



**EDUCATION
AND LEISURE SERVICES**

**POLICY FOR MANAGEMENT
OF OFF-SITE EXCURSIONS AND ACTIVITY
FOR SCHOOLS, OTHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS
AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION GROUPS**

PART ONE

**Policy
and
Procedures**

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PART ONE

Policy and Procedures

**This Policy is presented in TWO parts,
of which this is PART ONE**

PART ONE comprises Policy Statements and Policy Procedures

PART TWO contains support material, including user forms, some guidance notes and good practice guides.

PART TWO also contains the Service's Emergency Procedure Documents and lists sources of additional helpful information.

Additionally, a Compact Disk (CD) is available which contains copies of all user forms and the policy. These may also be downloaded from the Service Intranet and, in a slightly restricted version, the Internet.

No one part or section should be used exclusively nor without reference to parts of others.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy seeks to underpin, support and encourage the development of safe and enjoyable educational visits and recreational excursions by offering, as far as possible, definitive operational rules and statements.
- 1.2 This policy, together with associated guidelines and advice, is provided for all schools, other establishments and groups, which are administered by the Orkney Islands Council's Education and Leisure Services ('the Service'). It relates to any off-site visit, excursion or activity conducted, led or organised from, or by, these establishments or groups.
- 1.3 Whilst still allowing Group Leaders and planners some discretion, the policy is written to provide guidelines promoting safe and reasonable practise, using acceptable and good working procedures.
- 1.4 Whether the trip is to the local, off-site playground or to an overseas ski resort, the requirement for good forward planning, supportive scrutiny of applications, safe supervision and eventual safe return, is paramount. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the safe execution of an off-site visit or activity.
- 1.5 The Service recognises its responsibility to safeguard all those in its care during all officially sanctioned activities and excursions. Whilst mindful of its duty to provide challenging and demanding educational activity, the Service accepts responsibility for the safety and welfare of all concerned, but delegates this responsibility to the Head teachers or establishment manager or Area Community Education Worker ('Heads')* and their appointed supervisors and leaders.
- 1.6 Precautions taken should be reasonable – that is to say acceptable and with the application of standard good practice.
- 1.7 The Service recognises that the geography and topography of Orkney offers diverse and challenging interest, often requiring additional commitment and expertise from group and excursion leaders. In doing so it similarly recognises the need to encourage potential leaders and be reasonably flexible regarding absolute rules of supervision.
- 1.8 Quality risk management is always a pre-requisite; organisers and supervisors must adhere to the policy and must always have the full backing of their respective Head.
- 1.9 Where apparent anomalies, or ambiguities of wording occur, or if Procedures or Policy are not clear, then it is for the Head to make appropriate enquiries.

* **Heads** refers to the Head teacher, Head of School, Head of Establishment, Area Community Education Worker or any group operating under the authority of Education and Leisure Services.

2 POLICY

2.1 Scrutiny and records of applications

Heads are expected to scrutinise applications for any off-site visit or activity, whether or not it involves hazardous activities. All applications will be made on a copy of FORM EX A or EX B provided for this purpose in Part Two, Sections 1 and 2, of the policy. Heads must retain all records relating to any off site visit or activity. Written approval for any exceptions is required from the Service. All decisions and any recommendations made in relation to the application must be clearly detailed by the Head on the form.

2.2 Excursion objectives

Heads must ensure that general objectives are satisfactory. These should be shown on every application and on the Parent and/or Guardian Consent Form.

2.3 Child Protection

Heads will ensure that Child Protection Procedures, as required by the Service, are applied.

2.4 Disability and additional support needs

Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that off-site visits or excursions do not exclude participants because of disabilities or additional support needs. Heads will, when appropriate and whenever possible, ensure that supervision levels are increased to allow participation by individual group members with additional support needs. It may be necessary to produce risk assessments for these individuals.

2.5 Referring applications

Heads need not refer applications to the Service if the proposed visit falls into the categories in Levels 1 or 2 of Section 3.5. Written records of these 'internal' approvals will be made and retained at the establishment for auditing purposes. A copy of the Head's Approval page will be sent to the Service before the excursion commences.

