

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



**Education, Learning &
Leisure**

***PROCEDURES
FOR ALL
OFF SITE
EXCURSIONS***

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1 Education Learning & Leisure Off-Site Excursion Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

All off-site excursions must operate within Aberdeenshire Council Policies, Procedures and legislative requirements.

This guidance “**Procedures for all Off-Site Excursions**” sets out the procedures for Education Learning & Leisure (ELL) staff that are planning and carrying out any off-site excursion with young people. This guidance should be viewed in the context of the Council’s broader culture of safety and good practice. It seeks to define current best practice and informs the arrangements within the Council’s management systems for the consistent assurance of that best practice. The document is not a definitive guide but must be considered as the principal source of guidance and instruction to help ensure the safe management and delivery off all Off-Site Excursions. The guidance must be read in conjunction with other documentation relating specifically to the activity, as appropriate.

The guidance is underpinned by the Scottish Government framework document “**Going Out There**” which establishes the tone and spirit for the delivery of outdoor learning and outdoor education. The guidance embraces the principles of sensible risk management by seeking a balanced view that considers both the benefits and risks associated with visits and activities.

The documents “**Procedures for all Off-Site Excursions**” and “**Going Out There**” amalgamates guidance formerly provided by the two documents: “**Safety & Good Practice in Adventurous Activities 2003**” and “**Safety and Good Practice for Educational Excursions**” which have been withdrawn.

The ELL guidance sets out a common framework for the management and delivery of all off-site excursions and has been adopted as the principal source of guidance and instruction, within ELL.

This guidance will be reviewed periodically and kept up-to-date to reflect legislative changes, new practices and lessons learned from evaluations.

Where advice or clarification is required this should be addressed in the first instance to the Education Learning & Leisure Senior Management Team.

Maria Walker
Director of Education, Learning and Leisure
Woodhill House, Aberdeen
July 2013

1.2 Inclusion

Aberdeenshire Council is committed to increasing participation across our culture and community. Inclusive practices recognise and value the richness of diversity which exists in our community and develops appropriate responses to meet the needs of all. These procedures have been developed to support staff in the planning and delivery of off site excursions by emphasising risk assessment and facilitating this approach to identify and delivery inclusive services.

The focus on achieving successful outcomes for all children and young people is in line with the Scottish Government's priorities (Getting it Right for Every Child and Curriculum for Excellence).

1.3 Child Protection

Our responsibility to protect children extends beyond the boundary of the school or establishment. In preparing for off-site excursions and considering the risk assessment for the excursion, our child protection responsibility must be included. Consideration must be given to how those in our care will be protected when we are outside our usual operational environment. This can be discussed with the Child Protection Coordinator for the establishment, who will advise you on your plans and any child protection concerns.

Consideration also needs to be given to known child protection issues and situations which are current for children and young people in your establishment and how the excursion might impact on them. Will the risk for these children be increased and how is that to be addressed?

This guide will help you to organise and manage off site excursions and ensure that an approach is adopted which address the needs of every child.

Remember:

“Children may be in need of protection where their basic needs are not being met, in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development, and they will be at risk through avoidable acts of commission or omission.”

Protecting Children: A Shared Responsibility, 1998

1.4 Parental Permission for Excursions Outwith the UK.

Aberdeenshire Council is required to have the written consent of both parents who have and are currently exercising parental responsibilities and rights, with respect to a child aged under 16 years, before that child can participate in an educational excursion outside the UK. (The Children (Scotland) Act 1995)

2 Key principles

2.1 Aims of Off Site and Outdoor Learning in Aberdeenshire.

- To support and promote the four capacities underpinning the [Curriculum for Excellence](#), namely 'successful learners', 'confident individuals', 'responsible citizens' and 'effective contributors'.
- To promote living, journeying and working together out of doors through a range of activities which provide learning, experience, adventure, challenge and enjoyment.
- To actively promote a greater awareness of the environment and sustainability issues, both local and wide, through educational activities and visits to a variety of natural environments and through taking part in and understanding the impacts of off-site and outdoor activities.

Aberdeenshire Council is a licensed provider of Adventurous Activities.

Much of what follows in the Procedures, related to adventurous activities, not only reflects current best practice but is required to ensure that the Council meets its legal obligations in respect of the Activity Centres (Young Persons safety) Act 1995 and associated regulations.

The planning and organization of off site excursions is of a voluntary nature (unless there are contractual implications) but, where such excursions are organised, they must comply with the procedures set out in this document.

For off site excursions involving **ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES** additional guidance is provided for each activity within the '[Activities](#)' section of the Off Site and Outdoor Learning website.

Where the provision of adventurous activities is contracted to an [Approved External Provider](#), then the provider's own safety management system will apply for those activities and their own operating procedures will be followed.

2.2 Definitions and Terminology

Off Site Excursions: any organised event where participants are taken off site from their establishment

Off Site and Outdoor Learning:

This is a generic term encompassing many forms of experiential learning out of doors. Off site and outdoor learning is defined as:

"Active learning through direct personal experience offering challenge, fun and adventure within a managed framework of safety."

Types of Excursion.

