

Code of Practice for Off-site Visits and Activities for Children and Young People's Service

Interim Revision January 2008

Excellence for all



Code of Practice for the Children and Young People's Service

Off-site Visits and Activities

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This document must be read by all relevant Governors, Headteachers, Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVCs), Group Leaders, staff and volunteers, and recorded as such, prior to the granting of Formal Approval of any off-site visit or activity.

Some County Council Directorates may decide to publish their own Overview and Flowchart of Responsibilities to take account of slightly different line management structures and job titles.

Introduction

Educational visits, residential trips and adventurous activities are wonderful opportunities to extend children's learning and enrich their appreciation of themselves, others and the world around them.

The **Code of Practice** and **Guidelines for Off-site Visits and Activities** form the policy of North Yorkshire LA in relation to all off-site visits and activities conducted from schools and Continuing Education establishments within the county.

The **Code of Practice** seeks to set out the parameters simply for all parties.

The *Guidelines* give a detailed explanation of the processes that must be followed.

- → The management of children beyond the confines of the classroom and of school boundaries requires a higher level of management skill and experience.
- → Educational visits normally involve substantially greater numbers of children than parents normally deal with. A higher level of preparation, organisation and management is expected of a school group compared to a family group visiting the same venue or participating in the same activity.
- → The school/establishment has a clear Duty of Care toward the pupils in its care. The same Duty of Care should be extended to any pupils aged 18 years or older who participate in any off-site visit or activity.
- → Governing Bodies, Headteachers, Education Visits Coordinators (EVCs) and CYPS Managers will appreciate that the appropriate selection of Group Leaders and other adults to accompany any visit or activity is crucial to both safety and quality assurance. They may be expected to carry these responsibilities 24 hours a day.

No set of guidelines can ever cover every possible set of circumstances and therefore safe educational experiences rely on the appreciation of training, common sense and sound judgement of teachers and other leaders working within their own level of experience and competence.

The **Code of Practice** and **Guidelines**, supported by thorough preparation prior to departure, provide a framework for all off-site visits and activities to continue at the highest levels of safety and quality.

LA Code of Practice

- ✓ Each school/establishment Governing Body must formally adopt the LA Code of Practice and Guidelines.
- ✓ Each school/establishment must have a written policy for off-site visits and activities.
- ✓ This Code of Practice sets the parameters for each North Yorkshire County Council school or establishment operating under North Yorkshire LA
- ✓ The Code of Practice and associated Guidelines will be reviewed at least annually. Any opinion or review-generated observation should be forwarded to the LA.
- ✓ The Guidelines put the onus of responsibility on each school/establishment to manage issues of health and safety, discrimination and quality assurance internally as described in their establishment's policy.

Approvals

- ✓ The LA delegates approval for all visits and permitted activities to schools/establishments with the exception of:-
 - All visits and activities abroad
 - All Adventure Activity visits and activities that are not included in the matrix of approved activities and leader competence

Planned visits in these categories must first be considered and approved by the school/establishment in the normal way under their Policy arrangements. They should then be **submitted to the LA** for their consideration and approval using the electronic Notification Database. Where guidance or advice is required prior to formal approval being given, the LA should be contacted as soon as possible.

✓ All Formal Approval must be given in writing. A signature by the appropriate person on the Planning Flowchart and Checklist is sufficient. Any LA Formal Approval should normally be dealt with electronically through the Notification Database.