When a proposal falls into the categories listed in Levels 3 or 4 of Section 3.5, Heads must refer the application for off-site visits or activity to the Service. If the proposed off-site visit, excursion or activity does not fit into the categories in Section 3.5, then the Head must refer such applications to the Service.

2.6 Experience, supervision ratios, guardian consent and licensing

When the proposed visit or activity falls into the Prescribed Activity Levels of Section 3.5, then Heads will ensure that the Group Leader's experience and qualifications are suitable and that supervision ratios conform to the advice given in Section 3.4 and that these are also suitable for the environment and conditions likely to be encountered. Advice and clarification for these matters can be obtained from the Outdoor Education Advisor. Heads will also ensure that Parent and/or Guardian consent is obtained for every specific excursion and that Leader Emergency Information is also available for use during emergencies.

When hazardous activity is to be supervised by a 'provider' then any relevant Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALS) licence number ¹ must be shown on the application. When appropriate, the Orkney Islands Council licence number will be shown. Form EX C3 (PART TWO Section 3) is used for this purpose. Heads will ensure that accreditation or verification for such licences is current and valid for the activity.

2.7 Insurance

Heads will ensure that insurance, approved by the Service, is in place and that all participants are covered. For Level 1 and 2 notification must have been received by the Service for insurance to be in place. For Level 3 and 4, approval must have been given by the Service for the OIC insurance to be in place.

2.8 Travelling and transport

When and where motorised transport is being used during the visit or activity, then the Head will ensure that the provision is suitable and legal and complies with all relevant legislation. For ferry journeys ², the Service requires relevant risk assessments and a code of practice ³ to be evolved as a resource within each establishment or group.

¹ License numbers are supplied by the provider. The Orkney Islands Council licence number is R1077.

² “...the Education Authority has a legal duty of care in respect of children from the point at which they are picked up by the transport operator to the point at which they are dropped. In the case of School buses provided by contract, the responsibility lies with the bus driver. In the case of ferries or planes, the responsibility lies with the operator of the service”
Principal Legal Officer Chief Executive's Service - Orkney Islands Council.

³ Examples of Risk Assessments are found in PART TWO Section 4 (EX D7)
Good Practice Guides GP 1 to GP 9 are found in PART TWO Section 5.

(2 POLICY - continued)**2.9 Residential, self catering and domestic facilities**

Heads will ensure that residential accommodation, domestic or self catering facilities are suitable for the gender mix; that Child Protection procedures are in place and that facilities and services, including catering, comply with Environmental Health regulations, Fire Regulations, Health and Safety legislation and Food Hygiene regulations. Form EX C5 Accommodation Provider (PART TWO Section 3) is used for this purpose. In particular, Heads will ensure that, during self-catering trips, the Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate is held by an accompanying member of staff who shall be responsible, whenever possible, for handling, storage and serving to appropriate standards.

2.10 Risk assessments

Heads will ensure that risk assessing ⁴ is carried out and that the assessments are scrutinised by someone ⁵ capable of making informed comment and offering constructive advice before the visit or activities commence.

2.11 Provision for first aid and medical needs

Heads will ensure that provision for first aid administration and materials, including an appointed person or suitably qualified first-aider is made together with procedures to ensure that medical needs of individuals for all likely circumstances are met.

2.12 Emergency procedures

Heads will ensure that emergency procedures, including a provision for supervisor illness or incapacity, are in place. The Leader Emergency Information form EX D3 must be in use whenever an excursion is out of establishment hours, is remote, is defined as a hazardous activity or when off-Orkney.

2.13 Home-base Contact arrangements

Heads will ensure that sustainable Home-base Contact arrangements ⁶ are in place, when necessary for 24 hours a day, whilst an 'off-Orkney' visit is in progress. If delegating this role then the Head will make certain that the person(s) appointed as Home-base Contact has the authority to make significant decisions and has sufficient resource.