Listed below are some examples of off site excursions. They vary in terms of the levels of risk and extent of the planning and organisation required to manage them appropriately:

This is **NOT** a definitive list:

- A survey carried out by pupils on the streets outside their school
- Core curricular work such as field work or visits to historical sites.
- Engaging with stimulating environments for art work or creative writing.
- Mini beast hunt in the local park.
- Subject enrichment such as theatre visits, concerts and museum visits.
- Taking part in or watching sporting fixtures or other competitions.
- Cultural visits and/or international exchanges.
- Residential stays
- Organised holidays
- Visits to countries outside the UK, third World countries and remote areas
- Adventurous activities
- Expeditions within and out with the UK.

Adventurous Activities:

Activities with a level of perceived risk and for which specialist training and/or qualifications would normally be required to lead them.

This list can never be exhaustive but includes:

- Journeys outside Europe, the USA and Canada
 - All upland, hill and mountain activities on foot, horseback, bicycle, ski or snowboard.
 - All climbing related activities such as rock climbing in and out of doors, deep water traversing, abseiling, improvised Tyrolean traverses, bouldering, bridge swings, bungee jumping, rock hopping, coastal scrambling, etc.
 - All watersports and water related activities such as kayaking, open canoeing, rafting, sailing, wind surfing, surfing, water ski-ing, wave boarding, inflatables, gorge walking, coasteering, fishing and swimming in natural waters.
 - Underground activities – caving, mine exploration, pot holing.
 - Cycling including mountain biking and all biking activities including low level trails and on road cycling. (Cycling Proficiency testing would not be notifiable).
 - All horseback activities.
 - Quads, trail bikes and any form of motorized activities in natural terrain.
 - Airborne activities such as kite surfing, snow kiting, hang gliding, paragliding, parachuting, parapenting.
 - Any other activities of an adventurous nature where participants are likely to be more than 1 metre above the ground or over water and where specialist equipment would normally be required to safeguard progress and where specialist training/qualifications are required to supervise.
-
- All adventurous activities are notifiable to the external Adventurous Activities Consultant (AAC) during the planning stage. See: [notification pack](#)

The AALA license requires Aberdeenshire Council to maintain a system which gives it reliable information on the adventurous activities which take place. This approach also supports the monitoring of adventurous activities as part of our safety system which helps to ensure processes are followed within Aberdeenshire and that external providers maintain expected standards.

Additional information on the common adventurous activities can also be found in the [Activities section](#) though it should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

Inevitably there will sometimes be a grey area at the boundary between what is considered to be an adventurous activity and what is not and therefore in cases where staff are uncertain as to whether notification to the AAC is required the advice to Heads of Establishment is to notify to the Adventure Activities Consultant as a precaution.

2.3.1 Categories of Excursions

For notification and authorization purposes off-site excursions are categorized as follows;

Category	Description	Who Can Authorize this Excursion?
1a	Excursions within the UK without adventurous activities	Head of Establishment
1b	Excursions within the UK with adventurous activities	Head of Establishment with Adventure Scotland Guidance
2a	Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada without adventurous activities	Head of Establishment
2b	Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada with adventurous activities	Head of Establishment with Adventure Scotland Guidance
2c	All excursions to countries outwith Europe, USA or Canada. All exchange visits to any location	Head of Establishment with support of the ELL Excursion Group

Education Learning & Leisure Excursion Group

Purpose of the Group

The purpose of this group is :

- To oversee the arrangements for the planning and preparation for excursions carried out by ELL establishments;
- To support the authorization of excursions to locations grouped under 2c in the Categories of Excursions table.

Membership

Membership will include ELL Risk Officer, ELL CP Officer, Adventure Activities Officer, a primary and an academy head teacher ,the Sport and Leisure Manager plus others as required.

Operation of the Group

Establishments planning 2c type excursions will notify the ELL Excursion Group at an early stage of planning by sending a completed copy of the form provided at **Appendix 1** to ELLEXcursions@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

The form is provided to give the Group a “heads up” that a 2c type trip is being considered.

The group will work with the establishment to help ensure the effective planning of a safe excursion.

Authority to proceed

Authority to proceed with a 2c excursion will be given by the head of establishment.

TABLE 1

Category 1 - Excursions within UK

Notification & Approval Process

Type of Off-Site Excursions	Examples for Illustration purposes	Head of Establishment (HoE)	HoE's Line Manager	Head of Service.
<p>Category 1a</p> <p>Excursions within the UK without adventurous activities.</p>	<p>Activities in local park, mini beast hunts in local woods, field trips. Visits to HM Theatre, to castles, museums, places of local interest etc. Overnight/residential visits to cities and places of national interest.</p>	<p>Excursion plans approved by Head of Establishment with a requirement to maintain and retain records of all excursion plans within the establishment.</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans. Notified for information.</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans.</p>
<p>Category 1b</p> <p>Excursions within the UK with adventurous activities, delivered either in house or by Approved External Providers.</p>	<p>Day visits to local approved providers such as Transition Extreme or Aberdeen Snow Sports and longer overnight stays in approved residential centres, such as Loch Inch Watersports.</p> <p>Adventurous activity such as Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions, hill walking, rock climbing, mountain biking, skiing etc. delivered by the establishment's own qualified staff / volunteers or external provider staff or a mixture of both.</p>	<p>Excursion plans approved by Head of Establishment only after formal consultation with the Adventurous Activities Consultant through the formal Notification process.</p> <p>Required to maintain and retain records of all excursion plans within establishment.</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans. Notified for information</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans.</p>

