

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES

Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice

Date created or revised: 0626 (interim)

Date of next review: 0627

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PREFACE

1.1 THE VALUE OF OUTDOOR LEARNING

Outdoor Learning, visits and off-site activities at SES enhance the education and development of young people within our care. Staff routinely organise off-site activities to fulfil curriculum and examination requirements or to provide young people with a richer range of educational, social and leisure opportunities and resources. This document is designed to support staff by ensuring that such programmes continue to be safe and well managed.

1.2 RATIONALE

This document defines the arrangements that organisers of all educational, social and leisure visits have to take into account. It includes information on:

- Legal responsibilities (Health and Safety at Work Act, Common Law, Education Act Equal Opportunities Act, Disability Discrimination Act, Minibus Regulations, Adventurous Activities Centres Act, etc.
- The requirements of SES placed on its employees in order that it can meet its responsibilities to the Health and Safety of its employees and clients.
- Guidance to ensure best practice in managing off-site activities.

Nothing in this document should be interpreted as overriding any legal responsibilities. Where a conflict appears to arise between the advice given and statute or common law then the latter will apply. In such cases, or where any other discrepancy arises, the advice of The Directors of SES should be sought at the earliest opportunity.

1.3 REVIEW

This document will be fully evaluated and reviewed within two years of its current date. The Beach Induction is updated annually, therefore an interim update will be issued prior to the full evaluation and review.

INTRODUCTION

2.1 REFERENCE POINTS

Readers should use this document in conjunction with the following publications and websites:

- DfE Health and Safety: Responsibilities and duties for schools (2022)
- Health and Safety Executive: School trips and Outdoor Learning Activities: Tackling the health and safety myths (2011)
- Health and Safety Executive website – Frequently asked questions – education – school trips
- RoSPA website – Water Safety Advice and Information
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel website – national guidance

These documents and websites contain contacts, documents and bibliographies of other publications that you may find useful.

2.1.1 Terminology

For ease of reference the following terms are used in a broad context, except where specifically defined in the text.

Young Persons: Children and young people placed with SES, to whom SES have a duty of care.

Staff: Includes all adults employed by SES in whatever capacity.

Team Leader: Where reference is made to “approval by the DCM”, this will also apply to Team Leaders who have been given the relevant training needed to sign off activities at the same level.

Visit Leader: The employee with the overall responsibility for the planning and leadership of the visit.

Visits Co-ordinator: The appointed person in each establishment who is involved in the planning and management of educational, social and leisure visits, including adventure activities led by staff.

Directors: Directors of SES

2.2 CONTRACTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

This guidance is designed to make trips and activities safe. Nothing within this document should be construed so as to conflict with the Terms and Conditions of Employment of any of SES employees.

It is important that there is clarity about who is organising an event. It would be unacceptable if an employee implies, even by omission, that any activity is sanctioned by SES, when in fact it is a personal/private arrangement. Employees organising such events act outside of their contract of employment and consequently are not covered in any way under SES’s liability arrangements.

2.3 IN WHAT WAYS DOES THIS DOCUMENT APPLY?

This document applies to any occasion when young people are participating in activities whilst legally in the care of the establishment. By this definition it is relevant to:

- Any on-site curriculum based activity;
- Any off-site curriculum based activity;
- Any off-site extra-curricular activities organised by SES
- Any other situation involving off-site adventurous activities for which SES has a legal duty of care to young people;
- Visits abroad.

Such activities will include:

- Local visit to a field study centre, library, church, village hall, other school, youth club, park or playing field, etc.
- Visits to a sports centre, swimming pool, theatre, cinema, museum, study centres, work placement, sports fixtures, etc.
- Any activity of a residential nature regardless of the nature of the accommodation (field study centre, hostel, boating, caravanning, camping, etc.)

2.4 THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.4.1 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers also have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes participants in off-site visits. The Act places overall responsibility for health and safety with the Employer.

However, employees have a legal duty to:

- Take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do or don't do
- Co-operate with the employer to ensure that Health and Safety requirements are complied with
- Report to their employer, or Health and Safety Adviser, any matter in which safety is compromised and any shortcomings in Health and Safety systems

2.4.2 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

This requires employers to:

- Make an assessment of the risks of activities;
- Introduce measures to control those risks;
- Tell their employees about these measures.

2.4.3 Delegation

SES as the employer is legally required to do risk assessments. In the case of visits it delegates this task to the Visit Leader supported and advised by the Visits Co-ordinator (VC). It is this person who has the subject/activity expertise, who defines the learning objectives, designs the activity to meet these objectives, and has the knowledge of the group involved and the resources available in terms of supporting staff, transport and facilities. By assessing and recording the risks the Visit Leader is exercising her/his duty of care for the visit by identifying and addressing potential risks.

Risk assessments should take into account the needs of staff. SES recognises its duty of care under the Health & Safety at Work Act towards its employees and voluntary helpers, as much as to the young people in its care. SES will provide all possible support, information, guidance and training to those staff concerned. It will develop, maintain and share a

knowledge base so that all staff involved in visits and activities can feel confident in their ability to manage risks.

The Principal has oversight of Health and Safety across the establishment. The Principal and Visits Co-ordinator (VC) should involve, and keep informed, their Health & Safety Committee in monitoring the relevant aspects of educational visits as a means of providing additional support to staff.

Regardless of the status of the visit the VC will remain the lead person for “clearing” all visits. The only exception is for external provider visits where the requirements of the external provider approval process are not fully met; these can only be authorised by the Principal, or in their absence, the Registered Manager.

The VC is pivotal in ensuring that the Visit Leader has the necessary competencies to organise the trip and that the Visit Leader has access to all available support.

2.4.4 The Education Act 2002 section 175 (Child Protection)

The duty of SES in respect of child protection extends to taking young people on off-site visits; therefore procedures as outlined within specific child protection documentation apply. On residential visits there will be a named person for child protection who in the event of a child protection issue, will liaise at the first opportunity with the designated person at each establishment.

2.4.5 Common Law – “In loco parentis”

Staff have a legal duty of care, which is contained in the Common Law principle of “in loco parentis”. This places on the Visit Leader the responsibility to do all that is reasonable to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of young people in their care.

2.4.6 Individual Responsibilities

Because the ‘duty of care’ means avoiding actions or omissions where injury to others may be a ‘reasonably foreseeable’ consequence, organisers of visits, should they fail in their duty, risk legal action being taken against them. The principle of vicarious liability provides that the person for whom the act was committed should generally be liable. Usually SES will be the “organiser” held responsible. It is for this vital reason that all off-site activities must be properly approved. Failure to do so exposes the individual organiser of the visit to the full liability of a negligence claim. Where court action reveals that any member of staff neglected to take into account the advice of the company, action will be taken under the Company’s Disciplinary Procedures.

Specific individual functions and responsibilities of individuals are set out in more detail in the guidance in Section 3.4.

3 THE ORGANISATION OF EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND LEISURE VISITS

This section highlights the key considerations in planning both on and off-site visits. Subsequent sections amplify this guidance.

3.1 APPROVAL FOR VISITS

3.1.1 Day to Day Activities/Visits

These are everyday activities, which may or may not be supervised. Where approved risk assessments are in place approval rests at DCM level. There is no requirement for a visits form to be completed. Every young person has an Activities Risk Assessment Overview in place to ensure day-to-day activities are considered at an individualised level. (See section 3.7)

Activities are classified as 'Day to Day' activities under two main areas:

- a Global low key activities such as a visit to the local village or town which are classified and approved as day to day for all children. The risk assessments for these are generic to all children and can be found on the network within the general “**Visits/Risk Assessment**” area of the network.
- b Specific activities that would normally be Category A that are reclassified for a specific child under their individual risk assessment due to independent progress and competence as a ‘**child specific day to day activity**’. This would be completed on a Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment, found on the network.

An example could be a young person who has been regularly and successfully taking part in swimming at a local pool over a significant period of time. Swimming would normally be Category A but is reclassified as Day to Day based on that particular individual's proven, safe track record. Additionally, young people developing their range of independence skills and opportunities may have child specific risk assessments to support these, for example, independent visits to towns or local facilities. The risk assessments for ‘**Child Specific Day to Day activities**’ rest in the child's individual folder on the network and **not** within the general Visits/Risk Assessment area.

3.1.2 Category 'A' Visits/Activities

Category 'A' visits or activities are those that present no special risks and can be safely supervised by a Visit Leader who has been judged competent to lead visits generally. (See Section 3.4.3). These will require a visit form completing on Clearcare every time the activity occurs, including repeat Category A visits.

Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment

Young people may require a Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment for particular Category A visits or activities due to medical issues (see section 3.11.8), or a significant perceived lack of competence or skills deficit. This is different to a 'Child Specific Day to Day', which is created due to growing independent skills.

Decisions on when a Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment may be required rests with the Case Coordinator, Personal Tutor and Learning Mentor. A visits form will be required every time, alongside the standard Category A Risk Assessment.

NB Child Specific Activities Risk Assessments are located in the child's individual folder on the network and **not** within the general Visits/Risk Assessment area.

3.1.3 Category 'B' Adventure Activities and Visits to more Hazardous Environments

Category 'B' visits or activities are those for which safe supervision requires that the Visit Leader should normally have undertaken a recognised course of training, or have relevant experience. Activities in Category 'B' also include all those within the activities scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. (See Section 5.1).

N.B. All residential visits are Category 'B' and require a Field File if they are to be more than 2 consecutive nights away or are over an approximate 60 minute driving distance from the home. (See Section 4)

3.1.4 External Providers of Activities

External providers are often used for activities that cannot be facilitated by SES staff such as horse riding, archery and mountain biking. These activities can fall within category 'A' or 'B' but an external provider is required as they have the necessary staff competencies and equipment to provide such activities. To use an external provider, the Visit Leader must ensure the provider completes the External Provider Approval Form and provides valid public liability insurance (minimum £5 million; any less must be approved by the Principal using the External Provider Level of Public Liability Insurance Consideration form to make an informed decision based on the level of risk). It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to forward the completed form (two weeks prior to the activity taking place) to the VC for final approval before the activity can go ahead. If the VC is unavailable, approval can be given by the RM or Principal.

The VC will support and guide Visit Leaders in deciding when an activity needs an External Provider Form completing. As a guide, if the providers staff are running the activity, then a provider form normally needs completing, whereas if SES adults remain in charge of the young people during an activity, it will fall within an SES internal risk assessment activity.

There is scope for some External Providers to offer activities such as bush craft that could, on occasions take place on the SES grounds. Prior to such

activities taking place, it must be clearly defined using the External Provider Checks for Activities Being Delivered on SES Grounds form where responsibilities lay for specific aspects of the activity such as tools, first aid etc. It is the responsibility of the SES employee who commissions the use of the external provider to ensure the form is completed.

(See also SES Recruitment and Selection Policy and Practice document)

3.1.5 Approval Matrix for Visits

Approval Matrix for Visits

Type of activity	Category	Visit Form	Head of Educ or DCM / TL	VC	Principal	SES Directors
Routine day-to-day activities that typically happen on a regular basis as part of normal everyday family life in a children's home, e.g. visit to a local town, local park, etc. Child Specific day-to-day.	Day-To-Day	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Off-site curricular , non-residential local visits: field studies to non-hazardous locations, swimming pools, sports centres, museums, history studies. Extra curricular (non-residential or non-adventurous) : theatre visits, non-local journeys. Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment	A	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Category A repeat Trips/Activities	A	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
Any residential visits.	B	YES	N/A	YES	YES	NO
Any adventurous activities whether residential or not, and visits to more hazardous environments (See Section 5.1 for a list of these activities)	B	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Any visits abroad.	B	YES	N/A	YES	YES	YES

3.1.6 Approval from the Principal

The Principal must ensure that their approval for all category B residential visits and activities is given in compliance with the Principal's Checklist for Approval of Visits and Activities (see Section 4). In rare circumstances where the Principal is unavailable for an extended period of two weeks or more (e.g. annual leave, sickness), the Registered Manager can be delegated authority to approve category B visits.

3.2 PLANNING VISITS AND ACTIVITIES

3.2.1 Recording

Various recording forms and checklists are available to support staff in the arrangement of visits and activities. Recording is necessary for several reasons:

- Ensuring that the significant Health & Safety issues have been addressed;
- Formalising approvals;
- Keeping track of the planning process;
- Ensuring nothing significant is overlooked;
- Assisting communication between managers/staff/participants/parents;
- Supporting establishment safety auditing;
- Providing evidence of learning;
- Providing evidence of good practice (especially if things go wrong).

3.2.2 Planning

Planning Checklists exist to help the Visits Coordinator (VC) and the Visit Leader to ensure:

- the maximum educational benefit to young people;
- the safety of young people and staff;
- effective organisation and administration.

Before Visit Leaders, supported by the Visits Co-ordinator, begin to make arrangements for a visit or activity (residential only), they should refer to the relevant Planning Checklist (Section 4) and take the following steps:

- Obtain approval from the VC
- For repeat trips approval may be sought from the DCM
- For trips abroad, initial approval in principle from SES Directors is required via the Principal, with the final field file approved by the Principal.
- Select the group and its supervisors.

The learning objectives of all visits and journeys must be clearly defined. The nature of the activities undertaken must be suited to the ages, abilities and aptitudes of all the young people taking part in them. For certain types of activities, taking account of young people's prior experience is essential; e.g., expedition work, adventurous activities. (See Section 5)

Some visits and journeys organised may fall within the scope of the Package Travel Regulations 2018 if they include at least two of the following:

- Transport
- Accommodation
- Other tourist services (e.g. guides)

These are essentially package holidays sold or offered for sale in the UK, (in which case see Section 5.8).

In using planning checklists Visit Leaders will need to be thoroughly conversant with all advice and information offered in this document and its appendices.

3.3 PROCEDURES AND GENERAL GUIDANCE

This document sets out the guidance that underpins the management of Health and Safety of Young People on all visits and outdoor activities away from each establishment. It incorporates the advice contained in national guidance referred to in section 2.1 above and **should be used in conjunction with those reference points**. The following should therefore be undertaken:

- Provide written guidelines and training where necessary for staff, including advice and training on risk assessment.
- Assess and provide approval for educational visits and activities that involve adventure activities, overnight stays in the UK, foreign visits and fieldwork in hazardous areas, where these meet the companies requirements.
- Provide emergency telephone contact for the duration of the visit where necessary.
- Provide training to those employees who are delegated health and safety tasks and ensure they are competent to carry them out.
- Provide third party and employer liability insurance cover.
- Monitor arrangements for visits and activities to ensure that standards, as set out in this guidance, are observed. This includes visiting sites and groups in the field.
- Provide access to named staff for advice and further guidance.

SES has attempted to extend and develop parts of the earlier advice to ensure an even greater degree of safety for young persons. Where there is no specific guidance on a particular matter within this document, staff should refer to the Visits Co-ordinator and/or Principal.

3.4 KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VISITS

3.4.1 The Principal

The Principal is required to have an overview of all aspects of visits and activities. In practice many of these responsibilities are delegated, however this does not absolve the Principal of his/her respective responsibilities.

The Principal should ensure:

- That visits have specific and stated objectives;
- that all planning complies with regulations and guidelines, including the SES Health and Safety Policy and Practice document;
- that the Visit Leader provides a written evaluation (where required) for visits or activities once they have taken place;

- that they assess proposals for certain types of visit along with the Visits Co-ordinator (VC) in accordance with their responsibilities as outlined in the guidance.
- Training needs have been appropriately assessed, and the needs of the staff and young persons have been considered.
- Parents/placing authorities have signed the appropriate consent forms.
- Risk assessments have been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Visit Leaders are experienced in supervising the nature of the individuals and groups going on visits and will organise them effectively.
- Visit leaders have sufficient experience in relation to the nature and/or geography of the visit.
- Visit Leaders are supported by the VC and given sufficient time to organise properly.
- Non-SES Employees, volunteers are appropriate people to supervise children.
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all young persons and steps taken to ensure that they comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Adequate first aid provision is available within the establishment to serve the needs of visits and residential trips.
- Proposed modes of travel are appropriate and vehicle drivers are appropriately qualified.
- Structures and systems are in place to check vehicles for roadworthiness and that they have all the required documents, e.g. MOT, insurance cover, and road fund licence.
- All travel times, both out and back, are known including pick-up and drop-off points.
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- That there are procedures in place to ensure that the Visit Leader, group supervisors, Duty DCM and VC have access to all relevant documentation. This extends from this document through to visit specific documentation such as visit forms, risk assessments and, where applicable, field files.
- That there is a contingency plan for any delays, including a late return home.
- That sufficient rest periods are allowed for Visit Leaders on visits, especially residential.
- That staff/drivers have not been involved in a long shift or extended period at work prior to the journey.
- Incidents are reported as required.
- That details of any incident involving personal injury to a young person, and the accompanying risk assessments, are kept until four years after the person concerned has left SES.
- That details of any significant damage caused to third party property by a member of the party are kept for six years after the incident.
- That records of all educational visits and activities undertaken by the establishment are retained for a period of ten years from the date of the visit.

3.4.2 The Visits Co-ordinator (VC)

An SES Visits Coordinator supports the Principal to ensure SES fulfils its health and safety obligations for visits.

- The VC will be involved in the planning and management of visits and activities, including adventure activities, led by SES staff.
- The VC will support the Principal by ensuring that the company guidelines for leading activities are followed.
- The company will provide and purchase the necessary support and ongoing training for the Visits Co-ordinator
- The VC will be trained in line with the National Training Programme developed by the Outdoor Education Advisors' Panel and DfE.

General Functions of the VC

The VC will make certain the relevant risk assessments have been completed in accordance with company guidance and requirements and the findings are integrated into the planning of the activities. These risk assessments are required to be written down. These should be shared with all members of the group, including the young people, in a form of language that can be understood. The VC should also in particular:

- Appoint suitable people to be leaders/accompanying staff and volunteer helpers in accordance with guidelines and good practice.
- Assess the competence of leaders, accompanying staff and volunteer helpers. This could include verification of prior experience, awarding body certification/accreditation.
- Where appropriate, to organise and facilitate the training of leaders, accompanying staff and volunteer helpers. This will include training such as first aid, hazard awareness, national governing body leadership awards, etc.
- Ensure SES led activities meet the required standard.
- Provide support to the Visit Leader in the completion of risk assessments.
- Organise thorough induction of leaders, accompanying staff and volunteer helpers.
- Ensure there is emergency planning including the emergency contact for each visit.
- Record keeping for individual visits including accident and 'near miss' reporting in accordance with company guidance.
- Review systems and on occasions, monitor practice.
- Oversee the approval of external providers and work placement providers.
- Liaise with the Principal.
- Maintain the SES Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice document in an up to date state.

3.4.3 The Visit Leader

N.B. SES uses the term "Visit Leader" in place of the title "Group Leader"

One member of staff, the Visit Leader, should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. The Visit Leader should:

- Be approved by the VC.
- Follow SES regulations, guidelines and policies.
- Have determined and justified the objectives of the visit.
- Appoint a deputy.
- Have undertaken a prior visit/inspection visit, where appropriate, in order to carry out a local risk assessment.
- Clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned.
- Be able to control and lead young persons of the relevant age range.
- The Visit Leader will also need to be aware of, and to act upon, any responsibilities associated with the rights of landowners, public agencies, the general public, and for the preservation of the environment (e.g., wildlife).
- When there is a joint group from two or more establishments, an overall Visit Leader should be nominated, whose responsibility it will be to ensure that the guidance in this document is complied with. However, the responsibility for the welfare of individual young people from each establishment rests with their own approved Visit Leader.
- Be aware of Child Protection issues and issued with up to date guidance.
- Ensure adequate first aid provision will be available at all times.
- Undertake and complete, with support from the VC, the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and where applicable, parents/carers.
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment for all elements of the visit.
- Review regularly undertaken visits/activities with the VC and advise the head of their establishment where adjustments may be necessary.
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves including the learning outcomes, and that these are shared appropriately with the young persons.
- Have enough information on the young persons proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed.
- Ensure that young persons are not exposed to activities, which are outside their capabilities. Where appropriate, a programme of prior experience should be planned to prepare young persons; e.g., Duke of Edinburgh's Award or skiing.
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors to young persons is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- Use on-going risk assessment procedures, consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the young persons is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality.
- Ensure that group supervisors and the establishment's contact have a copy of the emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the group's staff and other supervisors have the details of young persons' individual risk assessments, care plans and other needs including medical.

- Report all incidents, accidents and near misses formally for incidents that result in serious injury or death.
- Ensure that a comprehensive evaluation is completed after each relevant visit where required.

3.4.4 Staff

At all times of day and night staff on SES-led visits act as employees of SES.

Staff must do all that is reasonable to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They should:

- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and help with control and discipline.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity and notifying the Visit Leader if they think the risk to the health or safety of the young persons in their charge is unacceptable.

3.4.5 Adult Volunteers

Adult Volunteers on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. This is the responsibility of the VC and the Visit Leader.

Volunteers acting as supervisors must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone on the group.
- Not be left in sole charge of children or have unsupervised access to young persons except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment and where appropriate DBS checks have been undertaken.
- Adult Volunteers on residential visits must be DBS checked.
- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline.
- Speak to the Visit Leader or other adult supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of young persons at any time during the visit.

3.4.6 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers and Placement Authorities should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The generality of Category A visits are covered within the admission process.

For Category B non-residential OAA activities and visits, permission is sought on a termly basis. This will outline the nature of the activities but will not always be specific about venues, times and dates.

For Category 'B' residential visits the Visit Leader should ensure that parents/carers and/or Placing Authorities are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions if required. Consent must be

given from an informed basis - this especially applies to organisational arrangements in 'Down-Time' and how this is to be supervised. For each residential, off-site extended visit (Category B) a specific letter is sent to parents with a conformational reply slip. For all residentials abroad a Head of Service letter giving consent should be obtained from the Placing Authority.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents/carers and/or Placing Authorities for whom English is a second language or have difficulty with written communications. The Visit Leader should also tell parents/carers and/or Placing Authorities how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example:

- Reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.
Give the Visit Leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit (usually by means of the consent form).

3.4.7 Young persons

Under Health and Safety legislation, young persons also have a responsibility to maintain their own and other's health, safety and welfare. The level of responsibility that the Visit Leader can expect will vary according to the ability and maturity of the young people involved. Safety arrangements, procedures and risk assessments should be shared with the young people in an appropriate way so that they can assume some basic responsibility for their own safety.

Section 4 contains samples of "Preparing Young People Checklist" and "Questionnaire for Young People going on a Visit".

Section 3.11 contains guidance for preparing groups for visits

3.5 STAFF TRAINING

It is important that there are strong links between policy and practice described in this document and staff training. Key training in relation to activities and visits is built into all staff induction and foundation training. It is structured as follows:

Induction:

Risk Assessment	The Basics
Visits/Activities	Doc Pgs 8 to 37

Foundation:

Cat B Visits
Beach Induction

General Staff top up training will be given on an annual basis and as issues arise through evaluation or new initiatives. Individual training is delivered through

ongoing individual professional development within bespoke Professional Development Plans.

In addition to training the following protocols should be followed in relation to when and how new colleagues first lead and take responsibility for trips out:

- Successful visits accompanying lead colleagues
- Clearly planned first lead visit - planned and evaluated alongside VC.
- Subsequent 2nd planned visit alongside an experienced adult who has been lead on activities.
- Cat B visits should be led by those colleagues that have previously attended a Cat B visit and/or have the relevant experience to lead such an activity or visit.

A copy of the completed Adult Visit Logs should be kept on the staff members PD file once signed by the Visits Coordinator. It is then the adult's responsibility to maintain and update their Visits Log.

3.6 SES HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

For general guidance on health and safety matters Visit Leaders must apply the procedures set out in the Health and Safety Policy and Practice document. Visit Leaders should view all staff, particularly health and safety sub-committee members as a resource on which to draw during their planning.

3.7 RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK REDUCTION

SES has a risk quantification table and a risk assessment format that provide a consistent structure within which to conduct and record risk assessments. Section 4 contains sample risk assessments and the risk quantification table.

Every young person at each establishment has an Activities Risk Assessment Overview to gauge areas of risk for an individual child in a given activity. These are located on the Network and are reviewed by the 5th of every month. The Activity Risk Assessment Overview gives a detailed account of how to manage risks for individuals; the level of risk for each activity is assessed using the risk quantification table.

If an activity within the overview is considered high risk, triggered by a numerical score of 10 and above using the SES Risk Quantification Table, it will need to be incorporated on the young person's Risk Assessment Management Plan. Where a young person is assessed as able to undertake an activity independently, a child specific day to day risk assessment may be required. Staff must indicate on the overview whether each activity requires a Child Specific or the Activity risk assessment, or in some cases both. For example, a young person may require a Child Specific Activities Risk Assessment due to their medical needs, in conjunction with the Activity risk assessment (see Risk Assessment Policy for further guidance).

The Activity Risk Assessment Overview should always be read in conjunction with the young persons General Risk Assessment Overview, Risk Assessment Management Plan and Child Specific Medical Risk Assessment; (See also Positive Management of Behaviour Document, and Risk Assessment Policy).

Section 4 contains the template for the Activities Risk Assessment Overview.

3.7.1 Establishment Approved Risk Assessments

Approved risk assessments can be found under the heading of Risk Assessment and Visits in the staff area on the Network. An activity or visits risk assessment is approved by the VC and/or Principal prior to the activity or visit taking place. Where staff need to note additional information there is space on the relevant visits form. Alternatively there might be a need to totally review particular approved risk assessments in the light of events or changes over time. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to judge whether a particular risk assessment holds good before 'quoting' it on the visits form. If in doubt staff should consult the VC for an opinion as to whether a review is necessary.

Automatically each time a relevant risk assessment is considered for use a critical review of its content, appropriateness and accuracy should take place. This action will result in either the risk assessment being used as it stands or a written update being submitted to the VC for re-approval.

In addition to this process we ensure that every Risk Assessment is reviewed by the VC within a three year period of its original creation date.

There is a resource folder on the network containing archive copies of previously approved risk assessments that can be copied and modified before being resubmitted to the VC or Principal for re-approval.

3.7.2 External Provider Risk Assessments

Risk assessments for activities licensable under the Adventure Activity Licensing Act (AALA) are the responsibility of the licensed provider. **Staff should not request copies of these or imply approval of them in any other way.** SES does, however, encourage providers running AALA licensable activities to display their risk assessments on their websites or makes them available for viewing. Visit Leaders must prepare assessments for other elements of the visit, for example:

- Down time supervision
- Sleeping Accommodation
- Eating Arrangements
- Fire Safety
- Night Security
- Vehicle Safety etc.

3.7.3 General Considerations About Risk Assessment

- Risk assessments should be completed well before the date of the visit (2 weeks for first time Category A and B visits) and should be approved by the VC.
- Where external providers are involved, their own risk assessments will apply for the activities and facilities for which they are responsible. Visit Leaders should ensure they have prepared assessments only for those

elements of the visit for which they are responsible as described in 3.7.2 above.