2.14 Recording and reporting accidents ⁷

Heads will ensure that arrangements are made for the recording of all accidents, injuries, incidents and dangerous occurrences. Heads will also ensure that supervisors and leaders know the Service's requirements and the precise procedure for the Reporting of Illnesses, Diseases or Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR). When visits are made out of the United Kingdom, Heads will ensure that any special requirements or provision for reporting are in place.

2.15 Serious accident procedures

Heads will ensure that the Service's own Serious Accident Procedures ⁸ for dealing with a serious accident are in place, including the facility to inform parents and guardians about incidents as quickly as possible. Any accident procedures put in place by an establishment or Party Leader, will always include rules, statements and advice written for this purpose by the Service.

2.16 Financial management and accountability

Heads are responsible for obtaining best value and for financial accountability. Heads will ensure that a suitable policy for the handling of group member's personal money, during excursions, is in place and that accounting sheets are compiled and retained.

2.17 Training needs

Whenever possible Heads will allow time, facilities and resources for the training needs of Group Leaders.

2.18 Resource material

Heads will, whenever possible and where appropriate, allow preparatory site visits and encourage the compilation of resource and other relevant material which will assist Group Leaders when planning off-site visits or activities.

2.19 Delegation

Heads may delegate tasks to suitably trained or experienced persons. However, Heads cannot abdicate overall responsibility for the safety and welfare of participants nor for the safety and welfare of leaders during site visits or activities.

2.20 Retention of Documents

Heads are responsible for ensuring that documentation in relation to excursions is retained by the establishment for seven years after the pupil leaves secondary school.

⁴ Risk Assessing is also dealt with in POLICY PROCEDURES Section 3.2 (Page 8).

⁵ For levels 1 and 2 Heads or appointed persons; for levels 3 and 4 The Outdoor Education Advisor.

⁶ See also 2.13 & 3.3.7 Home-base Contacts. A Home-base Contact is always required for excursions away from Orkney.

⁷ Recording and Reporting Procedures are dealt with in the Orkney Islands Council Health and Safety Policy.

⁸ The Service's Serious Accident Procedures EX D8 and EX D9 are in Part Two Section 4.

3 POLICY PROCEDURES

3.1 SUPERVISION

3.1.1 Duty of care and *in loco parentis*

Heads will ensure that everyone connected with an excursion, activity or visit, understands their responsibilities regarding 'duty of care'. This must protect all participants, leaders and the general public or anyone who may come into contact, or be affected, by the excursion.

The Group Leader is expected to explain what this means to everyone in the party, including other leaders and that 'reasonable and prudent care', as might be applied by a caring parent, is expected at all times.

3.1.2 Behaviour

Heads will require Group Leaders to set out clear parameters with participants regarding obedience and good behaviour. A clear, unambiguous explanation to the parent or legal guardian is required so that each party member understands their role in supervision and safety. Responses given on a consent form, or in personal letters, must be collected and retained at an accessible location.

3.1.3 Leaders

Heads will ensure that all leaders, whether volunteers, casual helpers, external representatives or, even, senior group members, are properly briefed by the Group Leader - responsibilities should be defined as formally as possible. **In particular**, there will be agreement with accompanying parents about their precise roles in relation to their own family members and any additional responsibilities related to other group members.

Supervisory duties might, occasionally, need to be modified during travel, activity or visits and whenever this occurs, every helper must be aware of significant changes of responsibility.

3.1.5 Duty of care owed to staff

Heads and Group Leaders also owe a duty of care to each other, any other supervisory staff, accompanying parents or volunteer helpers.

3.1.6 External or residential activity providers

Heads will ensure that, when any agencies, providers or supervisors are used, then their procedures for safety and welfare, both in and out of activity, are scrutinised and that proper written risk assessments are made available. Forms EX C1 to EX C7 (PART TWO Section 3) is used for this purpose. In particular, Heads must be satisfied that residential facilities are safe and that supervision extends through and during night-time.

3.1.7 Records

Good written records of decisions made and actions taken should be made and retained. Whilst this might seem onerous, such record-keeping illustrates good risk management strategy. This is particularly important when decisions are taken to NOT implement a procedure (for one reason or another) or if operating OUTSIDE stated policy.