TABLE 2

Category 2 - Excursions Outside the UK and All Exchange Visits

Type of Off-Site Excursion	Examples for Illustration purposes	Head of Establishment (HoE)	HoE Line Manager	Head of Service
<p>Category 2a</p> <p>Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada without adventurous activities.</p>	<p>Cultural visits, visits to historic battle sites, war graves, European Parliament, cities etc</p>	<p>Excursion plans approved by Head of Establishment with a requirement to notify the line manager for information purposes only.</p> <p>Required to maintain and retain records of all excursion plans within establishment</p>	<p>Will be notified of the excursion plans logged by the establishment for information and will acknowledge receipt of these to HoE.</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans.</p>
<p>Category 2b</p> <p>Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada with adventurous activities.</p>	<p>Watersports, Alpine ski trips, climbing, trekking, glaciers, deserts. Sports & leisure resorts and remote locations within Europe, USA and Canada.</p>	<p>Excursion plans approved by Head of Establishment only after :</p> <p>(a) Formal consultation with the Adventurous Activities Consultant through the Notification process</p> <p>and</p> <p>(b) Notifying line manager of plan and objectives for comment.</p> <p>Required to maintain and retain records of all excursion plans within establishment</p>	<p>Will be notified of the excursion plans for comment prior to any final approval being given by HoE.</p>	<p>Will have access to the establishment's records of all excursion plans.</p>

<p>Category 2c</p> <p>Excursions to countries out with Europe, USA or Canada.</p> <p>All exchange visits to any location</p>	<p>Expeditions and excursions to far away and often remote locations such as all third World Countries, Siberia, Antarctica or South America.</p> <p>Exchanges with participants staying with host families.</p>	<p>Excursion plans approved by Head of Establishment with the support of the ELL Excursion group after :</p> <p>(a) Formal consultation with the Adventurous Activities Consultant through the Notification process</p> <p>Required to maintain and retain records of all excursion plans within establishment</p>	<p>Will be notified of the excursion plans for information.</p>	<p>Will be notified of excursion plans for formal consultation purposes and Director Briefing.</p>
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2.3.2 External Providers

An 'External Provider' is a business or agency that provides instruction, supervision or leadership services in support of excursions and outdoor learning. In the case of adventurous activities the council operates a **Register of Approved External Providers**. These are organizations whose safety management arrangements have been vetted by the council in terms of their competence and safe practice in the provision of adventure activities. The relationship between an establishment and an external provider is essentially that of client and contractor and as such, the activities led and managed by external providers will be delivered under the terms of the external provider's own safety management arrangements.

For those off-site excursion activities which involve a combination of in-house and external providers. (e.g. A school ski trip where the pupils are supervised/taught by the Ski School for part of the day and by the school's own qualified staff for the other part.) it must be made clear which safety management arrangements are being applied at any given time and a clear and unambiguous handover from one to another arranged.

2.3.3 Freelance staff/volunteers

This term refers to activity specialists who are engaged on either a paid or voluntary basis to assist with the delivery of activities. They are usually engaged because they hold the appropriate National Governing Body awards to enable them to lead or supervise particular activities. Freelance staff will be required to work within the terms of this council's safety policy document and it must be clear who will line-manage them and provide an appropriate induction into the council's safety management arrangements.

2.3.4 Head of Establishment

In the context of the document the designation is not confined to the managers of facilities such as head teachers, recreation officers, and managers of specialist facilities such as Alford Ski Centre and Huntly Nordic Centre, but also includes managers of community learning programmes (Community Learning and Development Workers) and managers of sports development projects/programmes (Sports Development Officers). This is the individual who carries direct responsibility for authorizing the planned activity or event.

2.3.5 In-House Provision

Throughout this document reference is made to “in-house provision.” In the context of this document this is where an off-site excursion, including all its activities, is being led/supervised/instructed by the establishment’s own staff/volunteers including any freelance staff recruited by establishments.

2.3.6 Parents and Legal Guardians

Parent will be used to refer to either natural parents or a person/s appointed as legal guardian/s of a child or vulnerable adult for whom permissions may need to be sought.

2.3.7 Staff

Throughout this document reference is made to “staff”. In the context of this document the designation is not confined to paid employees of the Council but also includes volunteers /parent helpers that are properly engaged.

2.3.7 Visit Leader

In the context of this document this refers to the person organizing and leading the excursion. For more detail see section 23.

3 Principles of Safety Management

Safety, during off-site activities, should be seen in the context of the Council's broader culture of safety. Staff should be familiar with those aspects of the Aberdeenshire Council's Health and Safety Policy that are relevant to the content of their planned programme.

Duty of Care is a legal obligation owed by anyone who takes responsibility for the safety of others. This applies equally to associated aspects of safe practice such as use of minibuses, fire and domestic safety, safety in built-up areas and provision of appropriate insurance. The duty of care owed to a participant, if the person is a child or has physical or learning difficulties, may be more challenging to fulfil and may require more rigorous checks to be carried out.

Safety has, as its basis, a sound framework of planning and organisation, coupled with the competence of those members of staff responsible for delivery and supervision. Competence relies upon an appropriate mix of experience and training.

An intrinsic feature of off site excursions is that all may not always go according to plan. This implies a need for safety systems that are adaptable and flexible within the overall safety framework. Only well trained and experienced staff will be able to apply the sound judgment required in such circumstances.

"To ensure the safety of participants, all reasonable precautions should be taken which are commensurate with the acceptance that complete safety might destroy the very reason for participation."