- Specialised information for some visits may be necessary and the VC should ensure that the person assessing the risks is competent to do so, seeking advice whenever necessary.
- Visit Leaders should consider the particular individual factors involved for our children, since the level of risk represented by a combination of activity and personal factors may be unacceptably high for them.
- Supervising staff must remain alert to potential problems and be prepared to intervene if a situation threatens to get out of control.
- Activities cannot be entirely risk free, but young people must not be placed in situations that expose them to an unacceptable level of physical or psychological risk.

Approval is required before any financial commitment or contract for services is made and, for adventurous activities, at least four working weeks before the departure date. If the provider is not on the SES list of approved providers (available on the Network), the External Provider Approval Form must be completed prior to confirming a booking. The VC and/or Principal will use this, together with the appropriate forms and risk assessments and any licence of the provider (e.g. AALA), to determine whether approval will be given.

The VC will have received training on risk assessment and should review the risk assessments before submission approval or submission to the Principal for a second opinion/approval, or if necessary the Directors of SES. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards? (things which may cause harm, injury or damage)
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the Visit Leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- Are all staff / supervisors aware of them and able to carry them out?

The person(s) carrying out the risk assessment should record it in writing and ensure all staff and other adult supervisors on the visit have read the information, and in certain circumstances have their own copy. They should be clear about their role and responsibilities in these matters. This may require a briefing or meeting to establish this degree of clarity.

It is not necessary to duplicate approved Risk Assessments that are already on the network. In this situation the visit form acts as the hard copy record of visit.

From April 2026, all Visits Forms are completed electronically on Clearcare. Visits Forms completed prior to this date are archived and retained for ten years from the date of the visit.

Risk assessment for visits and activities should be considered in four distinct levels:

- Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place;
- Visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group;
- Ongoing risk assessments, which take account of changes; e.g. weather, availability of preferred activity, illness of staff or participants, etc.
- Child Specific risk assessments, which identify special considerations for a child due to independence, medical needs or significant competency concerns.

3.7.4 Generic Activity Risk Assessments

There is a generic risk assessment (see Section 4) that covers the range of activities that are common to all visits, such as:

- Travel
- Medication
- Use of Public Toilets
- Absconding
- Sun Burn
- Inclement Weather
- Hydration
- Unsupervised Time
- Lost Children Procedures
- Behaviour
- Injury / First Aid
- Ill Intentioned Strangers

3.7.5 Visit/Site-Specific Risk Assessment

These will be conducted by visit leaders with the support of the VC for each venue, and amended as necessary for different groups or in the light of events. Although prepared by the visit leader they should all be approved by the VC and/or the Principal.

SES will provide risk assessment training for employees who are delegated the task of risk assessment.

Before booking a visit, the Visit Leader should obtain a verification from external providers that illustrate that they themselves have assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place, including local operating procedures for each programme or activity.

It is highly recommended that wherever possible an exploratory/inspection visit is carried out by the Visit Leader. This will not only inform the whole process and provide the Visit Leader with confidence when taking participants, but will also enable the Visit Leader to be familiar with how to get to the venue.

If it is not possible to visit the site beforehand, the Visit Leader should be satisfied that alternative arrangements are sufficient for an assessment to be made. In such cases, when considering approval of the visit, particular attention should be paid to the detail of the risk assessment process.

3.7.6 Ongoing Risk Assessments/Reassessments

Decisions and judgements may be made as circumstances dictate such as changing weather, tiredness/illness in the group, behaviour issues with other groups at the same venue, etc. These must be carried out by the Visit Leader and other adults while the visit is taking place and should be informed by the generic and visit/site-specific risk assessments.

They can be recorded in the case of a residential visit on the “Itinerary” or “Daily Plan” section of the Field File at an appropriate moment and incorporated into the “Visit Evaluation” (Section 4) after the visit.

Risk Assessments should be kept as a working document to help plan any repeat trips.

Having a pre-assessed ‘Plan B’, (e.g. swapping activities on the itinerary so that the activity can be carried out on a different day), is good practice as it reduces the problems that can arise when you divert from the plan.

Activities that have not been approved through the appropriate process should not be substituted. This is essential in the case of adventure activities (External Providers may ‘swap’ an activity due to internal problems at the centre – if the suggested activity has not been cleared, schools should not automatically accept this alternative. Parents/Carers/Placing Authority will for example, not be aware and may take issue with the activity).

The following list is meant as an aide-memoir for the VC and Visit Leader to consider when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- The location, routes and modes of transport;
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- The ratios of staff and supervisory staff to young persons (see Supervision, Section 3.10);
- Vetting of Adult Volunteers;
- The group members’ age, the range of ages, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- Young persons’ prior experience, knowledge of the activity;
- The special educational or medical needs of young persons;
- The quality and suitability of available equipment;
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- The competence/qualification of instructors;
- Emergency procedures;
- How to cope when a young person becomes unable or unwilling to continue;
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit;

Trips may involve taking the same or new groups of young persons to the same location each year. As some factors will change from year to year, it is important to re-assess the risks each time – even where the Visit Leader stays the same. An evaluation comment must be completed for all first time Category A visits and all Category B visits. For Category A visits and non-residential Category B, these must be evaluated as an edit on the original Clearcare Visits Form. For all Residential Category B visits these must be evaluated using the evaluation form (see section 4) and forwarded to the VC. Day-to-Day visits need not have any specific written evaluation unless there is something of significance that influences future thinking/planning

3.8 FINANCIAL PLANNING

The Visit Leader must ensure that adequate arrangements are made to finance the visit and manage the finances. Educational visits may be paid for by any combination of the following:

- Group Activity Budget
- Individual Activities Budget
- Learning Centre Budget
- 24 hr Learning Budget
- Children's Activity Accounts
- Children's Voluntary contribution from savings or pocket money
- Parents'/carers' voluntary contributions;
- Special fund-raising events;
- Donations or sponsorship subsidy;
- Charitable grants;
- A combination of the above.

A clear accounting procedure must be in place and the Visit Leader must make sure that a final account is drawn up and presented to the VC and/or Principal. Prior to entering into any contractual agreement or making payment to activity/service/accommodation providers, the Visit Leader must obtain all necessary approvals. SES will not be responsible for financial commitments entered into should SES decline to give approval for a visit or activity. For this reason, it is recommended that provisional bookings are made as early as possible and details are forwarded to the VC at the earliest opportunity for approval.

Visit Leaders should comply with normal SES financial procedures (See Financial Procedures Document)

3.8.1 Additional Financial Contributions to Visits or Activities

Placement fees with SES are all inclusive so it is highly unlikely that parents will be asked to contribute to the costs of a visit. Any exceptions to this can only be sanctioned by the Principal.

Even though our client group have a very high level of special needs, as an independent limited company the pursuit of grants or charitable funding may in some circumstances be a sensitive matter. Before pursuing such options visit leaders should have specific approval from the Principal.

Children's activity money may be available to fund certain visits and activities. This will relate to the planned individual programme for each child and decisions will be made on an individual basis. The Registered Manager in liaison with key staff will monitor issues of equal regard and opportunity between individual children.

A contribution from children's own money would only be considered as part of that child's individual programme or exceptional circumstances.

3.9 FIRST AID

First Aid provision should be appropriate to the nature and destination of the visit. Visit Leaders should, with the help of the VC:

- undertake a risk assessment which will identify the level of first aid knowledge required and the equipment to carry;
- identify the location of professional medical help and include this information in the staff and group briefings;
- ensure that adequate levels of first aid provision are maintained throughout the entire visit (both during transportation and at the destination(s)).
- ensure that adults, and where appropriate young persons, have an emergency procedure and know how to contact professional medical help and appropriate emergency services.

3.9.1 Category A visits

For category A visits the following should apply:

Visit Leader or Group Leader/Supervisor

Through company policy all staff should have at least a first aid at work certificate. Some staff in their early stages of employment may not. The adult in charge of a group of young people must have a basic knowledge of first aid, access to a first aid kit and know how they will contact professional medical help, should the need arise at any time on the visit (including the journey). It is best practice that they attend a one day Emergency Aid at Work (or equivalent) every three years as part of their professional development.

3.9.2 Category B visits

For category B visits the following should apply:

Visit Leader on a Day Visit to a more Hazardous Environment

The Visit Leader should have taken the 'Emergency First Aid' training course, lasting 4 hours as a minimum.

Visit Leader on Residential Visits/Adventurous Activities or Visits Abroad

The Visit Leader and accompanying staff should have taken the 'Emergency First Aid' training course, lasting 4 hours as a minimum.

Sole charge, adventurous activities or remote locations

Where staff act as activity leaders and are in sole charge of a group they should be qualified to take that activity, holding the appropriate National Governing Body qualification, and have extensive proven experience.

3.10 SUPERVISION

The factors to be taken into account when considering supervision ratios for visits include:

- the particular activity;
- experience of the group involved;
- the needs of individuals within the group, including those with special education needs;
- environment and conditions in which the visit will take place;
- experience of the staff;
- nature of the venue.
- Each child's individual behaviour risk assessment;
- Each child's individual activity risk assessment;
- Each child's individual medical risk assessment.

The minimum staffing levels for all visits from an SES establishment is one member of staff to three children. However, the above factors may determine that staff levels have to be higher. Contingency plans must be available to cover withdrawal of one or more supervisors through illness or other reasons and to cover unforeseen circumstances.

3.10.1 Group Size Management

- The maximum group size will depend on, environment, age and maturity of young people, level of supervision and qualifications/experience of staff.
- Some visits may require staff from each sex.

The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the young people on a visit or activity at all times.

All supervisors of subgroups must be aware of their responsibilities for the safety of the young people in their care at all times. Each young person must also know which supervisor is responsible for them, or their group at any point in time.

Coach drivers and staff in museums, activity centres and at other destinations are not included in supervisory ratios. The visit leader always holds the 'duty of care' and it cannot be dispensed to another person.

Where adventurous activities or visits to more hazardous environments are involved, it is almost certain that ratios will be above the minimum requirement. (See Section 5).

Staff should be aware that the skills and experience required to manage a group are different and inherently more challenging, particularly with SEMH needs children than when on a one to one ratio.

Thorough planning, preparation of the group and a strong leadership approach are essential to ensuring the group feel safe and are clear about boundaries both in terms of conduct and geography.

3.10.2 Volunteers

SES would use its own employed staff to fulfil the necessary best practice staffing levels. However, there may be occasions that volunteers are included as part of the group over an above the necessary staffing levels and in such circumstances they should be:

- Carefully selected and DBS checked.
- Ideally, well known to the establishment and year group.
- Offer expertise, experience and a contribution that complements the quality of provision already in place.

Anyone who has not had a DBS check should not be left in sole charge of/or given unsupervised access to young persons. Such persons may not be used in a supervisory capacity on any residential visit.

The Visit Leader needs to be clear about procedures for vetting volunteers who wish to be supervisors or drivers, in particular for residential visits. The suitability of potential supervisors should be assessed by the Visit Leader and the VC and/or The Principal at an early stage of the planning process. Where there is any doubt about suitability, further investigations should be made and if any doubt remains the adult should not be allowed to help supervise the visit.

Similar considerations should be made for adults who have no supervisory role but who wish to take part in the visit; such persons may fall outside of some insurance policies.

For the protection of both adults and young persons, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone with a young person, unless part of an agreed one to one working arrangement. If visit leaders or other staff are unsure about this they should ask for confirmation from the VC and/or Principal prior to the trip.

3.10.3 Supervisors' Responsibilities

All adult supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. This should be put in writing. In particular, all staff or volunteers should be aware of any young persons who may require closer supervision, and the specific reasons why. SES staff retain responsibility for the group at all times.

3.10.4 Competence if Leading an Adventure Activity

(Section 5 contains comprehensive guidance on Establishment Led Adventurous Activities.)

For SES Staff to be in the capacity of leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the Visit Leader must ensure that those who are acting in the capacity of instructor are suitably competent to lead or instruct young persons in the activity. This will be discussed as part of the approval procedure involving the VC and/or Principal in ensuring that all qualifications, planning and organisation meet the required standard. Competencies should normally be demonstrated by holding a relevant and current National Governing Body (NGB) Award and/or by extensive proven experience. Approval will also need to be sought from the current SES insurance company.

At centres where a licence is granted by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) all staff leading the activities covered by the licence remit should be competent as they are assessed by AALA.

3.10.5 Head Counts

The Visit Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell young persons what to do if they become separated from the group. The numbers involved in trips out from each establishment are likely to be small. Nevertheless, periodic name/head counts should take place and these should be pre-planned, probably at obvious activity points such as embarking on transport. Although an 'institutionalised' type roll call may be completely inappropriate and embarrassing for our children, the Visit Leader should consciously and systematically conduct the procedure even if not overtly obvious to others. He/she should briefly share the results with a colleague, therefore registering that it has happened.

3.10.6 Remote Supervision

The objective behind some visits for older young persons may be to encourage independence and investigative skills. As a result some of the time on visits such as trips abroad and while undertaking fieldwork may be unsupervised.

The Visit Leader should establish during the planning stage of the visit whether it is appropriate and safe to do so as part of the risk assessment process.

The Visit Leader remains responsible for young persons even when not in direct contact with them. Young persons must have the ability to contact the Visit Leader.

3.11 PREPARING YOUNG PERSONS

Young persons who are involved in the visits planning and organisation, and who are well prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be at less risk.

Young persons must clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail.

Young persons must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major cause of accidents and the establishments VC's must ensure through knowledge of the Visit Leaders competence that she/he and the other supervisors have good control.

Young persons should also be told about potential hazards and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others. This should feature in a risk assessment as a control measure to reduce risks.

The Visit Leader must decide how information is to be provided to young persons but must ensure that the young persons understand key safety information, including procedures and control measures identified through the Risk Assessment process. Section 4 contains a questionnaire and a checklist that will facilitate this.

3.11.1 Information to Young People

The Visit Leader must decide how information is to be provided to young people (and parents/carers) but must ensure that the young people understand key safety information, including procedures and control measures identified through the Risk Assessment process. Young people should understand:

- The clear aims and objectives of the visit/activity.
- The background information to the place to be visited.
- Basic foreign words where appropriate.
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules.
- Why safety precautions are in place and what these are.
- Why additional special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities.
- What standard of behaviour, conduct and dress are expected of young people.
- Who is responsible for them during the trip/visit?
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group.
- Rendezvous procedures and what to do if separated from the group at any stage.
- Emergency procedures including using telephone for emergency calls both in UK and abroad.

For residential visits all group members should carry the address and telephone number of the accommodation in case an individual becomes separated. This applies especially to foreign exchange visits when the young people will also need to know about any ground rules agreed between the Visit Leader and host family.

Where visits involve multiple activities with differing requirements each activity will need to be assessed and separate information provided. Young

people should be aware of who is responsible in instances where the Visit Leader has delegated responsibility to another member of staff.

If at any time there is a change in the planned schedule, new activities should be assessed for risk, appropriateness for the young people's needs, and then the young people should be provided with the appropriate information to ensure educational benefit and their health and safety.

3.11.2 Preparing Young People for Remote Supervision

The VC and Visit Leader must ensure that if remote supervision is intended at any point during the activity/visit that they have confidence in the young people's abilities to work in that way and that all the appropriate preparation in order to facilitate their safety and health during remote supervision is in place and will have been completed by all young people prior to departure.

Young people must be aware of the ground rules and be adequately equipped to be on their own in a group.

The size of each group should also be considered.

As a minimum standard, young people must have the following:

- Telephone numbers and emergency contacts and mobile phone.
- Money (including change/card appropriate for local public telephones).
- Maps and plans and any other information for them to act effectively.
- Knowledge of how to summon help.
- A knowledge of out of bounds areas or activities and why they are out of bounds.
- A rendezvous point and times.

It is essential that young people are told not to go beyond agreed parameters, on their own at any time during remote supervision activities as this significantly alters the risk assessment.

3.11.3 Participation

The Visit Leader must ensure that all young people are capable of undertaking the proposed activity. This should include careful consideration of the suitability of the activity for the different ages and levels of experience represented by the group.

It is against SES company policy for the children of supervisory adults to participate. If consideration is given to the inclusion of an adult's own children in an activity, there must be additional adults present to ensure adequate supervision is in place to mitigate against any conflict of interest in an emergency situation.

Young people should be encouraged to take on challenges during adventurous activities but should not be coerced into activities of which they have a genuine fear.

3.11.4 Decisions Not to Involve Young People in a Visit(s)

Virtually all programmes and activities are driven by individual need as opposed to blanket group activities. Implicit in this is that the risk assessment and planning accounts for potential behaviours and if this is not possible then that person cannot be involved in the trip. It may be that all plans are in place and a sudden change in circumstance or behaviour just prior to the trip causes a re-evaluation of the situation.

3.11.5 Withdrawal of Young People During the Visit

Young persons whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or that of others should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits, in extreme circumstances, the Visit Leader should consider if they should be sent home early. Such eventualities should be considered in the initial planning and risk assessment.

3.11.6 Equal Opportunities

SES is committed to equality of opportunity and all staff should comply with the following guidance:

- Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure that activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special education or medical needs, gender identity, ethnic origin, sex, religion, etc.
- All young people should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible.

The VC and Visit Leader should consider these issues for every trip and if a visit is to cater for young persons with particular needs, a suitable venue should be selected and visited to ensure its overall suitability for the group.

3.11.7 Responding to Individual Learning Needs

An integral aspect of each establishment's statement of purpose is to completely respond to individual needs. This is reflected in high levels of individual planning and personalisation, which results in the highest level of differentiation possible.

3.11.8 Young People with Medical Needs

Individual medical needs for young people are identified as part of their Portfolio of Achievement and Need Overview (My Health), with subsequent associated risks identified in the General Risk Assessment Overview.

A young person's medical needs should be woven throughout their Activities Risk Assessment Overview, providing specific detail of how to support them. Where the Medical Issues aspect has a score of 3 or more for impact, a Child Specific Medical Risk Assessment is required irrespective of the total level of risk.

The Child Specific Medical Risk Assessment ensures key medical diagnoses are considered for the young person, with guidance for adults on the potential impact on everyday care as well as their social, emotional and mental health needs. Examples of potential conditions are diabetes, epilepsy, physical impairments or asthma (although this is not an exhaustive list). Within the risk assessment, key adults must determine if any additional Child Specific Activities Risk Assessments are required due to the medical condition or diagnosis. Additional professional medical advice may be sought from the GP or a Child and Adolescent Child Psychiatrist (see Risk Assessment policy for further detail).

Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All staff supervising visits should be aware of a young person's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Staff must alert other supervising professionals to a young person's serious medical conditions from the outset of a visit or activity, usually as part of initial communication or on arrival at the venue.

Ideally, staff who are trained and regularly administer medication should be part of the staffing group on the trip or visit. Failing this then a named person, generally the visit leader, will be intensively trained regarding the specific medical requirements pertaining to the individuals on the activity, prior to it taking place. If a particular activity does preclude a young person on the grounds of a medical condition, or their safety cannot be reasonably assured, then alternative arrangements should be made to include and involve them as best as possible to support the young persons self esteem.

3.11.9 Planning for Each Young Person

Staff will already be familiar with the nature of a young person's individual needs. Any limitations or problems the young person may have should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment.

Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for our young people and the behaviour of some young persons may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Is the young person capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- Can the activity be adapted to enable the young person to participate at a suitable level?
- If the young person prone to fatigue?
- Will additional/differentiated resources be necessary?
- Is the young person able to understand and follow instructions?
- Will additional supervision be necessary?
- Does the inclusion of this young person pose a risk to his/her own safety?
- Does the inclusion of this young person pose a risk to others?
- Are the risks manageable?

3.11.10 Young Persons with Religious Beliefs Affecting Medical Treatment

There are some religions that refuse certain types of medical treatment such as blood transfusions. Supervising adults should all be made aware of this information where it applies.

Any identity cards that the young person carries should also contain such information.

Jehovah's Witnesses have a support network that can provide help in such cases. The Visit Leader and/or VC should contact the Parents/Placing Authority in such cases and discuss in detail the arrangements that can be made.

3.12 INFORMATION TO PARENTS/CARERS/ PLACING AUTHORITIES

In the case of visits and journeys involving overnight stays, visits abroad and/or adventurous activities, (Category B), additional Parental Consent should be sought as described in Section 3.4.6.

As children make significant steps towards going out of the home independently, social workers of placing authorities should be kept informed through the regular communication routes of liaison with Personal Tutors and through the monthly update communication procedures.

3.12.1 Briefing Meetings

Before residential visits, or when the young persons are to travel abroad or engage in adventurous activities, parents/carers/placing authorities should be fully consulted. The following information on matters that might affect a young person's health and safety should be given to parents/carers as a minimum to ensure consent is granted on a fully informed basis.

- Dates of visit.
- Visit's objectives.
- Times of departure and return.
- Mode(s) of travel.
- The size of the group.
- Level of supervision.
- Any times when Remote Supervision may take place.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Details of provision medical needs.
- Procedures for young persons who become ill.
- Names of the Visit Leader and of other accompanying adults.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Standards of behaviour expected in respect of, for example, alcohol, sexual behaviour, smoking and general group discipline, including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct that both parents and young persons should sign.

- What young persons should not take on the visit or bring back.
- Details of insurance.
- Clothing and types of equipment to be taken.
- Money to be taken, including safe storage.
- The information to be given to parents and what they will be asked to consent to.
- On exchange visits, the details of the host family; for example, whether they have hosted any of the establishment young persons before.

3.12.2 Informed Parental Consent

Consent forms should contain details of any possible risks that may come from activities to be participated in. Full warnings should be given and parents should be advised of preventative measures taken.

The Principal, Visits Coordinators (VC) or Visit Leaders should seek consent for:

- adventurous activities
- visits to more hazardous locations
- visits abroad
- any residential visit
- remote supervision.

3.12.3 Medical Consent

Doctors can be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without parental consent, but it is possible that a surgeon in another country might be reluctant to operate on a young person unless assured that the Visit Leader had parental authorisation to agree to such treatment. It is sensible to include a translation of the medical consent, as signed by the parents/carers/ Placing Authorities, in the appropriate foreign language.

3.12.4 Early Return

The Visit Leader should ensure that parents/carers/ Placing Authorities are informed if there is decision to return a young person whose conduct gives cause for concern on a visit.

3.12.5 Contact During the Visit

The Visits Leader and VC must ensure that parents/carers are able to contact their child via Avocet House or Turnstone House or the Visit Leader in the event of an emergency at home. They must have a number to ring for information in the event of an incident during the visit or if applicable, a late arrival home. Parents/carers must therefore:

- know the destination details;
- be aware of the emergency contact arrangements
- provide contact numbers for day and night use in an emergency.

The VC and Visit Leader may arrange for parents/carers to be told of the group's safe arrival on certain types of trips. Young persons may wish to speak with their parents/carers individually. Such arrangements should be agreed with parents/carers and young persons beforehand.

Parents/carers concerned after a phone call should contact staff at each establishment in the first instance.

3.13 PLANNING TRANSPORT

When the VC and Visit Leader consider the journey element of a visit, there are certain constraints that will determine the kind of transport to be used, the planned breaks and whether more than one driver will be required. There is a separate SES Transportation and Travel Policy and Practice document which all staff should have read and is available for detailed reference when planning journeys.

3.14 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

3.14.1 What to do when there is an emergency

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergencies which will require an on the spot response by leaders. These cannot be comprehensively defined. Examples could include minor injuries, food poisoning, or young people being temporarily lost, and more serious situations such as accidents involving serious injury or fatality.

The Emergency Procedures flowchart overleaf, in conjunction with the Emergency Procedures Checklist in Section 4, are designed to support the Visit Leader in dealing with an emergency. Reference should also be made to the Critical Incident Policy and Practice.

Practice in the event of an emergency should be thoroughly discussed at the planning stages of the visit and all adults (and possibly children) should be briefed in advance.

Good practice requires that the Visit Leader will carry an up to date list of medical conditions for each member of the trip in case of medical emergencies. This is to include young people and adults alike.

3.14.2 Responding to Incidents as an Avocet House or Turnstone House Emergency Contact Person

In the event of an emergency, the procedure for the emergency contact person is to:

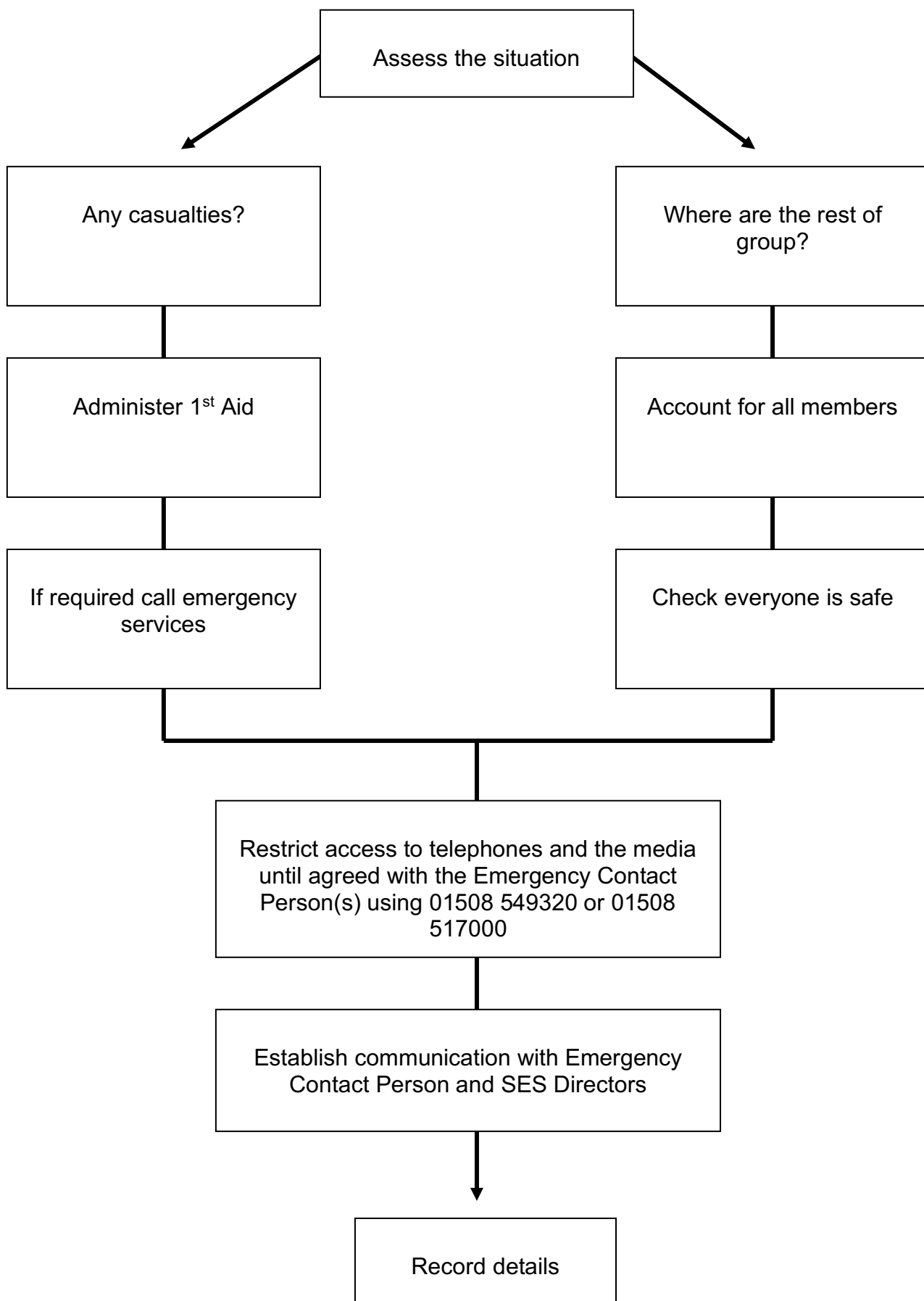
- gather as many facts as possible - clarify exactly what has happened, to whom, what action has been taken and when, etc;
- advise the Visit Leader as to who will contact parents/carers;
- in the event of a serious injury/death, the Principal must be contacted immediately - they will advise on what to do next;

- do not disclose details or names of those involved to the media - the handling of all contact with the media will be determined by the Principal in consultation with the Directors of SES.