Heads must accept that such records will be required, in the unfortunate event of a serious accident, as part of an 'evidence trail'⁹ which will need to be provided during any investigation.

Relevant material might include staff resource, risk assessments, briefing notes, cue cards, tick lists and reminders written by the Head or Group Leader.

⁹ **evidence trail** - support material related to this subject is be found in PART TWO Section 5 (Good Practice Guide GP 8) and may be downloaded from the Service's Intranet.

3.1.8 Free time

Heads must ensure that all leaders understand and accept their responsibility for safety and welfare for all participants during –

- Free time
- Night time
- Recreational time
- Travel
- Any unsupervised activity

Whilst there might be some relaxation in supervisory duties during these times, it must be accepted that group members and particularly children are, at these times, still owed the same duty of care. Heads must satisfy themselves that all reasonable precautions to prevent injury are in place.

It is particularly important that Heads and their appointed Group Leaders check that arrangements during residential courses are up to the standards required by the Service.

3.2 RISK ASSESSING

Risk assessing is an integral and essential ingredient of overall safety management and requires training, experience and competence to be completely familiar with all aspects. However, the principles of listing known hazards, or risks of injury (both physical and mental) associated with an activity are relatively simple. Risk assessments will always address significant risks and hazards and they must form part of a written safety plan. All reasonable measures for protection from potential danger and injury are required in law.

3.2.1 Ensuring assessments are in place

Heads must ensure that risk assessments are in place, covering not only all significant environmental and physical hazards but also illustrating that some thought is given to addressing less definable topics such as group dynamics, challenging behaviour or possible illness. Unless preparations for such issues are made, then unexpected problems might bring the whole activity into disarray, compromising group or individual's safety or welfare.

3.2.2 Scrutiny of assessments

Risk assessments may be of little value unless they are scrutinised. Heads will, therefore, make certain that risk assessments are read by someone¹⁰ capable of making informed comment or constructive suggestions.

3.2.3 Assessments of challenging-behaviour and medical issues

Assessment of the group's general ability should be made when planning an excursion, as it is essential that all group members are able to gain educational benefit from the proposed activity and that no individual is able to disrupt plans, the free-running of the activity, or the Group Leader's ability to make important decisions. Challenging-behaviour assessments may not, necessarily, shape every plan but they will form part of the safety chain. Assessments of this type are not easy to produce, but may be best obtained from those who work with individuals, or the group, for lengthy periods.

For convenience, an assessment of the medical and health needs of individuals is included in this section. It is imperative that any medical requirements are noted for inclusion in any 'away pack' for the Group Leader's attention. Any relevant comments made by parents or guardians, either verbally or on the form(s) provided (FORM EX D1 and D2, Part Two Section 4), MUST be included in these assessments.

3.2.4 Generic risk assessments

Establishments and groups have much to gain if they produce generic risk assessments for activity routinely undertaken. These will address the obvious and expected problems associated with a specific activity. For instance, regular trips to the swimming pool or a ferry journey, will usually raise specific issues and these might exist in every similar excursion. Generic risk assessments will be available as resource files and serve to give Group Leaders an *aide memoir* which assists in preparation. Such assessments also allow Heads to assert rules and definitions.

3.2.5 Activity risk assessments¹¹

These may well be generic, allowing establishments which regularly undertake types of activity, to produce definitive working sheets from which Group Leaders plan excursion safety. Such assessments will address all known risks and any hazards associated with a given activity – they will suggest avoidance procedures and preventative measures. Completed activity assessments will illustrate that the Group Leader is prepared for known risks and hazards associated with a specific activity.

¹⁰ For levels 1 and 2 Heads or appointed persons; for levels 3 and 4 The Outdoor Education Advisor.

¹¹ Examples of Risk Assessments may also be found in PART TWO Section 4 and Section 5. Outdoor Activity Risk Assessments are addressed in the Service's Outdoor Education Handbook.