[\(Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education\).](#)

3.1 Key Elements of Good and Safe Practice

There are a number of **KEY ELEMENTS** that will support both good and safe practice. These are identified below and expanded upon later in the document.

Well Defined Objectives

The objectives for the programme or event must be clearly stated and understood by all concerned.

Risk Assessment

A written risk assessment must be completed prior to each event or series of events. The risk assessment can only be completed once the proposed composition of the party is known since the ability of the group and the additional support needs of individuals are relevant factors. It is good practice to carry out the risk assessment with those taking part in the excursion wherever possible. The person leading the risk assessment should ensure the Head of Establishment has viewed and accepted the risk assessment as suitable. The assessment should be recorded and copies given to all leaders and supervisors, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.

Staff Competence

Competent leadership is the most important safety factor of all. Appropriate supervision ratios along with the required competences and experience of leaders should be identified as part of the risk assessment process.

It is a requirement of the Adventure Activity Licensing Service that updated evidence of staff competences/qualifications relating to adventurous activities be kept on file within each establishment.

Detailed information on the required technical competences and minimum supervision ratios required for the leadership of adventurous activities can be found within the guidance sections of the relevant [activities](#).

Training of Staff

Leaders need to be able to safeguard the physical and psychological health of the people, especially young people, in their care. It is essential that staff receive appropriate training for the organisation, leadership and supervision of off-site excursions.

Clearly defined roles

It is essential that all those involved in the planning and delivery of off-site excursions understand their roles and responsibilities.

Good Communication

Effective communication during all stages of the planned event is crucial. Often it will be sufficient to communicate verbally but it may be necessary to provide written instruction on occasions. Mobile phones can be of great help and their use should be considered but not totally relied upon. Satellite phones may need to be considered by groups visiting more remote regions.

For school pupils, further details of any specific communication needs they may have can be found in education support plans.

Planning and Preparation

All aspects of the activity should be carefully planned. It is strongly recommended that organizers use a form of **Planning Checklist**.

Arrangements **must** also ensure that appropriate contingency arrangements are in place.

Monitoring

It is a vital link in the safety management chain that managers satisfy themselves through a monitoring process that the guidance and good practice that is outlined in this document is being implemented 'on the ground'.

Evaluation

The outcomes of events should be evaluated in order to learn from the experience. The evaluation process helps to build confidence and competence and will help inform the planning for all future programmes.

3.2 Understanding Risk Assessment

On any off site excursion, the safety of participants and employees must be the primary objective. **Participants must not be put into a position that exposes them to an unreasonable level of risk.** A written risk assessment **must** be completed prior to each event or series of events.

Risk levels are usually rated as high, medium or low. Where a risk assessment shows a risk as being **high or medium** then the planning of this excursion must be re-considered to ensure that control measures are put in place to manage this risk down to **low**.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to:

- identify the likely hazards to be encountered
- identify hazards you may create as a result of actions you intend to take
- identify those who are at risk
- identify how risks can be minimized and managed at an acceptable level by implementing suitable control measures.
- establish appropriate supervision ratios

The person carrying out the risk assessment **must** record it and give copies to all leaders and supervisors on the excursion and to the Head of Establishment for approval.

A risk assessment template is included with this guidance and specific templates for adventurous activities are included within the guidance sections for each [activity](#)

An effective risk assessment must cover the whole excursion ie from start point to end point. It will not identify and manage the risks faced by the group if it only begins from the point the activity itself begins.

3.2.1 Forms of Risk Assessment

Risk assessments should be proportionate and as comprehensive as is necessary for the excursion and participants.

This can best be achieved by working closely with staff and participants to review the stages of the excursion to identify risks and the control measures needed to deal with them. This will help to put agreed control measures into context and actively involve participants in the management of their safety.

Where specialized activities entail particular hazards, or where medical or special needs of participants exacerbate hazards, the Head of Establishment **must** ensure that the hazard is managed appropriately.

Where people with additional support needs are participating, it is essential that appropriate advice is taken on what reasonable adjustments are required and how they can be made, in line with Aberdeenshire Council's policy on inclusion.

For all children and young people, using the GIRFEC Practice Model will help ensure that the needs of all children and young people taking part are recognized and met.

There are three common forms of risk assessment:

1. Generic risk assessment.

These are useful in identifying generic risks attached to certain activities or excursions. For example there are generic risks attached to visiting large cities regardless of whether the city is London, Manchester or Glasgow.

Sample generic [risk assessments](#) for the more common adventure activities are provided on the Off Site and Outdoor Learning web site.

2. Excursion or Site-specific risk assessments

These should be completed **in addition to** generic risk assessments to evaluate risks that are particular to your planned activity or excursion. The composition of the party will influence a site specific risk assessment, especially if there are medical issues and/or additional support needs. Transport arrangements are another key factor.

Where appropriate, a generic assessment should be appended to the specific risk assessment.

3. Dynamic risk assessment.

Generic and site-specific risk assessments are always done prior to the excursion.

Dynamic risk assessment is a continuous process ongoing throughout the excursion. They are less likely to be recorded but are a product of continuous monitoring and vigilance by staff and participants. In simple terms dynamic risk assessment is the result of continually asking the question, “**What if.....?**”. Decisions taken as a result are best arrived at and shared in discussion with other staff and participants when appropriate.

Regardless of how decisions are made, all those potentially affected need to be clearly briefed.