Monitoring

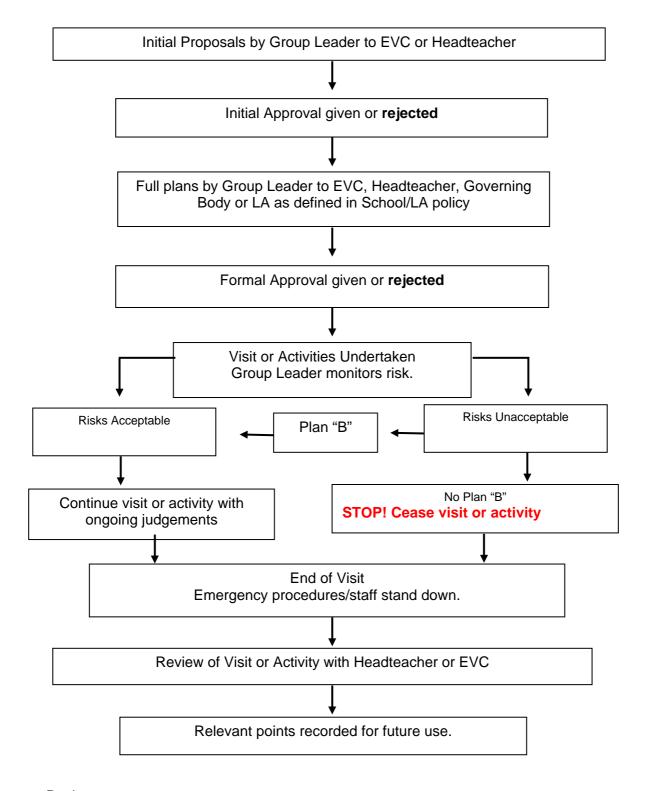
- ✓ The LA will monitor off-site visits and activities.
- ✓ The LA retains the responsibility to intervene and/or stop an off-site visit or activity at any point during the activity or during the planning stage if there is any concern over the Health and Safety of pupils or adults.
- ✓ Schools/establishments have a responsibility to monitor their off-site visits and activities.
- ✓ The Code of Practice and Guidelines do not cover any activity arranged for Work Experience, College placement or emergency health or welfare related issue. These matters are dealt with under separate policy and guidance.

- ✓ The LA will provide a range of support and CPD to enable schools and establishments to
 operate at the highest standards. This could include input from:
 - Senior Adviser
 - Outdoor Education & Educational Visits Consultant
 - Risk Management Unit
 - Schools Health & Safety Risk Management Service
 - Outdoor Education Service
 - Insurance & Risk Management Section
 - Pupil & Parent Services
 - Register of Approved Adventure Activity Leaders
 - Educational Visits Co-ordinator Training
 - Group Leadership Training
 - Adventure Activity Leadership Training and Assessment
 - Monitoring System
 - Guidance notes
 - Quality and Improvement Service

Overview of Responsibility (according to LA and School Policy)

Requirement	Responsibility
Policy Framework	LA
Guidance and Advice to Schools	LA
Generic risk assessments	LA
Consultant contact	LA
School policy for visits, activities and emergencies	Headteacher/Manager Governors
Notification and Planning	
Notification of visits and activities programme to LA.	EVC Headteacher/Manager
Planning for individual visits/activities	Group Leader
Pre-visit Risk Assessments	Group Leader The Provider
Risk Assessment during visit/activity	Group Leader Any adult supervising children The Provider
Formal Visit Approval	
Abroad	LA
Beyond LA approved Adventure Activity Matrix	LA
All other visits	EVC or Headteacher/Manager or Governors
Review	Group Leader EVC Headteacher/Manager Governors
Notification to LA of Accidents/Incidents/Near Misses	Group Leader or Headteacher/Manager

Flow Chart for Off-Site Visits and Activities (Schools)



