



POLICY TITLE	Educational Visits Policy
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Author	DS
Relevant Statutory Regulations	Statements from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) "School Trips & Outdoor Learning Activities" June 2011
Senior Team Lead	Head of School
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Statement of Policy

The Head Teacher, staff and governors of The London Acorn School are committed to ensuring students will experience a wide range of activities. Off-site visits and related activities are a valuable part of their education; therefore, well-planned and managed trips are fully supported and encouraged.

A common-sense approach will be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. We consider that it is important for children to learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life. Health and safety measures must always be proportionate to the risks of an activity.

Staff will be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and children safe and manage risks effectively.

The Head Teacher, staff and governors are committed to the following:

- Risk assessment will focus attention on real risks, not risks that are trivial and fanciful.
- Proportionate systems and procedures are in place and followed to ensure that trips presenting lower-risk activities are quick and easy to organise, and higher risk activities (such as those involving climbing, caving or water-based activities) are properly planned and assessed.
- Those planning the trips are properly supported to ensure that teachers can readily check if they have taken sufficient precautions or whether they should do more.

Teachers should read the following statements, which are fully supported by the school and reflected in this policy:

“Health and Safety Executive (HSE) fully supports schools arranging a wide range of out-of-school activities, which can include visits to museums, trips to the countryside or taking part in challenging and adventurous activities. HSE wants to make sure that mistaken and unfounded health and safety concerns do not create obstacles that prevent these from happening.”

“HSE fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. Striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips has been a challenge for many schools, but getting this balance right is essential for realising all these benefits in practice”.

Statements from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) “School Trips & Outdoor Learning Activities” June 2011 (www.hse.gov.uk)

Arrangements

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

Each year, The London Acorn School will arrange a number of activities that take place off-site and/or out of normal hours, which support the learning and achievement aims of the school.

Within each curricular programme of work, the teachers plan educational visits and activities that support the students’ learning. We plan activities in advance and inform parents of these in due course.

Approval Procedure and Consent

The governors have delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other off-site activities to the Head Teacher and has nominated the Chair of Governors as signatory to this policy on behalf of the governors. Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head Teacher must approve the initial plan. In approving visits, the Head Teacher will ensure that the visit leader has been appropriately inducted/trained and is competent to lead the visit.

If possible, an exploratory visit should be made to the planned venue. If this is not practicable, alternative arrangements will be made to gain as much knowledge of the site as possible by liaising with officials at the site or seeking advice from colleagues who have made previous visits. Site officials will be asked for copies of specific site risk assessments and emergency arrangements.

Where external providers are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the students.

Parent or Carer Consent

Written communication with parents regarding all educational visits will take place, although consent is not a requirement the school prefers to operate in this way in order that all families are fully cognisant of the educational experiences that their child is taking part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school (with the exception of nursery age children) as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents will be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Parents will be told in advance of each activity and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from a particular activity or trip. They will also be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed (by email or text) if an activity has to be cancelled. For all residential visits, parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

Approval of Staff to Lead an Adventurous Activity

What is and what is not an 'Adventurous Activity' is set out below.

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'.

For most activities the competence required of a 'technical adviser' is stipulated by the activity's National Governing Body.

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

In cases where no National Governing Body exists, the school 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 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 will be the responsibility of the Head Teacher.

Using an External Provider

An 'External Provider' is one that provides 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.

The decision about the use of an external provider is the responsibility of the visit leader and Head Teacher.

To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, the school will ensure that either:

- a.) The Provider holds an LOtC Quality Badge, or
- b.) A 'Provider Form' (see Appendix A) has been satisfactorily completed by the provider.

(If a Provider holds an AALA license (or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.)

For Providers that hold an LOtC Quality Badge 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.

The expectations of Students and Parents

The London Acorn School has a clear code of conduct for educational visits based on the school 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and includes the potential of withdrawal of a student prior to or during the visit if such conduct places a child or children at risk and would have led to a temporary exclusion from school.

Management of Educational Visits

Guidance for Group Leaders

The employer is responsible for health and safety, though tasks may be delegated to staff. Employees also have a duty to look after their own and others' health and safety. Employers, school staff and others also have a duty under the common law to take care of pupils in the same way that a prudent parent would do so.

Group leaders will be selected by the Head Teacher and be given overall responsibility for the preparation, supervision and conduct of the visit.

The Group Leader must ensure that they have followed school procedures, suitably manage the visit and provide all information required for the specific activity.