Repeated Events

Where an excursion is one of a series of similar events (e.g. regular ‘away’ sports fixtures or off site and outdoor learning events) it may not be necessary to carry out written full risk assessments for every occasion. By taking a dynamic risk assessment approach you will be able to judge to what degree the safety management arrangements or the composition of the party has changed and if additional hazards are now evident. Where minor adjustments are required to the risk assessment a “variation sheet” should be used.

It is important not to become complacent and a continual process of dynamic risk assessment should take place in order to monitor safety.

Residual Risk

Risk cannot be entirely eliminated from an off site excursion or event. The risk that remains, having carried out a risk assessment and implemented control measures, is called the “**Residual Risk**”.

It is important that all those involved, including parents, are aware that a residual risk exists and acknowledge how this will be dealt with by all in the party.

For excursions organized by Aberdeenshire Council establishments, the residual risk should never be other than “**Low**”. If the risk assessment shows a risk level of “**High or Medium**” then the excursion needs to be re-planned to achieve a low risk level.

Exploratory visits

Wherever possible the party leader should undertake an exploratory visit. This will not only assist in carrying out a more comprehensive and meaningful risk assessment, but should help judge the suitability of the venue for meeting the excursion’s objectives and the range of needs of the participants . This will enable staff to prepare prior to visiting the site, with a group.

If an exploratory visit is not possible then other sources of information must be sought in order to effectively assess risks. These might include:

- other organizations that have used the same venue.
- tourist authorities
- management of the venue
- the safety policy, risk assessment and operating procedures which may be already in place at the venue itself.

Additional Information on Risk Management

Additional information on Risk Management is shown at Appendix 14.

The Risk Assessment template is shown at Appendix 3.

4 Preparation and Planning

Whether an excursion is to the local park, a canoe expedition or a residential overseas trip, it is essential that formal planning takes place and that it begins far enough in advance of departure. This chapter provides guidance on the planning process and a number of related issues that may need to be considered.

4.1 Head of Establishment's Responsibilities

Heads of establishments are expected to follow and implement this guidance to ensure their responsibilities are fulfilled and that outdoor learning experiences and off-site visits are managed safely. Heads of establishments should ensure that :

- The visit has suitable aims and effective ways of achieving them
- The visit leader is competent to manage and monitor the risks throughout the visit.
- Child protection procedures are in place
- Appropriate risk assessments have been completed and proportionate safety measures are in place
- Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and participants have been considered
- Communication with parents has been carried out and parents have been appropriately informed of all aspects of the excursion and the risks involved and the necessary permissions obtained.
- Suitable financial arrangements are in place both to finance the excursion and safely manage currency and access to cash during the excursion
- The visit leader has suitable experience and competencies for the visit
- Visit leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Visit assistants and other accompanying adults in a supervisory role are appropriately recruited and briefed
- The ratio of other accompanying adults to participants is appropriate
- The Authority has approved the visit, if appropriate
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and additional support needs of all the participants
- The Authority's policy on the administration of medicines has been followed
- Appropriate first aid provision will be available to meet the needs of the participants.
- The mode of travel and travel arrangements are appropriate
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover in place.
- Effective contact arrangements are in place
- Emergency arrangements, if required, are in place and have been communicated to those who need to know
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

An aide memoire for head teachers is attached at **Appendix 1**

4.2 Visit Leader's Responsibilities

Visit leaders will consult with and seek advice & guidance from their technical advisors and Head of Establishment regarding up to date agreements on practice and procedure in off-site visits.

The visit leaders will complete a risk assessment and do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group including:

- Taking overall responsibility during the visit
- Obtaining approval of your plans from the Head of Establishment
- Following the procedures set out in this document.
- The visit planned is a good choice for all participants
- Having enough information on the proposed participants to assess their suitability for the visit or that the visit is suitable for the participants, being mindful of equality and inclusion
- Appointing and briefing visit assistants, deputies and other staff where appropriate
- Being able to control, lead and instruct participants of the relevant age range
- Being trained in child protection issues

4.3 Adventurous Activities Consultant

Aberdeenshire Council has engaged the services of a [Safety Management Consultant for Adventurous Activities](#). They are acknowledged experts in the field and will provide specialist advice on safety and other operational issues. They have responsibility for:

- Advising the Council on policy issues relating to off site and outdoor learning.
- Advising Senior Officers and Heads of Establishment on operational aspects of off site and outdoor learning.
- Providing support to staff in establishments for the implementation and interpretation of policies.
- Checking of completed notification forms and advising Heads of Establishments.
- Checking Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition & training plans and advising Heads of Establishments.
- Checking particular procedures where appropriate with external providers.
- Carrying out monitoring visits from time to time on activities taking place.
- Providing in-service training for council staff and volunteers relating to adventurous activities.

4.4 Authorisation and Authority Notification

There are **THREE STEPS** to gaining authorization for an off site excursion.

STEP 1 Initial Approval: Head of Establishment.

In the first instance, staff planning excursions **must** seek authorisation in principle from their Head of Establishment. This initial approval should be obtained before engaging with young people or parents. At this early stage, details may be limited but should include:

- Objectives of the excursion
- Any particular challenges likely to be raised for participants or supervisors
- Likely dates, duration and venue
- Size and make-up of group , adhering to Aberdeenshire Council's Inclusion Policy
- Initial Risk Assessment
- Staffing requirements and any cover needed
- Staff experience and competency
- Other resources
- Estimate of costs, including additional costs associated with the support of those with additional support needs

STEP 2 Detailed Planning

The Visit Leader carries out detailed planning and risk assessments for the excursion. The risk assessment is recorded. Information about the support requirements of people with additional needs will be useful at this stage.

