

This Good Practice Guide is offered as informal material. It comprises well-intentioned advice but does not obviate the need to pay particular attention to your safety procedures or advanced planning.

In Orkney, Excursion Leaders will probably accompany groups during ferry trips on many occasions, so it is a good idea to develop a Generic Assessment which can be modified to suit specific occasions.

Generic assessments are dealt with in Good Practice Guide 5. Whenever they are used they **MUST** be in date and entirely relevant to the particular journey.

Heads, or regular excursion leaders may also wish to write their own Good Practice Guide - the following points are given as guidance:

- Particular attention will be applied to the control and supervision of the party during waiting, embarkation and alighting, as well as during the whole crossing.
- There should always be a briefing, prior to a ferry journey, given in a controlled environment to everyone in the party.
- The leader should always carry a list of group members' names and their parent/guardian telephone numbers.
- Leaders should know the general whereabouts of every member of the party during the journey and, for this reason, a buddy or partner system of control is advised.
- Leaders must know the precise procedures which will be applied if a vessel emergency occurs during the journey and make themselves aware of the exact location of muster stations.
- Those with challenging behaviour must be supervised closely and not allowed to wander freely at any time.

The most common risks and problems are likely to be associated with –

- falls and trips leading to injury
- becoming cold
- getting wet
- feeling unwell
- going missing during waiting time or during the voyage
- unruly behaviour
- mislaying personal items

To avoid these obvious problems, leaders must brief everyone accordingly, offering advice about common situations – such as rough weather, carrying or wearing warm clothing, eating additional snacks, remaining calm and unhurried about the boat, listening to instructions and being aware of the buddy's whereabouts at all times.

Supervision on longer journeys can be made easier if some form of fairly passive activity, such as competitions, quizzes, writing, reading or art, is devised beforehand.

On longer journeys leaders should consider having an emergency kit in the party, comprising – items of spare warm clothing (including hat and gloves) and a spare waterproof jacket.

Overleaf is an example of an (incomplete) risk assessment for a hypothetical journey. It lists the most likely occurrences but not all possibilities.

Risk Assessment (incomplete) – ferry journey

Significant hazard/Risk	Control Measures	LIKELIHOOD	
		High/Med/Low	Further Acton Required
Vessel emergency	Report to group leader. Obey crew.	M	Listen to procedure's broadcast
Getting cold	Carry warm clothes. (hat and gloves?)	M	Perhaps everyone should have a rucksack
Feeling unwell	Isolate. Sit quietly	M	NO medicines should be taken during journey
Physically sick	Isolate. Warm or cold plain drink?	M	Report to crew
Challenging behaviour	Closer supervision	M	Individual briefing
Getting wet	Move to shelter. Change clothes	L	Carry spare sweater and waterproof jacket
Becoming thirsty	Take/buy drinks	L	Brief about litter
Injury	First aid treatments	L	Report to crew
Going missing	Trace buddy	L	Report to crew

Compiled by David Mason

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Heads should encourage leaders to assist in the building of a resource file for ferry journeys. They should also encourage leaders to record, without prejudice, in a book provided for this purpose, incidents occurring during ferry journeys.