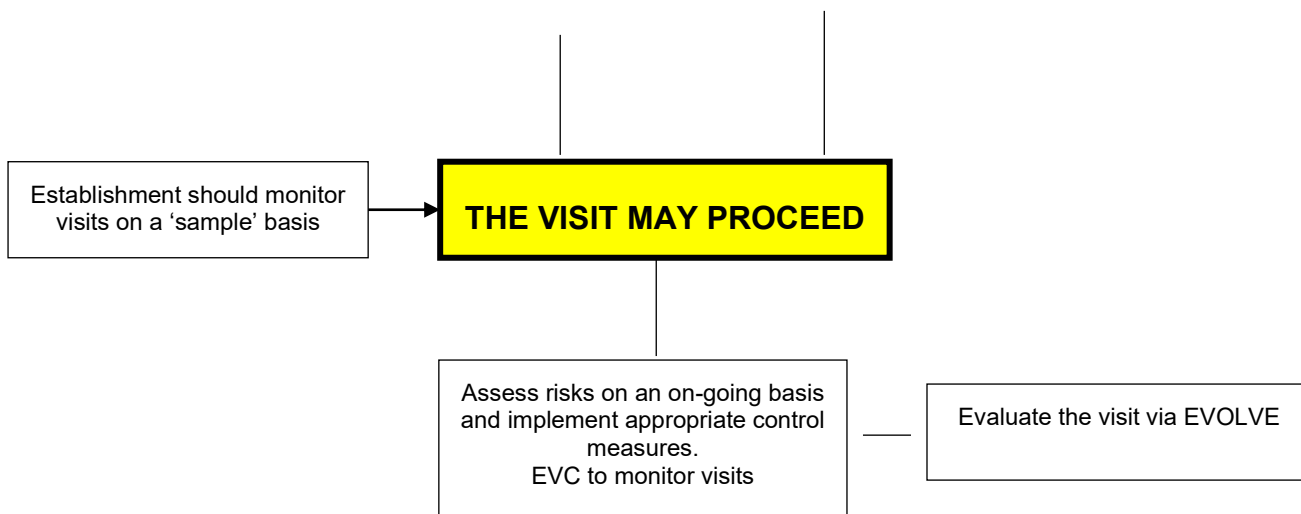
The EVC should:

- be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment. Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the senior management of the establishment
- attend training and revalidate training every three years, a mandatory requirement by the LA
- should support the head of establishment in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits
- support the head with approval and other decisions (see [Section 10](#))
- Ensure all visits meet employer requirements
- Support assigning competent people to lead/supervise visits
- Support staff induction / training with regards to educational visits
- Monitor visits, visit leaders and identify any training requirements

- ensure that an establishment policy is in place for educational and off-site visits, and that this is updated as necessary, and readily available to staff, e.g. via EVOLVE, this should compliment the employer, the LA’s policy

Refer to OEAP document: [EVC Roles and Responsibilities](#)





4 Approval of Visits

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow for approval.

Approval is delegated to the Head of Establishment for all visits, except for the following visit types:

- overseas
- residential
- involving an adventurous activity as defined in [Section 22](#)

The above three categories are ‘authorised’ within the establishment but are further assessed and ‘approved’ by the LA via EVOLVE. All visits for LA approval must be submitted at least four weeks before the date of departure.

In approving visits, the Head of Establishment and EVC should ensure that the visit leader has been appropriately inducted/trained, and is competent to lead the visit, see [Section 10](#)

A member of staff intending to supervise or instruct an adventurous activity, must be specifically approved by the LA to do so, see [Section 29](#). See National guidance on what activity is categorised as Adventurous.

5 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, and at least one needs to be entered for the form to be completed.

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

If you are working with an external provider, it is recommended that you share your intended outcomes with them to ensure they work with you to achieve them. It is also important to share any groups additional needs, as they may need to make alterations or amendments to be fully inclusive.

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, should feed into any follow up work.

Refer to OEAP document: [Evaluation of LOtC](#)

[High Quality Outdoor Education](#) can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place.

6 Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. Reasonable adjustments are required to be made to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate 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.

Refer to OEAP document: [Inclusion](#)

7 Planning

Planning Considerations:

- The facilities at the venue
- Equipment the group will require
- Staff training needs
- Transport arrangements
- Insurance
- Supervision ratio's
- Emergency procedures

- Arrangements for pupils
- Informing and briefing parents/carers
- Preparing pupils
- Understanding and risk assessing groups additional needs

EVOLVE provides a means of recording visit planning during the planning phase, and enables the EVC and Headteacher to monitor, contribute and support the activity prior to being submitted for approval stage.

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, please see [Planning with EVOLVE](#) diagram.

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. See [Managing Risk in Play Provision](#)

Many aspects of planning will normally 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, as it is not necessary to repeat generic policies on EVOLVE.

A preliminary visit is an important part of planning for an educational visit, to ascertain the suitability of the venue and its facilities. It is expected if a pre visit cannot be conducted, comprehensive information and guidance will be obtained from the venue/provider.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional '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 in Notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson / session which is relevant to the needs of the group.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider (see [Section 30](#)) and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. If an external provider has been awarded the Learning Outside of the Classroom quality badge, the provider's risk assessment is not the concern of the establishment leader, does not need to be requested from the provider, and does not need to be attached to EVOLVE. If the provider has not been awarded this quality badge it is important to request, read and understand

as well as attach risk assessments to the visit form, they will also need to complete an independent provider contract form, which again needs to be attached to the visit form.

Alternative arrangements (a '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, ensure your plan B, mitigations are documented.

Supervision needs should be considered during the planning stage and while ratios are not a legal requirement after the EYFS, the recommended ratios set by the LA should be followed where possible, while also taking into consideration other factors to determine the most suitable ratio, see below for more information.

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.

