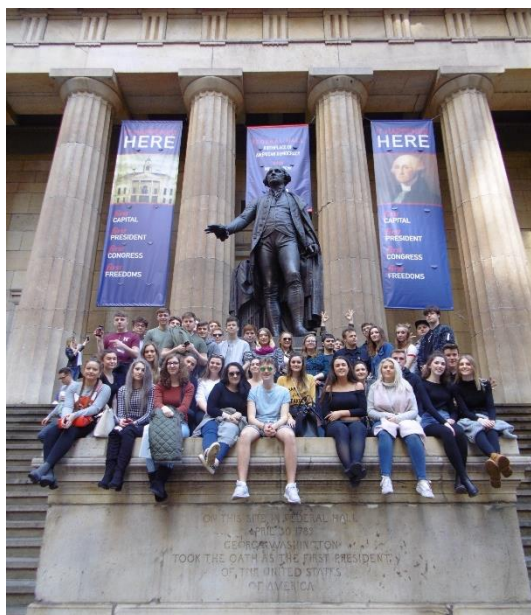




monmouthshire
sir fynwy



**Educational Visits
Policy**

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Introduction

This document sets out Monmouthshire's planning and approval procedures for off-site educational visits and outdoor learning (referred to as 'visits') and the procedures by which the Local Authority (LA) and its educational establishments meet the standards set out by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) National Guidance (NG). The online national guidance is recognised as best practice by the Welsh Government (WG) for the management of educational visits and outdoor learning. This document replaces all previous Monmouthshire policies and guidance relating to off-site educational visits and outdoor learning.

Employers and employees who organise visits, have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974 and other health and safety legislation to ensure reasonable risk management procedures are in place for the planning and organisation of these activities.

Anyone organising an off-site educational visit or outdoor learning activity for children and young people from an LA controlled educational establishment (e.g schools, youth service) in Monmouthshire must follow the procedures set out in this policy, plan their visit using the online 'EVOLVE' system and use the online '**OEAP National Guidance**' to help manage the visit, which can be viewed by going to www.oeapng.info/ Non-Monmouthshire controlled establishments may also use this policy and procedures, but must first contact the Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA) and formally adopt the policy through the governing body or management board of the establishment.

Staff must also be aware that this policy should be read in conjunction with other establishment / LA policies, guidelines or advice that may be relevant to the overall planning of a visit, e.g. health and safety, safeguarding, inclusion, critical incident plan, accident reporting, first aid, charging policy, transport, volunteering.

The LA strongly advises that this policy be adopted by the schools' governing body, or in the case of other establishments, the management board. All staff involved in visits, whether managing or leading them should read and understand this policy. It is the responsibility of the establishment to ensure that any revisions or updates are disseminated to staff. The establishment's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) should upload the policy onto EVOLVE and ensure that all staff have access to it.

This policy is reviewed (and updated as necessary) every three years, or learning from an accident/incident on a visit.

Foreword by Chief Officer for Children and Young People

Well planned and well organised educational visits offer an invaluable opportunity to enhance the curriculum, enrich children and young peoples' learning, experience something new, raise self-esteem and increase motivation. In turn, this leads to an appetite for learning, helps foster good staff/young people working relationships and helps raise levels of achievement in education and life.

Delivering learning outside or off-site does not need to be more difficult than delivering it inside a classroom. Planning and management should, therefore, be practical, proportionate and non-bureaucratic.

The key to effective and successful outdoor learning and off-site visits is the right leaders doing the right activities with the right young people in the right places at the right time.


Learning out of the classroom is a strong theme that runs through all stages of education in Wales and Monmouthshire is committed to offering an exciting and enjoyable range of educational visits for our young people.

It is important that children and young people are progressively exposed to carefully managed risks, without being exposed to significant dangers. Educational visits can range in scope from a short excursion to a local park, museum, cultural or historical venue to a wide variety of outdoor and adventurous activities or an overseas expedition.

This document sets out the planning and approval procedures which help staff to plan and deliver high quality and safe visits. By adopting these nationally recognised procedures, staff will be following best practice, therefore reducing the level of risk to our children and young people and in doing so will be supported by the Local Authority should an incident occur.

Staff who organise and engage in educational visits with children and young people show dedication, commitment and enthusiasm. Their work ensures that the young people of Monmouthshire continue to be given the opportunity to take part in such activities. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their professionalism, commitment and dedication. This document is aimed at supporting them in their valuable work and helping to make the organising of visits as straightforward as possible.

Will McLean



SECTION A

Roles and responsibilities

Visit Leader (VL)

The Visit Leader has the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, a single Visit Leader should be designated. If this role changes during a visit, a clear handover should be made.

The key requirements for Visit Leaders are that they must be competent to lead, confident and accountable. Visit Leaders should have the ability to lead to the level demanded by the visit, and have sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the activities, the group, and the environments they will operate in.

Visit Leaders must follow this policy and related guidance and undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of group members (young people and staff) and parents/carers and ensure that the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) are properly defined and communicated, ensuring effective supervision.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

Each establishment must have a competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator who has completed the EVC training course (updated every 3 years). The EVC is the establishment's focal point for planning and monitoring visits and is the routine contact for dialogue with the Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA). Due to the nature of the role, the EVC should be an experienced Visit Leader with sufficient status within the establishment to guide the working practice of colleagues leading visits.