The information required will vary depending on the trip. This will include the following for low-risk educational visits:

- Providing venue details or and being familiar with the visit location and centre
- Ensuring that all those accompanying the trip understand child protection issues (may include parent helper)
 - General details of the activity for parents and students (a letter to parents)
 - Assess the students on the trip to ensure all specific medical needs are considered
 - Liaising with the location/centre to inform them that a visit is planned for a specific date
 - Ensuring that transport can be organised (if required).

Additional information and procedures is required for higher-risk trips, trips involving transport, out of hour's visits and residential trips. This may include the following:

- Parental consent forms
- Specific risk assessments of the activity/trip
- A completed Provider Form (Appendix A) if the external provider is not in possession of an LoTC Quality Badge
- Risk assessments from the centre or activity provider
- Emergency contact details for students
- A suitability assessment of those students potentially completing the visit (consideration for those with special educational needs).

Accompanying Staff and Volunteers must:

- Follow the instructions of the group leader
- Help to maintain control and discipline
- Be prepared to stop any activity if they feel the risk to health and safety is unacceptable
- Not be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Inform the group leader if concerned about the health and safety of students during the visit.

Competence of Group Leaders

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants. The Head Teacher will consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- What experience has the leader had in leading or accompanying similar or other visits?
- Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- Does the leader exhibit sound decision-making abilities?
- What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

Planning

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.

Visit planning 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.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for managing the activity. It should be checked that the provider has a robust risk assessment in place, and where possible, a copy should be obtained by the group leader.

Alternative arrangements 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.

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.

Safety During the Visit

Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that all participants understand what is expected of them. This includes any 'rules' that will be in place. These should be re-emphasised as appropriate during the visit.

Monitoring of the visit must be ongoing, and this contributes towards both enjoyment and safety.

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity to suit changed or changing circumstances.

Following the visit, the visit leader should record any significant issues for reference and to inform future visits.

Staffing/Supervision

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a visit. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

On all visits there must be an 'effective level of supervision' that has been approved by the Head Teacher, and where applicable is in accordance with Governing Body policy.

Staffing ratios will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and resources. Ratios should not be finalised until the general assessment of the activity is complete. Lower risk activities may require lower staff to student ratios.

As a guide, staff: student ratios are as follows:

- One adult for every six pupils in school years 1 to 3 (under-5s reception classes should have a higher ratio).
- One adult for every ten to 15 pupils in school years 4 to 6.
- One adult for every 15-20 pupils in school year 7 onwards.

Residential visits and adventure activities will require higher levels of supervision and all accompanying staff and volunteers must be DBS checked.

For all other visits, the visit leader and Head Teacher must make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis, after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs

- the experience and competence of staff and other adults
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions
- the contingency options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the visit leader or Head Teacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Staff who are assigned to support the specific needs of an individual, cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Group leaders will also need to consider the needs of students with SEN and/or physical disabilities. Known behaviours, learning and physical needs should also be taken into account.

The school specifies the following level of adult support:

- Children 4 - 8 years old: 1 adult to 6 children
- Children 9 - 12 years old: 1 adult to 8 children

The group must be led by a teacher.

Overseas: the school policy is that visits abroad should be accompanied by a minimum of one adult to 15 students. Foreign Language Assistants may accompany trips, but do not count as adults in this calculation.

Volunteer Adults: At least half of the adults accompanying an educational visit should be staff based at the school (teachers or other members of staff). Organisers are encouraged to use other adults to meet (or exceed) the minimum staffing requirements. Students (over 18) may also be used sparingly. Any volunteer helpers should be properly briefed on their responsibilities and especially on safety procedures and must be DBS checked.

All groups must be led by a teacher. Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing students' learning in a variety of environments through induction and training.

Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit (if practical and necessary), briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and Head Teacher might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments (if applicable).

Risk Assessment

Health and safety law requires the employer to assess the risks to the health and safety of staff and others affected by their activities. The terms risk assessment and risk management are used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activity and the steps taken to counter them.

The school will take a common-sense and proportionate approach, remembering that risk assessment and risk management are tools to enable children to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether, but it should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork.

Some activities, especially those happening away from the school, can involve higher levels of risk. If these are annual or infrequent activities, a review of an existing assessment may be all that is needed. If it is a new activity, a specific assessment of significant risks must be carried out.

The Head Teacher will ensure that the person assigned with the assessment task understands the risks and is familiar with the activity that is planned. Where a risk assessment is carried out the group leader must record the significant findings of the assessment.

A risk assessment is not required every time an activity is undertaken that usually forms part of the school day, for example, taking pupils to a local venue which is frequently visited, such as a swimming pool, park, or place of worship. Any risks of these routine activities will have been considered when agreeing the school's general health and safety policies and procedures.