Refer to OEAP document: [Good practice](#)

Refer to CBC documents: [Appendix A - Planning Checklist](#)
[Appendix B - Preliminary Visit Form](#)
[Appendix C - Risk Assessment Form](#)

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' and 'codes of conduct' that will be in place. These should be reemphasised as appropriate during the visit.

Monitoring of the visit must be ongoing, and this contributes towards both enjoyment and safety, the visit leader must dynamically risk assess all activity as the visit unfolds. The visit leader should be ready to update the risk assessment throughout the visit; it is an ongoing process as various factors can evolve and change. It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g., Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, behaviour etc.

Whatever the nature of the visit, there should always be regular head counts. The visit leader and accompanying staff should have access to details of pupils and adult on the visit at all times, it is recommended, particularly for years 1-3 that pupils are easily identifiable, without using name badges as this can make them vulnerable to strangers, badges with an emergency contact number are useful.

Accidents or incident that may occur on an educational visit should be recorded in the appropriate accident book at the venue, and school accident book on return.

Following the visit, the visit leader should record any significant issues as a note on EVOLVE, for both reference and to inform future visits. Any near misses should also be recorded on the Risk Assessment for future use.

Evaluation of the visit and risk assessment post visit is also very important, to note any lessons learned and to inform good practice, the planning on any repeat visit should start from the evaluation from the previous visit.

Refer to DfE document: [*A Handbook for Group Leaders*](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [*Visit or Activity Leader*](#)

Basic Principle for Safe Practice:

- Have a clear, detailed itinerary, making clear who is responsible for what activity
- Carry out risk assessments to consider health, safety and welfare of all parties
- Ensure the intended outcomes are laid out and understood for the entire visit, appropriate for age and ability
- Ensure the leadership team and competent and qualified (where necessary)
- Ensure that statutory regulations and adhered to
- Working within the guidance and advice from National governing bodies and other recognised organisations
- Ensure there is a clear code of conduct established and understood
- Ensure consent is obtained, and where relevant INFORMED consent has been provided
- Adequate Supervision at all times – YOU CANNOT TRANSFER DUTY OF CARE
- Carry a list of all details for the group, including any existing medical information, emergency contact details etc
- Ensure first aid is always accessible, either through the appointed member, or by the venue/provider
- Know your group
- Regular Headcounts (especially when group depart anywhere / split up and regroup)
- Ensure toilet facilities are always accessible
- Carry out a pre-visit to the venue and assess risks, putting control measures in place
- Have a Plan B in place, be prepared to change plans, and say NO
- Record and learn from accidents, incident and near-misses
- Evaluate your visits and re-assess risk assessments post visit.

9 Parent / Carer Consent

Section 35 of the Education Act 2011 states: *'if a school trip is part of the planned curriculum during regular school hours, parental consent is not required. However, it is still considered good practice to inform parents about the visit.'*

Annual consent is appropriate for regular routine activities that the establishment run within normal operating hours.

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

Refer to CBC Documents: [Appendix F - Parental Consent Form \(Day Visits\)](#)
[Appendix G - Personal Information & Consent Form \(All other visits\)](#)

Expectations should be understood by the young people and their parents/carers prior to the activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual is likely to compromise the safety of themselves or others, the group leader should consider the possibility of excluding the child from the activity.

Costings

Prior to organising an activity or visit, staff should ensure that the total cost of the activity is determined, including transport, entrance fees, insurance, provision of resources or equipment for the activity, needs of the group to be fully inclusive, and providers or adult helpers. The lead time given to the activity should be sufficient to allow the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Funding off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contribution (which is voluntary except for residential visits). No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make contribution.

10 Competence to Lead

The competence of the visit staff, primarily 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:

- a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (Check visit history on EVOLVE)
- b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- d) Is the leader an employee of the Local Authority?
- e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision making abilities?
- g) What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- i) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- j) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?

- k) If leading adventurous activities has the leader been ‘approved’ by the LA?
- l) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?
- m) Is the leader able to demonstrate personal involvement in an activity and therefore possible competencies via an up-to-date National Governing Body (NGB) logbook?

Experience of areas:

Competence as a leader will most likely result from:

- Experience / knowledge of the venue and facilities
- Experience of the activities to be undertaken
- Adequate knowledge of the group, and an understanding of any additional needs
- Accompanying similar visits
- Appropriate training (specific where relevant)
- Leadership skills and other personal qualities (common sense)

The establishment head should decide on the level of experience to determine competence, consider using a competency framework tool to assess visit leaders.

Refer to diagram: [Planning with EVOLVE](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [Assessment of Competence](#)

Refer to CBC Document: [Appendix O - Competency Assessment](#)

11 Staffing and Supervision

Visit leaders have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit. You must consider that:

- all supervisors must be competent to undertake their specific responsibilities during a visit. See [Section 10](#)
- no adult should accompany the group except as a designated supervisor with identified responsibilities. It is strongly advised that the inclusion of young people who are not on the establishment’s roll (e.g., younger or older siblings or the children of accompanying adults) must be discouraged for the following reasons:
 - a specific visit for a particular age group may not be suitable for these young people
 - lines of responsibility can become blurred when parents have their own children on a visit
 - the issue of divided loyalties can arise in an emergency or critical incident
 - the insurance cover may not extend to unofficial members of the group