STEP 3

The Visit Leader seeks final approval to proceed from the Head of Establishment. ***In all cases the final decision to approve or otherwise rests with the Head of Establishment.***

Depending on the excursion, the Head of Establishment may be able to make this decision without seeking advice from sources outwith the establishment. Excursions vary considerably from simple local excursions with no adventurous activities on the one hand to, for example, a month long expedition to a remote location within a Third World country on the other.

Given these differences and the differences in associated risks, the Head of Establishment is obliged to seek advice in certain cases before making the final decision.

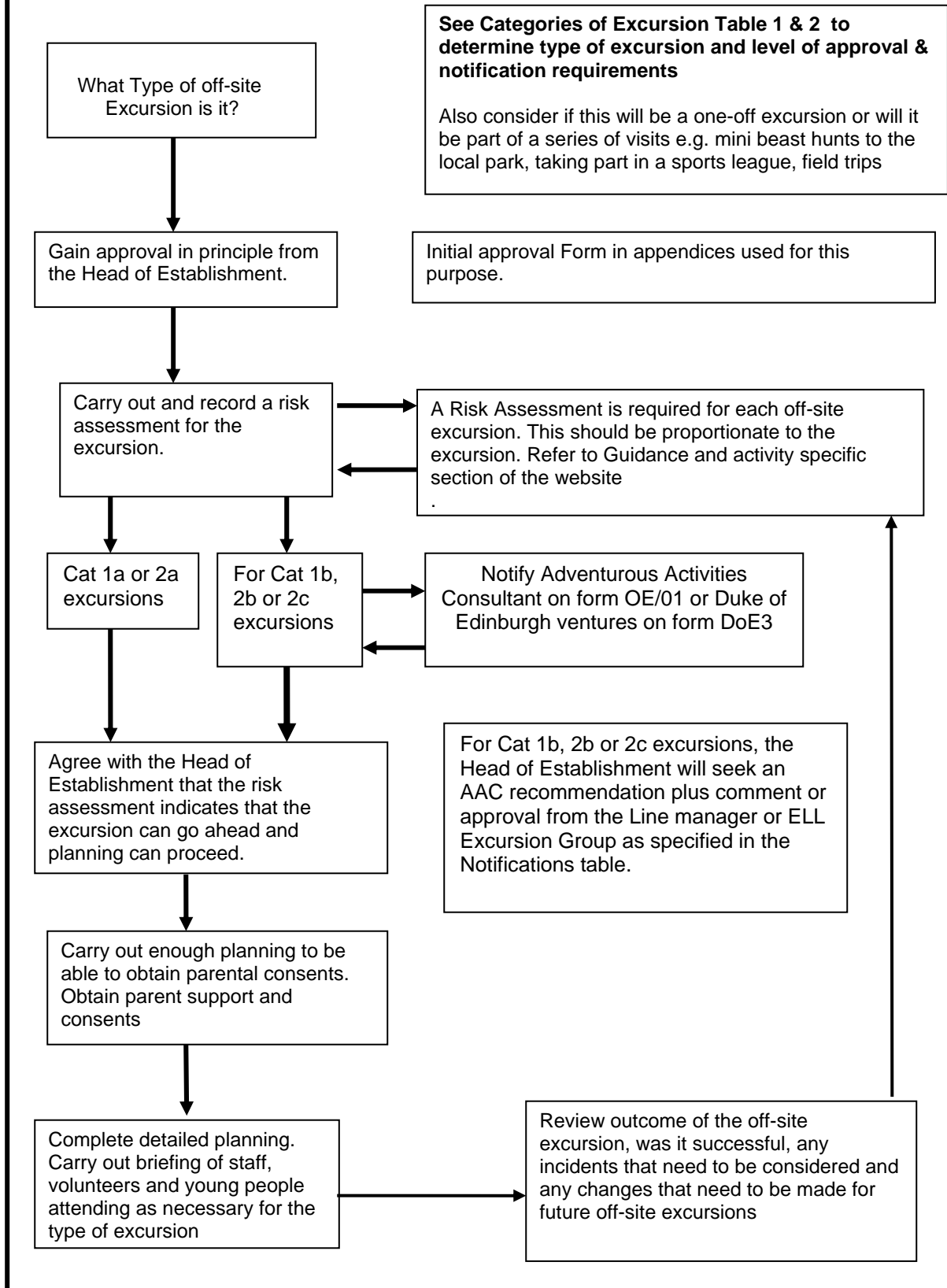
In all cases, the establishment is **obliged to maintain** records of all off-site excursions and to make those records available for line managers and senior officers, as required.

A copy of the Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition / training plans also require to be sent to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Administration office for quality assurance checking.

The flow diagram below outlines the process required to be followed to enable the Head of Establishment to approve an off-site excursion.

4.4.1 Notification & Approval Process for All Off-Site Excursions

4.4.1 Notification & Approval Process for All Off-Site Excursions



4.5 External Providers / Contractors

Excursions without adventurous activities.

