

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.

Resource Files and Generic Risk Assessments become essential for planning off-site excursions. They are compiled by those whose experience is used to supplement information available in establishments or on the Service's IntraNet. Every leader should be encouraged to assist in the compilation of resource material. Files will be kept in a place where all leaders and organisers may gain access.

A typical resource might be a word-processed sheet (with an accompanying disk, so that updates and amendments may be inserted) giving valuable information for a first time user.

**An example of a resource sheet for a local beach used for low level recreation**  
**Dyke-end Beach (Fictitious)**

Visits to beaches, foreshores and coastal reaches are subject to Head and Service Approval (as level 3 activity) – no leeway is offered. Staff must produce a separate Risk Assessment for the journey to the beach and for any specific activity to be undertaken.

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Dyke-end Beach is EXCELLENT for safe recreation and rock pool investigation. There seem to be very few dangers, even in windy conditions, but a good briefing is always necessary. There is excellent shelter at the south end in the only wartime building; it is big enough to hold 20 children and safe enough for rendezvous', briefings and snack breaks.

Two difficult Orkney gates have been erected on the approach to the beach (take sturdy gloves). It is recommended that access, using the path beside the farm, be negotiated by telephone (01856 811 000 – Mr & Mrs Flett) on the morning of the visit (or night before) – apart from an occasional tractor no dangers are known to exist. Kye use the track to the South Field but never graze the track

Once on the beach, care should be taken to AVOID allowing children into the old gunnery building at the north end of the bay, as there are a number of quite dangerous foot spikes and rolls of rusty wire.

Leaders should be aware that mobile phones (Voda and Orange) seem to work ONLY at the north end of the beach and ONLY on top of the sandstone outcrop there. The nearest land line telephone is in the farmhouse.

In May 2005, we had the feeling that the school minibus was opened while unattended – it is recommended that the minibus and any private cars should be locked when left in the car park.

Always warn children about flotsam and take antiseptic solution with a litre of fresh water, as well as a good plaster supply in the first aid kit. Brief carefully about unpleasant sharps and discards.

Staff should take bin liners and gloves to clear bruck – set an example. Only when previously planned should children be involved in this.

***Dated and checked CAJ 12 MAR 2007***

Resource material of this type must not be allowed to decay in filing systems. It is essential that each file is checked before placing reliance on the information. For this reason assessments should always be dated and, when in use, be in date. Having the file on disk means it can be quickly modified and brought up to date.

This time the Head sets out rules.

### **SPORTS PITCH JOURNEY (Fictitious)**

Due to the School's position it is necessary to cross a potentially busy road to use the Sports Pitches. Owing to the Highways Service rules, the flashing lights cannot be used, so the following information will be valuable to staff.

The activity should not take place in high winds, heavy or threatening rain nor in low visibility created by haar or the approach of dusk. Take your mobile telephone (O<sup>2</sup> does not work 08/05).

Always run a briefing just prior to the journey.

Mention specifically –

- The need to go to the toilet before leaving the school
- Make certain all necessary equipment is placed and carried in the bags provided
- Remind everyone that they CANNOT return for personal items left behind
- The need for personal drinking water to be carried by each person – NO glass containers
- Issue the three bright bibs and whistles for two rear monitors (staff will ALWAYS lead and wear the third bib)
- Remind everyone of the need to stay closely spaced.

When arriving at Gutter Place the road is clearly visible in each direction for a safe distance. Position one monitor at each side of the road and cross the whole group in twos without rush.

*Compiled September 1999 – modified 9 March 2007. Valid until Sept 2007*

*Alan Edwards Head teacher*

Note that you must not substitute an activity assessment with a generic one. If any risks or hazards occur to you and are not mentioned in a generic one, then there is a need to compile a formal and specific risk assessment.

Included here is a suggestion that it is very good practice for each establishment to have a 'without prejudice' safety book. This is a note book in which anyone may enter observations related to safety, health and security during excursions (or any other establishment activity). It is essential for Heads to be very encouraging regarding the use of the book and make no direct reference, during subsequent discussion, to the writer.

What does and does not get entered into this book is not easily defined but it should NOT be a general 'gripe' book nor should it be a substitute for reporting accidents, near misses or dangerous occurrences. For some it may be the only opportunity to improve safety management. A typical entry might look like this –

I am concerned that senior group members are allowed to assist without careful or proper briefings. There was a case in point today, when one senior group member got carried away with enthusiasm and was allowed unsupervised contact with some younger participants. It was good-intentioned and not a serious breach of security but I fear it might be different on another occasion.

Emma G. 27 November 2007.