- this may affect your supervision ratio's
- it is not expected that group leaders will formally assess the competence of parents who act as supervisors on occasional day visits, though careful deployment of these would be needed. Best practice would be to pair them with another supervisor whose competence has been formally assessed using statements from Appendix O
- all supervisors must be aware of their responsibilities for the safety of the young people in their care at all times. They should have a reasonable prior knowledge of the young people, including any special needs, medical needs or disabilities and an understanding how to manage those needs. This is especially important for residential visits when all young people, their parents and all supervisors should meet prior to the visit taking place. All supervisors should carry a detailed list of the young people in their group at all times, detailing any needs, consideration to SEN/Behavioural/Medical/allergens and dietary need.
- ***each group must have sufficient "additional" supervisors to manage, in the event of an emergency, incident or unforeseen circumstances, with regards to residential visits, visits abroad and visits involving adventure activities.***
- each young person must know which supervisor is responsible for him/her or his/her group
- coach drivers and staff in museums, activity centres and at other destinations cannot be included in supervisory ratios. A supervisor or other employee of Central Bedfordshire Council always holds the "duty of care" and it can only be discharged to another person in particular circumstances and in relation to medical care
- where adventure activities are to take place during a day visit, it is good practice to improve the ratios above the minimum requirement
- where possible, even on day trips, mixed gender groups should have male and female supervisors. Where this is not possible, the implications need to be carefully considered. If in doubt they should seek advice from the person listed at the beginning of this chapter as the key contact person, and decisions documented on the visit submission
- each group should have the means to contact the Group Leader or other supervisors if needing help
- each supervisor must have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken
- all group members must be aware of the risk assessment and its contents
- supervisors should be competent to exercise appropriate control of the group and ensure that young people abide by the agreed standards of behaviour, and be willing to stop the activity, if the expected standards are not being met

- all groups must have appropriate access to First Aid
- Staff who are specifically assigned to support the special needs of an individual, cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group

Supervision can be direct, indirect (within clear boundaries), or remote. In reality, these three form part of a continuum of supervision ranging from physically holding the hand of a child, to a group of competent young people checking in with supervisors perhaps once a day, during their self-managed expedition or exchange visit. The three types outlined here are illustrative of the range:

Direct Supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of a leader.

Indirect Supervision (supervision within clear boundaries) occurs when a group is given the freedom to explore an environment or engage in an activity away from direct adult supervision but within clearly identified and agreed boundaries, for example:

- small group or individual work within a venue/area such as gallery, museum, cultural or historic site or city
- time between more structured activities during a residential visit

These should be set up so that, in an emergency or changed circumstances, it should not be a difficult or lengthy process to re-establish direct supervision.

Remote Supervision occurs when a group works at such a distance that direct supervision would take some time to be re-established (e.g. during a remotely supervised adventure walk; young people travelling independently to a venue; an orienteering activity; a Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition). For this form of supervision to be appropriate a decision must be made that the young people no longer require an adult leader but are capable of operating independently.

Refer to OEAP document: [Group Management and Supervision](#)

12 Staff to Pupil Ratios

There are no statutory requirements with regard to minimum staff to pupil ratios on educational visits outside of the EYFS, however, you must follow the recommendations made by the LA where possible, while taking into consideration the following factors:

- Sex, age, ability and competence of group
- Pupils with additional needs, Medical, SEN, Behavioural – consider any 1:1 arrangement already in place
- The type of activity and hazards associated
- Type of accommodation

- Length and type of visit
- Competence of staff (any relevant training for specific visits)
- Requirements of venue
- Provision for first aid

Ratios will also be determined by the outcome of a risk assessment focussing on the **SAGED** principles:

Staffing requirements - Ratio and level of staff expertise and experience required.

Activity characteristics - Specialist instruction required.

Group characteristics - What is their prior experience and ability? How compliant are they and are there any specific medical needs?

Environmental conditions - Possible impact of weather condition and water levels?

Distance from base - Time and distance to travel to base to access support mechanisms?

NEVER LET ANYONE WHO HAS NOT BEEN DBS CHECKED TO HAVE ANY UNSUPERVISED ACCESS TO CHILDREN

Duty of Care

Visit leaders and accompanying staff have a legal duty of care in common law, this is non delegable to coaches, instructors or volunteers. The pastoral duty of care remains with the establishment staff, however the technical duty of care may be delegated to a professional, for example a ski instructor.

The following ratios are advisory and can be used as a 'starting point' in the process to determine the actual teacher – pupil ratio.

Day Visits in the UK

For all day visits where the element of risk to be encountered is similar to that normally encountered in daily life (e.g. visits to historical sites, some field work, visits to places of local interest and local walks) the minimum supervisory ratio should be as follows:

For Foundation Years (young people under 5)

- One supervisor for every 3 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

Please note that ratios for Early Years 'outings' are no longer specified and will be determined by the outcomes of a risk assessment (see above)

Refer to: [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(Nov 2020\)](#)

For Years 1 to 3 (young people under 8)

- One supervisor for every 6-8 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

For Years 4 to 6 (young people aged 8-11)

- One supervisor for every 10-15 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

For Years 7 to 13 (young people aged 12 to 18 years)

- One supervisor for every 15-20 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

Overnight Visits in the UK

Establishments should ensure that:

- all young people have access to at least one supervisor who is well known to them
- all supervisors are aware of their responsibilities for the safety of the young people in their care at all times. This is especially important when the responsibility is divided between the school/youth centre and a residential centre. Each young person must also know which supervisor is responsible for them or their group
- it is strongly advised that mixed gender groups of young people under the age of 18 have at least one male and one female supervisor. The LA recognises the difficulty this places on its Lower Schools in particular, but it is an expectation for other phases

For Years 1 to 3 (young people under 8)

- It is not usual practice to take this age group on overnight visits, and they rarely happen, however the supervisory ratio should be: One supervisor for every 5 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

For Years 4 to 6 (young people aged 8-11)

- One supervisor for every 8 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

For Years 7 to 13 (young people aged 12-18)

- One supervisor for every 10 young people, depending on the nature of the visit

Refer to OEAP document: [*Ratios and Effective Supervision*](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [*Vetting and DBS \(Disclosure and Barring Service\) Checks*](#)

13 First Aid

Establishments should already have in place a risk assessment which determines their first aid provision on site. Off-site provision should simply be an extension of this. The level of first aid required must be risk assessed, the determination of the appropriate requirements should take into account:

- The nature of the activity

- The nature of the group
- The likely injuries associated with the activity
- The extent to which the group will be isolated from the support of the emergency services (both in terms of distance and response time)

Qualified first-aiders may not be necessary for all off-site activities and visits. However, a basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- Has a working knowledge of simple first aid and is competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group
- Knows how to access, and is able to access, qualified first aid support (consider mobile telephone signal, landline access etc)

For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there is a statutory requirement that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must accompany children on outings.