They should be part of, or able to influence the senior management team and have sufficient authority to make a judgement call about the competence of any other staff member to lead a visit and to approve or decline visits. This cannot be a purely administrative role, although certain functions may be delegated to an administrator.

The EVC should ensure that all visits meet the employers and establishment's policies, procedures and requirements. This includes appropriate monitoring, evaluation and recording to ensure that the Head/Manager and Governing Body/Management Board can access the data they require.

Head/Manager

Heads/Managers must ensure that the establishment has adopted this Educational Visits Policy and that all relevant staff are notified of any updates to the policy or guidance involving visits.

An appropriately competent EVC must be appointed and be allowed sufficient time to fulfil the role, including attendance at OEAP-approved training. Heads/Managers often choose to designate themselves as EVC. Any change of EVC or Head/Manager should be notified to the OEA as soon as possible. Where an EVC has not been nominated, the Head/Manager will assume responsibility for this role.

The Head/Manager should ensure that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of all visits to be inclusive and keep the Governing Body/Management Board informed about the delivery of visits. They must ensure that effective support structures are in place for dealing with emergency situations. Further details on responding to an emergency incident can be found in Section C (and Appendices 1-4). In addition, schools may have their own Schools Critical Incident Plan that they should refer to.

The Head/Manager must approve **all** visits prior to the visit taking place and forward to the LA (on EVOLVE) any visits requiring LA approval.

Governing Body/Management Board

Members of a Governing Body or Management Board should view their main role as being "to enable and ensure"; otherwise described as being a "critical friend".

A Governing Body/Management Board should ensure that it has a clear understanding of employer's responsibilities under health and safety law. They should ensure that this policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body/Management Board and that robust systems support implementation of the guidance and ongoing advice and training.

The governing body should challenge in order to be clear about of how visits lead to a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness.

The involvement of the Governing Body/Management Board in the visit approval process should be clear, ensuring that approval and notification procedures operate effectively. It may be appropriate for one or more members of the governing body to have access to visit details on EVOLVE, to be determined by the establishment.

Monitoring procedures should be in place, visits evaluated, good practice shared and any issues should be followed up to comply with statutory and employer's requirements.

Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA)

The Outdoor Education Adviser fulfils the statutory council functions to support the LA in meeting its legal responsibilities and powers with regard to visits delivered to young people by its employees.

With the support of Gwent Outdoor Education Service team, the OEA provides expert advice on safety and quality of visits, including risk management. The OEA is a member of the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP), ensuring that national guidance, advice and initiatives are presented at a local level.

The OEA ensures that adequate and appropriate training is available and taken up by relevant employees.

On behalf of the LA, the OEA approves (or disallows) visits for which LA approval is required.

The OEA monitors standards of health and safety on visits, including observation.

Training

Training is available through the Gwent Outdoor Education Service to enable staff wishing to fulfil any of the roles below to gain background knowledge and key skills in order to carry out the role. Following training, staff should be given time to consolidate their skills and knowledge by shadowing experienced staff, becoming an assistant leader and then taking on a leadership role with the support of experienced staff until the Head/EVC is confident of the leader's abilities to carry out the role.

Course Title	Relevance	Details
Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) Training	Mandatory for this role	One day classroom based course, endorsed by the OEAP for those who have been approved by the Head to be the EVC for the establishment <i>(Half day refresher every 3 years)</i>
Visit Leader (VL) Training	Recommended for this role, particularly new VLs	One day practical course, endorsed by the OEAP for all those wishing to lead visits.
Head/Manager role	For further understanding of this role in relation to visits	Delivered via cluster group meetings / skype / to individuals
Governor/Management Board role	For further understanding of this role in relation to visits	Delivered to whole governing bodies or group of specific governor roles e.g. H&S lead / chair
EVOLVE training	For staff managing and planning visits online	Delivered via skype / groups of visit leaders / EVCs
Snowsport Course Organiser (SCO) Course	Mandatory for those wishing to plan, organise and take groups skiing or snowboarding	One day classroom based course delivered by Snowsport Cymru <i>(Refresher training recommended every 3 years)</i> <i>(Please note - this course is not for leading the practical elements of skiing or snowboarding)</i>
Outdoor Learning (OL) Cards Course	For staff wishing to broaden their PE/DofE/Forest schools/outdoor interest knowledge and skills	One day practical course, endorsed by the OEAP. To help develop activities in support of the Adventurous Activities part of the PE curriculum in Wales – orienteering, problem solving, bouldering and journeying.
RLSS National Water Safety Management Programme (NWSMP)	For VLs working with groups in water or at water margins	A modular programme offering practical elements of preventative management of groups in or around a variety of water based environments e.g. river, beach, canal, lake. Also

		includes rescue and recovery modules if required.
National Governing Body (NGB) Awards e.g. Lowland Leader, Single Pitch Supervisor	For those wishing to lead a particular adventurous activity e.g. walking, climbing	Contact Gwent Outdoor Education Service for further details

Contact details

All contact numbers given in this policy are correct at the time of going to print. However, contact numbers can change and it is important that any numbers relied upon by the visit leader e.g. ‘at home’ emergency contact or other staff members are checked for accuracy before travel.