3.14.3 Dealing with an Emergency - Flowchart

See diagram overleaf

Dealing with an Emergency – Flowchart



3.15 INCIDENT REPORTING

Standard procedures apply for managing and recording accidents, injuries and near misses. Near miss reporting enables SES to increase its knowledge base with regard to risk assessment and sharing good practice. Unforeseen incidents may enable all of us to reflect on our competence and identify future training needs.

The Visit Leader has a legal responsibility to report all incidents resulting in serious injury or death. For such highly significant incidents not covered by the RPI and Non RPI Incident Forms there is a specific Critical Incident Report Form available for visits (see Section 4). For generic advice on reporting and recording incidents see the Staff Handbook. See also the SES Critical Incident Policy and Practice document.

NB: For all residential visits outside of Norfolk a copy of the critical incident policy should form part of the field file. As part of the preparation and planning for such a trip the Visit Leader will need to be able to demonstrate that they have extensive knowledge of all aspects of this policy prior to commencement of the trip.

Any issue not covered in the above range of guidance should be resolved in the first instance with the Visits Co-ordinator and/or Principal.

3.16 INSURANCE

SES carries thorough and comprehensive insurance cover for all aspects of the operation of each establishment. This covers adults and children worldwide in terms of travel and activities. The VC and/or Principal will advise on any specific additional insurance arrangements if and when required.

3.17 EVALUATION

3.17.1 Category A Visits

All new Category A activities should have a written evaluation after the first time they have taken place. The visit leader for the activity is responsible for this and should complete the appropriate section as an edit on the original Clearcare visits form.

3.17.2 Category B visits

All new non-residential Category B visits should be monitored and have a written evaluation after the first time they have taken place. The visit leader for the activity is responsible for this and should complete the appropriate section as an edit on the original Clearcare visits form.

3.17.3 Residentials

- a Upon return from any residential there is to be an evaluation meeting between all young people and adults involved in the trip.
- b Residential adults will meet with Visits Coordinator for a debrief.

- c Through these meetings the visit leader will complete a residential evaluation form (see page 54)
- e One copy is to be stored with the Field File and one to be given to Visits Coordinator.
- f Once completed the Field File and extra Evaluation Form are to be handed to Visits Coordinator for archiving (scanned and store on the network).
- g This is to be completed no later than one month from the return from residential visit date.

3.18 SES KITE: OPERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

The contents of this policy and practice document provide comprehensive **guidance** for all SES Kite staff. SES Kite adults will receive the same level of risk assessment training as all colleagues as part of their induction. However, it is important to recognise that supporting vulnerable young adults is uniquely different to working with children at either Avocet House or Turnstone House.

SES Kite staff must ensure that appropriate risk assessment process has taken place for all visits and activities. For young adults within SES Kite Residential Provision the vast majority of visits and activities will be catered for through their Activities Risk Assessment Overview, General Risk Assessment Overview and Young Adult Specific Activity Risk Assessments. In addition, specific area of need will be detailed and planned for within the Portfolio of Achievement and Need structures. For young people residing within SES Kite Supported Accommodation Provisions they will have a Young Person Risk Assessment and a Medical Risk Assessment. These documents are available on the SES Kite home network and must be understood by all staff.

For visits or activities that fall outside of these procedures, staff must consult with the RSM to ensure the very best standards are adhered to. The guidance provided by this policy and practice document will inform and support appropriate decision making. The type of visits that this applies to are likely to be significant outdoor and adventurous activities.

The SES Beach Induction provides clear guidance for all SES Kite staff. Some important differences must be recognised. SES Kite staff can support young adults on a 1:1 basis at the beach; they must have a full understanding of the young adults swimming ability and their own confidence to enact a rescue. It is strongly advised that lifeguarded beaches are used in line with SES Policy.

Staff must understand and recognise the importance of dynamic risk assessment when working with young adults. By virtue of being over 18, young adults may perceive they can automatically grant themselves consent for all activities; due to their vulnerability it is important that staff always act to keep the young adults best interests paramount, as expected of any parental role model.

Adaptations of the key forms contained within this document are located on the SES Kite home network.

4 FORMS REFERRED TO IN THIS DOCUMENT

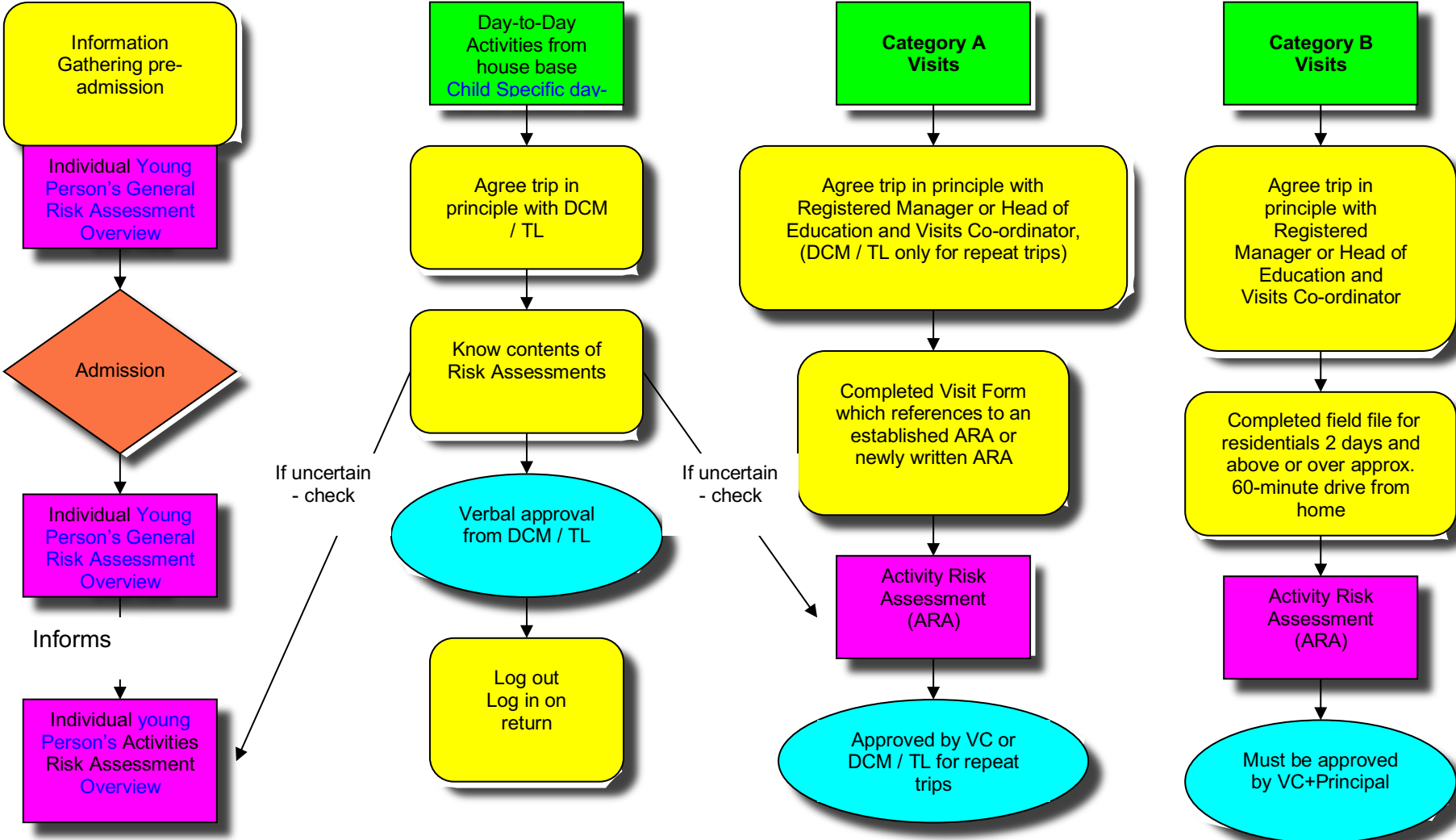
This section has the following documents referred to in the main body of this Policy and Practice paper.

- 4.1 Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Overview Chart
- 4.2 Principal's Checklist for Approval of Visits and Activities
- 4.4 Visit Co-ordinator's Checklist for Approval of Visits and Activities
- 4.5 Visit Leader's Planning Checklist
- 4.6 Residential Proposal Form
- 4.7 Preparing Young Persons Checklist
- 4.8 Residential Visits Field File
- 4.9 Residential Visits Itinerary
- 4.10 Residential Visits Daily Plan
- 4.11 Residential Visits Alternative Activities
- 4.12 Residential Visit Evaluation Form
- 4.13 Critical Incident Report Form
- 4.14 Emergency Procedure Checklist
- 4.15 Risk Evaluation Table
- 4.16 Activities Risk Assessment Overview
- 4.17 Generic Risk Assessment Statements
- 4.18 Activity Risk Assessment: BBQ
- 4.19 Activity Risk Assessment: Visit to Local Town
- 4.20 External Provider Approval Form
- 4.21 External Provider Approval Questionnaire
- 4.22 External Provider Level of Public Liability Insurance Consideration
- 4.23 External Provider Checks for Activities Being Delivered on SES Grounds
- 4.24 Work Placements Process Summary
- 4.25 Work Placement Provider Form
- 4.26 Work Placement Approval Questionnaire
- 4.27 Work Placement Evaluation Form

EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL AND LEISURE VISITS AND ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW CHART

INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN

ACTIVITIES, VISITS AND TRIPS



EVALUATION AND REVIEW AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL

PRINCIPAL'S CHECKLIST FOR APPROVAL OF CAT B VISITS AND ACTIVITIES (RESIDENTIAL)	
General Considerations	
1. The visit complies with regulations set out in SES's 'Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice' document	
2. The visit complies with the establishment's own Health & Safety Policy document	
3. Where applicable, approval has been sought from SES Directors before any contractual arrangements are entered into with the Provider	
4. Training needs have been assessed by a competent person	
5. Risk assessments have been completed	
The needs of young people have been considered:	
1. Educational Objectives	
2. Financial (charging policy)	
3. Preparation for the visit	
4. Equal Opportunities	
5. Individual Learning Needs	
6. Medical needs	
7. Child Protection measures	
The needs of the staff have been considered:	
1. Workload	
2. Preparation time	
3. Working time	
4. Adequate systems in place to receive money	
5. Staff expenditure re-imburement	
6. Training	
7. Support systems	
8. Robust Emergency procedures	
9. Rest times before, during and after journey	
10. Volunteers and/or additional adults are appropriate people to supervise	
Transport arrangements are:	
1. Appropriate	
2. Drivers are qualified	
3. Vehicles are road worthy	
4. Vehicles are insured	
5. Vehicles hold a current MOT certificate	
6. Vehicles hold a road fund license	
7. Travel times out and back are known	
8. Pick up and drop off points are known	
9. There is adequate and relevant insurance cover	
The establishment has:	
1. Address and phone number of venue	
2. A copy of the itinerary	
3. A copy of the contact names	
4. The Visit Leader, group supervisors and VC have a copy of the above	
5. That all concerned are conversant with agreed emergency procedure	
6. Detailed lists of all participants (staff and young people) are logged with the VC	
7. Detailed lists of all participants (staff and young people) are logged with the Visit Leader	
8. There is a contingency plan for any delays or cancellations including a late return home	
Completed By:	Date Completed:

VISIT CO-ORDINATOR'S CHECKLIST FOR APPROVAL OF CAT B VISITS AND ACTIVITIES (RESIDENTIAL)	
1. Head of Establishment informed and advised of visit	
2. Directors informed and advised of visit where applicable	
3. Visit Leader approved	
4. Accompanying staff approved	
5. Volunteers approved	
6. DBS checks carried out	
7. External Providers Approved	
Assessed competence and prior experience of:	
1. Visit Leader	
2. Accompanying staff	
3. Volunteers	
4. Young people	
Training needs assessed:	
1. Visit Leader	
2. Accompanying staff	
3. Volunteers	
4. Young people	
5. First aiders available	
6. Risk assessments completed in writing	
7. Risk assessments shared with group	
Visit Leader aware of responsibilities under:	
1. Duty of care	
2. Health and safety law	
3. Child Protection law	
4. Disability Discrimination	
Establish policies on:	
1. Charging	
2. Exclusion	
3. Cash handling	
4. Medicine policy	
5. Emergency planning procedures in place	
6. Previous accidents / near misses related to this activity are taken into account	
7. There are means to record injuries/near misses	
8. There are means to record damages to property or equipment	
Completed By:	Date Completed:

VISIT LEADER'S PLANNING CHECKLIST

1. Identify educational need for visit/journey/activity.	
2. Read and be conversant with any establishment policy on educational visits and journeys.	
3. Make preliminary visit to venue(s) whenever possible, or seek advice from experts in the locality/other establishments which have visited.	
4. Undertake a thorough risk assessment with support from the establishments VC, where applicable. This should be recorded, acted upon and shared with the group.	
5. Identify and appoint Visit Leader, Deputy, other adult supervisors, first aiders and potential participants.	
6. If not an SES employee ensure all accompanying adults have a DBS check, including coach drivers where they will be resident with the group and/or share regular or unsupervised access to young people.	
7. Draw up a draft plan/itinerary.	
8. Brief other adult supervisors, including partners abroad, to ensure they understand their responsibilities.	
9. If visit includes proximity to water, issue 'Group Safety at Water Margins' booklet.	
10. Make provisional bookings for transport, accommodation, activities, etc.	
11. Ensure External Provider Forms are completed and approved by VC where applicable	
12. Circulate provisional information about the visit to group members' parents and parental consent letter for Category B visits.	
13. Check and if necessary arrange additional insurance	
14. Confirm bookings of transport, accommodation, etc., and complete the financial arrangements.	
15. Collate all documentation for Field File.	
16. Produce identity/contact cards for group members and adult supervisors – in the language of the country to be visited if travelling abroad.	
17. Hold a final briefing meeting for all staff and young people, e.g., safety information, personal and protective clothing requirements behaviour, and arrangements for the supervision of free time/unstructured time.	
18. Have a cash float and/or cheques for entrance fees and emergencies.	
19. Check climatic and prevailing conditions.	
20. Ensure travel sickness pills have been taken where necessary.	
21. Allocate seats, paper bags and buckets.	
22. Take mobile phones (pre-charged and having checked it will/should work in the area where you will need it). Identify landline locations if in doubt or 'blackspot' for mobile reception.	
23. Use on-going risk assessment techniques to decide on whether to implement any contingency plans.	
24. Complete Daily Log and Medical Record as required.	
Evaluation Form to be completed and circulated for information to:	
Principal/Registered Manager	
Visits Co-ordinator	

PREPARING YOUNG PERSONS CHECKLIST	
1. Dates.	
2. Times of departure and return.	
3. Method of travel to be used, including name of any travel company.	
4. Destination with full address and telephone number.	
5. Emergency contact arrangements at home and away, if all young people not at one centre. This enables parents/carers to contact either the centre or a local point of contact in their home vicinity.	
6. Agreed arrangements for young people to contact parents/carers and parents/carers to contact young people during the visit.	
7. Emergency procedures for the group including details identified in the Risk Assessment process.	
8. Procedures for group members who become unwell/ill.	
9. Names of Visit Leaders, accompanying staff and supervision arrangements.	
10. Broad aim of visit and details of all proposed activities planned. Any hazardous environments/ adventure activities must be clearly specified and the way in which risks are to be managed must be identified.	
11. Advice on custom & excise regulations and what items young people may not bring back from abroad.	
12. Check that young persons have provided information on any specific dietary requirements.	
13. Background information about the place to be visited.	
14. Advice on pocket money and ways to carry money and valuables safely.	
15. Clothing/footwear and other items to be taken.	
16. What items should not be taken on the visit.	
17. Basic safety rules when using transport.	
18. Code of conduct: details relating to the standard of behaviour, expected	
19. How to avoid specific dangers and why group members should follow rules.	
20. Why safety precautions are in place.	
21. The use of contact/identity cards and what to do if lost or parted from the group.	
22. European Medical Card (visits abroad).	
23. Vaccination requirements (visits abroad).	
24. Tetanus – reminders about need for boosters.	
25. Passport and visa requirements for visits abroad.	
26. Procedures in place for visits to residential centres abroad.	
27. How to use telephones abroad, money required, etc.	
28. Advice on foreign culture and customs, including dress codes, attitudes to gender, body language, etc.	

Specialist Education Services

RESIDENTIAL PROPOSAL FORM

Proposed by/Visit Leader:			
Proposed Date: (From/To)		Location:	
Suggested Residential Team:		Children Involved:	
Description of Residential:	Educational		
	Recreational		
Links to National Curriculum: (for educational trips only)			
Proposed Activities:			
Brief Outline of the Trip (include: travel, type of accommodation, child specific activities, aims and objectives)			
Estimated Cost:			

RESIDENTIAL VISITS FIELD FILE

This file contains all the information relating to the educational visit/journey.
Copies must be provided to:

- The Local Point of Contact (VC, Head of Establishment or other nominated person, Manager) who remains in Norfolk, throughout the duration of the visit.
- Any Supervisors of sub-groups within the party if they cannot readily access this information during the visit, e.g. temporarily operating on different sites.

Field File Contents	
Aims and Objectives	
Visits Form	
The itinerary for the Visit.	
Daily Plans	
Completed Parental Consent Form (where applicable)	
Copy of all known contact numbers for the Visit Leader, e.g., mobile, hotel, visitor centre, attraction, etc.	
Local Point of Contact details.	
Risk Assessments relating to activities and individual children	
Equipment List	
Emergency Procedures and contact numbers.	
The original vehicle/travel documents, certificates and driving licences (where necessary) - e.g., establishment minibus.	
Incident/Report forms	
Medication Records	
Missing Person Information Records	
Petty Cash Recording Forms	
Guidance sheets (e.g. Group Safety at Water Margins)	
A copy of any contracts with providers, e.g., accommodation, travel, activity.	
Trips Outside of Norfolk: Critical Incident Policy	
For Visits Abroad	
Passport details page for each group member	
Copies of E111 forms/European Health cards	
Reference numbers of travel docs/tickets	
Contact numbers for the British Consulate/Embassy	
Insurance details and telephone numbers, including medical emergency contacts	
Details and contact numbers of all families in home-to-home exchange visits	

RESIDENTIAL VISITS: ITINERARY

Dates:

Day	Activities	Children	Staff	Considerations

RESIDENTIAL VISITS: DAILY PLAN

Date:

Time	Activity	Children	Staff	Instructions & Arrangements

RESIDENTIAL VISITS: ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES

Date:

Time	Activity/Travel	Children	Staff	Instructions & Arrangements

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES RESIDENTIAL VISIT EVALUATION FORM

To be completed by the Visit Leader. This form should also be used to inform future planning.

Visit Leader:
Date(s) of visit:
Venue:
Purposes(s) of Visit:
Members in Group (Initials):

Date residential debrief meeting held on:

Please record comments from the group debrief on the following features:

Comment	
Provider's pre-visit organisation	
Travel arrangements	
Content of education and learning programme provided	
Quality of instruction and learning	
Equipment	
Suitability of Environment(s)	
Accommodation	
Food	
Evening / Alternative activities	

Courier/representatives	
What were the most powerful aspects of the week for children's outcomes and why	
What could be done differently or changed / improved	
Other evaluation & comments including "close calls" not involving injury or damage	

Signed:

Date:

Visit Leader's full name:

VC/Principal Monitoring comments:

To be completed after all ventures and filed in the establishment's central record of visits and journeys.

This completed form must be retained by the establishment for a minimum period of three years from the date of departure.

This must not be removed from the establishment file until:

Date: _____

(10 years from date of departure)

Critical Incident Report Form

The injured person, a responsible person completing the form on behalf of an injured person, or a responsible person reporting the near miss must complete parts A, B, C and D as applicable. Please complete in block capitals.

A. About the incident

1. Type of incident (*Tick applicable box*)
 - Accident resulting in injury
 - Near miss/dangerous occurrence
 - Violent incident (*Physical or verbal*)
 - Work-related ill health (*Go on to Section B*)
 - Damage to building or property

(Complete all of Part A then go to Section D)
2. Date of incident
3. Time (24 hour clock)
4. Address/site where incident happened
5. Exact location on above address/site
6. Describe task or activity taking place and what happened

B. Outcome of the incident

1. How was the person involved affected?
 - No injury or near miss incident (*Go on to D*)
 - Minor injury (*Up to 3 days absence*)
 - 'Over 3 day' absence, expected absence or incapacity for usual work
 - Unconscious/needed resuscitation
 - Taken to hospital
 - Hospitalisation for over 24 hours
 - Major injury (*Defined under RIDDOR*)
 - Death
 - Ill health (*Describe nature of illness below*)
2. List injuries/illness
3. Part of body affected

C. About the injured person

1. Name
2. Home address and post code
3. Home phone number
4. Age
5. Male
 Female
6. Status of injured person (*Tick applicable box*)
 - SES employee - employee number
 - Client (*Go on to 10*)
 - Pupil (*Go on to 10*)
 - On training scheme/work experience
 - Voluntary worker
 - Someone else's employee (*E.g. contractor*)
 - Member of public (*Go on to part D*)
7. Job title/occupation
8. Department
9. If 'Someone else's employee' ticked above give name and phone number of employer
10. Name and address of normal work base, e.g. unit or school (*If different to address in box A.4*)

D. About the person who has completed Parts A - C (* Delete as applicable)

I am the * **injured person named in part C** and confirm that this report records the incident as described.
* **a responsible person reporting the incident**

Signed: _____ Print name: _____ Date: _____

Dept: _____ Section/unit: _____

Once Parts A-D are complete please pass this form onto the responsible line manager.

SES Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice: 0626

E. Line manager's investigation of the incident

(Parts E and F to be completed by the relevant manager/supervisor)

1. Tick one box that best identifies the kind of incident

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact with moving plant or machinery, or material being machined | <input type="checkbox"/> Work related ill health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hit by a moving, flying or falling object | <input type="checkbox"/> Road traffic accident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hit something fixed or stationary | <input type="checkbox"/> Damage to building, property or equip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Injured while handling, lifting or carrying | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slipped/tripped/fell on same level | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fall from height | |
| - How high was the fall? <input type="text"/> | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trapped by something collapsing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drowned or asphyxiated (lack of oxygen) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to or contact with a harmful substance | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed to heat/fire/explosion | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric shock | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Injured by an animal | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical assault | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threatened assault/verbal abuse | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Near miss/dangerous occurrence | |

2. Why did the incident happen? (Describe below)

3. Please tick any relevant factors that contributed to the incident

- No risk assessment of task/activity
- PPE not worn/provided
- Insufficient training/instruction
- Inadequate supervision
- Work pressure/lack of concentration
- Inadequate work procedures
- General tidiness
- None of above

4. Has this incident (same task, activity, etc.) occurred before in your area of responsibility? (Not necessarily to the same person) Yes No

5. Follow up action (Describe what has, or will be done to prevent a recurrence)

Action taken, or to be taken	Name of person responsible for action

6. Were there any witnesses to the incident? Yes No

Provide names and addresses or telephone numbers (Attach any relevant statements)

7. If a violent incident were the police informed? Yes No

Crime number

F. About the person who has completed Part E (To be signed by the person completing part E)

The information contained in this incident report is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: Date: Tel/ext:

Print Name: Position:

G. What to do with the completed form

This form must be presented to the Principal of Avocet House immediately upon return from the visit.

- The completion of this form will provide information required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations and the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations.
- Completion of this form is not an admission of liability.
- Information on this form will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Office use only
 HSE informed
Additional comments

Practice: 0626

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE CHECKLIST	
1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency.	
2. Make sure all other members of the group are accounted for and safe.	
3. If there are injuries, immediately establish their extent, as far as possible, and administer appropriate first aid.	
4. Establish the name(s) of the injured and call whichever emergency services are required.	
5. Advise other group staff of the incident and that the emergency procedures are in operation.	
6. Ensure that an adult from the group accompanies the casualties to hospital.	
7. Ensure that the remainder of the group are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to base.	
8. Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all young persons are accounted for.	
9. Control access to telephone until contact is made with the Head of Establishment.	
10. Contact off-site base (outdoor centre, hotel, youth hostel, etc).	
11. Contact local point of contact, Head teacher or designated senior member of staff.	
12. Notify the British Embassy or Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad.	
13. Where serious injuries or fatalities occur, which would result in media involvement, the Group Leader, the local point of contact, Principal or designated senior member of staff must ensure that the Directors of SES are contacted.	
14. Do not discuss or admit legal liability.	
15. Refer requests from the media to the designated individual and/or their representative. It is not for the Visit Leader or other group members to discuss matters with the media. Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.	
16. In addition, complete the SES Incident Report Form (Section 2).	
17. This form should also be completed for less serious injuries and near misses.	
18. Write down all other relevant details of the incident while these are still fresh in the memory.	
19. Ask other supervisory staff to do the same. If practicable, take a photograph of the accident scene and any equipment, etc, involved.	
20. Keep any equipment involved in its original condition.	
21. Keep details of these emergency procedures to hand and ensure that you have the means to implement them.	

In cases where a notifiable accident or notifiable dangerous incident has occurred, the Health and Safety Executive should be informed by telephone or online, within 24 hours of the incident occurring (telephone line: 0345 300 9923 or <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reporting/how-to-make-riddor-report.htm>).

NB: It is usual for the Principal to make this call. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to communicate with the Principal early enough to ensure this can happen.

RISK EVALUATION TABLE

The table below is used to evaluate and prioritise risk levels. For example Likelihood x Impact = Risk level. Risk levels are Extreme, High, Medium, Low. Therefore a risk evaluated as Almost Certain with an Impact as Catastrophe would generate a risk level of 25 (Extreme Risk).