In a situation where expert medical help is not readily available at least one member of staff should be a competent first aider, based on the nature of the particular visit, the EVC (or visit leader) should make a professional judgement regarding the level of first aid required. The appointed qualified first aider must be named on Evolve and be able to evidence qualification through submission to Evolve.

Standard contents for a 10-person first aid box are:

- General advice on first aid
- Twenty individual wrapped sterile adhesive dressings in assorted sizes
- Two sterile eye pads with attachments
- Four individually wrapped triangular bandages
- Six safety pins
- Six medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings
- Two large versions of item 6 (18 cm x 18 cm approximately).
- Saline water or sterile normal saline solution (when no mains water is at hand) Normasol is a brand of saline solution that is acceptable to use.
- Disposable face shield (un-used) can be included (Protection from HIV etc).
- Plastic bags and ties for disposal of soiled items
- Scissors (must be blunt ended)
- Hypo-allergenic waterproof Elastoplast-type dressings
- Hypo-allergenic moist cleansing wipes
- 2 pairs gloves, vinyl or latex (caution - ensure First Aider is not susceptible to latex induced dermatitis)

Refer to OEAP document: [First Aid](#)

Medicines and Medication

Medicines should be clearly labelled with name and dosage, and handed to the group leader, however for some conditions these agreements may be inappropriate, i.e. asthma, when a young

person will need quick and convenient access to their inhaler, similar considerations need to be made for conditions such as diabetes. It is advisable to consult with the young person's parents/carers, and where necessary seek medical advice.

When administering medicine, the below practice should be followed:

- A letter of authority from the parent should be received in order to confirm their consent, advise correct dosage
- Only minimum necessary supply of medicine for the visit should be taken
- Health care plan should accompany the young person on the visit and risk assessment take consideration of this
- Non-prescribed medicines should not be administered without consent.

14 Insurance

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) carries third party public liability and employer's liability insurance in respect of sums for which it becomes legally liable to pay compensation.

In addition, many schools buy back from CBC 'Off Site Activity Insurance'. This is a block policy providing personal accident cover for all legitimate group members. For full details relating to this policy please read the [Off Site Activity Insurance](#) Advice regarding insurance may also be sought from the Central Bedfordshire Insurance Team.

Contact: insurance@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

For those establishments who make their own insurance arrangements, personal accident / travel insurance must be taken out for all visits abroad. For all other visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Body (where applicable), Head of Establishment, and Educational Visits Coordinator to determine whether additional insurance should be taken out.

The establishment should particularly consider the need for additional insurance for residential activities, or those involving adventurous activities or hazardous environments. All person's traveling overseas are encouraged to take out Personal Liability Insurance.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid GHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See www.gov.uk. The UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) lets you get state healthcare in Europe at a reduced cost or sometimes for free.

GHIC does not replace travel insurance.

Refer to OEAP document: [Insurance](#)

Refer to CBC Documents: [Appendix E - Statement of Insurance](#)

[Appendix Q – Off Site Activity Insurance \(Summary\)](#)

15 Transport

Refer to OEAP document: [Transport - General Considerations](#)

Private Cars

The use of private cars for the transportation of young people should be avoided wherever possible. The issues of insurance along with that surrounding child protection, 'in loco parentis' and a driver's competence must be considered carefully therefore no planned use of private cars should take place.

Private cars may have to be used in an emergency, for example to transport a child to hospital or a doctor's surgery. This would not be classed as 'planned activity'.

Establishments can ask parents to transport their own children to a venue. Establishments must not suggest or encourage parents to transport others. If an accident occurred, the establishment and therefore the employer could be held accountable. If parents arrange to do that independently then they would be responsible for that action.

The Group Leader remains responsible at all times under common law unless the responsibility is passed back to the individual parent or carer.

Refer to OEAP document: [Transport In Private Cars](#)

Coaches

Establishments must use a reputable approved coach company. Central Bedfordshire Council holds a list of approved transport providers. For ad-hoc enquiries please contact CBC Transport team. In addition, liaising with other establishments within the LA that have used a particular company (via a search on EVOLVE) will help to determine the level of service that may be provided.

Minibuses

Any school using a minibus to transport children must have a policy governing this. The policy should include a nominated member of staff who is responsible for ensuring compliance to the policy.

In order for an employee to drive the school minibus, the following requirements must be met:

- The driver must be a minimum of 21 years old and with two years previous driving experience
- The driver must hold a D1 category on their licence
- The driver should have no more than 6 penalty points on their licence
- The Driver must successfully complete a 'Driver Assessment' and **renew this on a three-year cycle**
- If a tail lift vehicle is used, then a full MiDAS test must be undertaken and also renewed on a three-year cycle
- Details of qualifications should be recorded on Evolve

Please note that where insurance is arranged through Central Bedfordshire Council Insurance Team these are all pre-requisites. Failure to meet requirements could invalidate the insurance in the event of a claim and also lead to the driver unwittingly committing a criminal offence.

The driver of a school minibus cannot effectively supervise the group for a prolonged period of time. It is therefore essential that a second supervisor travels in the vehicle in order to manage pupil behaviour. The only exception to this is where the journey is short and within the local school environment when it is acceptable for the driver to take sole charge of the vehicle and pupils. In planning the journey, the visit leader will need to be mindful of the maturity and compliance of the group being transported. If there are any concerns, then a second member of staff must accompany the group. The MiDAS trained driver must be able to evidence qualification through submission to Evolve.