For general advice about educational visits, outdoor learning and adventurous activities, Local Authority (LA) approval for off-site visits, LA leader approval and training:

Clare Adams

Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA)

Hilston Park OEC, Newcastle, Monmouth, NP25 5NY

T: 01600 750221

M: 07966 158868

For general enquiries about outdoor education, training and in the absence of the OEA:

Ian Kennett

Head of Service

Gwent Outdoor Education Service, Hilston Park OEC, Newcastle, Monmouth, NP25 5NY

T: 01600 750221

M: 07768 880814

SECTION B

Visit approval

All visits must be approved as set out in the table below. They must be planned and approved using EVOLVE, except routine visits which may be approved using a paper based approach, but are strongly advised to use EVOLVE, keeping all visit records in a central location.

Type of Visit	Who approves the visit?
Routine (see definition below) and all other visits not listed in this table	Head/Manager
Non-routine visits involving overnight and overseas stays	Head/Manager followed by LA (28 days before visit)
Visits including adventure activities and/or in demanding environments (see definition below)	Head/Manager followed by LA (28 days before visit)
Duke of Edinburgh's Award training or expeditions	Head/Manager followed by LA (28 days before visit) Additional DofE forms required – see EVOLVE
Overseas expeditions using an independent provider (i.e. trekking or adventure activities in a developing country)	Initial approval by Head/Manager and LA (12 months beforehand) Followed by final LA approval (8 weeks beforehand)
<p><u>IMPORTANT</u></p> <p>VISITS MUST NOT PROCEED UNTIL THE CORRECT LEVEL OF APPROVAL HAS BEEN OBTAINED</p> <p>(It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to check this before proceeding)</p>	

Blanket approval

Approval for a series of visits may be given by Heads/Managers for staff to run routine visits or by the LA for those staff who have gained LA leader approval. For visits that have been given blanket approval, the Visit Leader and EVC must ensure that relevant information is left with the establishment 'at home' emergency contact including details of the venue, activity, group, transport, start/finish times and other relevant information for **each visit**. This can be done using EVOLVE or a paper based approach.

Visit definitions:

Routine visits

These are regular, repeated visits that are usually part of the curriculum and take place either on the establishment site or in the local area. They take place within normal establishment operating hours, usually require no extra payment to be made and risks involved are covered by a generic risk assessment. Examples of such activities are: forest school activities, swimming lessons, local area visits to a park or museum, sports fixtures.

Adventurous activities

The table below lists a range of adventurous activities, although it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list. If any uncertainty arises as to whether an activity is adventurous or not, VLS should seek the advice of their EVC, or contact the OEA.

Land Based Activities	Water Based Activities
Rock climbing/abseiling including climbing walls	Kayaking and canoeing
Mountaineering	Sailing and windsurfing
Hill walking	White water rafting
Ice climbing	Water skiing
Gorge or coastal scrambling/sea cliff traversing/coasteering	Snorkel and aqualung diving
Underground exploration – cave or mine	All forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
Skiing (snow or dry slope)	Improvised rafting
Air activities (except commercial flights)	Kite surfing
Horse riding and pony trekking	Surfing and body boarding
High ropes courses	Dragon boating
Quad biking/ATV's	Wave skiing
Orienteering	Jet skiing/personal water craft
Mountain biking	Stand Up Paddle boarding (SUP)
Paintballing	

Any activity (**including camping, fieldwork and non-adventure activities**) taking place in demanding environments as defined in the table below

Demanding environments

Location	Definition	Level of approval required
Normal countryside	<p>Areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • which are close to vehicle access (i.e. less than 30 minutes walking time for any group member to the nearest road from which the group could be evacuated by vehicle) and • where the environment does not have any of the features of a 'demanding environment' listed below. 	Visits here do not require LA approval
Demanding environments	<p>Areas where there is significant risk to the group from one or more of the following factors;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hazardous terrain (e.g. cliffs, very steep slopes etc.); • remoteness (i.e. more than 30 minutes walking time from the nearest normal vehicle access point from which the group could be evacuated); • difficult escape (i.e. places where the group could be trapped and/or where they would need specialist help to escape); • exposure to severe weather (i.e. open to the weather and no easily accessible shelter within 30 minutes walking time for any of the group); • open areas without clear boundaries where the group might stray into hazardous or remote terrain in poor visibility; • fast flowing water, deep water, or water with strong currents (including tidal flow) where: • the group will be close to the water and there is a significant risk of someone falling in; • the group will be entering the water. 	<p>Visits here do require LA approval</p> <p>(except pre-approved activities run by Gwent Outdoor Education Service – Hilston Park, Gilwern, Talybont)</p>

SECTION C

Standard Operating Procedures

Planning your visit – SAGE

Identify clear aims and benefits: Answer the WHAT, WHO, WHY, WHERE and WHEN questions. In other words be clear about what you want to achieve, with whom and why. A clear understanding of aims makes it easy to identify suitable choices for many other aspects of planning (such as venue, transport, competence of leaders, preparation of the group etc). Identifying the potential benefits is essential in making sound judgements as to whether the plan is sensible, acceptable and viable.

The degree of complexity of visit planning and management will depend on the interplay of several variables. These variables can be remembered as “SAGE” and include:

S taffing - who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.

A ctivities to be undertaken: what do you want the group to do and what is possible?

G roup characteristics: consider prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.

E nvironment - indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance and the ease of communications between the group and base. Do not overlook environments to be passed through between venues. For residential visits consider the accommodation and surrounding area. For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions.