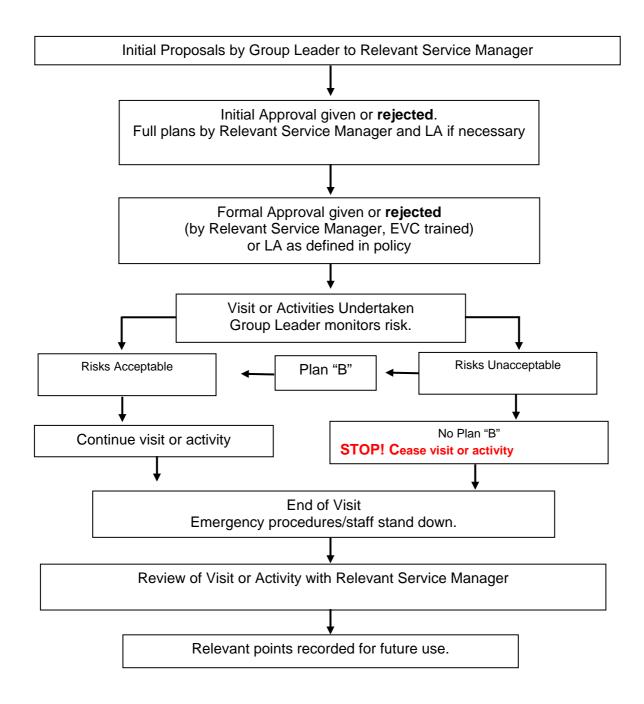
Review

- Annual Educational Report to Governing Body
- Annual Review of School Visits Policy.

Overview of Responsibility (Youth Service and Adult Learning Service)

Requirement	Responsibility
 Guidance and Advice to Community Education Districts and to schools (in respect of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award) 	
Adventure Activity Licence	LA
Generic risk assessments	
Consultant contact	
Community Education policy for visits, activities and emergencies (in line with school's policies)	LA
Notification and Planning	
Notification of visits and activities to LA	Area Youth Work Team Leader/Area Adult Learning Manager (EVC, Headteacher in respect of school D of E)
Planning	Group Leader
Pre-visit Risk Assessments	Group Leader
Risk Assessment during visit/activity	Group Leader Any other responsible adult Licensed Provider
Formal Visit Approval	
Abroad	LA
Beyond approved Activity Matrix	LA
In scope of the Adventure Activity Licence	LA
All other visits	Area Youth Work Team Leader/Area Adult Learning Manager (as long as EVC trained)
Review	Area Youth Work Team Leader/Area Adult Learning Manager

Flow Chart for Off-Site Visits and Activities (Youth Service and Adult Learning Service)



Review

- Annual Educational Visits Report
- Annual Review of Educational Visits Policy.

Roles & Responsibilities

The LA

In managing the Health and Safety of pupils and adults, the LA has a responsibility to ensure the following is provided:

- ✓ a written Code of Practice and Guidelines for schools/establishments
- ✓ a clear system to retain or delegate approval for different types of off-site visit and activity
- ✓ access to named specialist staff for advice
- ✓ dissemination of national guidance relating to Health and Safety and good practice during visits and activities
- ✓ procedures to monitor and review safety during off-site visits and activities
- ✓ appropriate training for school/establishment staff and governors
- ✓ a register of approved leaders of adventure activities
- ✓ generic risk assessments
- ✓ appropriate insurance cover
- ✓ emergency procedures in place including 24 hour telephone access

The Governing Body

To fulfil its responsibly for the Health and Safety of pupils on off-site visits and activities the Governing Body must :

- ✓ in schools/establishments where the LA is the employer formally adopt the LA Code of Practice and Guidelines
- ✓ in schools/establishments where the Governing Body is the employer, the governors' role will be the same as shown for the LA. It is recommended that governors of these schools/establishments should adopt the Code of Practice and Guidelines and be monitored by the LA
- ✓ determine, approve and review the school/establishment's policy on off-site visits and activities
- ✓ agree a method of approval for each type of visit
- ✓ agree the organisational framework, support and emergency procedures for off-site visits and activities
- ✓ ensure that each visit or activity has a stated educational objective and complies with the LA Code of Practice, Guidelines and the school/establishment policy

Headteacher/Manager

The Headteacher/Manager is responsible for ensuring that the:

- ✓ school/establishment's policy for off-site visits and activities is implemented
- ✓ LA Code of Practice and Guidelines are followed
- ✓ details of any off-site visits or activities are included in the Headteacher/Manager's report to the Governing Body
- ✓ Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is appointed and LA informed. Where there is no EVC, the responsibilities pass to the Headteacher/Manager by default

Educational Visits Coordinator

Each school/establishment must appoint or nominate an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The Headteacher/Manager may take this role or delegate it to another member of staff. If there is no EVC the duties pass by default to the Headteacher/Manager.