IMPACT

LIKELIHOOD

	Catastrophe 5 (Loss of services for long period of time/multiple fatality)	Major 4 (Loss of services for more than seven days and/or fatality)	Moderate 3 (Significant disruption. Violence or threat or serious injury)	Minor 2 (Some disruption. Minor injury)	Insignificant 1 (Little disruption. No injury)
Almost Certain 5 (The event is expected to occur in most circumstances)					
Likely 4 (The event will probably occur in most circumstances)					
Occasional 3 (The event might occur at some time)					
Unlikely 2 (The event is not expected to occur)					
Rare 1 (The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances)					

Specialist Education Services

ACTIVITIES AND VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This form has been completed in line with the Health and Safety Policy

Young Person:	Date Completed:	Completed by:	Review Date:
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Score	Action	Score	Action
1 – 4 Low	Deal with as per General Behaviour Management Policy	5 – 9 Medium	Record on file. Monitor closely. Consider specific strategies
10 – 15 High	Full Risk Management Plan required	16 – 25 Extreme	Extreme risk: defer to directors

Activity	Is allowed to do Independent	Risk Assessment Tick As Required		Specific Detail	I Impact	L Likelihood	Level of Risk I x L
	Y/N	Child Specific	The Activity				
Playing in the grounds							
Playing out in the neighbourhood, including the park							
Trip to the shop, e.g. BP Garage							
Walk to the shop - Loddon							
Catch bus to shop – Local town or city							

Trip to leisure facilities							
Swimming at a local pool							
Local job, e.g. paper round							
Playing with local children							
Youth club							
Specific sports/ recreation club							
Cycling in the community, e.g. 2 mile radius							
On site group							
Off site group							
On site 1:1							
Off site 1:1							

Specialist Education Services

ACTIVITIES AND VISITS GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENTS

This form has been completed in line with the Health and Safety Policy

Compiled by: Andy Robinson / Lisa Rutland	Date Compiled: 10.04.25
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SECTION ONE

Date of Visit/Activity:		Name of Visit/Activity:	Generic Risk Assessment Statements	Category:	
Location:		Activity:			
Visit Leader:		Staff:			

SECTION TWO

Young People on Visit <i>Please list below</i>	Considerations for Particular Individuals <i>Please check Young People's risk assessments within the context of the visit, and list variations/considerations below. If necessary, a Day to Day/Child Specific Risk Assessment should be completed</i>

SECTION THREE

Aspect	Potential Risks	Risk Score <u>Without</u> <u>Controls</u>	Actions/Precautions/Control Measures	Risk Score <u>With</u> <u>Controls</u>	Further Actions, Comments and Prompts
Car travel	Accident	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to one accounts for individual risk assessments and lone working risk assessments • Staff have undertaken maintenance and visual safety checks of their cars • .Driver to do head count of pupils when more than one • High expectations of pupils with regard to travelling, is made explicit to them before setting off. • Seat Belts to be worn at all times and students to remain seated when travelling. • 2 Drivers for long journeys. Regular breaks. Drivers not supervising students 	9	In the event of an accident or breakdown contact School/ Emergency services accordingly
Medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misadministration of medicines • Loss of medication 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that any student on prescribed medication has been given theirs before leaving where appropriate. • Check that any prescribed medication required for the trip is taken in the locked medication box 	4	Check medical records of group
Public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ill intentioned strangers 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure use of school toilets before commencement of journey • Pupils to be monitored by staff to and from toilet 	3	Check student history of group being taken
Absconding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened risk because of emotional state • Lack of adult support/supervision available • Accident 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to supervise students at all times except for planned autonomous activities • Staff check individual risk assessments 	6	

Sun Burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varying levels of skin damage or degree of burn 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to ensure sun block is applied to all students as a condition of taking part and encourage wearing of hats. Keep skin covered where possible. Regular topping up of sun cream as advised by product 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check sun block is in first aid bags before leaving. Any student refusing to apply sun block will be asked to sit in the car or taken back to Avocet House
Inclement weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant discomfort Hypothermia 	6	Staff to ensure students take suitable clothing. N.B. this cannot be applied in isolation to activities in wild country or extreme environments	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clothing checked before leaving school Students refusing to take or wear appropriate clothing will not go or will be brought back
Hydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> De hydration 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure adequate supply of water is taken. Drink before departure 	4	
Destination:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site specific 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure outside providers have risk assessment in place when planning visit Staff to brief pupils on inherent dangers 		Ensure you have documents in hand to check prior to visit
Unsupervised /Free Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various potential outcomes if children not fully prepared 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear purpose identified for unsupervised time Children fully briefed on unsupervised procedures Children in pairs or in threes where appropriate. Children to be given check in times in person and / or by mobile 	6	Check student history of previous trips i.e. shop lifting, running away.

Lost Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended unplanned time alone raising risk levels 	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost children procedure to be used if necessary Children supervised at all times except for planned autonomous activities Children clearly briefed on day's timetable and procedures Specific briefing on lost procedures 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform school immediately School to inform police and parents
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various potential outcomes if not prepared and assessed thoroughly 	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear warnings given if behaviour fails to meet expected high standards One-to-one supervision until behaviour is modified Removal back to Avocet House Any planned or unplanned positive handling, Consider Police involvement. Staff identification with badge on their person Provision will be in place to remove any uncooperative students from the activity 	6	Inform school immediately
Injury / Minor injury (First Aid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks are slow response compounds symptoms of original injury 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid Kit to go in vehicles involved in visits At least one first aid qualified member of staff on the trip 		
Ill intentioned Strangers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of potential outcomes 	12	<p>Children briefed on sensible approach and warned in a balanced way that most adults are okay. Precautions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not go off alone with anyone Be aware of location and that other people are around 	4	If in trouble shout loudly to attract attention

Specialist Education Services

ACTIVITIES AND VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT

This form has been completed in line with the Health and Safety Policy

Compiled by: Lisa Rutland	Date Compiled: 20.08.24
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SECTION ONE

Date of Visit/Activity: See Visits Form	Name of Visit/Activity: Cinema Visit	Category: A
Location: Cinemas in Norwich, Great Yarmouth & Lowestoft other cities.	Activity: Watching Movies	
Visit Leader: See Visits Form	Staff: See Visits Form	

SECTION TWO

Young People on Visit <i>Please list below</i>	Considerations for Particular Individuals <i>Please check Young People's risk assessments within the context of the visit, and list variations/considerations below. If necessary, a Day to Day/Child Specific Risk Assessment should be completed</i>
See Visits Form	

Aspect	Potential Risks	Risk Score Without Controls	Actions/Precautions/Control Measures	Risk Score With Controls	Further Actions And Comments, Prompts
Movie Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate content viewed 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all children only see movies that are age appropriate as per the British Board of Film Classification 	4	
Movie Special Effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of inducing an epileptic seizure, resulting in possible physical injury 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults to research movie to check for any warnings and guidelines for suffers of epilepsy if a child with epilepsy is to be taken to the movie 	2	
Dark Cinema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slips, trips and falls • Cuts, scrapes and grazes • Inappropriate contact between young people 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all children take extra care when entering dark cinema with climbing stairs and finding seats in low light • Adults should ensure they sit directly with children as opposed to on a different row • Ensure consideration is given to where each child sits with adults sitting in between children where necessary to prevent negative behaviours • if there are any safeguarding concerns around the children in the group adults should ensure they sit between those children at risk 	4	
Access to Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate behaviour in response to not getting what they want 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child to be given clear expectations prior to going in any shop 	4	Adults to be aware of all children's risk assessments in

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stealing 	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is closely supervised whilst visiting shops if previous / recent history of stealing is suspected 	4	relation to history of stealing
Child Absconding / Getting Lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible risks from ill intentioned strangers. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to stay within eye-sight of adult at all times Children to stay near adult to avoid getting lost. Pre-arranged meeting point to be agreed at start of visit in case accidental separation occurs 	4	If child goes missing, all attempts will be made to find them, DCM to be informed, police will be called at last resort after consultation with DCM
Contact with Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threat from ill intentioned strangers 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to be aware of the dangers of strangers. To stay with the supervising adults and to listen to the adults at all times 	4	Police to be informed immediately Inform DCM
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury or death from collision 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to stay away from / behave sensibly around busy roads and traffic Use pedestrian crossing areas / lights where available Use green cross code when crossing roads Awareness in car park areas 	4	Emergency services to be called immediately in the event of an accident. Inform DCM

Specialist Education Services

ACTIVITIES AND VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT

This form has been completed in line with the Health and Safety Policy

Compiled by: Lisa Rutland	Date Compiled: 07.04.25
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SECTION ONE

Date of Visit/Activity:	Ongoing	Name of Visit/Activity:	City/Town/Village visit	Category:	Day to Day
Location:	Local towns and villages	Activity:	Visit to local towns and villages for the purpose of shopping / park visits / restaurants		
Visit Leader:		Staff:			

SECTION TWO

Young People on Visit <i>Please list below</i>	Considerations for Particular Individuals <i>Please check Young People's risk assessments within the context of the visit, and list variations/considerations below. If necessary, a Day to Day/Child Specific Risk Assessment should be completed</i>
	N.B. certain activities such as the cinema would need an activity specific risk assessment to run alongside this one

SECTION THREE

Aspect	Potential Risks	Risk Score Without Controls	Actions/Precautions/Control Measures	Risk Score With Controls	Further Actions And Comments, Prompts
Water Margins	Threat of possible injury or drowning	8	Young people to stay away from / behave sensibly around open water areas Awareness of weather and/or tidal conditions Make the group aware of dangers No paddling/swimming Awareness of where public safety equipment is available Stay clear and behind barriers on shear drops into deep water ie quays and locks	4	Mobile phone and First Aid kit is carried. DCM is aware of where the staff have gone (by way of completion of In/Out book) and expected time of return.
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injury or death from collision 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to stay away from / behave sensibly around busy roads and traffic Use pedestrian crossing areas / lights where available Use green cross code when crossing roads Awareness in car park areas 	4	Emergency services to be called immediately in the event of an accident. Inform DCM
Access to shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inappropriate behaviour in response to not getting what they want Stealing 	6 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child to be given clear expectations prior to going in any shop 	4 4	Adults to be aware of all children's risk assessments in relation to history of stealing

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child is closely supervised whilst visiting shops if previous / recent history of stealing is suspected 		
Child Absconding / Getting Lost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible risks from ill intentioned strangers. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to stay within eye-sight of adult at all times • Children to stay near adult to avoid getting lost. • Pre-arranged meeting point to be agreed at start of visit in case accidental separation occurs 	4	If child goes missing, all attempts will be made to find them, DCM to be informed, police will be called at last resort after consultation with DCM
Contact with Public	Threat from ill intentioned strangers	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to be aware of the dangers of strangers. To stay with the supervising adults and to listen to the adults at all times 	4	Police to be informed immediately Inform DCM

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LTD

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Email: avocet.house@specialisteducation.co.uk

Turnstone House, Birtwick Park, Old Bungay
Road, Kirby Cane, Bungay, Suffolk, NR35 2HP
Tel: 01508 517000
Email: turnstone.house@specialisteducation.co.uk

EXTERNAL PROVIDER APPROVAL FORM (Educational use of commercial, charitable and private facilities)

The Educational Visits Coordinator (VC) or Visit Leader

Complete the front page and then forward it with the rest of the form to the prospective Provider. The Provider should return a copy. It might be more appropriate to make arrangements to visit in person.

If the Provider holds a current LOtC Quality Badge the Visit Leader should complete section 1 only and return the form to the Visits Coordinator.

The Provider*

Please give careful consideration to each statement on the following pages and sign, in the appropriate space, to indicate the standard of accommodation or service that you will provide to Specialist Education Services Ltd. Please indicate any statements, which do not apply to your provision.

Space is also provided for you to detail the centre registration or approval scheme for which you currently hold accreditation. Certificates and documentation should be available for inspection on request.

Once approval has been given, it will be valid for all Specialist Education Services Ltd establishments unless some aspect of provision was not accounted for in the original request. The approval is valid for three years but may be withdrawn at any time. We trust that within that time any significant changes to the context of the form will be notified in writing.

Specialist Education Services Ltd will not give approval for visits to centres, which do not meet the standards listed in this document.

To be Completed by the Visit Leader or VC	
Name of Provider	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Type of Provider	

* Provider could be a hotel, campsite, tour operator, activity provider, outdoor centre, etc.

ACTIVITY CENTRES LICENSING REGULATIONS 1996

Providers in the UK who operate activities covered by the scope of the 1996 Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations must attach a copy of the Activity Provider's current licence and the schedule to that licence.

Additional Information

Please also attach a copy of your Public Liability Insurance Certificate and, where applicable, your Personal Liability Insurance Certificate.

Declaration By The Provider

To the best of my knowledge the information given below is correct. I undertake to inform Specialist Education Services at the earliest opportunity of any substantive change to this information.

SIGNED	DATE
NAME	
POSITION IN ORGANISATION	
NAME OF COMPANY	
ADDRESS OF COMPANY	
TELEPHONE NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LIMITED THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

Please return this request for approval to the establishment listed on the first page of this document

For Specialist Education Services Use Only

EXTERNAL PROVIDER FACILITATOR NAME:

DATE FORM SENT TO PROVIDER:

NAME OF VISITS COORDINATOR:

Approval By Visits' Coordinator

THE ABOVE NAMED PROVIDER IS AUTHORISED: YES / NO (circle one)

SIGNED (Visits' Coordinator):

DATE:

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LTD EXTERNAL PROVIDER APPROVAL QUESTIONNAIRE

STATEMENT	YES/IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	N/A	COMMENT
For Providers that hold a current LOtC Quality Badge it is ONLY necessary to complete section 1 and pass to VC				
1. Does the Provider hold a Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge which is in date?				
LOtC Quality Badge Registration No	Expiry date			
For Providers that DO NOT hold a current LOtC Quality Badge sections 2 – 23 should be completed				
2. The Provider has a Code of Conduct for visiting groups which all participants of the activity will be made aware of upon arrival.				
3. There is a clear definition of responsibilities between providers and visiting groups regarding supervision and welfare of participants.				
4. There are adequate and regular opportunities for liaison with the provider staff and visiting staff.				
5. There are appropriate programme options in the event of bad weather, staff illness and other unforeseen circumstances.				
6. The provider is approved/licensed by the appropriate authority such as Local Government, Governing Body or otherwise where applicable.				
Insurance				
7. I enclose a copy of the Provider's public liability insurance. (minimum level of £5m is required)				
Health and Safety Policy				
8. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained and records are available for inspection.				
9. The Provider complies with all relevant safety regulations such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, COSHH, Environmental Health requirements and has a health and safety policy and written risk assessments which are available for inspection. (UK based providers)				
Staffing and Activity Management				
10. The Provider operates a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment, which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for the safety and welfare of participants are competent to undertake the duties.				
11. The Provider has a robust recruitment process to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with young people, including enhanced DBS check for any staff engaged in regulated activities.				

STATEMENT	YES/IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	N/A	COMMENT
12. The Provider will make clear their expectations of how responsibilities for the supervision and welfare of participants are shared between Provider staff and visiting staff.				
13. The staff identified as having any level of management responsibility for a particular programme or activity possesses the competencies, qualifications and/or experience required to deliver the activity.				
14. Operating procedures conform to a relevant National Governing Body (NGB) (or equivalent organisation) where these are relevant to the safe conduct of the activity at the level being undertaken and comply with the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority qualification matrix where applicable.				
15. Provider staff competencies are confirmed by possession of NGB qualifications or staff have their competence confirmed by an appropriately qualified and experienced technical adviser.				
16. Where there is no appropriate NGB or equivalent organisation for an activity, operating procedures and staff training and assessment requirements are explained in the Providers code of practice.				
17. Participants have access to a person with a current first aid qualification. Staff are practiced and competent in accident and emergency procedures.				
18. The staff have the experience, competence and professionalism to work with the age range and abilities of the group.				
Equipment				
19. All equipment used in activities is suited to the task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary.				
Vehicles				
20. The Provider's vehicles and trailers, if used within or hired from the UK, comply with existing UK regulations.				
21. Vehicles and trailers are kept in a roadworthy condition, comply with existing regulations, and are appropriately insured.				
22. Vehicles have forward-facing seats and are fitted with lap and diagonal seat belts.				
23. All drivers are appropriately qualified and adhere to drivers' hours regulations.				

Specialist Education Services

External Provider Level of Public Liability Insurance Consideration

Name of External Provider being considered for a lower level of Public Liability insurance

Name:	Type of Activity:
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Consideration	Yes/No	Comments
Is the activity a Cat B? (If Yes do not approve)		
Is the activity low impact such as dance, drama, yoga? (If Yes could be approved)		
Would the activity be scored as a 2 or lower on the SES risk table for impact? (If Yes could be approved)		
Does the activity involve height such as climbing walls or high ropes courses? (If Yes do not approve)		
Is the activity high impact (risk table score of 3 or higher) such as a sport that might involve 'incidental or full contact'? (If Yes do not approve)		
Does the activity use equipment that could be dangerous such as archery, bushcraft, go karting? (If Yes do not approve)		
Rational for approval/non approval: (Risk vs benefit to young person)		

Approval by the Principal and Director

The above-named provider is approved for use with a Public Liability insurance level of:	
£	Million
Signed (Principal)	
Date	
Signed (Director)	
Date	
SES insurance company informed by:	
Date email sent:	

Specialist Education Services

External Provider Checks for Activities Being Delivered on SES Grounds

Name of External Provider (EP)

Name:	Type of Activity:
-------	-------------------

Consideration	Comments
Has a schedule of planned activities been given to SES from the EP?	
Will the EP's or SES risk assessments be in effect for the activity?	
If EP's risk assessments are used for the activity, are they in line with SES practice and policy?	
If SES risk assessments to be used, have they been shared with the EP?	
EP Signature to verify SES risk assessments have been shared and understood	
If SES staff are needed to support with an activity, will they need training or a briefing session prior to the activity?	
Has the EP been briefed on the individual young people's needs and group dynamics?	
What level of supervision has been agreed in the respect of any young people who are not involved in the activity?	
How will equipment or tools be managed safely throughout the activity and quantities checked in at the end of the activity?	
Who will be responsible for administering First Aid and recording any accidents that might occur?	
How will SES be informed if a young person leaves the activity?	

Visit Coordinator signature and date	
Principal signature for Category B activities	

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LTD

WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS PROCESS SUMMARY

Providing young people with an opportunity to experience real work environments is fundamentally important to their personal development and employability. All work placements are tailored specifically to the young person and are subject to a similar level of scrutiny to the approval for Category B visits. The exception to this would be one off accompanied work visits that are catered for through standard Category A risk assessment.

The first stage of any potential work placement would involve an informal discussion with the possible provider or employer, establishing parameters for any collaboration and defining objectives for the young person. Once this has been agreed, the work placement approval form would be completed in consultation with a lead adult from the Learning Centre team. Once approved, key information regarding the placement and risk assessments for the young person would be shared.

Prior to the commencement of the placement, a visit form is required, as well as a risk assessment covering any details not covered by the employers own procedures and risk management. The level of supervision is defined according to the abilities of the young person. Following the first day on placement, a lead adult communicates directly with the employer to check progress and make any necessary adjustments for following weeks.

Once the placement is completed, an evaluation form is sent to the employer to seek feedback on the experience, including the performance of the young person, and communication with the Learning Centre. If appropriate, a written reference would be provided for the young person.

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LTD

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WORK EXPERIENCE PROVIDER FORM

Careers Information Guidance Advisor

Complete the front page and ensure the rest of the form is finished in consultation with the prospective Work Experience Provider. This needs to be finalised prior to any young person entering into a regular work experience placement. It might be more appropriate to make arrangements to visit in person.

The Work Experience Provider

Please give careful consideration to each statement on the following pages and mark in the appropriate space, to indicate that the essential requirements are met in order to provide a successful placement. Please indicate any statements that do not apply to your provision.

Any relevant certificates or documentation should be available for inspection if required. Please attach a copy of your Employers' and Public Liability insurance certificates.

Specialist Education Services Ltd will ensure all necessary preliminary steps are in place prior to the commencement of a work experience placement for a young person. This information process is two way to allow for both parties to understand their level of commitment to the placement.

To be Completed by the SES Careers Information Guidance Advisor	
Name of Work Experience Provider	
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone Number	
Email Address	
Type of Work Experience Placement	

Declaration By The Work Experience Provider

To the best of my knowledge the information given below is correct. I undertake to inform Specialist Education Services at the earliest opportunity of any substantive change to this information.

SIGNED	DATE
NAME	
POSITION IN ORGANISATION	
NAME OF COMPANY	
ADDRESS OF COMPANY	
TELEPHONE NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LIMITED THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

Please return this form to the establishment listed on the first page of this document

For Specialist Education Services Use Only

NAME OF WORK EXPERIENCE FACILITATOR:

DATE FORM SENT TO PROVIDER:

NAME OF VISITS COORDINATOR:

Approval By Visits' Coordinator

THE ABOVE NAMED PROVIDER IS AUTHORISED: YES / NO (circle one)

SIGNED (Visits' Coordinator):

DATE:

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES LTD WORK EXPERIENCE PROVIDER APPROVAL QUESTIONNAIRE

STATEMENT	YES/IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	N/A	COMMENT
Insurance				
1. I enclose a copy of the Provider's Employers' Liability insurance certificate. (minimum level of £5m is required)				
2. I enclose a copy of the Provider's Public Liability insurance certificate. (minimum level of £5m is required)				
Health and Safety Policy				
3. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained, and records are available for inspection. All staff are practised and competent in accident/emergency procedures.				
4. The Provider will ensure the young person is made aware of fire drill/evacuation procedures and where the muster point is				
5. The Provider has a Safeguarding policy in place that will cover the young person whilst under their supervision. If this is not in place, then the Provider agrees to be supplied with information related to the safeguarding of the young person and an agreed safeguarding protocol will be established. (Please add comments to this effect)				
6. The Provider complies with all relevant safety regulations such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, COSHH, Environmental Health requirements and has a health and safety policy and written risk assessments which are available for inspection. (UK based providers)				
Staffing and Activity Management				
7. The Provider will identify a suitably qualified/experienced employee to supervise and oversee the welfare of the young person whilst in the work place.				
8. The Provider maintains local operating procedures for each activity offered as part of the work experience. Where appropriate, these written assessments are available for inspection.				
9. The Young Person will have access to a person with a current first aid qualification. Staff are practiced and competent in accident and emergency procedures.				
10. There is a code of conduct agreed between the Provider and the young person. This takes into account the Employers own Code of Conduct for its employees.				

Equipment				
11. All equipment used in activities is suited to the task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary				
Knowledge of Young People				
12. All relevant information about the young person is shared and discussed with the Provider prior to a placement being agreed upon.				

SPECIALIST EDUCATION SERVICES
WORK PLACEMENT EVALUATION FORM

Placement:

Was the process of setting up the placement straight forward and easy?	
Did you receive the right amount of information about the student prior to the placement?	
Did the student meet with your expectations?	
What were the highlights of the placement?	
Were any issues dealt with effectively by staff at Avocet House?	
Would you consider having another student placed with you?	
Are there any improvements in our procedure that you could suggest	
Finally would you recommend a student from Avocet House to other business in the locality.	

Signature

Date.....

5 INFORMATION IN RELATION TO GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE IN THE KEY AREAS OF ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES, FIELD STUDIES, DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD SCHEME AND VISITS ABROAD

This section identifies safe practice in a range of specific activities that may be undertaken as part of the educational visit. The advice contained does not include every possible eventuality, or indeed every activity. Staff should also refer to the Safe Practice in Physical Education, School Sport, and physical activity book.

5.1 ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES CATEGORISATION

Adventure Activities will never be regarded as an SES day-to-day activity and will fall into the either category A or category B activities.

Category A Adventure Visits/Activities

Visits/Activities which present no special risks and can be safely supervised by a Visit Leader who has been judged competent to lead visits generally, are considered to be Category A. In accordance with good practice, these activities are conducted following the SES's guidance for visits. These visits only require a visits form and specific risk assessment and approval by the VC and / or Principal.

Examples of this category include:

- walking in country parks or on non-remote country paths;
- field studies in environments presenting no particular hazards.

Category B Adventure Activities and Visits to more hazardous environments

Activities for which safe supervision requires that the leader should normally have undertaken a recognised course of training, gained relevant experience and have been judged competent, either by the appropriate NGB or a technical adviser for the specific activity. Activities requiring the above are Category B activities.

Approval for Category B visits must be given by the VC and Principal. In some instances such as a trips abroad, approval in principle from the Directors of SES would be needed.

The process of training, accumulation of experience and assessment may lead to the award of a recognised NGB qualification. Alternatively, it may lead to a local or site specific validation.

An NGB award such as the Basic Expedition Leadership Award (BELA) may also be relevant as a measure of competence for Visit Leaders supervising activities in Category B.

Examples of activities might include:

- walking in open country
- camping in unfamiliar or remote environments;
- cycling on unfamiliar roads or non-remote off-road terrain;
- low level initiative challenges;
- field studies on the coast and/or where there is a tidal influence.

Activities in Category B also include all those within the activities scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, as well as other activities for which this rigour of assessment of leader competence is appropriate. Examples of the latter might include:

- low level or non-remote hill or moorland walking;
- climbing on indoor climbing walls;
- swimming in inland waters.

Nominated SES staff or contracted consultants who are able to assess and sign off colleagues for leadership in Category B activities will be suitably experienced, qualified and aware of the responsibilities which are incorporated in the role. Permission should must always be sought from the current SES insurers prior to nominated SES adults leading adventurous activities. The VC or Principal offer support in completing this process.

A comprehensive Specialist Education Services list of approved activity centres / providers is maintained by the Visits Coordinator at both Avocet House and Turnstone House, located on the staff area of the network.

5.1.1 Adventurous Activities

The following activities are considered to fall within the adventurous activities category:

Land Based Activities	Water based Activities
Aerial runways, zip wires	Angling – from a boat, or on land where waters are turbulent or prone to rapid changes in level/depth/speed
Archery	Canoeing – kayaks/open canoes
Assault courses, high and low rope courses	Powered water sports (e.g. jet skiing) and other powered craft
Camping	Rafting and raft building
Caving, potholing and mine exploration	Rowing
Climbing (rock/wall), sea cliff traversing, abseiling	Sailing
Cycling - mountain biking	Snorkelling
Martial arts, self defence	Sub aqua activities
Go-karting, quad biking	Surfing
Gorge or ghyll scrambling	Swimming – open water, pools
Horse riding and pony trekking	Water skiing
Orienteering in unfamiliar environments	Windsurfing
Paintball	
Problem solving (some activities)	Airborne Activities
Skiing – snow/dry slope	Balloon flights
Walking – normal, open, wild country	Gliding, helicopter flights
	Parachuting, paragliding, parascending or other non-commercial flights

This list is not definitive and the VC and Visit Leaders should bear in mind that activities which would not normally be considered hazardous might become so by reason of environmental conditions or the nature of the group

undertaking them. Approval must be sought for any visit or activity not listed that has an equivalent risk to the above activities.

The following description may be useful in deciding whether an activity should be regarded as hazardous, but it should not be regarded as definitive in an insurance context:

'Adventure activities are defined as an aspect of outdoor learning which could involve the participant in some degree of either physical or psychological risk, or which involves some degree of inescapable activity. In general, field sports and games can be stopped at a moment's notice, and the generated tension, competition or even risk eliminated. With adventure activities, the participants cannot be suddenly isolated from risk on the blow of a whistle.'