Parental communication and consent

The key is to provide parents/carers with sufficient information to make an informed decision about the participation of their child. Such information may be given in a variety of ways, as the information needed by parents/carers will depend on the nature and complexity of the visit. For example, regular sports fixtures or cultural visits may involve information being given for the term ahead with parents being informed of any changes to this as they occur, perhaps by phone, email, text etc. For more complex visits, specific information letters will be needed and for the most complex or adventurous visits a combination of written information and briefing/information meetings may be most appropriate.

For routine visits, blanket parental consent can be obtained on an annual (or termly) basis. Informed parent/carer consent must be obtained for all non-routine visits (or series of repeated visits) using a ‘non-routine visit consent’ form. This form also includes details for obtaining up to date emergency contact, medical, dietary and swimming ability information.

Parental consent can be obtained directly through the EVOLVE system, or alternatively examples of routine and non-routine consent forms can be found in the ‘resources’ section of EVOLVE.

If parents/carers withhold their consent, the young person must not be taken on the visit but the

curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the young person in some other way wherever possible. If the parents/carers give a conditional consent the Head will need to consider whether the young person may be taken on the visit or not.

You may also decide that a 'code of conduct' or 'behaviour contract' is beneficial which should be discussed with parents and young people and signed by them. It may even be appropriate for the young people themselves to write it. It is important to set out expectations early on and getting parents and young people involved makes the process more transparent, easier to manage and gives it credibility. Relevant information should include any sanctions for inappropriate behaviour and in exceptional circumstances parents agree to the young person being removed from the visit. Other details may include the use of mobile phones or other devices, valuables and other personal items.

Using an Independent provider

For any visit, the VL should check that the location and activities offered are educationally suitable for the group and will meet the aims of the visit. Check that any provider offers good value for money by comparing with other similar providers. Remember that there is no substitute for first hand, up to date information and therefore it is strongly advised that, where possible a pre-visit is undertaken to any venue or area being used for a visit, particularly if it is a first time visit for the establishment. This level of pre-booking check is sufficient for visitor attractions and public access venues such as zoos, historical/cultural sites, museums, sports stadia, theatres, cinemas, hotels, bowling alleys, theme parks, and public access (lifeguarded) swimming pools or similar.

When using a specialist venue or activity provider e.g. outdoor activity provider (other than Gwent Outdoor Education Centres – Hilston, Gilwern or Talybont), farm visit or similar please apply the following guidance **before signing any booking form or contract**:

If an organisation is displaying the LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom) Quality Badge (see below), establishments can be assured that their venue has met required standards, so VLs **do not** need to carry out their own risk or quality assessments for the activities provided. The LOtC Quality Badge is the only nationally recognised indicator of good quality educational provision AND effective risk management. For this reason, **LOtC badge holders do not need to complete a Provider statement**. For further details of the LOtC Quality Badge Scheme go to: www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk



Providers who are not LOtC holders will need to complete the Provider statement (found in the 'resources' section of EVOLVE) and check that this has been satisfactorily completed by the provider **before booking**. This requires them to confirm that they have risk assessments in place for all activities/services that they provide and that these are available to view at the premises on request.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NO NEED TO OBTAIN COPIES OF THE PROVIDER'S RISK ASSESSMENTS.

Seek specialist advice on any concerns arising from the provider's responses by contacting the Outdoor Education Adviser.

Local Authority (LA) leader approval

Who needs LA leader approval?

Staff or volunteers who wish to lead adventurous activities or activities in demanding environments for which LA approval is required must first be confirmed as technically competent to lead by the Outdoor Education Adviser, or appropriate technical adviser.

Prospective leaders must seek LA leader approval through their own EVOLVE log-in via the '**My details/awards**' section. In order to be granted approval the applicant must have all of the following:

- **Either** a) the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) leadership award for the terrain/activity **or** b) have a written and signed statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser verifying that the leader has the relevant technical and group management skills for the terrain/activity (see below for how to arrange technical adviser approval).
- Recent and relevant experience
- A current first aid certificate or qualification
- Support of the Head/Manager

[To arrange technical adviser approval the EVC must identify an appropriately experienced and/or qualified technical adviser who is willing to make a signed statement of competence for the prospective leader (uploaded onto EVOLVE). Technical adviser approval is usually only given if the leader has completed a training course in the relevant NGB leadership award, where one exists and the technical adviser has made a practical assessment and can confirm that the leader is operating at the standard of the relevant NGB leadership award or at a suitable level for a site-specific approval to be given.]

Depending on level of experience and technical skill, leaders may be given approval to lead either the activity/activities at specific, named venue(s) or at all venues that are within the remit of their competence at any time for the duration of the approval period.

The Outdoor Education Adviser will notify the leader and their EVC of their LA leader approval decision and this will be recorded in the leader's '**My details**' section of the EVOLVE system. This can be viewed at any time by the leader, their EVC or Head.

Duke of Edinburgh's (DofE) award groups

Anyone planning DofE training or ventures must first contact the LA's DofE Development Officer before planning the activity to ensure that the training or venture meets the requirements of the DofE and the LA.

Contact details:

Andrew Woolley, DofE Development Officer

Monmouthshire Youth Service, Gilwern Outdoor Ed Centre, Ty Mawr Lane, Gilwern Abergavenny NP7 0EB

M: 07779 980392

The DofE **Expedition Supervisor** is responsible for ensuring that risks are managed appropriately during the expedition (and any training sessions carried out in preparation for the expedition). Supervisors from LA controlled establishments must adhere to this policy, plan and approve their DofE training or venture using EVOLVE and apply for LA leadership approval, as above via EVOLVE.