- Refer to OEAP document: [Transport in Minibuses](#)
- Refer to DVLA Doc: [Driving School Minibuses](#)
- ROSPA '[Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice](#)' 2008
- MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) via [Community Transport Association](#) This also contains information on PCV licences, weight limits and towing.

Public Transport

For public transport within the Greater London area contact 'Transport for London', who offer free travel for establishment parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. See [Transport for London](#) Tel. 020 7918 3954

16 Farm Visits

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

Schools are strongly recommended to **notify** the LA of Farm Visits through the use of EVOLVE, and risk assess carefully.

Refer to Farming & Countryside Education: [Face Online](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [Farm Visits](#)

17 Water-Margin Activities

This section applies to:

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. It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft.

- 'shallow' typically means up to the knees of the participants

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

At the outset the establishment must decide whether the activity:

- a) Falls **within** the definition in bold above - in which case the below guidance applies,
or
- b) **Exceeds** the definition in bold above - in which case this is a water-based adventurous activity and [Section 25](#) applies.

All staff involved in water-margin activities should be conversant with the guidance contained within [Group Safety at Water Margins](#). This document must be made available to all supervising adults in advance of the visit.

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 if necessary.

LA approval is not required for water-margin activities, but schools are strongly recommended to notify the LA of water-margin activities through the use of EVOLVE and their risk assessment. 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.

18 Residential Visits

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that residential visits can potentially bring to children and young people and fully supports and encourages residential visits that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

It is expected that a purposeful preliminary visit is conducted by the visit leader prior to commencement of the residential visit. If this is not possible, the visit leader must seek information by other means and conduct a thorough 'site' scoping exercise as soon as practicable after arrival.

Remember, that while the safety of the group is paramount, it is also recommended to consider the quality of the programme in terms of educational purpose, and suitability for the group with regards to the intended outcomes.

Accommodation – prior checks of accommodation on arrival are recommended, checking sleeping areas are adequate, appropriate ventilation, reasonable toileting and washing facilities, heating and lighting, storage and room space for movement. It is recommended that a separate area can be utilised, for potential sick/unwell group members can isolate if required.

Ensure that kitchen and dining facilities are appropriate for the numbers involved and sufficient facilities for health, safety and hygiene.

Refer to CBC document: [Appendix B - Preliminary Visit Form](#)

On arrival to the accommodation / residential centre, the visit leader should meet with the centre manager or equivalent to discuss and agree routines, regulations and any requirements.

Fire Evacuation should be understood, check all exit routes from dormitories and other sleeping accommodation, ensure instructions have been read/understood, and all occupants are familiar with emergency procedures and escape routes.

All of the normal considerations for a routine/day visit will still apply, such as defined roles, responsibilities of staff and helpers, informed consent from parents/carers, expectations of behaviour (code of conduct), travel arrangements, insurance, contact details for venue, emergency contact details, clothing requirements, medication arrangements, first aid, use of mobile phones and smart technology etc.

Refer to OEAP document: [Organising a Residential Visit](#)

19 Overseas Visits

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that overseas visits can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages overseas visits that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

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

- a) Culture: food and drink, health and safety and hygiene standards may differ, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs
- b) Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation
- c) 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, 'Travel & Living Abroad', 'Travel Information by Country'). All relevant FCO information should be circulated amongst the staff team.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid GHIC (Global Health Insurance Card). See www.gov.uk

For exchange visits:

The success of an exchange visit largely depends on relationships and communications with the partner school. School exchange visits differ from other visits abroad due to pupils spending majority of the time with host families and therefore not under direct supervision of establishment staff. NOTE – Host families would not be subject to English Law and need careful planning. Pupils must be aware of ground rules agreed between group leader and host family in addition to those standards and expectations for any given day or residential visit. In addition to this the visit leader needs to ensure:

- A good personal knowledge of the host school and counterpart

- Satisfactory pairing arrangements are in place, partner school must make host families aware of any special medical or dietary needs of the guests, gender, age, family contact etc
- Parents, pupils, host school and family must be clear about the arrangements for collecting and escorting pupils throughout the visit
- Headteacher must retain a list of all children involved, their home and host family names and contact details
- Parents must be made aware and consent that their children will be living with host families, will not always be under direct supervision of the establishment staff.

Exchange visits can be arranged through agencies, in which case the Headteacher is responsible in ensuring the host families have been suitably vetted. Visit leaders making their own arrangements must be clear about procedures in the relevant country for vetting the suitability of the families, including criminal and background checks. If the host school or agency does not have the appropriate measures in place, the visit leader should seek further assurances and decide whether or not the visit should take place, the duty of care for their pupil is paramount.

Written consent from parents/guardians must be obtained in respect of pupils taking part, both guests and host families. Consent forms must also ask for permission for proposed activities, and travel.

When pupils are planning an exchange visit, there must be an agreed policy in place, however, general steps should also be followed.

- Ensure pupils are fully briefed and prepared, and consent to the Exchange visit
- Agree an acceptable code of conduct with pupils, parents/carers and visit leaders, as well as host families
- Ensure procedures are in place to check the wellbeing of the pupil throughout their stay
- Ensure pupils have contact details and means to make contact throughout the visit in the event of a problem or concern.

Central Bedfordshire Council has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel guidance document: [Young People's Exchange Visits](#) Maintained establishments are required to adhere to all relevant aspects of this guidance

- Refer to the British Council (Learning): www.britishcouncil.org
- Refer to OEAP document: [Exchanges and Home Stays](#)

For Overseas Expeditions refer to: [Section 29](#)

Refer to OEAP document: [Overseas Visits](#)

Refer to CBC Document: [Appendix P - Identity Cards](#)

20 Weather, Clothing & Survival

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

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
- A torch
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas)

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g., Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

21 Swimming

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

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.