For visits abroad, UK residential visits or visits which involve adventurous activities, either the Principal or VC must ensure that appropriate additional insurance cover is in place if required in case of accident and other matters needing medical treatment.

Full details of the insurance can be found in Section 3.16 of this document.

The Principal, VC and Visit Leader must establish that the provider of any adventurous activities has appropriate public liability insurance by obtaining a copy of their certificate/policy, and where required, the External Provider Form.

5.1.2 Adventure Activities Licensing Authority Regulations (AALA)

The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) is now governed by the HSE, and oversees the following categories of activities in the UK:

- caving
- climbing
- trekking (including horse trekking, mountain biking, off-piste skiing, etc.)
- watersport activities

Staff can log onto the HSE website to check if a provider holds a licence:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm>

It is important to recognise that although some organisations (schools, in most circumstances) are exempt from the need to hold a licence, they are not exempt from the need to apply the same standards. For the first time, there are legally stated expectations of qualifications, experience and other standards in relation to defined activities. These expectations would likely be applied by the courts, irrespective of whether the organisation was subject to, or exempted from licensing.

It is essential that staff organising adventurous activities understand the implications of the AALA Regulations, both to ensure compliance where necessary and to avoid inadvertently breaking the law. **It is particularly important to ensure that any provider of defined activities is licensed by AALA (HSE).** SES will not approve educational visits that involve

adventurous activities in the UK where an activity provider, providing licensable activities, is unlicensed.

It is the responsibility of the staff to check whether a centre offering activities requires a licence under the Activity Centres Act 1995 (Young Persons' Safety). The visit Leader must obtain from the Provider the following AALA license details.

- its number
- schedule information
- expiry date

Staff can check its validity by checking online at <https://aala.hse.gov.uk/aala/>. Support for, and verification of, this process will be provided by the VC and/or Principal.

Only when this information is known should a Visit Leader or VC make a firm booking. AALA Licensed centres will not require verification of licensed activities by SES. However areas such as checking appropriateness of accommodation, etc., remain the responsibility of the Visit Leader, details of which will be evident within the Field File.

Delegation of Responsibility when young people are undertaking adventurous activities.

Under common law, staff accompanying a group on the visit have ultimate duty of care. They cannot totally discharge this duty of care but they can occasionally delegate their responsibility by temporarily entrusting the safety of young people undertaking specific activities to, for example, a specialist instructor at a centre. This would apply when young people participate in adventurous activities controlled by experts at a centre where special arrangements exist. At such times the Visit Leader must remain accessible to all groups at all times. Throughout the rest of the visit the responsibility will be with the accompanying Visit Leaders and Group Leaders

5.1.3 SES - Led Adventure Activities

This applies to an activity that is off-site and totally organised, undertaken and completed by SES staff. It means that is the Visit Leader and key staff are immediately responsible for the safe supervision of the young people and the activity.

Adventure Activity

In the context of this document, an activity that has intrinsic hazards over and above those met within the everyday life of the participants and which need to be controlled through careful supervision, normally by a competent person with specialist skills in the activity.

If a member of staff is to organise, lead and instruct young people on adventure activities they should complete the checks set out in this guidance under Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction in Section 3.7

The Visit Leader of such a trip must pay attention to the knowledge and experience of the group prior to commencement. All hazards should be highlighted to avoid making assumptions, especially if there is any uncertainty of individual levels of knowledge.

SES recognises and acknowledges the distinctive features of SES-led Adventure Activities. These can be summarised by the list below:

- staff may work with the same young people over several years in a ‘club’ environment, hence they know the young people and their behaviour in different circumstances;
- the young persons can progress over the years to high standards in the activity;
- the young persons are encouraged to plan some of their activities and develop self-reliance;
- the young persons involved with SES-led adventure activity programmes are more likely to continue with the activity unsupported once they have left;
- parents will frequently attain a higher understanding of what the young persons are involved in;
- implicit in our vision statement “Care and Education Without Limits” is that we strive for increasingly appropriate and safe challenge.

5.1.4 Pertinent Guidance Publications

Essential reference material, particularly with regard to staff competence, is included in: *DfE Health and Safety: Responsibilities and duties for schools (2022)*

The National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for various adventure activities produce and publish their own guidance and maintain leader training and assessment programmes. Staff should note, however, that they might not always distinguish the minimum safety standards from more prescriptive standards that are designed to promote the development of performance in the activity.

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award has its own clear structure, procedures and guidelines that should be consulted in addition to the guidance in this document.

5.1.5 The Role of the Visits Coordinator (VC) in SES-led Adventurous Activities

The following are essential tasks for the VC in monitoring this work:

- ensure that the leaders are competent, with appropriate training, experience and expertise - ensure there are copies of any certification and check that it is still valid;
- make sure that relevant risk assessments are carried out and/or updated in line with SES requirements and that the findings are incorporated into planning;
- check that activity guidelines are followed;
- obtain specialist advice from technical advisers where necessary;

- ensure the proper delegation, control and storage of specialist equipment;
- put in place systems for random monitoring of activities and where specialist activities are involved, the use of technical advisers as appropriate in liaison the Principal and other Specialist SES Staff.
- verify activity is covered by SES insurance.

5.1.6 Ascertaining Competence – General

SES Staff, as opposed to centre instructors, may not have such regular experience of instructing an activity nor be as familiar with the activity sites. Similarly, staff that are involved in supervising the same activity at the same venue on an infrequent basis may not be as alert to abnormal conditions. These two factors could lessen their awareness of specific risks. Ascertaining the competence of staff involved with SES-led adventure activities is imperative.

5.1.7 Means of Verifying/Demonstrating Competence

The following are ways that competence can be verified and/or demonstrated:

- NGB Awards/Qualifications
- NVQs
- Local Validation
- Site specific assessment
- Experience confirmed by assessment in the field
- Proven Personal Experience (PPE) Log

5.1.8 National Governing Body Awards/Qualifications

NGB awards exist for many adventure activities. The responsible body for granting the qualification is the National Governing Body (NGB) of the particular sport. The appropriate NGB qualification for an activity or environment is listed in the matrices in Section 5.7

5.1.9 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)

NVQs are work related, competence-based qualifications that reflect the skills and knowledge required to do a job effectively. NVQs represent national standards that are recognised by employers throughout the country and are based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS). NVQs are most relevant where they incorporate the relevant NGB qualification. (Please note Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) are equivalent to NVQs).

5.1.10 Site Specific Assessment

This assessment will take place under the guidance of the VC and or Principal, where necessary, using an appropriate technical adviser. Site-specific assessment takes place when an individual is specifically trained to cope with the unique demands of a particular named location/activity. Details

of any local validation should be checked with the VC and Principal and that it is still current.

5.1.11 Experience Confirmed by Assessment in the Field

The acquisition of competence can be seen as the process of learning from accumulated experiences. The two key aspects that combine to bring about competence in adventure activities are personal experience in the activity and related training in it.

Attendance on training events should be seen as enhancing personal experience, not as an alternative to it. Experience (the factor on which sound safety judgements are based) takes time to be accumulated.

SES and its delegated staff are responsible for making such judgements of competence. Proof of all experience on which any part of the assessment is based will need to be validated by the employer. If experience is the only criterion for assessment, an external Technical Adviser will be brought in to assess competence. The cost of this is to be met by SES.

5.1.12 Proven Personal Experience (PPE)

Whilst recognising the need for staff to gain NGB Awards (e.g. BELA and WGLA) as their skills, knowledge and experience grows, many adults appointed to posts with SES will have an extended range of experience not verified by award levels. In order to apply for BELA and WGLA an amount of experience is required. Staff will be expected to complete their own walking and activity log to demonstrate proven personal experience. For this purpose a checklist has been created in line with the learning outcomes from the BELA. This should be kept in the front of the PPE log to indicate where the staff member feels their experience may apply.

We feel therefore that it is appropriate in certain circumstances whilst an adult may be working towards an award, for their PPE to be sufficient for some types of outdoor activity in Lowland Country and Low Grade Open Country.

5.2 LAND-BASED ACTIVITIES

5.2.1 Categories for Walking in Open Countryside

At SES we believe the children have an entitlement to visit a range of environments including those of outstanding natural beauty such as our National Parks. Indeed regular annual camps are organised to areas such as the Lake District, Derbyshire Peak District, North Yorkshire Moors and Isle of Wight.

It is important that we define in greater detail what we mean by walking in the countryside as there is no one single term that adequately defines the ground covered by the Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA) and the Walking Group Leader Award (WGLA).

Technically, at one end of the continuum, the moment you step out of the car on arrival in an 'Open Countryside' area then you are walking in open countryside by walking along a short path to a stream by the car park. At the other extreme there may be a planned walk of significant length over paths and other terrain at varying levels within open countryside on route to walking on Scafell Pike which needs technical knowledge, appropriate clothing, a degree of fitness and significant preparation.

At SES we believe that our children and staff should be able to access the pleasures of outdoor environments in the same way children would who are on a family holiday, whilst taking every reasonable and prudent step to ensure their safety.

Therefore for the purposes of all Activities SES consider there to be a category of 'Low Grade' Open Country walking.

5.2.2 Normal Local Country Walking

'Normal' countryside would usually be cultivated, at an altitude of less than 300 metres, be close to vehicular access and have no specific hazards, (e.g. unprotected mine shafts, crags or gullies).

Providing basic precautions are taken, such activity is considered to be of a low risk nature (Category A). Leaders will be expected to have researched the area carefully in order to identify particular risks and to apply appropriate safety measures (these risk assessments must be approved by the VC or Principal in writing and shared with the group as appropriate).

5.2.3 Low Grade Open Country Walking

The staff leading and involved in such walking will still be required to have experience of walking with groups in Open Country and meet the usual levels of expectation regarding group control for approval to be granted. Low Grade Open Country Walking is under the same criteria as that described for Open Country Walking but with the following extra conditions/restrictions:

- Planned walks will never be more than 15 mins from emergency vehicle access.
- Walks will follow tourist routes available in proprietary walking guide books that are graded easy to moderate.
- More typically they will be a low altitude, valley walks.
- Walks will not be in excess of 5 miles distance start to finish
- Walks will be below 400m

Within the remit of some residential camps staff may choose to enhance the children's experience by driving to key viewing points that are beyond the scope of access through the Wild Country and Open Country criteria. This invariably involves a short walk of a matter of a few hundred yards from vehicular parking where navigational skills are not as in demand. Typically the vehicle may never be out of site. Two illustrative examples might be a short visit to the Roman Fort on the top of Hard Knot Pass in The Lake District and the drive up to nearly the top of Mam Tor in Derbyshire. Group

control and clarity of boundary are still extremely important. SES will approve such activities on the basis of being clearly identified in the planned itinerary with an associated risk assessment. Impromptu stops and short excursions from cars in Lower Level Open Country are acceptable provided the staff conduct a common sense, dynamic risk assessment.

Providing basic precautions are taken, Low Grade Open Country Walking is considered to be of a low risk nature (Category A). Leaders will be expected to have researched the area carefully in order to identify particular risks and to apply appropriate safety measures (these risk assessments must be approved by the VC or Principal in writing and shared with the group as appropriate).

None of the above negates SES.'s commitment to rigorous staff training and a vision of a high level of accredited expertise across the staff team.

5.2.4 Open Country Walking

Altitude is not the only criterion; remoteness and the presence of objective hazards (bogs, rivers, crags) are also significant factors. In trying to equate the experience of leaders and the group to a proposed route, it is necessary to look at a range of factors that may affect the safety and well-being of the group. Such factors include:

- terrain – remoteness, steepness, presence/absence of footpaths, altitude, specific hazards (e.g. mines, quarries, MOD areas);
- time of year, weather, underfoot conditions, length of day;
- actual and forecast weather conditions;
- leader – experience and familiarity with the area;
- group – experience, age, fitness, equipment.

Therefore, Open Country Walking terrain should:

- be within reasonable walking distance of emergency vehicle access. This must be less than 30 minutes walking time (allowing for uphill sections) of any part of the route;
- be neither generally rugged or steep;
- have footpaths which are well defined on map and ground;
- be of no more than moderate height, rarely above 450 metres and not above 600 metres.

Many areas of countryside meeting the above criteria will lie in the geographical areas defined below as 'Wild Country'. Visit Leaders proposing Open Country Walking routes in such wild country areas must involve the VC and or Principal fully and risk assessments should clearly acknowledge and account for how dramatically terrain and conditions can change in such areas. In other words planned routes may fit open country criteria but the implications of deviations off route, (unforeseen flooding, absconding child etc), become greater than open country walking in less dramatic areas.

Open Country Walking is a Category B activity.

Qualifications and Experience

Leaders of routes in Open Country Walking terrain must:

- have considerable personal walking and navigational experience and provide evidence, if required, of such experience to the VC/ Principal (Keeping a personal log is effective);
- have appropriate group management experience, to the satisfactions of the VC and/or Principal;
- be familiar with the proposed area and route;
- hold a first aid qualification according to NGB guidelines and be aware of emergency procedures;
- be appropriately equipped to deal with emergencies;
- carry equipment appropriate to the route and time of year;
- have arranged emergency contacts and left full details of the route at base, including a contingency plan;
- ensure attention to environmental and access issues.

Qualifications and Experience

Basic Expedition Leaders Award (BELA)
Walking Group Leaders (MLTB)
Mountain Leader (ML)

Minimum Staffing Ratio: one staff to two children + one extra staff

5.2.5 High Level and Mountain Walking

This activity takes place in 'Wild Country' areas that are remote from help and vehicular access, where the group must be reliant on their own resources. Weather conditions can change quickly, wind and rain are frequent and visibility often poor. In such circumstances a fall, illness or navigational error can have serious ramifications. The risk of hypothermia is significant.

In the United Kingdom these 'wild country' areas can be found in:

Dartmoor	Exmoor
Bodmin Moor	Brecon Beacons
Black Mountains	Mid and North Wales
mountains	
Peak District (Dark Peak or Northern Moors)	Isle of Man
North Yorkshire Pennines	Cheviots and the Durham
Lakes	
Lake District	North York Moors
Mourne Mountains	Yorkshire Dales
Scottish Borders	Galloway Hills
Sperrin Mountains and North Antrim Hills	
Central, Western and Northern Highlands of Scotland	
Isle of Skye, Arran, Harris and Lewis	

If in any doubt, VCs or Visit Leaders should liaise with the Principal who will consult with and notify the Directors of SES. All hill walking or fieldwork in wild country abroad must be notified to the directors of SES.

Qualifications and Experience

See Qualifications Matrix Section 5.7

Group size:

In our particular circumstances, large groups are highly unlikely, but for the sake of thoroughness, large groups (9, including staff, upwards) create difficulties and must be avoided in wild country.

One adult should be designated as deputy leader for the actual walk or expedition because organisers will need to consider the effect of injury, illness or fatigue to any leader and the subsequent affect it could have on the group. This second person should have enough competence to assume a temporary leadership role.

Winter conditions

The UK's climate is dangerously unpredictable. At sea level, winter conditions can be present as early as October and remain until May. Such weather conditions can occur at any time of the year on higher ground.

It is therefore impractical to define 'winter conditions' in terms of dates. Winter Conditions is therefore taken to imply:

- all occasions when the route or any part of it is covered in snow and ice;
- times when the existing or forecast weather conditions for a route include near freezing temperatures with strong winds or persistent rain or snow. Wind chill factors must also be taken into account.

Conditions during the winter months are compounded by short daylight hours. This has significant implications for route length and group fitness. Leaders proposing to lead walking groups in such conditions should have, as a minimum, passed the Mountain Leader Training Board's Winter ML assessment and be personally experienced in such conditions and localities.

5.2.6 Camping

Camping can offer a cheap, valuable and exciting residential opportunity when properly organised and with appropriate forethought. Undertaken haphazardly and without proper training it can be a dispiriting and uncomfortable experience. It is vital that all camping should fall into the former category.

The following principles apply both to standing and mobile (i.e. lightweight) forms of camping.

Organisers must ensure that all sites and areas used are left clean with as little damage to the environment as possible.

In general, open fires are best avoided and should only be used in specific, designated areas and part of a planned camp experience with full specific risk assessments approved.

Staffing

A substantial proportion of staff involved should have significant experience of camping other than ordinary family camping. The ratio of staff and the balance between male and female will depend upon the nature of the particular camp. For more remote and self-sufficient camping, ideally at least one staff member should have a BELA award or considerable equivalent experience and relevant first aid qualification.

The Walking Group Leaders Award is a useful qualification for all Visit Leaders.

Safety

Perhaps the greatest hazard is fire and the Visit Leader should establish safety procedures of which all campers are made aware:

- adequate separation between tents is important, 3 metres is the recommended minimum distance;
- young people and staff should be familiar with the safe operation of all 'appliances' before the trip;
- establish first aid and fire points – the location of appropriate water and/or sand buckets;
- mark all containers of inflammable liquids store safely
- must not cook inside lightweight tents;
- on standing camps, the kitchen area is particularly at risk and should have its own water/sand buckets and, where possible, fire blankets and/or appropriate extinguishers;
- prohibit running and ball games near of stoves and tents;

Hygiene

The establishment of good practice and the provision of appropriate facilities are obviously essential. Inattention here can rapidly lead to a lowering of morale. Also recognise the age and particular needs of the group.

Leaders should give positive advice on personal hygiene to young people when necessary and make appropriate rules.

Keeping Healthy While Camping

It is accepted that, in the camping environment, risks cannot be avoided completely – but they can be recognised and reduced to reasonable levels by taking a few simple precautions.

Diarrhoea and vomiting (gastro-enteritis) can be a particular problem while camping. Illness of this type can range from unpleasant to life threatening in the case of E. Coli 0157. Germs can gain entry to the body in a variety of

ways, contaminated water can enter the mouth or skin during water based activities, for example. If a young person becomes ill while camping, it is important to seek prompt medical attention. All reasonable efforts should be made to prevent the spread of infection.

The Camp Site

Visit the site beforehand, wherever possible. If the camping field has been used for animal grazing, where possible it should have been cleared of all animals and animal faeces, and the grass cut short, for at least three weeks prior to the camp. The sun and rain will help to reduce the risk of harmful germs remaining.

Where running hot water is not available, make arrangements for proper hand washing as a minimum essential after going to the toilet, touching animals and before any food preparation or eating. A 'special' teaching session on this before the trip is useful, with continuing reinforcing advice.

Drinking Water

It is essential to ascertain whether the drinking water supply is safe or not. In the UK most drinking water from the mains via a tap is safe. Whenever water is collected from a doubtful or untreated source (e.g. a stream) then as a minimum requirement it should be boiled first. Boiled water can be stored for short periods in regularly cleaned and disinfected food grade storage containers. Water treatment kits/tablets can be used and users should read and follow the instructions carefully ensuring compliance.

Proprietary bottled water is a safe and convenient alternative where practical.

Four main areas require significant attention and organisation appropriate to the particular camp - its size, location and duration and the prevailing weather. These are:

- Sanitation
- Kitchen Waste
- Food storage
- Food preparation

Lightweight Camping

It is essential to undertake adequate advance preparation in which young people should acquire the appropriate skills of tent erection, stove lighting and meal preparation before being thrust on to the mountainside. Such practical skills will ensure, as far as is possible, that the experience will be one of satisfaction.

Use of Liquid Fuel Stoves

A court case, arising from severe injury to a school pupil and member of staff resulting from the incorrect use of Trangia stoves, highlights the dangers of incorrect practice in the use of this equipment. Essentially, incorrect

refuelling of a Trangia resulted in a severe explosion with consequential severe burns to both persons. The following procedures must be followed:

- Adequate, practical training in the use of stoves, the carriage and handling of fuel and the cooking process is essential before any expedition (including 'practice' expeditions) is undertaken. It is important that all participants are practised in these skills.
- The fuelling of liquid meth's stoves must only be from fuel bottles designed for the purpose. The only bottle to be used is the Trangia's own fuel bottle, specifically designed for use with Trangia stoves. Phase out the use of Sigg bottles.

Under no circumstances should refuelling take place directly from any open topped container.

Fuelling of stoves must not be carried out within five metres of any tent or lighted stove. Appropriate care should be taken to avoid spillage.

The stove must only be refuelled when the burner is cool enough to be touched. However inconvenient, this will ensure that no flame remains in the burner itself. The bottle cap (Trangia re-fill bottles and Sigg bottles) should never be removed during the refuelling process. Where possible, it is advised that a second burner be used whilst the first cools down before re-filling.

The principles above are applicable, with minor modification, to all liquid fuel stoves.

If bulk supplies of any liquid fuel are present (such as in training situations) this must be transferred to dedicated fuel bottles of the type above, well away from the planned cooking area and before any stoves or other naked flames are lit.

Petrol Stoves must not be used.

Gas Stoves

Gas stoves should be of the type which use self-sealing cartridges/cylinders. The older type, in which the cartridge head is pierced on assembly, should be replaced with the above self-sealing type.

Excellent additional advice on this issue is given in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition Guide.

Fire

There must be no naked lights (matches, lighters, smoking, etc.) in tents. By definition, this also prohibits cooking inside tents, including in the porch area.

Visit Leaders should ensure compliance with the above.

The Cooking Process

All participants must be practised in these skills and must be made aware of the dangers involved (see Sections 4.2.4.8-10). Cooking must not be undertaken inside the tent, including the porch area. In normal circumstances, it is recommended that the cooking process should be carried out at least two metres from the tent. No more than two group members should be involved in this task.

Great care should be taken when cooking including the stability of the stove. At all times great care must be taken to observe basic food hygiene and reduce the risk of possible contamination.

Associated First Aid

It is essential that all group members should know what action to take in the event of burns or scalds and recognise the importance of rapid emergency treatment in serious cases.

5.2.7 Snow and Ice Climbing

These activities are highly specialised and carry with them an unpredictable degree of risk, normally considered too great to be educationally justifiable for children as part of a school or care provision. Therefore the company will only support this activity in highly exceptional circumstances, where it is a proven and necessary next step progression, and where a young person has already excelled at the development of skills up to this point. Even so this would only be in relation to qualified, expert advice and support.

5.2.8 Rock Climbing and Abseiling

Under the 1996 Adventure Activities Licensing regulations, providers of Rock Climbing activities are required to hold a licence.

The use of commercial indoor climbing walls is classed as a Category A visit.

Qualifications and Experience

See Qualifications matrix Section 5.7.2

Qualified climbing instructors without appropriate hill walking qualifications or experience should confine their activities to 'roadside' outcrops, i.e. those which have vehicular access points nearby.

Qualified climbing instructors who have appropriate hill walking qualifications or experience may lead young people on appropriate graded routes in the more remote crags of the UK. Such routes may only be attempted in Summer Conditions.

Group size

Ratios of instructors to course members must reflect the nature of group experience and the routes/location in question. Qualified leaders will be

aware of the range of supervision required, from simple top-roping situations to major multi-pitch climbs, and should staff accordingly.

Abseiling

During abseiling practice students must be protected by a separately belayed safety rope.

Equipment

All equipment used for climbing and abseiling activities must conform to EEC legislation and/or UIAA rating. For further advice on equipment such as ropes contact the British Mountaineering Council.

No climbing or bouldering should take place unless the leader is present.

5.2.9 Cycling

Cycling and childhood go hand in hand. For decades bicycles have been a source of liberation, fun and challenge for children. Owning anything isn't a childhood right but if any object is synonymous with childhood it's a bike.

At SES we truly believe that we have a duty to facilitate the very aspects of childhood "liberation, fun and challenge" that ultimately in a medium and long term sense play a key part in limiting the risk of:

- Mental health difficulties
- Obesity
- Poor Self Esteem
- Lack of Educational Achievement
- Liberation through independent access to social networks and friends

Our responsibility in loco parentis is to facilitate the balance of providing a common childhood experience that accounts for the immediate safety implications of the activity without removing the benefits. In essence an insistence on adults covering their own liability by stating children always need supervising might contrive to create a situation where the young person doesn't cycle at all.

Therefore it is a balance between of assessing for each individual the factors that inform which will be:

- Cycling ability and experience
- Age and Maturity (Not always the same things)
- Locality and environmental, e.g. nature of roads
- Distance from home / help
- Ability to communicate through mobile phones, etc.
- Dynamic risk assessment around temperament / mood at the time

As with swimming there needs to be some form of assessment for young people new to SES provision, before that young person goes out on the road. This will take the form of:

- Gathering of information from paperwork, previous settings, social worker, parents etc about the young person's cycling experience and ability including any relevant medical needs.
- Irrespective of what information comes forward, an initial physical assessment / verification of cycling ability will take place as soon as is reasonably and practically possible after admission.
- This would take the form of a short assessment of basic control, ability to start, stop, ride in a straight line and turn such that they would be safe on the road under close supervision, following instructions. The latter point about being willing and able to follow instructions should also be part of the assessment and further considerations about the relationship and response of the young person to particular adults should also be a factor.
- This initial assessment will not be 'heavy' in duration or nature and may often be first triggered by a young person's wish / request to cycle. This can be managed easily in a one to one situation and it is perfectly feasible that an adult takes a young person out for an initial ride on the road in a matter of minutes after successfully completing the assessment. The important factor is that the adult goes through the process of recording their assessment on the initial Cycling Assessment form **BEFORE** embarking on a cycle trip.
- The formal Cycling Assessment form (found on the Network) which records this assessment activity that should then go on casework file and in turn informs what level of subsequent planning and risk assessment for cycling activities may be required.

Suitable locations for this assessment:

- Turnstone House:

Has flat, hard surface areas in front of and around the Learning Centre.

- Avocet House:

The road (School Lane) in the immediate vicinity of Avocet House between the two drive entrances, is on balance the most appropriate. Although traffic will occasionally pass it is a straight, quiet country lane where the supervising adult is able to monitor and see any traffic well enough in advance to halt the activity and step back into the car park or on to the verge.

The loose top surfaces of both car parks are not suitable for an assessment. That does not mean children can never cycle on them but part of building up their experience and knowledge is that any sudden turns on such surfaces will result in the front wheel skidding and them coming off.

The expectation of wearing helmets is set from outset as part of the assessment.

Following a successful initial assessment young people are free to cycle supervised on road trips, which will vary according to ability. All young people at SES have an individual Child Specific Day to Day Cycling risk assessment completed that specifies their cycling competence and any other

relevant factors that must be considered. This allows both adults and young people to enjoy recreational cycling without institutionalisation. In rare circumstances some young people may require cycling to remain as Category A due to levels of competence.

For group cycling activities other considerations and factors will need to be taken into account. Adults should consider that the group dynamic could serve to improve the concentration of an individual(s) or detract from it, which would be particularly pertinent if cycling skills are not secure and require high levels of concentration.

Cycling Independently

To cycle independently SES sets a standard of a passing the Cycling Proficiency Test or its equivalent 'Bike Ability'. This assessment meets a National Governing Body standard and involves an assessment conducted by a qualified person. This may be a team member or somebody external to SES. The latter gives an extra dimension of official status and gives the young person something to work towards. The assessment is usually preceded by a structured course of lessons in order to reach the standard.