Joint or collaborative visits

Any visit or activity involving young people from your establishment, or where young people have been recruited through your establishment should be treated as one of your own visits **even if another establishment or external provider is taking the lead role in organising the visit**. Examples include:

- Sports fixtures/tours where your establishment has made young people/parents aware of the opportunity but where the visit is being staffed by other adults (e.g. sports coaches, LA staff, Urdd staff, PTA groups or similar)
- Collaborative visits with another establishment
- DofE Expeditions where young people from your establishment are joining another establishment's expedition

For these visits, the young person's EVC and Head **must be able to evidence that they have:**

- ensured that the LA's requirements for visit planning and approval have been met. Another establishment may carry out this planning and approval if they are taking the lead role but the visit plan must include all young people and staff attending the visit from all establishments involved and you must view and approve the visit plan.
- satisfied themselves that the staff leading the visit are competent to do so e.g. confirmation by another establishment Head/Manager and that all activities are delivered by a suitably competent and insured activity provider or leader
- ensured that the supervisory staff for the visit are made aware of and are able to manage any relevant additional needs appropriately
- been sufficiently involved in planning for the visit to ensure that the activities, risk management and pastoral care arrangements (including 24 hr supervision) are appropriate
- ensured that parents are made fully aware of the details of the visit including supervision levels and have given informed consent

- Ensured that they can be contacted in the event of an incident, accident or other emergency and that arrangements for emergencies are clear between the establishments involved

Volunteers

A volunteer may take any role in a visit, including VL, assistant leader, activity leader or helper. This could involve help with transport, supervising a small group of children on a day visit, leading a specialist activity or a teacher’s partner accompanying a ski visit.

When using volunteers it is essential that they meet the requirements for the role (including accountability) and have been approved by the Head. When recruiting volunteers the establishment must adhere to current LA policy for volunteering and induction and they must be sufficiently competent and confident to carry out their responsibilities. Volunteers, particularly working independently, should be operating to the same standard as would be expected of an employee or contractor taking on the role and paid staff should make up at least 50% of the staffing team for a visit.

Group management and supervision

The responsibility for supervision is continuous, 24 hours a day. It is important that care and supervision are maintained during periods outside structured activities, as well as during the activities themselves. This does not mean that young people need necessarily to be constantly watched, but rather that leaders need to achieve a sensible balance of activities and supervision methods. Opportunities for such time should be built into the visit itinerary, be included in information to parents and be covered by the risk assessment. For further guidance on group management and supervision, go to www.oeapng.info/ (section 4.2a)

Staff/young people ratios

A question that arises frequently is ‘What are my ratios?’ In most cases it is difficult to answer without knowing the **SAGE** dynamics. As a starting point only, previous OEAP WG endorsed guidance (2010) used the following, however, ratios should be determined by carrying out a risk assessment:

General off-site visits			
Activity	Age of young people	Staff: young person ratios- typical range NB actual ratios must be determined by a process of risk assessment	Leader competence
Local visits and visits to normal countryside	Nursery	1: 2-4	Previous experience and
	Reception/Year 0	1: 4-6	
	Years 1-3	1: 6-8	

	Years 4-6	1: 8-15	approved by Head/EVC
	Year 7 onwards	1: 15-20	
	Special education	1: 6-10	
Residential visits and visits abroad	Years 4-6	1:8-10	As above
	Year 7 onwards	1: 10-15 (but 1:10 with 2 staff minimum for visits abroad)	
	Special education	1: 5-8 (but 2 staff minimum for visits abroad)	
Swimming in public pools (with lifeguard)	Years 1-3	1: 5-8	As above
	Years 4-6	1: 10-12	
	Year 7 onwards	1: 15-20	
Swimming elsewhere (without lifeguard)	All years	1: 5-10 (but 2 staff minimum)	As above & lifeguard qualification or rescue experience (LA approval needed)

Transport

When selecting a method of transport, please refer to National Guidance www.oeapng.info/ (sections 4.5 a-e) which gives general advice on driver competence, group supervision on transport, the hiring of coaches and minibuses as well as transport in private cars or establishment minibuses and seatbelts/child restraints.

If hiring a coach or minibus with driver, EVOLVE will ask you to confirm that you have appropriate written assurances in place from the hire company. It must be noted that when travelling abroad, different countries have varying operational procedures and it may be, for example, that coach seatbelts are not fitted as standard.

For Monmouthshire Fleet transport advice and confirmation of assurances required, speak to the Operations and Commercial Manager (Huw Jones) on **01633 644502**.

Visits and the threat from terrorism

The current global situation means that the possibilities of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk faced by us all. Like all risks this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way. In the unlikely event of being in the vicinity of a terrorist attack, the visit leader should seek advice from the emergency services. The establishment's 'at home' emergency contact should contact the appropriate LA emergency contacts who will be able to offer support, help and advice for dealing with the situation. For up to date guidance please visit www.oeapng.info/ (section 6k)

Risk management

Most human activity involves balancing benefits and risks. We cannot have all of the benefits but none of the risks. We can eliminate all of the risks only by stopping the activity - but we then lose all of the benefits. Good visit management is about maximising benefits while reducing risks to acceptable levels.

