

- Do not suck fingers or put pens, pencils or other objects your mouth.
- Wash hands, especially before eating, after any contact with animals and before leaving the farm.
- Wear appropriate clothing including suitable footwear (Wellingtons / boots).
- Clean or change footwear before leaving the farm, then wash hands.
- Cover all cuts and grazes especially on the hands with a waterproof dressing.
- Do not place your face against the animals or kiss animals.
- Do not taste any animal foodstuffs.

If a member of the group shows signs of illness (e.g. sickness or diarrhoea) after the visit, they and / or their parent / guardian should be advised to contact the doctor and explain that they have had recent contact with animals.



11.0 Use of Contractors (Providers) and Tour Operators

Schools, Integrated Youth and Play Service and other services need to make informed choices about the suitability of contractors of educational visits and outdoor centres in order to ensure, as far as is practicable, the health and safety of the pupils and others involved.



Contracted providers of educational visits include; tour operators, expedition providers, outdoor education centres, local farms, civic museums as well as national bodies such as the YHA.

Accidents can happen even during the most carefully managed activities. When considering an educational visit to an Activity Centre or when planning to use an Activity Provider, schools and other services must satisfy themselves on matters such as the company's safety policy, levels of instructor competence, qualifications and standard of equipment. For example, check that contacted providers hold an up-to-date Adventure Activity Licence, or a Learning Outside the Classroom quality mark as

these provide evidence that they comply with nationally accepted standards. To assist in this assessment the following issues should be considered: -

- **Safety Policy Statement**

Ask the contracted provider for evidence of:

- > An up-to-date and suitable health and safety policy.
- > The way in which the policy is brought to the attention of staff.
- > The way in which the contractor monitors his health and safety arrangements.
- Health and safety arrangements
Ask the contracted provider for evidence: -
- > That every reasonable measure has been taken to reduce the risk of the occurrence of an accident or ill health.
- > Of how the contractor actively promotes the awareness of health and safety amongst his own staff. For example, via training; team safety meetings; accident feedback reports etc.
- > Of independent verification of health and safety arrangements e.g. if an external professional body audits the contractor's health and safety precautions.

- **Insurance**

Ask the centre or provider for evidence that they have adequate public liability insurance and how their insurance policy affects your School or Youth Service insurance cover. Those Schools and Youth Services that are insured by the City Council should contact the Council's Treasury Management/ Insurance Unit.

- **Provision of accommodation**



All accommodation that is to be used for the first time must be checked to ensure it conforms to United Kingdom standards of safety as a minimum requirement. Ask for evidence from the accommodation provider directly, or seek it from the brochure advertising it or the Agent supplying it. If practicable request a pre-visit safety guide; this should draw your attention to accommodation's key safety points, in particular fire safety.

- **Provision of Services or Equipment**

Ask for evidence that equipment supplied by a contracted provider for your use on the educational visit or for an activity is: -

- > Recognised regulation equipment purchased by the contractor taking health and safety into account.
- > Adequately maintained to a planned maintenance programme, and maintenance documentation is up-to-date.
- > Regularly inspected and examined at the correct intervals.
- > Suitably repaired as required and there are effective systems in place for preventing damaged equipment from being used.

- **Transport**

When coaches or minibuses are to be used, ask the provider for evidence and details of coach safety audits, a copy of the coach company's operating licence as well as motor vehicle and employer's Liability Insurance. Other issues to be checked include: -

- > **Seatbelts:** where necessary ensure road transport is fitted with sufficient seatbelts for the relevant group size; in line with current legislation.
- > **Driver's Hours:** ensure all itineraries for tours using road transport take into account current legislation on driver's hours and statutory breaks.
- > **Driver recruitment:** check contracted coach/minibus companies provide evidence that they have taken reasonable steps to establish their drivers do not have a criminal record or a detrimental employment record.
- > **Foreign transport:** Check all companies used for transfers and excursions conform to all relevant local, national and international standards. Ask for evidence. The minimum standard is that they hold an Operators Licence, Fleet Insurance and Public Liability Insurance.
- > **Public Transport:** the appropriate authorities of individual Countries determine the regulations concerning public transport so there is little to be done in this area. If public transport is to be used ensure regard is given to the safety of Educational Visit Group Members using it; especially when boarding and alighting transport in countries that drive on the right.

- **Staff training**

Ask for details and evidence that the contractor's staff are suitably trained, qualified and competent: -

- > For their role in the visit including any activity they are required to supervise or manage.



- > For the use of any equipment they are required to use.
- > To respond quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency.
- > In first aid if required.

- **Emergency procedures**

Ask for details and evidence from the contractor that he has: -

- > Adequate 24-hour emergency plans and procedures in place and that they are compatible with yours.
- > Suitable contingency plans.
- > Adequate first aid provision and arrangements.
- > Suitable accident/incident reporting procedures.
- > Suitable means of communication; mobile phones etc. and can provide you with relevant contact numbers.

- **Risk assessments**

Ask for evidence from the contractor that: -

- > There is a robust process to ensure that risk assessments are carried out.
- > Suitable risk assessments have been carried out for all parts of the visit under his control and that they are reviewed if being used as a generic assessment for future visits and communicated to relevant staff.

- > There are adequate method statements and safe working procedures based on the risk assessments, for activities under his control.

- **Other issues**

- > Check that all products and services comply where applicable with current local, national and/or international standards.
- > Check that any required competencies can be independently verified. Is the contractor a member of a professional body etc?
- > Check that the provider abides by stipulated staffing ratios and all staff are checked for relevant criminal history.
- > Check that the Activity Centre clearly specifies when its own staff will be responsible for pupil supervision and when responsibility lies with the Group Leader.
- > Check if preliminary visits are welcomed or required.
- > Check if the Centre can accommodate children/young people or staff with special educational needs, disabilities or individual dietary requirements.
- > Check the activities and if they are appropriate for the age and abilities of the group members.
- > Check with other schools that have previously visited the same venue or have used the provider for their experiences. The LA will provide a list of activities and approved providers.

- **Sub-Contractors**

- > Check if the contractor employs a sub-contractor; for example in the case of a Tour Operator using an independent coach company. Ask for evidence from the contractor of any systems put in place to vet and monitor the sub-contractor's safety performance