For further information, please refer to the CBC document [Health and Safety in Schools - Swimming](#)

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities, as well as a qualified lifeguard. The following criteria apply:

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
- Unless suitably qualified, the establishment's staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision

- For swimming lessons, the LA establishment should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines

Hotel (and other) Swimming Pools

Establishments should check the lifeguarding provision in advance.

LA Approval is not required for this activity if qualified lifeguarding is provided at the pool, however this is likely to be attached to a residential visit which does require approval.

If lifeguarding arrangements are not provided at the pool, we recommend avoiding this activity, the visit leader would need to bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety, and approval to lead the activity will be required via EVOLVE.

The following awards/qualifications apply:

For free swimming activity

- A valid Royal lifesaving Society UK (RLSS) National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ), or equivalent in the country visited - see www.rlss.org.uk

For structured or programmed activity

- A valid RLSS UK National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTAC) or equivalent – see www.rlss.org.uk

or

- A valid RLSS UK Water Safety Management Award (WSMA), with appropriate endorsement (available from 2012) see www.rlss.org.uk

The role of the lifeguard is:

- To directly supervise the pool and the pool users, exercising appropriate levels of control. (Note: the lifeguard should remain on the poolside at all times except in the case of an emergency)
- If necessary, brief pool users in advance regarding rules (e.g. no diving, running, etc)
- To communicate effectively with pool users
- To anticipate problems and prevent accidents
- To intervene to prevent behaviour which is unsafe
- To carry out a rescue from the water
- To give immediate first aid to any casualty

The above must be accomplished in the context of the normal operating procedures and the emergency plan for the pool, which should be considered before swimming takes place. Full familiarisation of the systems described should be walked through at the pool.

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.

If a young person holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency lifeguard action, and supervision should remain the responsibility of the LA establishment's staff.

Open Water Swimming (i.e., not in a swimming pool and not a 'water-margin' activity)

LA Approval is required via EVOLVE.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas
- Changing environmental conditions
- Supervisor complacency
- Adherence to local advice
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, (i.e., is it a planned activity?)

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

For free swimming activity

- A valid National Beach Lifeguard Qualification (NBLQ) or equivalent in the country visited, see www.rlss.org.uk

Note: this is for beach/sea only, not inland water.

or

For structured or programmed activity

- A valid RLSS UK National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTAC) or equivalent – see www.rlss.org.uk

or

- A valid RLSS UK Water Safety Management Award (WSMA), with appropriate endorsement (available from 2012) see www.rlss.org.uk

22 Definition of an 'adventurous activity'

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

- All activities in 'open country' (see below)
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
- Rafting or improvised rafting

- Use of powered safety/rescue craft
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Water skiing
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Hill walking and mountaineering
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Abseiling
- River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration
- Shooting and archery
- Snowsports (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
- ‘Extreme’ sports
- Ice skating (rink)
- Theme parks
- Other activities (e.g., initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above

‘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. Please contact the local authority if you think this might apply. For level of competence required to lead in open country see [Section 25](#)

For the purposes of LA approval, 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
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go-karts
- Farm visits
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities as defined in [Section 17](#)

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

23 Adventurous Activities

This section is applicable to all adventurous activities except the following, for which separate guidance applies:

Water-based activities [Section 24](#)

Open country activities [Section 25](#)

Snowsports [Section 26](#)

Overseas expeditions [Section 27](#)

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that adventurous activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages adventurous activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

- a) **An external provider** - see [Section 30](#)

The provider must hold an [LOtC Quality Badge](#) or complete a [Provider Forms](#)

Note: In the UK, providers of adventurous activities must be licensed by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). AALA guarantees that certain minimum standards are met by providers, the visit leader is responsible for ensuring that the provider is licensed. If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (Adventurous Activity Licensing Authority) and/or any other accreditation but is not a LOtC Quality Badge holder, then a Provider Form is still required.

Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care. It would be expected that the accompanying staff take a proactive supervisory role, ensuring that external providers / instructors do not have responsibility for behavioural issues, for example. Accompanying staff being away from the pupils during sessions is a most unsatisfactory situation.

or

- b) **A member of your establishment's staff** - see [Section 29](#)

This person must be specifically approved by the LA to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

24 Water-Based Activities

For clarification between water-margin and water-based activities see [Section 17](#)

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that water-based activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages water-based activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The following are not regarded as adventurous activities for the purposes of LA approval:

- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools - see [Section 21](#)
- Water-margin activities as defined in [Section 17](#)
- Commercial craft, tourist boat trips, and similar activities for which young people would not normally wear personal buoyancy

With the exception of the above, all other forms of water-based activities are regarded as adventurous activities, and as such require LA approval.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) **An external provider** - see [Section 30](#)

The provider must hold an [LOtC Quality Badge](#) or complete a [Provider Forms](#)

Note: If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.

Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

or

b) **A member of your establishment's staff** - see [Section 29](#)

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 understood and considered 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, except, at the discretion of the activity leader, where the activity:

- a) takes place in a swimming pool,

or

- b) is 'swimming',

or

- c) is an activity for which personal buoyancy would not normally be worn by young people

25 Open-country activities

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that open-country activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages open-country activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

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. Please contact the LA if you think this might apply.

Open-country activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and therefore these visits require LA approval.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

- a) **An external provider** - see [Section 30](#)

The provider must hold an [LOtC Quality Badge](#) or complete a [Provider Forms](#)

Note: If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (and/or any other accreditation) but not a LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.

Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

or

- b) **A member of your establishment's staff** - see below

This person must be specifically approved by the LA to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

The following minimum levels of technical competence apply where a member of the establishment's own staff intends to lead an open-country activity:

- a) For leaders of walking groups outside the UK or Ireland, please contact the LA for further guidance.