3.2.6 Location risk assessments

These cannot be generic and will always be specific. But, for instance, visits to beaches in general might raise generic issues. Location assessments are made to ensure that the place is suitable for the planned excursion or activity and that any potential hazards are noted.

Heads must consider allowing Group Leaders time and resource to investigate locations before group visits commence.

3.2.7 Travel risk assessments

Heads will note that travelling is often the most hazardous activity undertaken by parties and will make certain the leader pays particular attention to this area. Travelling and transport usually make good subjects for generic assessments; these will address risks and hazards which might occur during journeys to and from locations; they might sometimes also be part of activity or location assessments.

3.2.8 Security and protection assessments

These may not merit a heading of their own, as it is within location or behavioural assessment that protection issues might be addressed. However, Heads will ensure that child protection and security issues are addressed.

3.2.9 On-going risk assessments

Risk assessments must always be dynamic - that is constantly under review. When a Group Leader relies on someone else's assessment, Heads will satisfy themselves that it has been thoroughly checked over and carries a current date. Heads must be certain that Group Leaders are capable of amending their risk management strategy if conditions or parameters change. Heads must also be certain that Group Leaders are able to make risk management decisions at the point of contact with unexpected hazards or risks. Field risk-management of this type forms one of the most valuable components of overall party safety.

Party leaders must be made aware that ONLY those activities approved (and for which risk assessments are complete) in the application are permitted.

3.2.10 Risk assessments by outside agencies

Heads must be entirely satisfied that external or 'provider' supervision is supported by quality risk assessing. This is particularly relevant when groups or individuals may be participating in hazardous activities.

3.2.11 Involving all leaders and pupils in risk management

All leaders should, whenever possible, participate in risk assessing and there is a strong case for involving pupils in risk management. Whenever possible, Heads will encourage Group Leaders to allow all group members to contribute to the compilation of risk assessments. Not only might this instil a sense of party discipline and co-operation, but it may also assist in overall risk management strategies. Group members may benefit greatly by gaining such experience and, for older students particularly, it could be seen as vocational training.

3.2.12 Carrying Risk Assessments

Heads will ensure that relevant risk assessments are carried by supervisors during activities and visits.

3.3 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Service Emergency procedures

Emergency procedures will always be part of advance planning for a visit. All schools, establishments and groups will follow the Service's guidance on Serious Accident Procedures¹². Heads will ensure that proposals give sufficient attention to problems which may affect the free-running of a programme and that there are written contingency plans for typical emergencies.

3.3.2 Reporting procedures

Heads will ensure that documentation, as required for the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), is complete. Heads will also ensure that any affected (and when possible ALL) parents and the Service are kept informed at every stage during an emergency. Heads will ensure that an Accident Book is taken during prolonged visits and that the Orkney Islands Council Health & Safety Officer is informed of all accidents¹³.

3.3.3 Communications

Mobile phones, though nowadays almost indispensable, are often subject to technical difficulties and should NOT be relied upon during emergencies and it is never suitable to rely on party members' mobile phones for this purpose. It may be necessary, during emergencies, for both the Group Leaders and the Home-base Contact to procure, or establish, a base with a telephone and fax land-line for effective and private communications. The School Policy on the use of mobile phones must be applied.

3.3.4 Supervisor support

Heads will ensure that all Group Leaders feel supported if and when offering first aid or emergency assistance and that excursion consent forms (FORM EX D1 and D2 (Medical), Part Two Section 4) have the clause defining parents' expectations or any limitations. Group Leaders must not hesitate to act during an emergency and to carry out life-saving actions.

3.3.5 Carry Cards

Carry cards¹⁴ **must** always be carried by group members during visits away from Orkney and are recommended for Orkney visits or activity. Group Leaders must ensure that group members know what to do if separated from the party or if a Group Leader becomes incapacitated.

3.3.6 Sending-home Procedure

A '*sending home procedure*' must be clearly defined. Parents/Guardians **MUST** be fully informed of their responsibilities and of their position in relation to any additional costs incurred.