Where elements of the excursion are contracted out to external providers, and where the provider accepts a duty of care for group members, Visit Leaders and Heads of Establishments must satisfy themselves that the provider:

- Is reputable
- Has carried out a satisfactory risk assessment.
- Has competent staff
- Has appropriate public liability insurance (see below)
- Has complied with child protection requirements (see below)
- Has been given full information as to the age, ability and make up of the group

Appendix 15 provides a prompt sheet to help staff answer these questions.

Excursions that include adventurous activities

ONLY providers approved by the Council may be used to provide adventurous activities for Council groups.

The Council maintains a '[Register of Approved External Providers of Adventurous Activities](#)'. Registered providers will have satisfied the Council of the standards of their safety management systems and the quality of their provision. Individual establishments should not request copies of safety management documentation from providers.

Heads of Establishments or Visit Leaders wishing to use non-registered providers should, in the first instance notify the Adventurous Activities Consultant **before any booking commitments are made**. This will initiate an invitation to [register](#) along with a process of scrutiny.

Public liability insurance

It is a Council requirement that any company or other external organisation to which excursion services are contracted must provide proof of current public liability insurance cover with an indemnity limit of at least **Five Million Pounds**

Protection of Vulnerable Groups.

External providers who accept a duty of care for young people should be required to sign a declaration confirming that all of their staff, who will carry out regulated work with children, have been Protection of Vulnerable Groups checked and that no adverse issues have been raised.

Child Protection & Vulnerable adults PVG Checks

All adults with a level of supervisory responsibility for children should have undergone a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check. . It is acknowledged that this may not be possible for staff employed by organizations operating overseas and all reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that such staff has at least been screened by their employer.

4.6 Staffing and Supervision Ratios

Deciding on the number of adults required on the excursion

4.6.1 It is important to have a suitable ratio of adult supervisors to participants for any excursion. The factors to take into account include:

- The needs of participants (Including visit assistants and visit leader).
- The Aberdeenshire Council Inclusion Policy
- Venue
- Activity
- Getting there
- Down time
- Reasonable contingency arrangements.

The full breadth of issues that need to be considered for your particular excursion will emerge from the risk assessment you carry out prior to the excursion.

4.6.2 Supervision ratios are directed by the nature and aims of the excursion and the age and stage of the participants. They must be decided in the context of the risk assessment prepared for the excursion.

The Head of Establishment is responsible for ensuring and approving an appropriate ratio of adults, including visit leaders and assistants, to children and young people taking part.

4.6.3 Visit leaders retain responsibility for the group at all times. Visit leaders and visit assistants should remember that they are expected to act as a “reasonable parent”.

4.6.4 The level of supervision is decided on a case by case basis based on the excursion risk assessment. Factors that will influence the decision you make will include staff experience and the ages and stages of the group. A fuller list is provided at **Appendix 3** .

Your excursion will have its own requirements and demands which will be identified by the risk assessment you carry out. Use the list at Appendix 3 as a starting point to review your excursion.

Staffing levels must reflect the needs of the group of participants at each stage of the excursion and not just what is felt to be required during the activities themselves. It is important to evaluate the composition of the group and give careful consideration to the ongoing needs of the individuals. The GIRFEC Practice model can be used to examine and make decisions on the needs of individual children and young people, during the off site excursion. This will support the preparation of a realistic estimate of the staff expertise needed along with the resources & support to enable the objectives to be achieved safely.

4.6.5 Due consideration should be given to gender balance. It is recommended that there is always at least TWO staff accompanying excursions except in circumstances where the activities are close to normal day to day living. That said you should always consider how you would deal with a situation where a person with a group is unwell or needs to accompany a participant in an emergency. **Supervision should be appropriate and proportionate and**

consideration should be given to the ease with which a replacement member of staff can be brought in, if required.

4.6.6 Competent Visit Leaders will recognise when the number of staff needs to be increased so that there are fewer participants assigned to each staff member. This may result from the risk assessment carried out before the off site excursion or from the ongoing dynamic risk assessment. The numbers of staff with the group needs to be able to accommodate this.

Where Visit Leaders operate alone, the group should be trained/briefed in the actions to be taken in the event of leader incapacitation. An assistant leader, able to look after the group and raise the alarm, should be present if the group would be at significant risk were the leader to be incapacitated.

Visit leaders should be aware that small parties with minimum staffing are vulnerable if staff are ill or have an accident during the excursion. This needs to be considered at the early planning stage.

The longer a visit lasts the more important it is to consider the needs for additional staffing. The constant duty of care is very demanding and coupled with other functions such as mini-bus driving will reduce the necessary degree of alertness and concentration.

4.6.7 In normal circumstances at least 50% of the staff should be employees of the establishment (e.g. teachers, youth leaders or learning support assistants). The balance of staff numbers will normally be made up of freelance staff and/or PVG checked volunteers recruited and approved by the Visit Leader. If a volunteer will only be responsible for their own child, for example, then a PVG check may not be required unless they have unsupervised access to other children.

4.6.8 The overall Visit Leader will normally be an employee of the establishment.

4.6.9 The following table is provided **for guidance only**. The risk assessment you carry out will direct your decision on the supervision level required for your off site excursion.

Guidance on Ratios (Excursions without Adventurous activities)

Group	General Off-Site Visits	UK off site excursion including overnight stay. Without adventurous activities	Foreign off site excursion without adventurous activities
Nursery under 5	1:2/6	Not Recommended	Not Recommended
P1-3	1:6/8	Not Recommended	Not Recommended
P4-6	1:8/15	1:6	Not Recommended
P7	1:15/20	1:8	1:8
S1-S3	1:15/20	1:8	1:8
S4:S6	1:15/20	1:10	1:10

4.6.10 Supervision Ratios for Adventurous Activities

Procedures for the teaching and supervision of adventurous activities are included within the guidance sections for the relevant [activities](#).