- b) For leaders of walking groups in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland
- Mountain Leader Award (Summer or Winter as appropriate) [Mountain Leader](#)

or

- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser - see [Section 29](#)

- c) 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.
- Walking Group Leader Award [Walking group leader award](#)

or

- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser - see [Section 29](#)

d) For leaders of walking groups in terrain 'easier' than that defined in c)

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

- Sports Leaders UK Level 3 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL). This is appropriate for the leading of groups in lowland areas, and for organising base and mobile camps. For more information visit the [Sports Leaders](#) website.
- Completion of a 'Leader Training' Course
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser see [Section 29](#)
- Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated
- An assessment of competence (written or implied) by the Head of Establishment

26 Snow sports

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that Snowsport activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages Snowsport activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

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

There are advantages to Snowsports taking place during term time as opposed to during the establishment holiday period. These include: greater choice generally, less queueing for lifts, less crowded slopes therefore less chance of collisions occurring, less crowded resort, higher possibility of 'sole use' of accommodation, lessons more likely to be conducted by permanent Snowsport establishment instructors (as opposed to 'casual' instructors), greater likelihood of English speaking instructors, considerable cost savings through avoiding high season (possibly allowing more young people to participate), etc.

A member of staff intending to organise a Snowsport visit (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) must hold the Snowsport Course Organiser Award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England <http://www.snowsportengland.org.uk/> and must have previously accompanied at least one educational Snowsports visit.

Young people may only participate in Snowsports 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 (i.e. not using a ski school instructor) must be qualified as below and have been approved by the LA via EVOLVE- see [Section 29](#)

Skiing

The minimum qualification to lead skiing on snow is:

- The Alpine Ski Course Leader Award (ASCL) www.snowsportengland.org.uk
- or*
- The Alpine Ski Leader Award (ASL) www.snowsportsotland.org
- or*
- A statement of competence by an appropriate ‘technical adviser’ - see [Section 29](#)

Snowboarding

The minimum qualification to lead snowboarding on snow is:

- The Snowboard Leader Award (SBL) administered www.snowsportsotland.org
- or*
- A statement of competence by an appropriate ‘technical adviser’ - see [Section 29](#)

Central Bedfordshire Council insists that all school-group skiing participants wear suitably designed helmets for snow sport activities. Further guidance is available on EVOLVE.

Young people on school visits must not participate in off-piste activities.

Important: Owing to unacceptable liability waiver requirements, currently LA establishments must not use the following resorts: Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone and Heavenly Lake Tahoe, until further notice. For other resorts in USA or Canada, the establishment must check the liability position prior to making a commitment.

27 Overseas Expeditions

The LA acknowledges the immense educational benefits that overseas expeditions can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages overseas expeditions that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

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) Complies with the OEAP guidance [Overseas Expedition](#)

For providers that do not hold an LOTC Quality Badge, the OEAP guidance 'Overseas Expeditions' should be referred to when the proposal is initiated. This document contains information for both establishments and providers and includes checklists 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/>

Visit leaders are also encouraged to attend LA Visit Leader training, this is recommended every three years, please visit your LMS platform to register.

The visit leader must ensure that all personnel traveling has the appropriate travel documentation, passport, GHIC, Insurance etc, they should also consider whether vaccinations are required for the country they are traveling to and ensure sufficient lead time is provided to make necessary arrangements.

The Foreign and commonwealth office (FCO) produces regular updated travel advice, the advice usually gives a summary of the current political situation, health warnings and security issues which will need careful consideration and risk management. Website address www.fco.gov.uk.

Before travelling abroad, the visit leader should ensure that the telephone number for the British embassy in the country to be visited is obtained and carried at all times, and knowledge sought of the nearest emergency services.

28 Emergency Procedures

In most instances, thorough planning of an Educational Visit or Journey will ensure that serious incidents are avoided. However, it is impossible to eliminate every risk. Accidents and even fatalities can happen on school visits although the statistical likelihood of this happening is very low.

Headteachers, EVCs and Visit leaders should familiarise themselves with the emergency procedures as described in the Central Bedfordshire Council document [Emergency Planning for School visits and Journeys](#)

The visit leader must make all accompanying adults aware of the emergency procedures that apply to the nature of the intended visit, each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number, the Headteacher and EVC should ensure the group have access to the dedicated 24hour

emergency duty contact. During school operating hours the agreed base contact will typically be the first point of contact.

The following should be held by the visit leader and the emergency base contact at all times.

- Names and details of all group members, and parental emergency contact numbers, and emergency numbers for accompanying adults
- Programme / Itinerary for the visit
- Details of travel arrangements, estimated times and pick up / drop off agreement
- Contact number for venue / accommodation

The following emergency procedures should be in place to, as far as is possible, negate the effects of an accident or incident that has occurred on a visit.

- A competent and experienced visit leader who has been fully briefed / trained in responding to emergencies that have occurred on school visits.
- A fully briefed 'School Emergency Contact' of appropriate seniority with access to the [Emergency Card - School emergency contacts](#)
- Appointment of Assistant Group Leader with access to duplicate field file and duplicate [Emergency Card - Visit Leader](#)
- All visit supervisors to carry one another's mobile phone number and the number for the School Emergency Contact.

Parent / Carers should be provided with the number for the school office and a 24 hour contact number in case they need to contact in an emergency, it is recommended this is not the visit leader's contact number as they will likely be occupied with the group and not , in a position to make an immediate decision / plan of action, the safety of the group is of most importance.

Refer to OEAP document: [Critical Incident Management](#)

Refer to HSE Document: [A Handbook for Group Leaders](#)

29 Approval of staff to lead an adventurous activity

Procedure for obtaining approval

Staff who wish to lead (i.e., supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity, as defined in [Section 21](#), must first upload details and scanned copies of all relevant qualifications (e.g. 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 (e.g. dates, venues, numbers, etc). The ALF will then be embedded within the Visit Form for that particular visit.