3.3.7 Home-base Contact(s)

When any part of a visit is outside normal establishment hours, then there **MUST** be a pre-arranged Home-base Contact and Heads will ensure that this person has (or these persons have) sufficient resource and are able to make ALL decisions necessary to support the group.

3.3.8 Serious accidents

Heads will ensure that a copies of both versions of the Service's Serious Accident Procedures (EX D8 and EX D9, Part Two Section 4) is taken by Group Leaders during excursions away from the direct and sustainable support of their establishment.

3.3.9 Media contact

The Orkney Islands Council Communications Officer is designated to deal with media enquiries on behalf of all schools, establishments and groups under their auspices. Once a serious accident is reported, the Head will contact the Service which will then implement the Orkney Islands Council media-procedure plan.

3.3.10 After a serious incident

It is not always possible to assess whether group members, not injured or not directly involved in the incident, have been traumatised or whether others, including staff, in the establishment have been affected as reactions may not surface immediately. Heads in this situation will get support from Orkney Islands Council who will advise on traumatic and psychological care.

¹² These procedures are found in PART TWO, Section 4 (Forms EX D8 & EX D9) and can be downloaded from the Service's Intranet.

¹³ Heads will remind leaders that, under RIDDOR, some types of accident are reportable 'immediately'.

¹⁴ An example of a Carry Card is found in PART TWO Section 5 (Good Practice Guide GP 9)

3.4 RATIOS FOR VISITS AND ACTIVITY

3.4.1 National guidelines ¹⁵ suggest the following MINIMUM supervision ratios –

- a 1 adult for every 6 children in school years P1 to P3
(early years classes containing children under the age of 5 classes should have higher ratios);
- b 1 adult for every 10-15 children in school years P4 to P7;
- c 1 adult for every 15-20 children attending secondary schools.

Heads will take into consideration the following factors when considering adult-to-group ratios -

- competence of staff, both in general and for any specific activities;
- age, gender mix and ability of the group;
- competence and behaviour of individuals;
- special educational, medical or mobility needs of individuals;
- nature of activities;
- duration and nature of the visit;
- requirements of any host organisation/location;
- the risk assessments;
- in residential situations, the desirability of leaders of each gender (where appropriate)

3.4.2 The Service accepts that staffing ratios for visits and excursions are difficult to define precisely because so much will depend on numbers of available supervisory staff in small establishments. However, it is NOT acceptable to allow an off-site visit to go ahead with an unacceptable ratio - this might be defined as '*insufficient supervisors to CONTROL the group and deal with an EMERGENCY*'. It is often more satisfactory, and therefore safer, to reduce the number of participants. Heads must ensure that supervision ratios are always sufficient to match expected circumstances and some unexpected situations. Reference to risk assessments will usually reveal the need for actual supervision levels. When groups comprise a mix of genders then it will always be appropriate to have leaders of each gender present – this is particularly important during residential or overnight events. It is accepted, and recommended, practice to have a minimum of two leaders per party.

¹⁵ Health and Safety on Educational Excursions (HASEE) - A Good Practice Guide and three supplements - November 2004 (Scottish Executive Education Service)

Extract (paragraph 60 – ratios).

...for groups of people under 18, adult to participant ratios could be:

- 1 adult to 15-20 group members for excursions where the element of risk to be encountered is similar to that normally encountered in daily life, e.g. excursions to sites of historic interest, most field work, local walks etc;
- 1 adult to 10 group members for all trips abroad;
- within each of these categories, schools may want to consider, for example for children under the age of 8 or for children with additional support needs, whether a lower ratio, of 1 adult to 6 (or fewer) group members should apply;
- for higher risk activities, consideration will need to be given to greater adult supervision, as appropriate.