The EVC must:

- ✓ have sufficient credibility to be able to influence colleagues
- ✓ have experience in leading and managing a range of educational visits similar to those run at the school/establishment
- ✓ be able to support colleagues in formulating risk assessments and developing risk management processes.

Group Leader

- ✓ One adult, the Group Leader, must have overall responsibility for the planning, management, supervision and conduct of an off-site visit or activity. It is not acceptable to have a joint leadership situation.
- ✓ Every off-site visit or activity must have a Group Leader.
- ✓ The Group Leader must be approved by the Headteacher/EVC and/or Governing Body according to the school/establishment policy.

Teachers

Teachers on school/establishment-led visits or activities act as employees of the LA (or the Governing Body), whether the visit or activity takes place within or outside normal hours, by the agreement with the Headteacher/Manager and Governors.

Adult Helpers/Volunteers

All teachers, teaching assistants, non-teaching staff, governors, parents or volunteers will act 'in loco parentis' and carry a duty of care toward anyone they are supervising. Their duty of care will require them to do everything that they reasonably can to ensure the safety and welfare of the pupils.

Parents or Carers of children on a visit

Parents and carers must:

- ✓ be fully informed about the visit or activity including rules and procedures, including access to all information on the appropriate written risk assessments (care must be taken to ensure confidentiality of pupil/adult specific information where necessary)
- ✓ ensure that their children understand the rules and procedures and will follow them
- ✓ give written informed parental consent for their child to participate and acknowledge their own and their child's responsibility to support the disciplinary, health, safety and welfare arrangements for the visit or activity. This may be rolling consent for a period of time.
- ✓ provide emergency contact details to the Headteacher and Group Leader
- ✓ provide all relevant details regarding their child's emotional, psychological and physical health to the Headteacher and Group Leader
- ✓ where necessary take responsibility for collecting their child if illness or unacceptable behaviour occurs during a visit or activity

Pupils

Pupils must:

- ✓ behave sensibly and responsibly
- ✓ not take unnecessary risks
- ✓ follow the instructions of the Group Leader and other supervising adults, including those
 at any venue
- ✓ report anything that may harm anyone to the Group Leader or supervising adult
- ✓ dress as requested
- ✓ be sensitive to local codes and customs, especially abroad
- ✓ understand that any behaviour that may put themselves or others at risk may result in being stopped from joining a visit or activity. In the event of this happening during a visit or activity arrangements may be made to return them to school/establishment or home. The curricular aims should be fulfilled in another way where possible

Emergency Procedures

The Governing Body and Headteacher/Manager must ensure that:

- ✓ the Chair of Governors, Headteacher/Manager and other key personnel have access to and have read the LA Incident Response Guide
- ✓ the school/establishment has a suitable policy for dealing with any emergency situation
- ✓ the school/establishment has contingency plans to put the policy into action
- ✓ a suitable member(s) of staff will be the contact(s) for the entire duration of every off-site
 visit or activity and hold lists of:
 - names and addresses of everyone on the visit
 - parental/carer contact details
 - Headteacher/Manager contact numbers
 - Chair of Governors contact numbers
 - NYCC Emergency Planning Duty Officer 01609 761888 (out of hours)
- ✓ all staff involved clearly understand the emergency procedures and have the emergency contact telephone numbers.
- ✓ where providers are being used, they have emergency procedures that will link to the school/establishment and LA emergency procedures

If the emergency involves a serious or fatal accident the police and LA must be informed immediately by telephoning

- Police on 999
- I A

(during office hours): on 01609 532218

(outside office hours): the County Council's Emergency Planning Duty Officer on 01609 761888. This officer has immediate communication with the Director of CYPS and other key personnel.

NO STATEMENT SHOULD BE MADE TO THE MEDIA – direct them to the County Council Press Officer.

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