Risk management, in the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, is a two stage process:

1. The identification of the potential benefits to be gained from an activity, along with any risks to the health and safety of those involved.
2. The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgement to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.

There are two broad categories of visit requiring different levels of planning, which are:

1. Routine visits that involve no more than an everyday level of risk. Such visits should require minimal planning or preparation beyond what is needed to make best use of the learning opportunity. In a school context, they are simply lessons in a 'different' classroom. These visits may be covered by a generic risk assessment document, used by all staff for all routine visits.
2. Visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment. This may be due to distance from the establishment, the nature of the activities, the environment or venue(s), the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. The additional steps needed to manage these aspects should be identified and recorded (as required by law). In the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, this means recording (as simply as possible) what you plan to do, as a result of identifying risks.

Examples of risk management forms can be found in the 'resources' section of EVOLVE.

Further information and guidance on risk management and writing a risk assessment can be found by going to:

www.oeapng.info/ (sections 4.3c – overview, 4.3f – practical advice, 4.3g – what to record and how)
www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm

Insurance

Any Monmouthshire establishment, their staff, volunteers and young people operating under this policy who have had their visit formally approved, will be insured by the LA's comprehensive employers and public liability insurance, personal accident and travel policies. This covers all visits including residential, visits abroad and adventurous activities.

If you are planning an unusual visit, involving an overseas expedition or activity not mentioned under 'adventurous activities', you should initially contact the OEA and then seek confirmation of insurance cover via Monmouthshire's Insurance Department on **01633 644277**. If using an Independent Provider, participants will still be covered under the LA's policy, **so it will not be necessary to purchase separate insurance through the provider**, unless provided free of charge as part of a package, for example. In this instance, in the event of a claim being made, participants will be covered by both policies. More often than not, the LA's policy will be more comprehensive than the provider's, so if faced with a claim

situation, in whatever context, **always** call the insurance team first to seek advice. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DEAL WITH THE CLAIM YOURSELF.**

Details of Monmouthshire's Insurance policies can be found in the 'resources' section of EVOLVE.

Final preparations

There is a Visit Leader check list in the 'resources' section of EVOLVE, which may be used to ensure you have covered all the organisational needs for the visit. You will also need to consider communication with other members of staff who are attending the visit and what information you should have to hand during the visit.

Communication with other staff on the visit

Depending on the nature of the visit, you may simply relay important information and organisational details to staff an hour prior to the visit, ensuring that they have read and understood the risk assessment. However for a more complex visit, it may take the form of a formal meeting several weeks before the visit to discuss a plan including supervision levels for different activities including 'down time', defining roles, handovers where appropriate and the sharing of information, for example medical and additional needs details. You may ask staff to read and sign the overall plan including the risk assessment document.

Communicating with the 'at home' emergency contact

An appropriate 'at home' emergency contact must be identified who will usually be a senior member of staff who is not staffing the visit and is contactable 24hrs for the duration of the visit. The 'at home' emergency contact must have the authority to make decisions in emergency situations on behalf of the establishment.

It is essential that the 'at home' emergency contact has details of the visit, including location, transport and WHO is on the visit. This is particularly pertinent to regular routine visits (e.g. sports fixtures) where participants may not turn up on the day, staff may change due to sickness or a venue change because of the weather. In this instance the Visit Leader must either update the details on EVOLVE prior to leaving, or leave the written updated details with the 'at home' emergency contact.

There may also be a system of 'checking in' before, during and after a visit with the 'at home' emergency contact along with a plan of action if the checking in doesn't happen on a particular occasion. This may involve a quick phone call or sending AND receiving of a text message to say that everything is going well. This is very important in situations where staff may be operating alone (e.g. DofE expeditions) or where visits are more complex in nature.

To be taken on the visit:

- Young people AND staff/volunteer medical, dietary, emergency contact information and swimming ability details (if appropriate). Information must be current at the time of the visit (can be retrieved via SIMS/EVOLVE link). For UK based visits a summary of information sheet is sufficient, however some countries require individual signed parental consent if seeking medical attention.

Seek advice before travelling from your tour operator or appropriate consulate.

- Risk management form(s)
- Details of Plan 'B'
- Emergency action procedures card including emergency contact details (Appendix 1)
- Accident form or other method of recording details e.g. phone
- First aid kit (if appropriate)
- A fully charged mobile phone

For more complex visits, e.g. visits abroad other documents and information may be required to be at hand e.g. passports and EHIC cards, booking forms, hotel and tour operator details, insurance details etc. Further details can be found by going to www.oeapng.info/ (section 7r – Overseas visits)

Record keeping

If the visit has been planned and approved using EVOLVE, establishments do not need to keep paper copies of planning forms. Parental permission slips may be destroyed after 3 months if no incident has occurred.

If there has been an accident/incident on a visit, establishments must ensure that the LA is notified according to their procedures and that a copy of the EVOLVE visit form, along with the completed incident form and permission slips are sent to the appropriate person.

The LA will keep accident/incident records until the young person reaches the age of 21 (or for 3 years in the case of an adult). Establishments therefore **do not** need to retain records of accidents/ incidents reported to the LA, unless they wish to do so for their own purposes.

Monitoring

Internal monitoring by the Head/EVC

The Head/EVC must monitor Visit Leaders from time to time to ensure compliance with this policy. This should include scrutiny of standards of visit planning and organisation as part of the visit approval process and occasional observation of visit leadership.