3.5 CATEGORIES OF EXCURSION, VISIT AND ACTIVITY

3.5.1 Prescribed Activity Levels

i. Level 1

Activity occurring on a regular or routine basis, usually within normal School or Establishment hours, for instance –

- a visits to places of worship, suitably supervised swimming pools, theatres, libraries, sports grounds.

ii. Level 2

Activity occurring on a less regular but routine basis, usually within School or Establishment hours, for example –

- a any non-hazardous sport which is taught, instructed or coached by a suitably qualified trainer;
- b travel involving air or sea passage on approved carriers WITHIN Orkney;
- c visits to ancient buildings or historic sites, natural or bird reserves and terrestrial farms;
- d work and community experience;
- e visits to safe beach zones, which do not involve the possibility of party members coming into contact with fresh- or sea-water, rocks or boulders, cliff paths or steep terrain;

iii. Level 3

- a boat or aircraft journeys with carriers OTHER than those officially approved by the Service;
- b any journey OUTWITH Orkney, but within the UK;
- c visits to beaches or foreshores (other than in Level 2e) or any offshore installation;
- d coastal/moorland/hill/upland walks or journeys;
- e wilderness activity;
- f camping or campcraft;
- g any activity run or organised by an Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALS) provider holding a current license.

iv. Level 4

- a any hazardous or adventurous activity, run, organised or hosted by an agency or provider not licensed, or not required to be licensed, by the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALS);
- b any hazardous or adventurous activity, including for example – cold- or open-water activity, cycling, horse riding, orienteering etc. run by any of the excursion leaders;
- c any excursion, activity, journey or visit outside the United Kingdom.

Heads faced with proposals for excursions, visits or activity not precisely covered by the above categories or where there is a *blurring* of definition, must seek approval from the Service.

3.5.2 Referrals

- a Referral to the Service is not required - for visits, excursions or activity in levels 1 and 2.
However, in certain cases, Heads may choose to refer applications for levels 1 and 2 to the Service.
- b Referral to the Service is always required - for visits, excursions or activity in levels 3 and 4.

4 APPROVAL PROCEDURES

4.1 Visit viability

In the first place it will be for Heads to satisfy themselves as to the general viability, suitability and overall safety of a proposed visit.

4.2 Appointing an overseer or co-ordinator

Heads may wish to appoint someone who will listen to or look over initial proposals, thus ensuring that submissions get consistent scrutiny by someone who may have enough time to give early advice and to see that procedures are adhered to. Larger establishments may wish to appoint an Excursion co-ordinator for off-site visits.

4.3 Form completion

The Service can only approve applications if they are made on the form provided ¹⁶ and will not approve incomplete applications.

4.4 Approving applications

The Head must approve the application before it is forwarded to the Service. The Service will not give approval for activity or excursions in Levels 3 or 4 without the consent of the Head

4.5 Approval times

Unless the proposed visit or activity is either complex or of a very hazardous nature, then the Service will always attempt to approve the application in the shortest possible time. If the visit or activity is complex or very hazardous, then the Service may need to refer details to an expert who will make comment before a decision is made - this may cause considerable delay in approving applications. Applications for all levels of excursion, but particularly those embracing Level 3 or 4 activity should always be made to the Service in good time. For Level 1 and 2, notification (EX A2) must be submitted to the Service prior to the excursion taking place, for Level 3 and 4 **no later than 10 working days prior to the day of departure**. For Level 3 and 4 approval must be given by the Service (EX B3). If approval has not been given, Heads must contact the Service before the day of departure.

4.6 Scope of approval

Only those activities recorded on the application form will be approved. Additional activity(ies) undertaken by parties, once the off site visit has begun, are not permitted unless appropriate approval is gained. For unplanned activity in levels 1 and 2, the Head may give approval; for unplanned activity in levels 3 and 4 approval can only be granted by the Service ¹⁷. Approval must be gained before any unplanned activity commences. It is therefore recommended that party leaders list 'reserve' activities to be used when, for one reason or another, planned activity becomes impracticable.

4.7 Evaluation, auditing and reviews

After every excursion, Heads will ensure that a Post Excursion Evaluation is carried out – evidence for this shall be retained at the Establishment.

As part of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Procedures, the Service will audit school and establishment written records of activities in Level 1 and Level 2 categories.

The Service will review Excursion Policy annually, revising application and approval procedures, policy statements, policy support documentation and the permitted activity list whenever necessary. Proposed changes will be published on the Service's Intranet in the first instance.