The passing of cycling proficiency does not guarantee or give the right to a young person to go out on the roads without adult supervision. In making the risk assessment of whether it is safe and in the best interests of the young person, other factors would need to be considered such as age, maturity, vulnerability, etc.

5.2.10 Mountain and Off-Road Biking

This is an activity that carries with it a significant degree of risk. There appears to be an underlying false assumption that because people can cycle they can also ride mountain bikes, off-road, in safety. SES requires that anyone leading or instructing a group should be an appropriately qualified cycle leader. If leading a group in remote areas or above 300m sea level, they should have a Mountain Leaders' Award and current 16-hour first aid as a minimum.

Under the 1996 Adventure Activities Licensing regulations, providers of mountain biking are required to hold a licence. Mountain biking is considered a 'trekking' activity and is classed as licensable when undertaken in high or remote areas as defined under 'Trekking'. Whenever SES establishments buy-in such 'in-scope' activities, the provider will always need to be licensed and organisers should ask for verification.

Operational Guidelines

The following guidelines must be applied by all leaders who must:

- ensure that his/her own cycling, technical and leadership ability is well above that required for the proposed route;
- ensure at least one adult holds a first aid qualification according to NGB guidelines and is aware of emergency procedures;
- carefully select each route, considering group ability and endurance;

- try out all but the simplest of routes before undertaking it with a group;
- carry out a practical test of group ability and confidence; do not rely on their estimation of their own ability, especially before a long or technically difficult route;
- ensure that all bikes are in satisfactory working order, in particular headset and wheel security and braking efficiency;
- ensure that each group member wears a correctly fitting, approved cycling helmet;
- ensure that the group is appropriately clothed and equipped with spares;
- ensure that staff ratios reflect the nature of the route. There should be a minimum of one adult to two children + 1 adult;
- have contingency plans to cope with fatigue, injury or unexpected difficulties.

Group size

Group size must be a maximum of 7 including staff.

Group control in cycling is more difficult than in some other activities. Appropriate group control systems should be established and the Visit Leader should clarify group expectations before departure.

Participants are at greatest risk on downhill sections. Close group management and speed control are vital, especially with less experienced groups/riders.

Environmental concerns

Leaders should only plan routes on bridleways and by-ways. Do not permit cycling on designated footpaths and avoid sensitive areas, treating the environment with due care at all times.

Take care when passing horses, as they are easily startled.

Ensure the group understands and obeys the Mountain Biking and Country Code.

Wild Country Mountain Bike Routes

Any leader proposing such a visit taking in remote routes in 'wild country' areas must hold the qualification and/or experience as for walking leadership (see matrix in Section 4.6.2). This is in addition to the appropriate levels of technical cycling skills and knowledge.

Low Key Recreational Mountain Biking

In some circumstances it may be appropriate for individual children to go mountain biking on low-key off-road routes that are non-remote. This would be on identified local Forestry Commission leisure tracks (e.g. Thetford Forest- blue /green routes) or locally assessed national cycle networks, such as former railway lines. The visit leader would need to be assessed as being of sufficient experience to lead the activity and be approved by the VC. In

this situation the adult ratio specified in the 'operational guidelines' section may not apply, therefore allowing a suitably experienced staff member to take up to three young people if the risk is deemed minimal after consideration is given to all factors and variables.

5.2.11 Skiing

Under the 2004 Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, Downhill skiing is not classed as a licensable activity. However, 'off-piste' and 'ski-touring' are considered as 'trekking' activities.

Downhill Skiing

Of the major adventurous activities, skiing is unusual in that the vast majority of group visits are organised through reputable and experienced tour operators. Such companies invariably include a part or full day of qualified instruction. Visit Leaders should nevertheless be aware that skiing is a potentially hazardous activity, taking place at altitude in winter. Supervision and group control must be ensured at all times. The duty of care cannot be delegated and the Visit Leaders/adult supervisors must remain present at all times.

Organiser Qualifications/Experience

At least one member of the staff team of the ski course must hold the Ski Course Organisers' Course of the English Ski Council. This will normally be the Visit Leader. This Award is associated with general organisational issues. It does not indicate ability or experience to supervise skiing.

Ski Instructional Qualifications

Organisers will normally be expected to opt for full instructional provision, of a minimum 4 hours per day. All skiing instruction must be given by formally qualified instructors who are either:

- instructors employed by the tour operator through the local ski school; or
- instructors with qualifications at B.A.S.I. Grade 3 as a minimum, or equivalent.

See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.3

Staff Supervised Skiing

Where additional skiing is provided outside normal instructional periods leaders must be qualified as follows:

For supervision on nursery slopes:	ESC Artificial Ski Slope Instructors Award or ESC Alpine Ski Course Leaders Award
For supervision on green and blue pistes: For supervision on red pistes: For supervision on black pistes:	For all coloured routes: ESC Alpine Ski Course Leaders Award Or ESC Coach or BASI Instructor

'Fully Supervised' Packages

Some Tour Operators provide 'fully supervised' packages, whereby leaders are provided by the company to supervise much of the skiing outside instructional periods, and to lead some social activities of the programme. Party Leaders should ensure that:

- such leaders are properly qualified (English Ski Council Alpine Ski Leader Award or Scottish Ski Council Alpine Ski Leader Award as a minimum);
- they are always accompanied by a member of school staff;
- they supervise skiing only and do not instruct;
- their activities are carefully monitored.

Individual Needs

Specific situations may suggest that some young people would benefit from direct supervision by school along with enrolment in normal instructional groups. The decision to deal with a given situation in this way must be that of the Visit Leader. Such young people must be led by appropriately qualified staff.

Guidelines for Staff Supervised Skiing

The decision whether or not to provide skiing additional to the four hours per day instructor-led sessions is a crucial one. It must be recognised that young people fatigue can quickly lead to deteriorating performance and an increased risk of injury. For younger people and novices, it is probably wiser to restrict skiing to four hours per day.

Where the decision is taken to provide additional skiing, Visit Leaders must ensure that such groups are supervised and led by an experienced adult skier (see above). Unless Visit Leaders can satisfy themselves of the capability of such adults they must opt for additional, instructor-led, supervisory sessions, despite the increased cost.

NB. This is a crucial decision that has to be made at the early planning stage.

In making additional skiing provision, organisers must recognise that:

- the effect of staff injury or illness can be disastrous in groups with small staff numbers and limited experience. This should be a major factor in deciding whether or not to opt for full, professional supervision;
- the cost of additional qualified instruction should not be the main factor in this decision. The safety and well being of students and the added flexibility of this arrangement should be paramount.

The following guidelines must be applied:

- most staff supervised sessions will usually take place following formal instructional sessions, normally towards the end of the skiing day. It is essential to recognise the likelihood of fatigue and plan accordingly;

- only undertaken sessions on local, easy slopes familiar to students and leaders and should be of short duration;
- restrict group size to 10 young people;
- under no circumstances should groups be taken off-piste or on pistes unfamiliar to leaders;
- do not allow jumps and speed skiing;
- most staff will not be qualified to instruct and should avoid any attempt to coach or introduce new skills;
- avoid expeditions, whereby travel from piste to piste is involved.

Artificial Slope Skiing

When skiing on artificial slopes the minimum instructional qualification is the ESC Artificial Ski Slope Instructor (A.S.S.I.). This award has no validity for snow skiing.

Off-piste and Cross Country Skiing

Off-piste skiing and ski touring in Britain, is an activity licensable under the Adventurous Activities Licensing Regulations.

Contractual Issues

Organisers may leave themselves legally exposed to litigation if they personally sign a contractual agreement with the tour operator. In summary, any such agreement must be signed by the Head teacher or delegated person, on behalf of the school, thereby making the school the contracting party.

The subject of 'free' inspection visits for staff is a sensitive one for some parents and governors. It is, however, important that the Visit Leader undertakes research, which can most effectively be done through personal knowledge of the resort in question. Such visits should:

- be kept to a minimum
- involve the leaders only
- have findings recorded in writing, made available at parental briefings if required, and retained. (Photographic evidence helps colleagues remember and can be used at presentations such as parent/young people briefings.)

Advice on the organisation, management and supervision of ski groups is available from the Educational Visits Adviser.

5.2.12 Caving

Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, 2004

Caving, including mines, is a licensable activity under the above regulations.

Leaders intending to offer underground exploration to young people are required to contact the Principal. SES will not validate any licensable

underground activity unless led by a licensed provider or by an appropriately qualified leader.

5.2.13 Gorge or Ghyll Scrambling

These activities are becoming very popular. They involve journeys along gorges, ghylls, streams, riverbeds or coastal cliffs using scrambling, bouldering and climbing techniques. Therefore, they are covered by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 and are licensable. See <https://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm> for advice on combined water/rock activities.

Leaders proposing such visits should ensure that they discuss the following points with the VC and where appropriate/necessary seek further guidance:

- when on routes with any climbing sections, be a qualified rock climber at minimum of Mountain Instructor Award (MLTB Single Pitch Award may be acceptable where only single pitch routes exist);
- seek advice in order to avoid sites of particular environmental sensitivity;
- recognise that it is an activity of above average risk, which constantly changes;
- carefully reconnoitre each proposed route;
- avoid gorges, ghylls and river beds during (or immediately after) heavy rain or snow melt or when it is forecast;
- in remote areas, hold appropriate walking qualifications;
- ensure that at least two adults are present;
- ensure that technical and emergency equipment is carried which is appropriate to the situation.

Group size should not exceed 10 in total and will often be less.

If deep and flowing water is present, it is recommended that the leader has attended either:

- BCU White Water Safety and Rescue Course;
- Swift Water Technician Level 1.

It is recommended good practice to have the following:

- Site specific validation by a technical adviser.

5.2.14 Coastal Traversing

In addition to the guidance stated above, anyone running this activity must have been assessed on their ability to understand tidal currents and rips.

The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority is looking at how these activities are run. See <https://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm> for advice on combined water/rock activities. Schools should seek up-to-date information if they are considering taking part in this popular activity.

If deep and flowing water is present, it is recommended that the leader has attended either:

- BCU White Water Safety and Rescue Course;
- Swift Water Technician Level 1.

It is recommended good practice to have the following:

- Site specific validation by a technical adviser.

5.2.15 Horse Riding and Pony Trekking

These activities carry a range of risks specific to the activity or arising from the environment. Before commitment, leaders should assure themselves that the following criteria are fulfilled:

- riding should normally only be undertaken through centres or riding schools approved by the British Horse Society and/or which are members of the Association of British Riding Schools;
- only BHS instructors should be used when offering riding to participants from SES establishments;
- any riding establishment to be used must be registered and have been inspected by the local Environmental Health Officer of the relevant local council. Ask the provider for a contact name and telephone number.

Riding clubs may also be used providing they fulfil the criteria. This must be confirmed, in writing, by the organisations concerned and should be checked by the visit organiser.

Pony trekking is subject to the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations when journeying into high (above 600 metres) or remote country as defined by the Regulations.

5.2.16 Archery

Qualifications

Archery Leaders Award of the Grand National Archery Society (GNAS) – governing body
Staffing ratio 1:12

Equipment & Procedures

Leaders and Instructors must comply with the guidance issued by the National Governing Body (GNAS).

Archery Leaders Responsibilities

- The leader should check the equipment before each shooting session.
- The range must be in accordance with GNAS Regulations. For further information contact the VC.
- No other activity will be permitted in the vicinity of the range or in the sports hall or gymnasium when archery is taking place.
- Only target archery is permitted.

- Safety precautions and shooting rules as published by the GNAS shall be enforced by the instructor at all times.
- No fire door should be locked to facilitate archery.
- Ensure warning signs are around the perimeter of the shooting and overshoot areas (yellow background with black text).

5.2.17 Other Land-Based Activities

A range of other activities, which do not readily fit into traditional categories may, nevertheless, carry significant risk. Examples are wide games, bungee jumping, initiative exercises and problem-solving activities. The rapid development of such activities makes it difficult to provide detailed and comprehensive guidance in this document.

5.2.18 Paint-Ball and War Games

Organisers should seriously consider the moral, ethical, environmental and health and safety implications of these activities before offering them to young people, although the company does not take a particular stance in this respect and each proposed activity must be judged on its potential merits as well as other considerations.

5.2.19 Gyms

Young people are able to access local gyms. Previously, children below the age of 16 were only permitted to use cardio equipment such as the treadmills and exercise bikes. Government guidelines have changed in recent years, with it now being recognised that young people can benefit from strength training without it having a detrimental impact on growth and bone development. Young people within SES can therefore use resistance machines (pin loaded weight machines) from the age of 13. Young people would still need to be over 16 to use any free weights other than 5kg dumbbells.

Going to the gym for weight training is dependent on there being a competent accompanying adult with a good level of experience in training to ensure the young person only trains within their agreed limits.

All young people accessing the gym, be it for cardio or weight training, should have a Child Specific Activity risk assessment completed to reflect the equipment they can use.

5.3 WATER BASED ACTIVITIES

VCs and Visit Leaders must recognise that all activities undertaken on, in or near water are potentially hazardous. The degree of risk will vary significantly depending on circumstances.

Slow-flowing, shallow water should be treated with caution and appropriate safety measures, including risk assessments, be made.

Fieldwork groups operating near water may also be at risk and leaders are strongly advised to apply the precautions detailed in this section.

5.3.1 Swimming Ability and Water Confidence

All participants involved in water activities must be confident in water. The ability to remain calm on sudden immersion is of greater importance than the ability to swim a prescribed distance. A combination of water confidence and proven swimming ability is ideal, but it is recognised that many children are unable, for physical reasons, to swim the previously required 50 metres.

The current national recommendation is as follows:

- that the ability to swim is highly desirable;
- that discretion is recognised for the responsible person in charge of the activity not to require a swimming test as a pre-requisite when:
- all participants are wearing appropriate approved personal buoyancy;
- are under close supervision where adequate rescue and back up facilities are to hand.

All young people who are new to SES establishments will be assessed for their swimming ability in order to inform risk assessments and decisions around participation in swimming and other water based activities. The assessment will take the following form:

- Gathering of information from paperwork, previous settings, social worker, parents etc about the young person's swimming ability including any relevant medical needs.
- Irrespective of what information comes forward, a physical assessment / verification of swimming ability will take place as soon as is reasonably and practically possible after admission. No informal, social swimming should take place until this is completed. Best practice is for this assessment to be conducted by a suitably qualified person, e.g. staff member with a swimming teaching qualification and or life saving qualification, or a trained PE teacher. In their absence, an experienced adult can complete the assessment using the detailed assessment form to ensure key areas are checked. Although formally organised, this will take place in a manner according to the needs of the young person and maybe very informal in terms of interface and delivery.
- There is a formal Swimming Assessment form (found on the Network) which records this assessment activity that should then go on casework file and which in turn informs what level of subsequent planning and risk assessment for swimming and other water based activities may be required.

5.3.2 Participation in Ancillary Activities

Swimming Pools

Groups on visits frequently have access to a swimming pool provided by the local council, hotel, campsite or centre. When considering the possible use of such a pool, leaders should check the following:

SES Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice: 0626

- is the pool and its immediate surroundings clean and regularly serviced?
- are the pool depths marked and suitable for the particular group?
- is the water clear and of an appropriate temperature?
- are changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- is lifeguard supervision constantly available? If not, at least one member of staff should have a relevant life guarding award for the type and size of pool.
- they must be supported by adult supervision in the ratio 1:2 (child to adult, of which one could be the lifeguard) and there should be first aid, rescue equipment and a means of summoning assistance available at the poolside.

Paddling in the Sea, Lakes and Other Waterways

SES wants the children in its care to have access to joyful experiences and is aware that restrictive policies may well inadvertently deprive them of these.

“Why can’t a young person on a hot sticky day during a walk paddle their feet in a stream?”

SES want to empower the children and the adults caring for them to allow this to happen; however, as much as we want children to enjoy the spontaneity of coming across a stream and engaging in such an activity, staff must be very aware that even paddling in natural waterways is potentially hazardous. The mindset and thought processes of the staff team and the people in charge must be anything but casual and spontaneous.

SES defines the limit of paddling to be when the water level is such that the persons knees are not immersed. Anything beyond this starts to progress to ‘wading’. **Wading is absolutely not permitted in these circumstances.**

In circumstances where staff decide that a paddling activity is possible and desirable, they must carry out a thorough dynamic risk assessment that considers and adheres to the following criteria:

- That the stream or waters’ edge is clearly shallow enough to meet the paddling criteria.
- Access to the water’s edge is in itself easily accessible and therefore by implication is an easy course of exit.
- That there are no shelves, pools or sudden drops within the vicinity of the paddling area.
- That staff clearly structure and define the limits of the paddling area and communicate this to the children from outset.
- That the limits of the paddling area, as defined by staff, leave plenty of room for any inadvertent error of judgement on the part of the young people, i.e. the area just beyond the defined limit is as safe as the area they are paddling in.
- Children do not remove trousers or shorts in order to paddle, this just creates the expectation that allows for going deeper than knees deep.
- Larger, fast flowing rivers should be treated with extreme caution. Although there might be shallow areas where the paddling limit is met,

the risks here are losing footing and being swept downstream and into deeper water fully clothed. When water levels are low there may be shallow or small pools that are well away from any fast - flowing current that can take people off their feet. These are the only circumstance and context that children should be allowed to paddle in an area associated with an inland river as opposed to a stream.

- Even streams can swell and be dangerous after a period of rain, no paddling should take place in any fast - flowing water that has the potential to sweep a person downstream if they lost their footing.
- If children don't adhere to the rules and limits of the activity, then staff must end the activity.

The above criteria equally apply to paddling in the sea.

Swimming in Inland Water (Rivers, Lakes and Other Waterways)

The use of natural waters for swimming is potentially hazardous.

In respect of inland swimming it cannot take place without a clear approved Category B visit proposal approved two weeks in advance by the VC.

Staff supervised swimming sessions are acceptable provided that:

- there is qualified life saving supervision directly at hand. (This should be either qualified lifeguards or qualified SES staff).
- the site has no abnormal hazard and is suited to the age and ability of the swimmers; if this cannot be established, **it should not be used**;
- due consideration be given to water and air temperatures and wind chill;
- the supervising staff are able and willing to effect a rescue in the situation and conditions prevailing;
- the supervising staff are familiar with, and practised in, resuscitation technique;
- the area to be used is clearly defined to all users.

Before permitting such activity, leaders should:

- recognise that even paddling can be dangerous, especially for young children;
- be aware that even strong swimmers can get into difficulties in natural waters;
- check carefully the young person's swimming ability and not rely on the young person's estimation;
- establish a clearly defined and recognisable area for the activity;
- ensure the group clearly understands distress and recall signals;
- ensure that a maximum of 2 young people per adult be permitted in the water at any one time;
- ensure that all supervising adults understand what action to take in an emergency and know the location and means of summoning the emergency services;
- if in any doubt or conditions change, stop the activity.

Swimming in the Sea

Such activities should normally take place on recognised sites that have adequate and competent supervision as laid out in the SES Beach Induction Policy and Practice (See section 6). **Informal and unsupervised swimming must not be permitted.**

Staff supervised swimming sessions are acceptable provided that:

- there is qualified life saving supervision directly at hand. (This should be either qualified lifeguards such as beach life guards or qualified SES staff).
- the site has no abnormal hazard and is suited to the age and ability of the swimmers; if this cannot be established, **it should not be used**;
- due consideration be given to water and air temperatures and wind chill;
- the supervising staff are able and willing to affect a rescue in the situation and conditions prevailing;
- the supervising staff are familiar with, and practised in, resuscitation technique;
- the area to be used is clearly defined to all users.

Before permitting such activity, leaders should:

- recognise that even paddling can be dangerous, especially for young children;
- be aware that even strong swimmers can get into difficulties in natural waters;
- check carefully the young person's swimming ability and not rely on the young person's estimation;
- establish a clearly defined and recognisable area for the activity;
- ensure the group clearly understands distress and recall signals;
- ensure that a maximum of 2 young people per supervisor be permitted in the water at any one time;
- ensure that all supervising adults understand what action to take in an emergency and know the location and means of summoning the emergency services;
- if in any doubt or conditions change, stop the activity.

As a children's home and school, we consider it extremely important for our children to experience the natural activities that children do with their families as part of growing up. A visit to the beach and swimming in the sea is an important experience that our children should have the opportunity to experience safely. SES conduct a full internal beach induction course for all staff who intend to be part of a beach visit that involves paddling or swimming. The beach induction course incorporates and expands upon the stipulations and guidance above. Only approved beaches with designated lifeguard supervision may be used.

Recreational trips to designated beaches are a Category A visit when the above criteria are met, e.g. staff have undergone annual beach induction training and planned swimming in the sea will only take place on the permitted beaches (see Beach Induction section 6.1)

If beaches outside of Norfolk are to be used, then they would be clearly named and vetted in advance as meeting the criteria outlined above.

The only specific local Suffolk one is Southwold.

5.3.3 Buoyancy Aids and Life Jackets

All participants in water-based activities must wear an appropriate, approved buoyancy aid or life jacket.

Leaders must resist any pressure from participants who maintain that the wearing of buoyancy aids is not the norm in a particular activity, e.g. windsurfing and rowing. Any approval to dispense with personal buoyancy must only be taken following a thorough risk assessment.

National Governing Body recommendations on the wearing of personal flotation aids are as follows:

- For most water-based activities a buoyancy aid is recommended, these must be regularly tested according to national guidelines by the Provider.
- Buoyancy aids must conform to CEN393 and rated at 50Kn.
- Life jackets must conform to CEN 395 rating.
- Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Senior Instructors in charge of sailing coastal/off shore will at their discretion decide whether buoyancy aids or life jackets should be worn.

5.3.4 Health Issues Relevant to Water-Based Activities

There are several potential risks to health that can be identified in or near water. Although the risks of contracting such diseases remain relatively low in the UK, VCs and Visit Leaders must consider them during the planning phase. Ensure that appropriate precautions are undertaken to avoid infection.

5.3.5 Sailing

Approval will normally only be given to sailing activity undertaken at an Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Training Centre or through a provider licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.

Qualifications and Experience

See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.5

- An RYA Senior Instructor must be afloat or onsite (where the site is adjacent to the water) at all times whilst sailing activities are being undertaken.
- An RYA Senior Instructor Certificate is a required qualification for overseeing safety cover and decisions relating to weather conditions, etc. When operating on the sea, the Award must have a coastal endorsement;
- For situations on exposed inland waters in which Visit Leaders are operating under the overall supervision of a water-sports centre, e.g. Filby

Broad, the RYA Inland Instructor/Assistant Instructor Awards are normally considered adequate;

- RYA Senior Instructors are free to determine the level and type of supervision, including the experience and qualifications of persons used in an instructional capacity, taking into account the type of water, craft, group, resources, prevailing weather conditions and any other pertinent factors.

Group control and supervision in sailing is heavily dependent on the experience of group members and on prevailing conditions. When operating with inexperienced sailors or in adverse conditions, the number afloat and/or the sailing area should be restricted.

Whenever expeditions are planned to take place in coastal waters aboard cruising craft, i.e., ballasted yachts having fixed accommodation, prospective party leaders should refer to the VC who must consult with the Directors of SES.

Instructor/Student Ratios

The Royal Yachting Association's recommended ratios should be applied in all normal circumstances. These can be found in the RYA Dinghy Coaching handbook (G14/03). Individuals in charge of sailing activities would be required to justify deviation from the guidance in the event of an incident.

5.3.6 Windsurfing

Qualifications and Experience

See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.6

Leaders / instructors wishing to instruct in board sailing must hold:

- RYA Windsurfing Instructor Level 1 Coastal Certificate for operation on sea or tidal waters, or
- RYA Windsurfing Instructor Level 1 Award for operation on inland water. Level 1 instructors should only work in areas as defined by the RYA as level 1 areas. Contact the RYA for further details www.rya.org.uk.

All arrangements for the supervision of windsurfing (group size, operating conditions, instructional ratios, safety cover, etc.) must meet the requirements as defined by the Royal Yachting Association.

5.3.7 Kayaking and Canoeing

Leadership Qualifications

Leadership awards are numerous and must reflect the location and whether the activity is undertaken in canoes or kayaks. See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.7

Group Size

Recommended leader/student ratios on which actual operating ratios should be based are:

- 1:4 for advanced coastal waters
- 1:6 for simple coastal waters
- 1:6 for Grade II or above canoeing or exposed inland waters
- 1:8 for placid, confined waters using single-seater kayaks
- 1:12 for placid waters using canoes maximum 2 people per canoe (tandem), no more than 6 canoes
- 1:6 for placid waters using canoes – solo (one person per canoe)

These ratios include any accompanying adults whose experience and ability is not significantly above that of the students and which would not enable them to assist the leader in an emergency.

In all situations, instructors should be qualified for the activity being delivered, i.e., kayak or canoe.

5.3.8 Sea Kayaking

Canoeing and kayaking on the open sea and in estuaries is a serious undertaking. Wind direction and strength, tidal effects and waves create an ever-changing environment where considerable experience and judgement is required on the part of the leader.

Apart from extremely sheltered or known, predictable situations the sea around the UK is generally unsuitable for introductory canoeing. Participants may normally have had inland water experience and have proved their competence before being introduced to sea canoeing.

There are, however, certain situations of settled, fair conditions when activities such as canoe surfing are eminently suitable for novices. The issue is one of leader judgement, based on sound experience.

Activity leaders must be qualified. See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.7

Any leader proposing sea kayaking activity, directly or through another party, e.g., commercial operator, must notify the Directors of SES well in advance of the visit.

5.3.9 White Water Rafting

White water rafting, using inflatable rafts, is an increasingly popular activity. Undertaken on 'specified waters' it is a licensable activity.

Leaders proposing to offer this activity must check with the operator (and, if necessary, with the Licensing Authority) that the provider is licensed. Unlicensed providers must not be used.

See qualifications matrix Section 5.7.8

5.3.10 Raft Building (Improvised Rafting)

Certain 'designated waters' mean that providers of this activity are subject to the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 and must hold a licence.

Such rafts are normally unstable, difficult to propel and steer and may 'fall apart'. Waters chosen for this activity should normally be confined, not subject to strong currents, and free from specific hazards, e.g., underwater obstructions.

Specific Requirements

- Every group member, when involved in this activity, must wear an approved buoyancy aid.
- It is strongly recommended that every group member should wear a canoe helmet whilst rafting.
- All afloat must be confident in the water.
- All participants must wear footwear throughout the activity.

Staff leading such an activity should have successfully attended a certificated course in supervising raft building.

Constructional Risks

- Leaders must check that all materials and tools are appropriate for the activity, the age and ability of the group.
- Plastic barrels/containers are available in a range of sizes. Steel drums should be avoided, they are prone to rust and often have sharp edges.
- Plastic containers should be used whenever possible. The contents of used drums may be toxic to humans and/or the environment. It is essential that leaders check thoroughly the contents of used drums and reject any that are suspect. Seek technical advice when necessary.
- Fingers, toes and eyes are particularly vulnerable. Adequate instruction, advice and supervision should be provided, particularly where tools are involved.
- It is often better to avoid the need for tools by providing ready-to-use materials.
- It may be necessary to consider the provision of protective clothing, e.g., gloves. Eye protection will be necessary in some circumstances.