Following any observation of visit leadership it is good practice to provide the VL with verbal and written feedback and recommendations for further training if necessary. A copy of the observation report should be given to the VL and another copy kept on file by the establishment, or uploaded onto EVOLVE.

Monitoring by the LA

The LA will monitor schools on a 5 year cycle to ensure compliance with this policy. The LA will contact EVCs to notify them of an upcoming monitoring visit and written and verbal feedback will be given to the EVC within 2 weeks of the visit.

Evaluation and review

Feedback from monitoring will be used to review procedures in order to ensure that they meet the standards expected for visit organisation and leadership and to identify further training needs.

As part of good practice and review, establishments are encouraged to evaluate each visit (or series of visits). On EVOLVE, once a visit has taken place, it will move to the Visit Leader's 'evaluate' tab where staff are asked to comment on the success of the visit according to their intended outcomes. This need only take a minute or two but is particularly important to record any learning points to ensure the success and safety of future visits.

Managing an incident, accident or emergency

If you are the Visit Leader managing an incident that occurs whilst on a visit, you must follow the procedures set out in the Emergency action procedures (Appendix 1). Your 'at home' emergency contact should be notified and will help to manage the incident.

The 'at home' emergency contact should refer to the Incident management flowchart (Appendix 2) and record all information known to date about the incident on the 'At home' emergency contact form (Appendix 3). Any immediate actions or requests for assistance should be discussed with the Visit Leader (or person informing them about the incident).

It is particularly important to keep a log of all calls, decisions made and actions taken. An Incident log sheet can be found in Appendix 4 for this purpose.


The 'at home' emergency contact should then refer to their 'Schools Critical Incident Plan', if there is one and assess whether the incident can be managed internally or whether additional assistance is required from the local authority in establishing an Emergency Response Team.

Following the incident, any relevant accident/incident forms should be completed and forwarded to the Health and Safety Officer. The visit/incident should be evaluated on EVOLVE and staff should be informed of any changes to procedures including risk management.

Section D

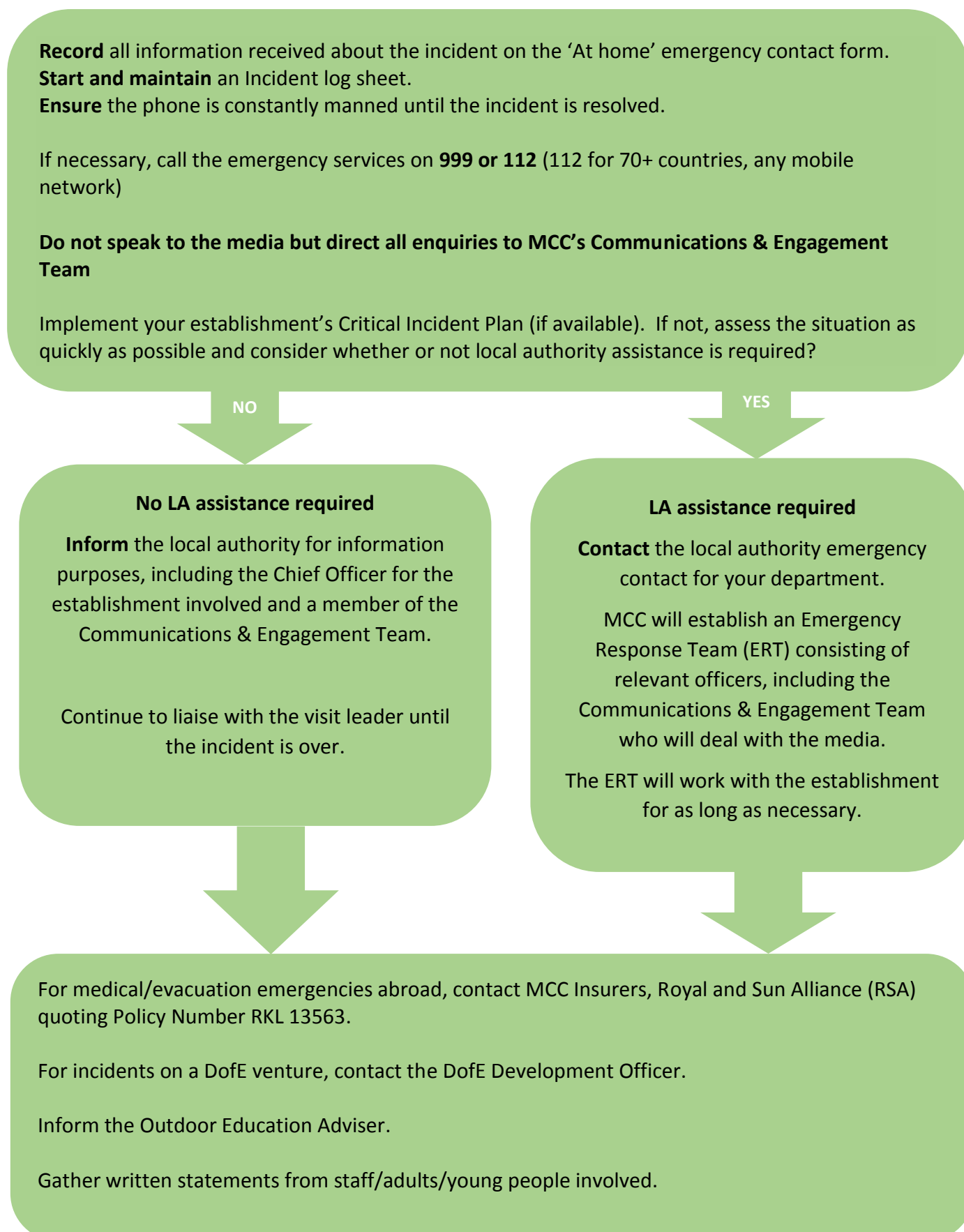
Planning forms

Forms to help with the planning process are located in the 'resources' section of EVOLVE. These include risk management forms, a planning checklist, parental consent forms, a provider statement, participant summary form and an overseas expedition form.