4.8 International visits

For trips abroad, Heads must seek authorisation at an early stage in the planning process from the Director of Education and Leisure Services. Initial information on estimated income and expenditure and estimated cost per pupil, together with proposed travel plans, type of accommodation and activities must be submitted with the approval request form (FORM EX D10). Once approval is obtained planning can continue.

4.9 Financial records / approvals

Heads should ensure that trip organisers / leaders have read the Service of Education and Recreation Services "Financial Guidelines for School Excursions" (included as GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE GP10). This document provides advice and guidance to staff for dealing with the financial arrangements of school excursions in order to ensure that basic book-keeping and audit requirements are maintained to assist staff in discharging their legal and public accountability.

¹⁶ Where mentioned in the text, forms EX A1 & A2 and EX B1, B2 and B3 may be found in PART TWO, Section 1 or 2 and may also be downloaded from the Service's Intranet

¹⁷ Owing to the serious nature of activity in Levels 3 and 4, it is unlikely that the Service will approve unplanned activity at short notice.

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5 REFERENCES**FORM DESIGNATIONS IN PART TWO****FOR LEVEL 1 & LEVEL 2 EXCURSIONS (GREEN)****Section 1**

- EX A1** Leader & Head's Checklist
- EX A2** Head's Approval
- EX A3** Post Excursion Evaluation Form

FOR LEVEL 3 & LEVEL 4 EXCURSIONS (YELLOW)**Section 2**

- EX B1** Leader & Head's Checklist
- EX B2** Head's Approval
- EX B3** Service's Approval
- EX B4** Post Excursion Evaluation Form

PROVIDER FORMS (PINK)**Section 3**

- EX C1** Facility Provider Form
- EX C2** Service Provider Form
- EX C3** AALS Licensed Activity Provider Form
- EX C4** Unlicensed Activity Provider Form
- EX C5** Accommodation Provider Form
- EX C6** Unapproved Transport Provider Form
- EX C7** Private Driver Approval Form and Checklist

USER FORMS (WHITE)**Section 4**

- EX D1** Guardian Consent
- EX D2** Medical Information
- EX D3** LEADER Emergency Information
- EX D4** Emergency Contacts
- EX D5** Party Members
- EX D6** Missing Person
- EX D7** Risk Assessment
- EX D8** The Service's Serious Accident Procedures (Leaders)
- EX D9** The Service's Serious Accident Procedures (Officials)
- EX D10** International Visit Approval Form

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDES**Section 5**

- G1** Beaches, Foreshores & Coastal Walks
- G2** Swimming, Wading or Paddling
- G3** Farm Visits
- G4** Internal Ferry Journey
- G5** Resource Files & Generic Assessments
- G6** Risk Assessing
- G7** Responding to an Accident
- G8** The Evidence Trail
- G9** Carry Cards
- G10** Financial Guidelines for Excursions
- G11** Summary of OIC Insurance

(References)

Origins of material used in some sections of Part One are to be found in or at –

A Good Practice Guide, **Health and Safety on Educational Excursions (HASEE)** and its three supplements - Standards for Local Authorities in Overseeing Educational Excursions, Standards for Adventure and A Handbook for Group Leaders. All are available in printable and downloadable format

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/hsee-00.asp>

**Follow the first link to Health & Safety on Educational Excursions
Chapter 1 shows the Legal Framework and summarizes the precise
requirements required by the legislation.**

Printed copies of this guidance and the supplements are available free on request from the Scottish Executive Education Service, Schools Division, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ, telephone 0131 244 0943.

Management Circular No 48B – Glasgow City Educational Services

The Hertfordshire Grid for Learning - www.thegrid.org.uk/info/

Guide to Health and Safety at School – Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
<http://www.rospa.com/>

Taking Students Off-Site – Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) www.atl.org.uk/

Organising School Journeys - Chalkface.Net www.chalkface.net

Please report failures in these hyperlinks

[HERE](#)

Other useful sources of information are given in Part TWO Section 6