Safety Cover

Where rafting takes place on large or moving waters, appropriate supervision must be provided.

Appropriate means of rescue must be provided, depending on circumstances. This may vary from a throwing line to provision of a qualified canoeist as rescuer.

On water larger than 100 metres across, on moving water or on other waters where specific hazards are present, it is essential to provide rescue facilities as follows:

- on large open waters (greater than 100 metres across) or rivers with significant current: BCU Level 3 Coach. Ratios – 1 instructor to 2 rafts; maximum 12 people; or where a powered craft is appropriate RYA Safety Boat certificate;
- on waters under 100 metres across or slow moving, free from specific hazard: BCU Level 2 Coach;
- on very small, enclosed waters where the raft can be reached at all times by wading, then a leader with experience and a qualified adult first-aider is required.

5.4 AIRBORNE ACTIVITIES

In general terms, SES would not give approval to teachers to take responsibility for instruction or direct leadership in any forms of airborne activity.

Exceptions may be made, in a few instances, where staff have specific national governing body qualifications and recent and relevant experience.

Where commercial providers are to be used, the VC and Visit Leader must ensure that the organisation is a bona fide operator and is licensed by the appropriate NGB or Government Department and the directors of SES are consulted well in advance.

5.5 FIELDWORK

Introduction

Fieldwork is an integral part of the curriculum. It is statutory in Geography, essential in Science and enrichment in many other subjects. It is also part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme (see Section 5.6). All fieldwork should be planned to take into account the safety of the students and the safety of the accompanying staff. Those on the field trip should show concern, respect and protection for the environment, consideration for landowners and be mindful of the rights of other visitors. In this way, fieldwork can be enjoyable, rewarding and stimulating for all participants.

All fieldwork and educational visits, whether to mountain or museum, involve young people participation and activity. At the planning stage the VC and the Visit Leader must consider the risks relating to the activities to be undertaken by young people and the risks posed by the environment being visited. Useful guidance on safety in fieldwork is given by publications produced by the National Association of Field Studies Officers, The Institute of Biology and the Geographical Association. Risk assessments should give consideration to the ways in which conditions may change and the ways in which these may affect the planned programme of activity. Risk assessment forms should be completed **taking into account the age, experience and circumstances of the students, and supervisory staff and the nature of the location to be visited.**

The VC should be confident that the Visit Leader is competent to lead the visit and that they are capable of making on-going risk assessments. This may require access to training. Written risk assessments and visits forms must be completed.

If the proposed visit involves:

- adventurous activities;
- visits to remote areas;
- wild country;
- and/or coastal/tidal areas,

the VC and the Visit Leader must apply the guidance relating to adventurous activities. Before organising any fieldwork visit abroad, the Visit Leader must read section - Visits Abroad (see section 5.8). Any visits abroad require SES approval in principle from a director of SES.

5.5.1 Day Visits

The Visit Leader approved by the VC or Head of Education should prepare a detailed and flexible plan. Fieldwork visits will vary in their duration, complexity and intensity. For some fieldwork the learning objectives and planning within teacher's unit plans, together with the visits form and risk assessment will suffice. For larger scale undertakings a more detailed field file may be necessary. that should include:

- aims and objectives of the day;
- details of group sizes and management;
- supervision ratios;
- transport arrangements;
- parking and toilet facilities;
- lunch arrangements;
- negotiated access details (where necessary);
- staff experience and training - run a briefing session for staff and parents involved if applicable;
- insurance;
- details of fieldwork activities;
- realistic programme including timings;
- risk assessments;
- emergency procedures - including briefing for students.

It is essential for all self-led events that a pre-visit is made. This should include site-specific risk assessments and acquisition of local knowledge. Mobile telephone reception can also be checked. Staff should have the appropriate qualification if the trip involves walking in hazardous country. Risk Assessments should be completed.

For larger undertakings (e.g. all day in more remote or potentially hazardous environments) Visit Leaders must prepare a copy of the Field File, (see Section 4), for each educational visit or journey and take it with them. Further copies of the Field File will need to be provided when groups split during the day for specific activities. A duplicate of the Field File will be left with the Local Point of Contact at the school.

Contact cards should be prepared for all students and staff giving details of personnel, locations, route and phone numbers. A duplicate of this information should be included in the Field File.

Preparing Students for Day Visits

For students to work effectively and safely out of doors, they should have regular opportunities to undertake fieldwork throughout their school careers. In this way they will progressively build up confidence and competence.

Preparation for a day field trip should include:

- preparatory work in the classroom;
- practice of techniques in the school grounds;
- a full briefing to include the aims and objectives of the trip, expected behaviour, locations, environments to be visited, risks and safety and personal clothing and equipment required.

Students should be made aware of the emergency plans and the alternative itinerary arranged in the event of unexpected difficulties.

On the Day of the Field Visit

1. Ensure that all party members are properly clothed, shod and equipped. Insist on adequate warm and waterproof clothing where necessary, and footwear appropriate to the terrain.
2. At least one member of staff should be qualified as a first aider. First aid kit(s) should be carried to all fieldwork locations. These may need to contain extra items such as a warm blanket, space blanket, etc. The first aid kit(s) should be available to all members of the party at all times.
3. The degree of supervision should be appropriate to the nature of the group and their activities. Staff should be easily identified and one member of staff should not help specifically with an individual group, but should have an overview of all the activities taking place.
4. Remind all participants of the recall signals for when they are in the field.
5. Carry out regular head counts.
6. Carry a mobile telephone. Staff and students should be aware of the location of public telephone facilities if they are available. Money and/or a phone card should be carried if necessary.
7. Work in ways that minimise environmental damage and degradation. Be aware that sampling is prohibited and/or illegal in some areas and that the Wildlife and Countryside Act gives protection to many plants and animals.
8. Make participants aware of local conventions and codes of conduct (e.g. the North Norfolk Coast Project publishes a code of conduct for field studies on the north Norfolk coast).
9. Ensure that the behaviour of the group does not damage the view of field studies held by landowners or the general public. Other groups may wish to visit the area after you.

5.5.2 Fieldwork in Specific Environments

The Built Environment and Industrial Sites

Cities, towns, villages and industrial areas form a significant part of work outside the classroom. The majority of issues encountered in each setting are consistent, e.g. group organisation, safety, etc. However, some are

specific to the built environment - noise, traffic, the public, machinery, obstruction of local facilities, etc.

Visit Leaders should be aware of public relations when working in public places. One poorly run group can cause immense local bad feeling and lose the support and goodwill of local people.

If remote supervision is used, staff should be placed at strategic points within the study area and the students made aware of where they can be found and contacted. Parents and placement authorities must be made aware of any intent to use remote supervision. This might not involve informing for every specific trip, but might be something that parents and placing authorities have been made aware of through one or a combination of the following:

On industrial sites, students must understand, and follow, any safety conditions stated by guides or demonstrators. During fieldwork in the built environment or on industrial sites Visit Leaders must:

- ensure that group organisation and staff: young people ratios are appropriate and in accordance with the requirements of this manual;
- check that participants are properly clothed and shod;
- remind students of risks, hazards and expected behaviour;
- ensure that spare apparatus, first aider, first aid equipment and appropriate safety equipment are readily available;
- ensure that recall and emergency recall guidelines are understood, implemented as necessary and followed;
- constantly check the location and status of each group;
- re-arrange groups if necessary;
- ensure that the students understand how dangers can vary from area to area, street to street, and that they take appropriate care;
- move groups to safe areas if they become exposed to unacceptable risks;
- not put students in the position where they may be accused of causing nuisance or damage;
- ensure minimal disturbance to local people and businesses.

Fieldwork and Visits to Coastal Areas and Beaches

(Staff should be familiar with the DFE document “Group Safety at Water Margins” on the SES Network)

Beaches and coastal areas offer a wide range of opportunities for both study and activity-based programmes. Physical topography, wave patterns and tides can all change in a very short period of time. Such environments present a number of inherent risks and hazards. For example, Norfolk’s cliffs are likely to comprise of unconsolidated materials and present a high risk from land fall and slippage, especially after sustained periods of rain; Norfolk’s beaches can become dangerous very quickly on incoming tides which trap unwary visitors.

It is therefore essential that Visit Leaders of self-run groups should have a good local knowledge of the sites that they intend to visit and have made a site visit close to the day on which the field trip is to take place.

Visits to beaches and coastal areas, such as cliffs, are considered higher risk than a standard Seaside visit such as Lowestoft Beach and therefore require approval as a Category B Visit.

Visit Leaders and VCs must:

- assess all risks from tides, rip tides and sand banks, checking timings and exit routes;
- on long beaches, define the areas in which work is to take place, with clear boundaries that are understood by all participants;
- ensure that all participants are aware of the significance of warning signs and flags;
- establish a rendezvous point on the beach to which individuals may return if separated;
- ensure that all staff are easily recognisable;
- be aware that there may be more than one wave pattern imposed on the local conditions that can vary the frequency and amplitude of waves;
- understand the hazards of muddy environments and ensure that the group is aware of these;
- understand the hazards of slippery rocks and ensure that the group is aware of these;
- be aware that beach litter can contain many hazardous substances including glass, dangerous chemicals, hypodermic needles, fishing tackle, etc., and ensure that all participants understand these risks;
- ensure that adults and students working at the base of cliffs wear hard hats;
- ensure that all group members are aware of the dangers related to cliff tops and that they keep to footpaths at all times;
- make members of the group aware of the risks involved in throwing stones;
- know, through local knowledge, where sewage outflows are and avoid them;
- take regular head counts;
- not permit scrambling on under cliff screes or slumps.
- swimming must only take place as part of a carefully supervised activity and only within the guidelines specified in Section 5.3. SES will not give approval for unsupervised recreational swimming.
- beaches present additional problems as a venue especially where large numbers of the public may also be present.
- attention must be given to checking for dangerous objects that may be buried or present risks from falling.
- climbing on cliffs or weed covered rocks should be discouraged.
- when moving along cliff tops, groups must remain on recognised paths at all times under close supervision and an appropriate distance from any precipice.
- group members should have suitable clothing for the exposed nature of such environments.
- attention must be given to the needs and abilities of members of the group.

When onsite, organisers should ensure that:

- all party members are appropriately clothed, shod and equipped;
- leaders maintain a degree of supervision, appropriate to the party, including frequent checks on number and safety;
- appropriate first aid equipment and other emergency supplies and materials are carried;
- collecting of plants, rocks, etc., is reduced to an absolute minimum or prohibited and that members of the party be encouraged, instead, to record by sketches, photographs and careful description;
- the use of questionnaires involving members of the public is reduced to a minimum or eliminated altogether. This is especially important when the visit is to an area where this kind of activity is likely to be practised by many fieldwork groups;
- the behaviour of the party does nothing to damage the view of field studies held by site owners or the general public, and to this end make sure that all members of the party recognise the need for good behaviour and courtesy in their contacts with the public.

The Visit Leader should review the situation regularly. Weather conditions, etc., can change rapidly on all coasts. Visit Leaders should have the knowledge and experience to make on-going risk assessments.

It should also be noted that the wind can be much stronger on the coast than inland and that sunburn can occur more rapidly and severely than inland. The local Coastguard, Harbour Master, lifeguard or Tourist Information Office can provide valuable information and advice on the nature and location of hazards as well as tide times, etc.

Most coastal environments are fragile and are easily damaged. Marine plants and animals have specific requirements for life. Groups must therefore work in a way that does not harm plants and animals to be found there or cause degradation to the marine environment. Coastal birds nest on the ground and are very vulnerable to trampling and disturbance. Always get permission and advice from Site Managers prior to a coastal nature reserve visit.

Fieldwork on Rivers

(Staff should be familiar with the DFE document “Group Safety at Water Margins – available online at <https://www.rosipa.com/leisure-water-safety/water/advice>)

VCs should be convinced that Visit Leaders have the knowledge and experience to lead a group carrying out fieldwork on a river. Visit Leaders must know the sites that they intend to visit and have local knowledge of the range of conditions to be expected at each site. Access must be negotiated where necessary. The Visit Leader should also be aware of the rainfall pattern on each stretch of the river in the 24 hours preceding the visit and how this might change conditions in the river. Students should not be allowed into a river when it is in spate. On self-run field trips, a pre-visit is essential **and the site must be checked again, on the day, for safety.**

During planning and on the day Visit Leaders should:

- ensure that all members of the party are mindful of changes of water depth and flow rate from site to site, e.g., in pools and riffles and on river meanders;
- ensure that all members of the party are mindful of changes in substrate - muddy and silty rivers can be dangerous;
- ensure that access for students is only at places where the bank is safe;
- be mindful of possible pollution from sewage, industrial waste, etc.;
- take precautions against the possible transmission of disease, e.g., Weil's disease;
- ensure that all members of the party can wash their hands before touching and consuming food.

Avoid causing damage to the environment and ensure that samples are returned unharmed to the river.

Information about particular rivers can be obtained from the Environment Agency.

Ponds

(Staff should be familiar with the DFE document "Group Safety at Water Margins" on the SES Network)

The Visit Leader should ensure that:

- students are properly protected against possible infection from the water;
- pond dipping is carried out from a safe place;
- equipment is used safely and properly;
- hands are washed before food is touched or consumed.

Terrestrial Environment

Terrestrial environments are very varied and group leaders need to ensure that they are aware of any topographical or landscape features that could be hazardous and to incorporate these into their risk assessments. The weather can also create risks either before or on the day of the visit e.g. high winds in a woodland, wet and slippery grass etc. The terrain should be surveyed and consideration given to rough ground, steep slopes and possible dangers such as ditches hidden by rank vegetation, old and neglected barbed wire fences, dog faeces etc. Group leaders should also be aware of the plants in the area whether these are the part of a study or not:

- Some plants are poisonous
- Some plants can cause rashes, blistering or burning

(NB: The Group's Leader should ensure that students do not eat or taste any plants or fungi.)

The group leader should ensure that anyone who is allergic to insect bites and stings is provided for and that the first-aider is aware of their condition. All students should wash their hands before touching food, and then again at the end of the visit.

Farm Visits

Farms can be dangerous places, even for those who work on them. Therefore, a farm visit needs careful planning. A pre-visit by the Visit Leader is essential to carry out a risk assessment. These risks must include the proximity of machinery and the hazards associated with *Escherchia coli* (*E Coli*) and other infections.

Teachers should insist on the following basic safety rules. Young people, and their parents, should be made aware of these. Students should:

- not place their faces against animals;
- not put their fingers in their mouths after feeding animals;
- not touch food or eat anything until after they have thoroughly washed their hands;
- not sample any animal foodstuffs;
- not drink from farm taps;
- not ride on tractors or other farm machinery;
- not play in the working farm area;
- not approach sick or distressed animals.

In wet or muddy pastures or on any land contaminated with animal urine or faeces, visitors should wear impervious outer clothing such as Wellington boots and plastic macs. If possible, wash boots down after leaving such environments. Otherwise, wash hands after removing boots. *E.coli* is easily transmitted from boot to hand to mouth.

Students must wash their hands thoroughly after a farm visit and before eating.

Visit Leaders and supervising adults should remain alert throughout the visit and conduct on-going risk assessments.

Further advice can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive's website, Preventing accidents to children on farms 2013 and also contact Easton College in Appendix 2

Residential Visits

All Residential Visits are Category B and visits abroad must be approved in principle by a Director of SES following a discussion with the Principal. Approval in principle must be sought at an early stage, with final approval given by the Principal on receipt of a comprehensive field file. For visits to centres, the work required in planning will vary, depending on whether the visit is SES staff-led or run by a recognised provider. It is important that Visit Leaders have a full working knowledge and understanding of the SES Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice document before arranging Residential Visits.

Where private providers are used, the Visit Leader should make a preliminary visit to the centre in order to carry out a risk assessment or to check those provided by the centre. Where the visit is self-run, risk

assessments must be made for the sites to be visited, activities to be undertaken and the accommodation in which the group will be staying. If the visit involves self-catering, a full risk assessment must be prepared for catering and food hygiene. If visiting a self catering establishment where no centre staff member holds a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate, it is advisable that one member of the party has this qualification.

Before organising a residential visit abroad, Visit Leaders must be conversant with Section 5.8. Advice on carrying out fieldwork abroad can be obtained from The Young Explorer's Trust or the Royal Geographic Society.

Educational visits or journeys organised or provided by establishments may fall within the scope of the Package Travel regulations 2004 if they include at least two of the following:

- transport;
- accommodation;
- other tourist services.

Further details of these regulations can be found Section 5.8

Use of Commercial, Charitable and Private Providers

SES welcomes the use of facilities managed by external providers where these partnerships extend education opportunities safely. The joint responsibilities involved between SES and the provider should extend from the planning stage to the end of the venture.

Where centres provide group tutors and/or overnight staff, such arrangements do not release visiting staff from responsibility for their group. It is not acceptable to include centre staff to meet the basic supervisory ratios. **Visit Leaders retain responsibility for the safety and well being of their group at all times.**

When choosing a centre, the VC and the Visit Leader should consider:

- the experience and qualifications of the staff;
- the quality of the education provision;
- the environmental ethos and sustainable management of the centre;
- the safety and risk assessment information provided by the centre.
- separate sleeping accommodation for staff and young people. Staff accommodation must be adjacent to the students' quarters and accessible to them.
- availability of a floor plan of the rooms in advance.
- its security precautions
- its fire exits, procedures and ability to hold a simulated fire drill
- its regulations and routines

For further information on Environmental and Field Study Centres and for a list of relevant publications, contact:

English Outdoor Council

Website: www.englishoutdoorcouncil.org

Or

Institute for Outdoor Learning
Website: www.outdoor-learning.org

Fieldwork Undertaken in Wild Country/more hazardous environments or Involving Adventurous Activities

[This section is taken from the 'Outdoor Studies Code (Council of Environmental Education) recommended by the National Association of Field Study Officers.]

Fieldwork undertaken in 'wild country' requires the same leadership, technical skills and equipment as would be appropriate for an activity group operating under the same circumstances. Factors such as location, time of year, remoteness and group experience are major criteria regardless of the educational reason for being in that environment.

When operating in or near water, leaders should consider and apply the appropriate Water Activities guidelines in this document.

5.6 DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARD EXPEDITIONS

Provision of Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DEA) can only be done under the umbrella of an authority that holds a licence.

Any DEA group operating under the County Council's licence must adhere to the policies, guidelines and systems described in this manual which apply to all participants (not just those under 18).

These policies apply to all sections of the Award. The expedition section obviously comes within the scope of this manual but so may activities in other sections, e.g., canoeing for the physical recreation section, or certain types of residential projects. Leaders should also consult the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Handbook and the Expedition Guide for information and should also familiarise themselves with the guidance on:

- remote supervision,
- lightweight camping, in particular the use of liquid fuelled stoves (Section 5.2.4)

The quality of training is crucial, particularly at the earlier stages. Sound training at the Bronze and Silver levels forms a basis on which expeditions in wild country can be undertaken and enjoyed in safety.

5.6.1 The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations

Most DEA Gold Award and many Silver Award expeditions will fall within the Licensing Regulations.

5.6.2 Paid Leaders

Organisers need to be aware that payment for leadership services in a licensable activity to someone who is not a member of staff at the organisation from which the group members are recruited will make the expedition subject to the AALA Regulations. In this case, any such provider must be licensed under the Licensing Scheme.

5.6.3 Incident Reporting

See Section 3.14.

5.6.4 Choice of Expedition Area

Choice of environment for DEA expeditions must take into account the experience and competence of each member of the group. Our emphasis should be on adventure and challenge through remoteness rather than technical difficulty/risk.

At no stage should it be necessary to cross a river other than by means of a purpose built bridge.

Expeditions in Normal Country

Normal country is defined in Section 5.2.1

Notification to the Directors of SES of expeditions in such country is NOT required.

Expeditions in Open Country

Open country walking is defined in Section 5.2.2

Expeditions in Wild Country Areas

Wild Country is defined in Section 5.2.3

The majority of young people undertaking expeditions, even at Gold level, will still be relatively inexperienced in hill walking. They will rarely have had more than a few days experience in such terrain and are unlikely to have been exposed to a variety of weather and underfoot conditions.

Steep Ground

The DEA Expedition Guide is quite explicit that routes chosen should reflect the experience of the group and should be 'through rather than over wild country – solitude not altitude'. SES strongly advise that ventures should travel through rather than over mountains. This means that groups should plan routes which predominantly use valleys rather than going to the tops of major peaks. Routes involving sharp ridges, very steep ground or prolonged treacherous underfoot conditions, e.g., heather-covered boulder scree should be avoided. The heavy loads carried exacerbate the difficulties of such terrain.

When advising group members, leaders should take into account the effect of navigational error during the expedition. Where such an error may quickly

lead a group onto very steep ground or sharp ridges, the route may need modification or supervision (see below).

Training will have provided group members with skills for operating in remote areas and they will be expected to carry equipment for sustained survival in such country. They will not have been trained for movement on steep ground, where the use of hands may be required, or where the carrying of a rope for safe movement would be the normal expectation.

River Crossing

The fording of streams and rivers, except in the most obviously benign circumstances, is a high-risk activity. It requires the judgement and skills of an experienced mountaineer. In conditions of significant depth and/or current it also requires the use of a rope for safety or rescue. **River crossing should never be necessary for a DEA expedition group.**

The DEA Expedition Guide offers little advice on this subject. SES's position is to view an expedition that requires or may require the fording of a significant river or stream with extreme concern. Routes should be selected to avoid the need for such activity. Groups must be advised that if confronted by swollen rivers as a result of unexpected heavy rain, then they should not attempt to cross, even if this means abandoning the planned route. They should either proceed on a planned alternative route or camp until such times as they are contacted or the waters subside until recognisable crossing places are once again safe to use.

5.6.5 Supervision during Expeditions

The DEA Expedition Guide is quite specific that a group should complete its expedition without external help. However, where a route places a group in technically difficult terrain then supervision by an appropriately qualified leader may be acceptable. Routes requiring supervision for safety reasons should not become the norm since they would then fall outside the expectations of the Award.

Where essential, supervision should:

- be undertaken by an appropriately qualified person. In wild country this will normally be someone who has been successful at the assessment of Mountain Leader Scheme ML (Summer);
- be restricted to those parts of the route which are outside the technical experience of the group, e.g., on or adjacent to sharp ridges or very steep ground;
- be of an absolute minimum and provided only to ensure the safety of group members;
- be discreetly done by 'shadowing', normally in visual contact but close enough to intervene if safety requires.

5.6.6 Altitude

Altitude in the UK is not, of itself, a major factor, subject always to consideration of prevailing and forecast weather. There are many areas of countryside which are of considerable height but which lack the objective dangers in the above paragraphs. DEA advice is that routes, "which involve more than 600 metres of ascent in a day should be viewed with suspicion." If applied, this advice will usually imply maximum height limitations.

5.6.7 Notification and Approval of Routes

Route selection should always be by the group members against criteria based on the above expectations. Leaders must ensure that routes chosen reflect the above criteria. It is important that routes should normally be notified to, and approved by, the Directors before submission to the Wild Country Panel. This will minimise paperwork should amendment be required. The Panels maintain no direct responsibility for safety but have such functions as, for example, checking that routes meet the minimum requirements of the Award level, advising on local access issues and provision of assessment, where required.

5.6.8 Organisers must supply to SES

- A copy of the Wild Country Panel notification form.
- Routes at 1:50,000 scale. Such information can be supplied simply on a marked 1:50,000 map, which will be returned.

Alternative routes can be supplied on a transparency. These should show map number/s, at least one pair of N-S/E-W numbered gridlines for location purposes, the day number or date of the part route shown and, where more than one group is involved, the name or number of the group.

5.6.9 Series Approval of Expeditions

In an effort to minimise paperwork, series approval may be given to certain groups. This will involve the written agreement of organisers/leaders to the selection of routes, staffing and management practices. Any organisers interested in this approach should contact the Directors through their establishment visits co-ordinator.

5.7 QUALIFICATION MATRICES - A GUIDE FOR VCs AND VISIT LEADERS

The following qualifications indicate the minimum normally expected for leadership in the particular activity. The VC and/or Visit Leader must check that all providers, paid or voluntary helpers comply with this guidance. In certain circumstances, and as indicated, proven personal experience (p.p.e.) at a comparable standard may suffice as an alternative. VCs must ensure that Visit Leaders are competent and should therefore satisfy themselves with regard to the relevance of the personal experience to lead.

Activity Qualifications Matrix – Glossary

ABRS	Assoc of British Riding Schools	MIC	Mtn Instructor Cert (UKMLTB)
BMG	British Assoc of Mountain Guides	ML	Mtn Leader Award (UKMLTB/SMLTB/WMLTB) or Mtn Walking Leader Award (UKMLTB)
BASI	British Assoc of Ski Instructors	NCA	National Caving Assoc
BCU	British Canoe Union	NVQ	National Voc Qualifications
BELA	Basic Expedition Leader Award	RYA	Royal Yachting Assoc
BHS	British Horse Society	SCOW	Ski Council of Wales
BST	British Sports Trust	SI	Senior Instructor (RYA)
CIC	Cave Instructor Cert (National Caving Assoc)	SMLTB	Scottish Mountain Leader Training Board
CCPR	Central Council of Physical Recreation	SNSC	Scottish National Ski Council
ESC	English Ski Council	SVQ	Scottish Voc Qualifications
LCMLA	Local Cave and Mine Leader Assess't (NCA)	SPA	Single Pitch Award (MLTB)
MLTB	Mtn Leader Training Board	SRA	Scottish Rafting Assoc
MIA	Mtn Instructor Award (UKMLTB)	WGLA	Walking Group Leader Award
		WMLTB	Wales Mtn Leader Training Board
		UKMLTB	United Kingdom Mountain Leader Training Board

5.7.1 Walking and Expeditions

This should be read in conjunction with Sections 5.2.1; 5.2.2; 5.2.3

Notes:

* Winter conditions apply when any part of the route is covered in snow or ice or when winter climatic conditions prevail, or are forecast, and where the use of ice axes or crampons would be considered normal good practice. Winter conditions can be present at any time of the year (even during the summer months) in high country. 'Summer' means all conditions not covered by the 'winter' definition.

For pony trekking activity in the above areas/seasons, leaders will require the BHS Ride Leader or ABRS Trek Leader Certificate.

(See table overleaf).

Activity	Leader	Assistant	Ratio
Wild country: winter* High or remote country in winter conditions*	MIC or Winter ML	Summer ML	
Low level or less remote areas in winter conditions*	Summer ML plus proven winter experience	Summer ML	

Wild country: summer* High or remote areas in summer conditions*	MIA or Summer ML	Summer ML or Proven Personal Experience	1:2 (including 2 adults)
Open Country Walking	Summer ML WGLA BELA	BELA PPE	1:3 (including 2 adults)
Low Grade Open Country Walking	WGLA or BELA or PPE	PPE	1:3 (including 2 adults)
Normal Lowland Country – any area outside the designated wild country areas	Walking Group Leader Award (WGLA) or Basic Expedition Leader Award (BELA) or Proven Personal Experience (PPE)	PPE	1:3 (including 2 adults)

5.7.2 Climbing

The table overleaf should be read in conjunction with Sections 5.2.5; 5.2.6; 5.2.10

Notes:

* These references apply to activity provision in summer conditions only. Unless appropriately qualified for walking activity, climbing leaders should restrict their activity to crags within easy walking distance of road/emergency access.

