

3.0 Planning an Educational Visit

3.1 Types of visit

Visits can be categorised into three categories, these are:

Category A



These are activities that present no significant risks. They should be supervised by a teacher who has been assessed as competent by the LA or Educational Visit Co-ordinator, where appropriate, to lead the activity. Examples include walking in parks or field studies in environments presenting no technical hazards.

Category B



These comprise some higher-risk or higher-profile activities. LA approval is required for this category of activity. Safe supervision requires that the Group Leader should as a minimum, have undergone familiarisation

specific to the activity and / or the location. The Group Leader will have to be approved as suitably competent by the LA, and hold any necessary qualification/award. Examples include; walking in non-remote country, camping or cycling on roads.

Category C



This is the most demanding category. It includes all those activities that if not school-led, would be in the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. LA approval is required for visits in this category. In the case of sports, where safe supervision requires the leader to complete some prior test of his/her specific competence, such testing might include a recognised course of training, the recorded accumulation of relevant experience or an assessment of competence by an appropriate body.

The range of visits offered to children and young people is further categorised by whether the visit is to be residential or abroad: -

- i) **Visit as part of a regular curricular activity within School / Youth Club hours with non-hazardous activities - Category A; e.g. a visit to the local park or library.**
- ii) **Visits not usually part of the school day / Youth Club hours that may extend beyond the end of the**

school day/Youth Club hours with non-hazardous activities – Category A; e.g. a visit to Chester as part of a ‘Romans’ topic.

iii) **Visits including an overnight stay – Category A/B; e.g. a visit to a European Country as part of language studies.**

iv) **Visits of one day or less involving hazardous activities – Category B/C; e.g. visit to do rock climbing or abseiling.**

v) **Visits including an overnight stay and involving hazardous activities**

Category B/C; e.g. staying in an outdoor activity centre and taking part in canoeing or other hazardous activities.

LA approval is not required for visits in categories (i) and (ii), however schools should employ this policy document as a basis to develop their own guidelines of good practice for such visits. LA approval is required for all visits in categories (iii), (iv), and (v). The LA will undertake sample monitoring of all educational visits.



Hazardous Activities

The activities listed below require LA approval. Please complete Form 1 and Form 2 and send to the Outdoor Education Officer at the Local Authority at least 28 days in advance.

The current list includes **all residential activity** and:

- airborne activities
- archery
- open country activities and field studies
- camping
- orienteering
- canal boating
- paintballing
- canoeing
- rafting
- caving/potholing
- rowing and sculling
- climbing
- sailing and power boating
- expeditioning
- sea-level traversing and coastering
- farm visits
- fishing
- shooting
- horse riding/pony trekking
- snow sport activities
- ice skating
- sub-aqua/snorkelling
- kite flying/kite surfing
- surfing
- low and high ropes courses
- swimming in open water
- moorland, fell and mountain activities
- theme park visits
- motor skills
- off road cycling/journeying
- water skiing

This list is not exhaustive; if in doubt seek advice from the LA Outdoor Education Officer.

3.2 Notifying the LA

The requirement for the LA approval of visits in categories (iii), (iv) and (v) applies to all establishments, including Schools, Academies, Integrated Youth and Play service establishments and voluntary youth groups.

The requirement for the approval of visits extends to all residential activities and any visit abroad, whether they include a hazardous activity or not. Contact the Outdoor Education Officer at the LA for advice if you are not sure whether you require approval for a particular visit. Please note, where LA approval is applicable, outline approval from the LA should be obtained for an educational visit at the earliest opportunity, and in any case, before any visit arrangements are finalised and prior to offering the visit to the intended group of children/young people. The LA should be notified using Form 1 (appendix 2) which should be sent at least 28 days in advance of any visit.

3.3 Exploratory Visits

An exploratory visit should be made, where possible, by any person who is to lead a group abroad, on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them. In other cases an exploratory visit should be undertaken to ensure that the venue is suitable, safe and meets the aims and objectives of the visit and can meet any other required needs.

Particular attention should be given to the potential for adverse weather conditions and the dangers presented by them, for example; flash floods, snow, frost, mud slides etc.

The exploratory visit should be used to assist in undertaking an assessment of the areas and levels of risk. Where an exploratory visit is not feasible the Group Leader should, as a minimum requirement, obtain specific information in writing from the proposed venue, other schools that have used the venue, local organisations, or Tourist Boards that will enable a suitable assessment of risk to be undertaken.

The image shows two pages of a form titled 'Form 1: Application for the Approval of Educational Visits Involving Hazardous Activities or Overnight Stays'. The form is divided into several sections:

- Section 1:** School Improvement / Children's Services. Includes fields for School Name, Group Leader, and Mobile Number.
- Section 2:** PURPOSE OF VISIT AND SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES.
- Section 3:** PLACES TO BE VISITED.
- Section 4:** EXISTING KNOWLEDGE OF PLACES TO BE VISITED.
- Section 5:** DATES AND TIMES. Includes fields for Start and End dates and times.
- Section 6:** TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS. Includes fields for Vehicle and Driver.
- Section 7:** ORGANISATION/COMPANAGENCY OF PARTY. Includes fields for Name, Address, Telephone, and Licence No. if Registered.
- Section 8:** ACCOMMODATION TO BE USED. Includes fields for Name, Address, Telephone, and Name of Contact.
- Section 9:** DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES.
- Section 10:** LIST OF ANY HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES AND WHO IS SUPERVISING.
- Section 11:** NAME, RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATION(S) INCLUDING FIRST AID AND SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF ACCOMPANYING THE PARTY (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY).
- Section 12:** NAME, RELEVANT EXPERIENCE, QUALIFICATION(S) AND SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER ADULTS ACCOMPANYING THE PARTY (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY).

3.4 Stages for planning a visit

The stages outlined below can be used as a tick list for use when organising a visit. There is a more comprehensive Educational Visit Checklist within the appendix.

Outline proposal to Head Teacher, Governing Body or Integrated Youth and Play Service Area Youth coordinator to seek approval in principle ✓

- Visit's aims & objectives
- Likely date, duration, venue
- Participant & staffing arrangements
- Resources and estimated costs
- Outline approval of LA for high-risk visits. If unsure of the category of your visit contact the Outdoor Education Officer at the LA for advice

Planning ✓

- Contact the venue; ensure it is suitable for the visit (see section 11)
- Decide on transport details (see sections 8 , 11 & 12)
- Decide on Group Leader/Supervisors & adult volunteers (see section 4)
- Decide on funding and budget arrangements (see section 13)
- Undertake a risk assessment one generic risk assessment may cover several similar visits (see Section 6)
- Undertake an exploratory visit if required (see Section 3.3)

Substantive detailed proposal to Head Teacher, Governing Body ✓

(form No. 1) Provide full details of:

- Risk assessment and intended hazard control measures (see section 6)
- Emergency procedure and Home/School Contact (see section 14)
- Transport arrangements (see sections 8, 11 & 12)
- Insurance arrangements (see section 7)
- Costs (see section 13)
- Group membership (see section 4)
- Staffing details; relevant qualifications & experience (see sections 4 & 5)
- Contingency plans e.g. bad weather activities planned.