The school requires group leaders to:

- Follow a common-sense and proportionate approach to risk assessment with the focus being on significant risks
- For higher risk activities a full risk assessment must be undertaken before the visit
- Complete the schools risk assessment (where applicable)
- Consider that risk assessment is not a one-off exercise; it is a dynamic process. The group leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

Group Leaders should note that for providers that hold an LotC Quality Badge, activity risk assessments do not need to be completed by the school. The risk assessments pertaining to the activities organised and led by the provider have been externally assessed and they have been awarded the LotC Quality Badge.

When planning an activity that will involve adventure activities such as: caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the Group Leader must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. These regulations apply to adventure activities that take place in England, Scotland and Wales but these arrangements may be subject to change in the future.

Transport

When hiring buses and coaches it is essential that the company is reputable. Local Authorities can provide an up-to-date 'Approved Bus and Coach Operators List' to enable schools to identify those operators who are able to provide vehicles and drivers to a minimum standard at all times.

The vehicle should be provided with seat belts on all seats – with all seats forward facing, as the law requires for school trips.

If parents' or teachers' private vehicles are used the vehicles must be roadworthy and adequately insured. Documentation must be checked by the Group Leader. All cars must be fitted with suitable child restraints. Parents must provide specific permission for their child to be transported in a private vehicle.

If public transport is used it is advisable to make party bookings in advance and ensure that the risk assessment adequately covers all potential hazards.

Minibus Transport

The school policy is that all Drivers of minibuses hired by school which are above the specified weight limit must hold a D1 License (those who obtained a license before January 1997 will have one). All those who do not have a D1 license will be required to complete a D1 license test before being permitted to drive.

Drivers will only be permitted to drive a minibus without a D1 license if the following conditions are met:

- The minibus weighs no more than 3.5 tonnes
- The minibus has no more than 16 seats
- The driver is over 21 years of age
- The driver has been driving on a full license for more than 2 years
- The driver is not specifically remunerated for driving through their contract of employment.

All drivers are required to complete a MIDAS or equivalent minibus driving training course (usually one day) before being permitted to drive.

Driver fatigue or distraction has been highlighted as a factor in recent minibus incidents nationally.

For journeys not exceeding 1 hour, a single teacher/driver may be considered adequate, subject to the nature of the group and the driver's ability and confidence to manage that group. For journeys involving between 1 hour and 4 hours driving, a second responsible adult should be present to supervise the group.

For journeys involving over 4 hours of driving, the second adult should be a suitably qualified minibus driver. For journeys involving over 4 hours, at least one of the drivers should have had a rest period of at least one hour prior to the start of the journey. Further regular rest periods must be taken – a 15 minute break every 2 hours is recommended.

Drivers must not drive if unwell or if on medication or receiving medical treatment which advise against driving.

Seat Belts: Students and staff travelling in minibuses must wear seat belts by law.

Overloading: The minibus is overloaded if the total weight (bus + fuel + passengers + luggage) exceeds the maximum laden weight for the vehicle. This weight is printed on the vehicle and in the handbook. For guidance, the vehicle should only carry passengers, driver and hand luggage.

The use of a trailer greatly increases the maximum laden weight and is essential when transporting a full load of older students plus luggage.

Liability for driving an overladen vehicle rests with the driver.

First Aid and Medical Needs

One member of the accompanying staff must be first aid trained and is also able to provide any necessary support for students with medical needs e.g. use of epipen. The group leader will ensure suitable medical / first aid cover has been provided. This will be assessed considering the activity and students participating. A travel first aid kit should be carried and also details of any students with medical needs.

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.

At the outset, the group leader must decide whether the activity falls within the definition above – if not, guidance on 'adventurous activities' should be referred to.

All staff involved in water-margin activities should be conversant with the guidance contained within the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) guidance document, Group Safety at Water Margins. This document must be made available to all supervising adults in advance of the visit.

Overseas Visits

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

- Culture: food and drink, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs.
- Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation.
- 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. All relevant FCO information should be circulated amongst the staff team.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), the latest advice should be sought due to changes arising from Brexit.

Weather, Clothing & Survival

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

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to the nature of the visit and the environment, the experience and strength of participants, the time of year and expected weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty, or for the whole group, and provision of emergency food and drink etc. The need for signalling equipment and/or mobile phones and torches should also be considered.

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

Swimming

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.

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

Swimming pools (lifeguarded)

UK Swimming Pool safety: 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 assurances must be sought that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.