** This reference is to activity on structures purpose-built for climbing, e.g., walls and towers. The proposed use of any other man-made structures, e.g., bridges, should be referred to the establishment VC who must consult with the Directors of SES.

*** This qualification is applicable where single pitch routes only are present in the particular gorge or ghyll. Environments containing multi-pitch routes require MIA or above.

Activity	Leader	Assistant	Ratio
Winter climbing. Snow and ice covered crags and gullies. <i>The company will only support this activity in highly exceptional circumstances, where it is a proven and necessary next step progression, and where a young person has already excelled at the development of skills up to this point. Even so this would only be in relation to qualified, expert advice and support.</i>	MIC Winter ML	Winter ML	Climbing ratios depend on the nature and
Rock climbing* Multi-pitch routes Single pitch routes	MIA SPA	SPA Trained	experience of the group
Climbing walls**	LEA CWS Climbing Walls Supervisor Award	Responsible adult	1:3 plus 1 adult
Gorge and ghyll scrambling***	SPA	SPA trained	1:3 plus 1 adult

5.7.3 Skiing

Notes:

This should be read in conjunction with Section 5.2.8

Nordic Skiing

Any groups planning this activity should contact the Directors of SES.

Activity	Leader	Ratio
Alpine skiing: Pisted, patrolled areas of recognised resorts Instruction	BASI 2 Ski Teacher BASI 3 or national ski School	1:3
Supervision	ESC SCO	
Off-piste, within marked patrolled areas Instruction or Supervision	BASI 3 Ski Instructor BASI 2 Ski Teacher	1:2
Off-piste, away from marked/patrolled areas Instruction or Supervision	Winter ML plus BASI 2 Ski Teacher	1:2

5.7.4 Caving

Notes:

SES will not support any underground activity, other than * below, unless led by a provider licensed under the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.

The table below should be read in conjunction with Sections 5.2.9

Activity	Leader	Ratio
Caves/mines With pitches over 18 metres With pitches under 18 metres Without pitches	CIC holder (or 5/NVQ Level 4) LCMLA Level 2 (or 5/NVQ Level 3) LCMLA Level 1 (or 5/NVQ Level 2)	1:3 plus one adult
Show caves/mines Journeys beyond public, marked/lit areas	As appropriate above	
Areas open to the general public*	None required	

5.7.5 Sailing

Notes:

Instructor qualifications should be relevant to the craft used, i.e., dinghies or keelboats.

The above qualifications assume that all major decisions are taken and that safety cover provided by a parent watersports centre, recognised by the RYA. Where this is not the case, a Senior Instructor Award (Coastal or Inland as appropriate) is required in all cases.

Leaders planning coastal journeys aboard cruising yachts should consult with the establishment VC who will subsequently contact the Directors of SES before commitment.

This should be read in conjunction with Section 5.3.5

Activity	Leader	Ratios
Sea or tidal waters Coastal journeys Sea/Tidal waters - from a harbour or suitable beach	Advanced Instructor Coastal Instructor Coastal	See RYA guidance on ratios
Inland waters	Instructor Inland	

5.7.6 Windsurfing

Notes:

Windsurfing must not take place without appropriate, professional safety cover provided by a recognised RYA centre.

This should be read in conjunction with Section 5.3.6

Activity	Leader	Ratios
Sea or tidal waters Inland waters	RYA Instructor Level 1 Coastal RYA Instructor Level 1 Inland	See RYA ratios

5.7.7 Canoeing or Kayaking

Notes:

Instructor qualifications must be relevant to the nature of the activity (sea or inland) and to the discipline, i.e., kayaking or canoeing.

This should be read in conjunction with Sections 5.3.7; 5.3.8

Activity	Leader	Ratios
Advanced sea activity or journeys, surfing	Contact Directors of SES before commitment	
Sea Journeys Close to suitable beaches Sheltered tidal waters, e.g., estuaries	Level 3 Sea Coach, Surf Coach (Kayak)	1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult
Large bodies of open water, e.g. lochs Journeys (kayak) Journeys (canoe) Close to suitable beaches	Level 3 Coach (Kayak) Level 3 Coach (Canoe) Level 2 Coach plus 4 star (Sea)	1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult
Rivers White Water Grade 11 and above White Water Grade 11 White Water Grade 1 or below Sheltered inland water, e.g., small lakes/canals	Level 3 Coach plus 5 star Level 3 Coach Level 2 Coach Level 2 Coach	1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult 1:3 plus one adult see notes

5.7.8 Rafting

Notes:

The above relates to inflatable rafts.

Controlled sites are short lengths of river, specifically managed and with safety provided.

This should be read in conjunction with Sections 5.3.9; 5.3.10

Activity	Leader	Ratios
White Water Grade 11 and above River – Grade 1 Controlled sites (Localised, sometimes purpose designed)	Raft Trip Leader (or 5/NVQ Level 3) Raft Guide (or 5/NVQ Level 2) Site specific training	1:3 plus one adult

5.8 VISITS ABROAD

5.8.1 Consideration Of Using A ‘Package Provider’

Any package holidays (visits and/or activities) are subject to strict regulation. Any plans that may be linked to package holidays or bookings need to be thoroughly explored in discussion with the Principal prior to any serious

consideration being given. The following information in 4.8.2 is therefore given as background information for the VC and Visit Leaders.

5.8.2 Package Travel Regulations 2018 (Summary)

Heads of Establishments Visit Leaders and VCs should be aware that The Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 2018 (the Regulations), are subject to variation in the light of new legislation, decisions of the Courts or of the facts of an individual case.

What do the Regulations apply to?

They apply to any packages sold or offered for sale in the UK. For the purposes of the Regulations a “package” is taken to mean:

“The pre-arranged combination of at least two of three things following, when they are sold or offered for sale at an inclusive price and where the service covers a period of more than 24 hours or includes overnight accommodation:

- *Transport*
- *Accommodation*
- *Other tourist services.”*

Who do the Regulations protect?

The Regulations require that tour operators provide evidence of security for the refund of money paid in case of insolvency. The tour operator can choose one of three options:

- Bonding through an Approved Body
- Insurance
- Holding clients’ money in trust.

There are advantages and disadvantages to all three methods and Visit Leaders should carefully consider these before making a choice.

Who do the Regulations provide for?

The Regulations require that the tour operator provide for repatriation of the consumer in the case of insolvency.

What information must be given to passengers?

There are four stages at which information has to meet the requirements of the Regulations:

- The Brochure
- Pre-Contract
- Contract
- “In good time” before a departure.

What precaution information is required?

In cases where there is no brochure, the following information must be given prior to the contract:

SES Educational, Social and Leisure Visits and Activities Policy and Practice: 0626

- General information about passport and visa requirements that apply to British Citizens who purchase the package.
- Information about health formalities required for the journey and the stay.
- The arrangement for security of monies and the repatriation of the consumer in the event of insolvency.

What information is required in written contracts?

The actual contractual details may not all be found in one document and a contract might be comprised of three or four documents such as a booking form, an itinerary sheet, booking conditions and any travel insurance certificate. The information required is as follows:

- The travel destination(s) and, where periods of stay are involved, the relevant periods, with details.
- The means, characteristics and categories of transport to be used and the dates, times and points of departure and return.
- Where the package includes accommodation, its location, its tourist category or degree of comfort.
- The meals that are included in the package.
- Whether a minimum number of periods of stay are required for the package to take place and if so, the deadlines for informing the consumer in the event of cancellation.
- Itinerary.
- Visits, excursions or other services that are included in the total price agreed for the package.
- The name and address of the organiser, the retailer and, where appropriate, the insurer.
- The price of the package, and if liable to revision, an indication of such revisions. It must be made clear too, that the company absorbs the first 2% of any price increase and no increase can be made less than 30 days before departure.
- The payment schedule and method of payment.
- Special requirements which the consumer has communicated to the operator when making the booking and which both have accepted.
- The periods within which the consumer must make any complaints.

What information must be provided in good time?

Certain information must be given before the start of the journey. How this information is given is left to the company's discretion:

- The times and places of intermediate stops and transport connections and particulars of the place to be occupied by the traveller.
- The name, address and telephone number of the representative of the operator in the location where the consumer is to stay.
- In the case of a journey or stay abroad by a child travelling alone under the age of 16, information allowing direct contact to be made with the child.
- Information must be given about an insurance policy, which the consumer may, if he or she wishes, take out.

What offences can be committed?

There are a number of criminal offences contained in the Regulations that can lead to prosecution. This includes such matters as:

- Making available to the consumer any brochure that does not give in a legible, comprehensive and accurate manner the information that the Regulation requires in any brochure.
- Failure to give to the consumer pre-contract information required on passports, visas, health formalities, security of money and repatriation.
- Failure to provide adequate security to guarantee the consumer refund of monies paid in the event of insolvency and to provide for repatriation.

If the above security is provided by holding clients' money in a trust account until the completion of the package, an offence is committed if the operator makes any statement to the trustee to get funds released in circumstances other than those permitted by these Regulations.

5.8.3 Approving a Visit Abroad

Approval of ALL educational visits abroad must be approved in principle by a Director.

Anyone wishing to organise a visit abroad must complete and submit the following to the VC, which will include:

- Objectives
- A list of all the documentation that will form the final field file; (each individual risk assessment to be listed individually)
- Nominal Roll form
- Itinerary for the trip.

These must be submitted to the Principal who will liaise with the Directors of SES for initial approval in principle. Please note that ALL these forms must arrive no later than three months prior to departure for approval to be given.

The final field file must be submitted to the VC who will check the contents before passing to the Principal who will provide final approval.

5.8.4 Staffing

Staffing levels need to take into account the nature and type of visit as well as the age of the young people and the experience of the staff involved in the visit. A ratio of one adult to 2 young people with at least 3 members of staff per group should be considered a minimum requirement. The only exception to these ratios would be where a young person was the only young person involved then in some circumstances two adults would suffice.

Staffing ratios must always be at a level adequate to deal with emergencies and unforeseen circumstances, e.g., one young person falling ill and requiring a teacher or supervisor to leave the main group of young people. Small groups with minimum staffing are particularly vulnerable in this respect.

5.8.5 Preparatory Session Prior to Any Visit

All interested parties should be given the opportunity for a full briefing. This can be done through a combination of correspondence, phone and ideally face-to-face briefings. Depending on whether children are with their families, accommodated or on a full care order there needs to be liaison with and permission from all parties who have a parental responsibility.

It goes without saying that all SES staff will be well briefed and have a clarity about their role, the following are illustrative of a number of things that will need consideration:

- the specific roles and responsibilities of each accompanying adult;
- systems to monitor children on a daily basis;
- group management during travel and organised outings;
- conduct on board coaches, ferries and aircraft;
- general procedures according to the type of visit to be undertaken.

A summary leaflet will help in the process of briefing as well as providing emergency information and contacts in one place.

5.8.6 Monitoring Whilst Abroad

Arrangements for supervision and monitoring will be made overtly explicit within the planning field file.

Parents and placing authorities must be made aware of all procedures for monitoring and contact with young people during the exchange.

5.8.7 After the Visit

On completion of each exchange or visit a debriefing session should be held for all participating staff. Principles and procedures should be examined and new experiences and examples of good practice highlighted. In addition, any matters for review should be discussed and considered as part of the planning process before the launch of the next exchange or visit. All participants, whether in attendance at these meetings or not, should receive full minutes of the meeting. Individuals unable to attend should be requested to send in writing any comments they wish to have recorded at the meeting.

5.8.8 Staying at a Residential Centre Abroad - Risk Assessment

Irrespective of the type of arrangements for a stay at a residential centre, it is essential that a risk assessment is carried out. If the visit is arranged within the establishment, the responsibility for the risk assessment is with the visit leader supported by the VC and subsequently approved by the SES Directors. If the visit is arranged through a tour operator, the tour operator should undertake the risk assessment. It is essential that the establishment obtains a copy of the assessment prior to confirmation of booking. If the Tour Operator has not carried out an assessment, the Visit Leader will need to do so. The risk assessment must include the Transport, Accommodation, Activity/Organisation. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure

regardless as to whether The Tour Operator provides a risk assessment, that there is a full coverage of risk assessment in relation to the trip and its activities.

If the visit is arranged by the school or establishment directly with the Centre, then the responsibility for risk assessment lies either with the visiting establishment or the Centre itself. Confirmation that a risk assessment has been effected is required.

When using a residential centre the Visit Leader must:

- conduct a fire briefing/practice as soon as possible after arrival;
- check that security measures are satisfactory;
- ensure all members of the party are aware of security procedures.

Good Practice Prompts:

- If the centre is on an enclosed site, perimeter gates should be secured at night.
- External doors should always be secured against risk of unauthorised entry but provide means of swift emergency exit at all times.
- Groups should not be located on ground floor accommodation wherever practicable.
- Accessible windows should be secured.
- Always ensure adherence to arrangements the Centre has in place for the security of valuables.
- Security considerations must take into account the specific logistics of the site and buildings.
- Teachers, and other supervisory adults, should not leave the Centre after dark unless for a specific function agreed by the Visit Leader and built into the risk assessment process (including on-going risk assessment).
- SECURITY MEASURES MUST NEVER PREJUDICE FIRE SAFETY.

5.8.9 Organising your own Transport - Travel Abroad

This section should be read in conjunction with Transport and Travel Policy and Practice document.

Where a supervisor accompanying the visit is also driving a vehicle it is not acceptable to expect him/her to exercise general supervisory responsibilities during the journey. This driving function must also be seen as working time. Provision should be made for the driver to take resting time. The Company, therefore, requires that there is an adequate number of other adults to supervise participants before, during and after the journey where appropriate.

Visit Leaders who wish to take a vehicle abroad other than to EU countries (whether an SES owned vehicle or a vehicle owned by another body), will need to take out additional insurance ('Green Card'). For visits to Spain, they will also need a bail bond.

When taking a vehicle abroad, drivers must comply with the motoring regulations of each country they visit. Regulations on taking a passenger vehicle abroad apply to vehicles designed to carry ten or more including the driver, whether commercially or privately owned. The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Travel Advice Unit) can provide information on foreign transport legislation and travel arrangements.

5.8.10 Hiring Coaches And Buses

An establishment organising its own visit or exchange must consider a number of factors when hiring a vehicle with driver(s). It is wise to establish what experience a driver has of driving abroad and whether or not he/she is familiar with the area to be visited.

On some visits abroad, e.g., exchanges, young people may be transported on foreign vehicles and in countries where regulations differ from those in the UK, e.g., seat belt regulations, organisers should make appropriate checks and advise parents of differing regulations to ensure informed parental consent.

5.8.11 Using A Tour Operator

There are a number of factors to be considered when organising a visit through a tour operator. These include Risk Assessment and Planning and Preparation.

5.8.12 Planning and Preparation

The Visit Leader should involve all accompanying staff from the outset and arrange team meetings to ensure that all are in agreement with the principles established and the information being given to parents and placing authorities. All accompanying staff should have a clear and specific role. Young people should be adequately prepared for visits abroad. Visit Leaders must give attention to the following factors:

- language – particularly common phrases;
- culture – e.g., body language, rules of behaviour, dress codes, local customs, attitudes to gender, etc.;
- alcohol usage – particularly where the legal age for consumption is younger, e.g., host families may offer wine with meals;
- food and drink – in some countries, group members will need to be advised of the dangers of drinking tap water. In some countries it is safer to drink bottled water and care needs to be taken with raw vegetables, salads and unpeeled fruit, raw shellfish, underdone meat or fish;
- money – how to carry money and valuables discreetly, e.g., money belts, zip armllets. If large amounts of money will be needed it might be advisable to take prepaid currency cards.
- use of the telephone abroad – obtaining money or phone card and knowing the correct code to ring home. (A charge card can be obtained from some phone companies allowing calls to be charged to the home number);

- emergency procedures – including how to contact emergency services in the countries to be visited.

Before using a tour operator, the Visit Leader must ensure it is reputable. This should form part of the Risk Assessment. The Civil Aviation Authority licenses travel organisers and tour operators who sell air seats or packages with an air transport element (Air Travel Organiser's Licence or ATOL). Travel agents do not need to hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence if they are acting only as an agent of an ATOL holder but, in this case, the Visit Leader must check whether or not the whole package being supplied is covered by the ATOL. If it is not, the provider must show evidence of other forms of security to provide for the refund of advance payments and the costs of repatriation in the event of insolvency.

There are seven bonding bodies approved by the Department of Trade and Industry:

Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)
 Federation of Tour Operators (FTOT)
 Association of Independent Tour Operators Trust (AITOT)
 Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
 The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
 Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
 The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers (ABTOT)

5.8.13 Emergency Medical Facilities

Some of these are available through health care arrangements in European Community (EC) countries to UK Nationals. An GHIC must be applied for through the NHS (<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>).

A GHIC allows access to medically necessary state provided healthcare when visiting an EU country at a reduced cost or sometimes for free.

SES requires that all participants have GHIC's before departure and that they are kept for safe keeping by a designated adult. They are no substitute for travel insurance.

5.8.14 Selecting Participants

Each young person's needs and individual risk assessment must be considered fully including repatriation arrangements if necessary.

5.8.15 Vaccinations

The Visit Leader must find out whether vaccination is necessary and ensure that all members of the group have received it in good time. Check whether the country to be visited requires proof of vaccination. The Department of Health gives advice on vaccination requirements in their publication, Health Advice to Travellers Anywhere in the World.

5.8.16 Visas/Passports

The Visit Leader must ensure that all members of the group have valid passports and visas (if appropriate) in the early stages of planning the visit. A group passport may suffice in certain circumstances.

5.8.17 Nationality

If the group includes young people where national or immigration status or entitlement to a British passport is in doubt, it is advisable to make early enquiries of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office concerning the requirements of the immigration rules and the right of re-entry. Young people who are not nationals of any EU member state may need a visa to travel from the UK to another member state. However, they may receive visa exemption if they are members of a Local Education Authority group. Details and forms are available from the Marketing Section of the British Council – 0161 884 0291

5.8.18 Care Orders and Wards of Court

If a young person is subject to a care order, foster parents will need to ensure that the Social Care Department consents to any proposed trip, as will officers in charge of residential establishments. If a young person is a ward of court, the Head of Establishment should seek advice from the court in relation to proposed journeys and activities abroad well in advance.

5.8.19 Selection of Supervisory Adults

The Visit Leader must ensure that:

- accompanying staff are aware of the role they are to play during the visit and their responsibilities are clearly defined;
- the appropriate number of copies for the Field File are taken on the visit, and in addition, for each member of the group;
 - a copy of the back page of their passport;
 - a list of numbers of other travel documents/passports;
- all accompanying adults must have clearance through the DBS checks;
- identity cards are prepared for students to carry on their person – these must be prepared in the language of the country to be visited (see sample in Section 2 and must contain all information that would be required to assist the young person should he/she become separated from the group.

5.8.20 Briefing Meetings for Parents and Participants

All staff and supervisors should meet all young people who will be in their care, together with their parents if required. Prior to departure, parents and young people should be introduced to all staff who will be responsible for the group throughout the visit abroad. Attendance at this meeting should be considered a priority for all concerned.

All parents, staff and participants should be provided with detailed written information about the visit. This will ensure that parents who do not attend briefing sessions will have an appropriate awareness. This should embrace such aspects as: insurance cover detailed itinerary other information such as contacts, supervision, staff details, travel company details, reciprocal health arrangements, etc.

Alternative provision should be made where parents/carers have language/literacy needs, which could compromise their ability to give informed consent from written information.

5.8.21 Briefing Meetings for Accompanying Staff

It is recommended that accompanying adults should be invited to a separate briefing/planning session to discuss their roles and responsibilities as a team whilst in charge of a group abroad. For a joint visit involving more than one establishment, such a meeting would allow staff from all establishments involved to meet prior to departure and to organise the details of their joint supervision. A set of agreed protocols may have to be drawn up to ensure that all agree on a single code of conduct for all participants. Attendance at this meeting should be considered a priority for all concerned.

Areas to be considered might include:

- the specific role and responsibilities of each accompanying adult;
- group management during travel;
- conduct on board coaches, ferries and aircraft;
- general procedures according to the type of visit to be undertaken.

5.8.22 Visits Abroad: Day and Residential - Minimum Supervisory Ratios

Some residential visits abroad may require additional supervisors. The VC and Visit Leader should consider this in relation to the ratios below and having read the relevant sections on supervision.

Young People All ages – Visits Abroad

To ensure that all young people have access to at least one member of staff who is well known to them, Visit Leaders proposing joint visits involving more than one educational establishment must ensure that at least one member of staff from each participating establishment accompanies the visit.

For visits involving larger numbers, the group must be subdivided

No. of young people	No. of adults/supervisors in addition to Visit Leader	Visit Leader
1-3	2	1
4-5	3	1
6-8	4	1
8 Max Group Size	4	1

5.8.23 Insurance

Where a school/establishment uses a tour operator, it must be a member of one of the bonding bodies approved by the Department of Trade and Industry.

Establishments must ensure that any tour operator/provider they use has an adequate level of public liability and product insurance cover. A full copy of the insurance cover should be requested at the initial planning stage (see Insurance Section, 3.15). Cover for at least £5 million is required by SES.

Implicit in the approval in principle request to the SES Directors is that they have a responsibility to ensure that the company insurance is in place. Visit Leaders may legitimately (and indeed should) ask to view the company insurance. Should a particular visit be outside of the scope of SES current insurance then the Visit Leader and Company Directors have a responsibility to be satisfied that appropriate cover is in place.

5.8.24 Exchange Visits

The nature and complexity of most of the young people at SES will mean that facilitating an exchange visit in the traditional mainstream model of students staying with other families requires exceptionally detailed planning and liaison with European partners. However, as part of SES 'no limits' philosophy we would regard the experience of staying with a foreign family as a potentially life changing event, and as such aspire to provide this opportunity where appropriate. Individual arrangements would be considered at the time.

6 BEACH INDUCTION POLICY AND PRACTICE

6.1 PERMITTED BEACHES

Only beaches listed below to be used for swimming in the sea.

For Summer 2026, the following beaches have all been awarded the International Blue Flag or the UK Seaside Award and all have RNLI lifeguard coverage between designated dates and therefore must not be used for swimming at any other time of the year.

Lifeguard cover is only available between designated times and swimming is not to be allowed outside these times when there is no professional rescue cover available.

- From 23rd May until 12th September 2026 between 10.00 and 18.00

Cromer East, Sheringham West, Mundesley, Sea Palling

- From 23rd May until 6th September 2026 between 10.00 and 18.00

Lowestoft (South of Claremont Pier), Southwold Pier (North)

- From 11th July until 6th September 2026 between 10.00 and 18.00

Sheringham East, Cromer West, West Runton, East Runton Southwold (South)

If upon arrival between these dates and times no lifeguard cover is provided, under no circumstances should young people be permitted to enter the water.

6.2 PRELIMINARY AWARENESS

- Check local conditions before going into open water
- Visit leader to be aware of young person's swimming ability. Remember to also take into consideration demeanor of individuals during the activity and their ability to listen and follow instruction before and during the activity.
- Do not rely on the young person's own estimation.
- Ensure that all members of the group, both adults and young people alike understand the distress and recall signals.
- Ensure the group has an understanding of the flags being flown and the factors that could affect their change during the activity.
- All adults must be willing and able to effect a rescue should it be required. The extent of this rescue will depend on the individual's confidence, ability and stature. Whilst some adults may feel confident enough to enter the sea and send assistance to alert lifeguards, others may feel it more pertinent for them to alert lifeguards and allow them to execute the rescue.
N.B. It is imperative, as with any first response to an incident that you safeguard your own safety.
- All adults must also be familiar with and practiced in resuscitation. (The updated CPR technique starts with 30 chest compressions, followed by two rescue breathes and continues on in this cycle)
- Ensure that serious thought has been given to the issues around changing and the nature of play whilst in the sea. This is to be done at the planning stage of the visit, not upon arrival.

6.3 LIFEGUARDS

- Upon arrival Visit Leader to establish contact with lifeguard and set up activity within their line of site.
- Ensure use of clearly defined, recognisable area for swimming. This area to be conveyed to entire group on arrival.

6.4 WATER SAFETY

- Minimum 1 adult in the water and 1 adult overseeing from shore.
- Maximum 2 young people per adult in water at any given time.
- Ensure regular head counts.
- Supervising adults must be easily recognisable by young people in the water.
- Clearly define to young people the depth to which they may swim. This will depend on several factors (height, swimming ability, gradient of beach).
- Limitation of depth must be within - water level at nipple height when standing or wading out 25 metres (whichever threshold is reached first).

- Firm guidelines to be set upon arrival, that should conditions change for the worse the activity will stop immediately.
- Body boards are permitted under close supervision, however under no circumstances are inflatables of any kind to be used.
- Do not climb on or swim near breakwaters.

6.5 VISIT LEADER

- Ensure you have read 'Beach R.A' and Visits Form has been completed and approved.
- Visit Leader to carry whistle, First Aid Kit and mobile phone. (Be aware, there is little or no signal on some parts of the East Coast)
- Visit Leader to ensure that appropriate protection is taken against weather conditions. This includes carrying, applying and re-applying sun cream and that sun hats are worn for extended periods of exposure to the sun.
- Visits Leader to ensure that enough fluids are carried and that all members of the party have sufficient liquid intake to prevent de-hydration during the activity.
- Do not swim immediately after a meal – use 30 minutes as a guide.
- The Visit Leader's word is final and the activity can be withdrawn at their discretion or through discussion with other supporting adults.

6.6 CODE OF CONDUCT

- Ensure young people stay away from wildlife areas, especially at nesting time.
- Avoid conflict with other beach users.
- Be considerate to other beach users. Remember noise travels much further during onshore winds.

6.7 WEATHER CONDITIONS

- Be aware that the combination of the sun and wind at the beach may cause conditions to feel different to when at Avocet which is further inland.
- Young people and adults may suffer sunstroke or heat exhaustion far quicker at the beach.
- All persons participating on the trip must apply sun cream (Factor 15>) before trip commences and ensure that they take an appropriate sunhat.
- If bathing you must ensure that a waterproof sun cream is applied.
- This must be re-applied every 60 minutes and time allowed to be absorbed by the skin for at least 10 minutes before re-entering the water.
- Upon return from the visit, an application of after sun lotion must be applied at regular intervals.

6.8 BBQs:

- Only beaches owned by North Norfolk District Council permit BBQ's (in designated BBQ areas).
- These are Cromer, Mundesley, Sea Palling, Sheringham, East and West Runton
- They are permissible to groups of 12 people or less; larger groups are required to obtain a permit.