		EMERGENCY ACTION PROCEDURES FOR VISIT LEADERS		June 2018
<p>FIRST RESPONSE</p> <p>1.Ensure that all young people and staff are safe from further danger and are cared for.</p> <p>2.Ensure that all necessary steps are taken to provide medical care and rescue of all who are injured or missing.</p> <p>3.In a medical emergency abroad, you must call the insurers, RSA, who will give advice and assistance.</p> <p>NEXT STEPS</p> <p>1.Contact your ‘at home’ emergency contact as soon as possible, giving full details of what has happened, to whom, where, when, any witness details and what has happened since. Give them a telephone number where you can be contacted.</p> <p>2.If you are unable to contact your ‘at home’ emergency contact, call Children and Young People emergency contacts (see over).</p> <p>3.If abroad, notify the foreign office consular assistance.</p> <p>4.If child abuse is suspected, contact your safeguarding lead or the police (if in immediate danger).</p>		<p>5.In the event of a fatality, notify the police.</p> <p>6.Retain all evidence in an unaltered condition.</p> <p>WARNINGS AND ADVICE</p> <p>1.Brief all staff and young people so that they stay calm and understand what to do to stay safe.</p> <p>2.As soon as possible, make a written record of all that happens – stick to the facts.</p> <p>3.DO NOT SPEAK TO THE MEDIA other than to refer them to the Communications Team (see over).</p> <p>4.Do not allow young people or staff to phone home or go online until contact has been made with the relevant professionals.</p> <p>5.Never admit liability of any sort.</p> <p>6.Do not allow anyone to see young people or staff without an independent witness present.</p> <p>7.No one, unless in a relevant official capacity has the right to see anyone who does not wish to see them. If someone tries to force confrontation, do not respond and call the police.</p> <p>8.Be as compassionate as possible with everyone involved.</p>		

				EMERGENCY CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS			
EMERGENCY SERVICES: 999 OR 112							
<i>(112 for 70+ countries abroad, any mobile network)</i>							
MCC General (office hours)	01633 644644	Emergency Planning Team			01633 644092/91		
MCC Emergency Planning Duty Officer (out of hours)	0300 123 1055	Outdoor Education Adviser			01600 750221/ 07966 158868		
Communications & Engagement Team	01633 644573/ 644402/644364	Health & Safety Adviser			01633 644196/ 07770 474977		
Children and Young People Emergency contacts	01633 644585/49 07826 894055/ 07766 504389	Insurance Manager			01633 644318/ 07767 425297		
		DofE Development Officer			07779 980392		
MCC Insurers - RSA (24hr) (Policy No. RKL 13563)	+44 (0)208 763 3155	Other: DofE Head Office			01753 727400		
PTU vehicle breakdown (24hr)	01633 644777/ 07789 945455	Foreign Office Consular Assistance			+44 (0)207 008 1500		
Establishment Contacts:				Local hospitals (A&E and 24hr):			
Your phone number		Newport (Royal Gwent)			01633 234234		
		Cardiff (Uni Hospital Wales)			029 20747747		
‘At home’ emergency contact number(s)		Swansea (Morrison)			01792 702222		
		Merthyr Tydfil (Prince Charles)			01685 721721		
Head / Manager / EVC contact number		Abergavenny (Nevill Hall)			01873 732732		
		Llantrisant (Royal Glamorgan)			01443 443443		

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT FLOWCHART



'AT HOME' EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM

The 'at home' emergency contact (receiving information relating to an emergency incident involving an educational visit) should use this form as a prompt to ask for and record as much information as possible:-

Date of Call:

Time of Call:

Name of Caller:

Contact Tel. No:

School / Establishment they are travelling with:

What is their role within the Group (Visit Leader / Assistant Leader / Helper / Participant)?

What is their current location?

Description of what has happened. *Try to ascertain the nature of the emergency, where and when it occurred and whether emergency services are on scene?*

Are there any casualties?

Any immediate assistance required?

Who else has / needs to be informed?

What action is now needed?

INCIDENT LOG SHEET

Incident:.....

Date:

Page No:

Time 24 Hr.	Message From	Message To	Contact Number	Message / Action / Rationale

Policy Version Control	
Title	Educational Visits Policy
Owner	MCC, Gwent Outdoor Education Service
Approved by	DMT, Health and Safety Forum, JAG
Date	June 2018
Version No.	1
Review date	June 2021
Status	Approved
Consultation	MCC Health & Safety, CYP, Safeguarding, Transport, Emergency Planning, Insurance, Outdoor Education, OEAP, JAG, Working party consisting of schools representatives, DofE Officer