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, and:

- is appropriately qualified through the relevant National Governing Body **or**
- has a 'Statement of Competence' from an appropriate 'technical adviser' – see below

For most activities the competence required of a technical adviser is stipulated by the activity's National Governing Body. For further clarification regarding a technical adviser 'Statement of Competence' please contact the LA.

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

In cases 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 (e.g., evidence of awards, experience, and logbook 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.

Approval where no formal qualifications are held may be given for the visit concerned only OR into specific areas and therefore terrain and should not constitute blanket approval. This should be made clear and or discussed at the time of any subsequent approval using this method.

30 Using an External Provider or Tour Operator

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

For the purposes of LA approval, an External Provider is NOT a:

- Youth Hostel (where accommodation only is used)
- Hotel, B&B, etc
- Campsite
- Museums, galleries, etc
- Tourist attractions
- Theme Parks
- Farms
- Coach, Train, or Airline company
- Swimming Pool
- Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by a member of your establishment's staff with an approved Activity Leader Form (ALF) ([Section 29](#) applies)
- 'Volunteer' instructor of adventurous activities (see below)

The decision about the use of an external provider is the responsibility of the visit leader, EVC, and Head of establishment. The LA does not 'approve' external providers or tour operators. Establishments will find it useful to 'Search by External Provider' on EVOLVE and liaise with other LA establishments that have used a particular provider.

Establishments should consider the requirements under 'best value' when selecting an external provider.

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

- a) The Provider holds an LOTC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

or

- b) A 'Provider Form' has been satisfactorily completed by the provider. [Appendix D](#)

Note: If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOTC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.

External Providers being employed to manage, instruct, coach run activities for young people participating in licensable activities under the age of 18 may need to hold their own AALS licence as per the Young Persons Safety Act 1995 and Adventurous Activities Regulations 2004.

For Providers that hold an LOTC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

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.

It is recommended that schools ask the provider to complete a simplified provider form, identifying key personnel and contact details.

For Providers that DO NOT hold and LOTC Quality Badge

It is essential that schools follow the following procedure:

- Download [Appendix D](#) Independent 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
- Attach the Provider Form to EVOLVE

If the Provider Form has been returned electronically then the e-mail to which it was attached needs to be retained for authentication purposes.

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.

In some instances, for example where an establishment intends to use an 'external', **voluntary** individual for services, then this person may be regarded as a temporary member of staff and the procedure outlined in [Section 29](#) may be appropriate.

The above procedure is **not** sufficient for Overseas Expeditions (i.e. those which typically take place in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries), for which separate arrangements are applicable and **must** be complied with, see [Section 27](#)

31 Safeguarding

All paid staff and volunteers supporting visits and journeys must be recruited in line with the school's own Recruitment and Selection policy in accordance with:

- statutory government guidance for schools and colleges 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025') and
- advice published by the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Staff and volunteers who supervise **regulated activities** or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

Regulated activity is work of a **specified nature** which involves **close** and **unsupervised** contact with children which occurs **frequently, regularly or intensively** in a **specified place**.

- **Specified nature:** teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment
- **Close:** close proximity to a child and allows a relationship to be built
- **Unsupervised:** no-one overseeing the activity who has had an enhanced DBS check
- **Frequently:** Frequent - once a week or more,
- **Intensive:** 4 days per month or more or at all overnight between 2am and 6am
- **Specified place:** e.g. school

Responding to concerns about a child/ young person

If a member of staff or a volunteer has concerns about the welfare of a child/young person, they should share their concerns with the visit leader who in turn will refer the concerns to the school's Designated Lead for Safeguarding and agree a suitable timescale for a progress report. If the visit leader is not satisfied with the progress report, then further advice should be sought from the Headteacher or from the Lead Governor for Safeguarding.

Responding to concerns about a member of staff or Volunteer

Concerns about and/or reports by a child in relation to the conduct or behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer should be reported to the visit leader who in turn must report it to the school's Designated Lead for Safeguarding. The Designated Lead will then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours for advice on managing the allegation or concern.

32 Traveling during A Pandemic

It is essential that the current government guidance is followed at the time of the visit. It should therefore be monitored for any changes including using the relevant links below.

If you are planning a visit to a different country within the UK (Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland), or overseas you should check current government guidance for that country, as well as for your own country. For example, you should check whether there are any restrictions that affect travel from your area into the country you plan to visit, and if you are planning a residential visit, you should check whether there are any restrictions on accommodation providers.

[OEAP National Guidance](#)

[Gov.Uk Travel Advice for Educational Settings](#)

[Central Bedfordshire Council - Guidance on Educational Visits and Journeys](#)

33 Contacts

QUERY	AREA NAME	TELEPHONE
General advice regarding school's visits	Risk and Finance Officer – Rachel Old Evolve@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	Tel: 0300 300 5471
Insurance	Risk and Insurance Officer Central Bedfordshire Council insurance@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk	Tel: 0300 300 8129
Emergency procedures	CBC Duty Emergency Planning Officer	07964111942

34 Useful Links

Association for Physical Education	www.afpe.org.uk
British Council (Learning):	www.britishcouncil.org
Department for Education (DfE)	www.gov.uk
Department of Health	www.dh.gov.uk
DVLA	www.dvla.gov.uk
EVOLVE	www.centralbedfordshirevisits.org.uk
Farming & Countryside Education:	www.face-online.org.uk
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	www.fco.gov.uk
LOtC	www.lotc.org.uk
LOtC Quality Badge	www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk
Mountain Leaders Training	www.mountain-training.org
National Library	www.national-library.info
Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel	www.oeapng.info
Royal Geographical Society	www.rgs.org
Royal lifesaving Society UK	www.rlss.org.uk
Snowsport England	www.snowsportengland.org.uk

34 Appendices

All appendices can be downloaded in WORD format from the 'Resources' section of EVOLVE.

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