Unless suitably qualified, the school 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 school 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

Lifeguarding arrangements will be checked in advance of any visit.

If lifeguarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the visit leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety, and specific approval to lead the activity will be required.

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.

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

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 RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'.
- Local advice must always be sought.

Emergency Procedures

Introduction

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergencies which will require on the spot response by the group leaders. Adequate provision for minor first aid must be available when the party is 'in the field' and the leader should ensure that the levels of supervision are sufficient to allow the group to be split where necessary.

Activity centres should have their own emergency procedures. Details of these must be obtained in advance of the visit and compared with the recommended framework below. If there is any doubt about the safety of the arrangements the trip should not take place.

Procedures

The school will appoint a member of staff as the emergency contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to the school office, the office will relay the problem to the appointed member of staff, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin. The Group Leader will keep this list with them at all times during the trip.

Mobile phones will be carried by all adults and the contact numbers shared between them and entered on the trip form.

The Group Leader will also take with them copies of the school Critical Incidents Policy and Missing Child Procedure and Log.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school reporting systems.

The Group Leader will complete the following:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and safe
- If there are injuries immediately establish their extent, so far as possible, and administer appropriate first aid
 - Establish the names of the injured and call whichever emergency services are required
 - Advise other party staff of the incident and that the emergency procedures are in operation
 - Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies the injured child/children to hospital
 - Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to school.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all students and staff are accounted for
 - Control access to phones until contact is made with the Head Teacher emergency contact point or designated member of staff, and he/she has had time to contact those directly involved.

Give full details of the incident to the headteacher or designated contact:

- Name
- Nature, date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- Details of injuries
- Names and telephone numbers of those involved
- Action taken so far
- Telephone number for further contact.

Serious Incidents

For serious incidents where the media may be involved, the group leader or other party members must not discuss matters with the media. Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.

The Head Teacher or designated staff member should arrange to contact parents/carers of those involved. For a serious incident the Head Teacher or designated staff member should contact parents of all party members.

The group leader should write down, as soon as practicable, all relevant details while they are still fresh in the memory. Other staff members might also be asked to do so. A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.

Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.

All accident forms should be completed as soon as possible and Insurers, the Health and Safety Executive should be informed as appropriate.

Terrorism

The current global situation means that the possibility of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk we all face. Like all risks, this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way. The UK government identifies five levels of threat from 'low' to 'critical'. Since 2006, when this level was first published, it has never been below 'substantial' – the middle level.

Group Leaders should follow the advice provided by the risk assessment in the guidance regarding 'Terrorism'.

Adventurous Activities

Definition of an 'adventurous activity'

The following activities are regarded as 'adventurous':

- All activities in 'open country' (normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access)
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Sailing / windsurfing / kitesurfing
- 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
- Coastering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration
- Shooting / archery / paintballing
- 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
- Other activities (e.g. initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above

The following activities are NOT regarded as adventurous but must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the Head Teacher 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
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go-karts
- Ice skating (rink)
- Farm visits
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities i.e. 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 slow-moving, shallow (typically up to the knees of the participants) water. It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft.

Safety during Adventurous Activities

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

- a) An external provider
Any external provider must hold an LotC Quality Badge or complete a Provider Form (Appendix A). (If a Provider holds an AALA license (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.) 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 the school's staff.

Water-Based Activities

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 known 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 guidance 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.

Open-country activities

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 in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland:

- Mountain Leader Award (Summer or Winter as appropriate) www.mltuk.org or
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser

b) 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 www.mltuk.org or
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser

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

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

- Countryside Leader Award. See www.countrysideleaderaward.org
- Sports Leaders UK Level 2 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL)
- Completion of a suitable 'Leader Training' Course
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser
- Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated
- An assessment of competence (written or implied) by the Head Teacher.

Snowsports

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 - 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. Leaders 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 follows:

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.snowsportscotland.org or
- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'.

Snowboarding: The minimum qualification to lead snowboarding on snow is:

- The Snowboard Leader Award (SBL) administered by www.snowsportscotland.org or
- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'.

Pupils may only take part in off-piste activities if under the direction of a suitably qualified local instructor, AND they will remain within the designated controlled areas, AND off-piste activities are specifically included within the visit insurance policy.

Overseas Expeditions

Overseas Expeditions are defined as those which typically involve journeying in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries.

Overseas Expeditions will only be approved if the provider either:

- a) Holds an LOtC Quality Badge or

b) Provides a statement of compliance with Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3.

For providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge, 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3' should be referred to when the proposal is initiated. This document contains information for both establishments and providers, and includes a checklist 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.