Larger parties

There are particular difficulties in safely managing large parties and reliance on staffing ratios alone is not enough. For the duration of the event each staff member should consider assuming separate responsibility for an appropriately sized group of named participants within acceptable ratios.

Buddy systems

Staff supervision can be effectively complemented by the use of a buddy system. Participants are teamed up with one or maybe two 'buddies' and each regularly checks on the other/s. Buddy systems are also useful for encouraging and developing responsibility and a sense of community.

Group Management

It is vital that head counts are done at regular intervals and at least prior to and at the end of each group movement from one location to another. Keeping account of large groups is made easier by individual staff members each accepting responsibility for a small manageable group and reporting directly to the Visit Leader that their group is present and correct.

It is good practice for Visit Leaders to:

- Carry a list of all participants and accompanying staff members at all times
- Make sure that all participants know a rendezvous points if they become separated

Consideration could be given to:

- Ensuring participants are easily identifiable for example through the use of coloured T shirts, baseball caps or school uniform.
- Providing participants with badges or cards containing details of their hotel and an emergency contact number. For overseas visits consider a note written in the local language.

Remote Supervision and Down Time

Supervision of participants must be maintained 24hrs throughout the excursion. There are different levels of supervision:-

- **Close supervision** – the normal level of supervision within the active or programmed phases of the excursion.
- **Remote supervision** – where activity is not directly supervised but participants are operating in groups within clearly stated and understood parameters. Staff are present but not necessarily within sight. Their whereabouts are known to participants and vice-versa.
- **Down time** – the time outside programmed activity. May involve different levels of supervision from close supervision of organised recreational activity through remote supervision of 'free time' to being 'on call' during sleep time.

It is essential that everyone involved in the off site excursion (staff and participants) understand the supervision arrangements and the expectations upon them.

4.6.11 Additional support needs

Where additional support needs exist, the levels of supervision should be appropriate to these needs.

In some cases the format of activity and its venue may need to be adjusted to suit the individuals involved and in some cases it may not be possible to safely include an individual in the activity even after “reasonable adjustment” has been made.

Equipment and other resources deployed may need particular consideration.

The number of staff and the range of expertise and competencies should be determined by the needs of the individuals within the group and the nature of the activity. While particular competencies may be required to support participants with additional support needs, it is desirable that, with participant and parental consent, relevant information is shared with the group. This will enable group members to participate as fully as possible and be mutually supportive

(Refer to Appendix 6)

Staff fatigue

Leading excursions, particularly those involving a residential stay can be both physically and emotionally demanding. It should normally be the case that at least two staff accompany any one group and due consideration should be given to sharing tasks and responsibilities.

It may sometimes be the case that the leader or instructor is the only member of field staff present. Consideration should therefore be given to providing a support member of staff who can share the driving and other appropriate tasks. The issue of potential staff fatigue should be considered in the risk assessment process.

4.6.12 Volunteers & Parents as Leaders of Off Site School Excursions

Schools are frequently invited to become involved in local, regional and national events with pupils selected to attend and represent their schools. These may take place during or out-with the normal school day.

Examples of such events are;

Sports matches or tournaments; University ‘Techfest’ Lectures;
Dance competitions; Regional School Quiz; Alpine Ski Races; Chess

Where circumstances prevent school staff supervising and accompanying pupils, it may be appropriate to use competent volunteers and parents. Supervisor volunteers must be PVG scheme members and be registered in the Council’s Volunteer Scheme, prior to the event. This is not necessary where a parent is only supervising their own child.

Visit assistants, including volunteers, parents / carers supporting visits as well as volunteers working for service providers, have an important role in supporting and enabling outdoor learning experiences and off-site visits. They can help with the running of an activity and be part of the supervision ratio, where competent to do so (often in adventurous activity settings leaders/assistants/volunteers need to be included in the operational ratios). Visit assistants should be carefully selected and be prepared for their supervision role by the Head of Establishment.

Even where they are not physically supervising a part of the visit, the Head of Establishment must be aware that they remain responsible for the safety of the group. Visit assistants should be clear about their roles and responsibilities which includes an:

- understanding of how they can ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- understanding that they will only be left in sole charge of participants where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- agreement to follow the instructions of the HofE/visit leader and help with control and discipline.
- understanding of the need to inform the visit leader/event organizer if concerned about the health or safety of participants at any time during the visit.
- understanding if instructing/coaching an activity that requires a qualification then they must be properly qualified to do so.
- understanding that if transporting pupils other than their own children in their private cars then they must possess appropriate insurance cover.

The risk assessment will consider the event, the size of the party, the destination, how emergencies will be dealt with, behaviour issues and the duration of the off site excursion, in addition to the usual risk assessment considerations.

Parental views will need to be considered as part of the risk assessment.

This will help the Head of Establishment with the decision on whether this is an appropriate way of arranging supervising for this excursion.

This approach to excursion supervision should not normally be adopted for excursions outwith the UK.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Establishment to check that everything required is in place before authorizing an off-site activity with visit assistants, such as volunteers, in charge of a group of pupils on an off site excursion.

5 Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Checks.

The PVG scheme replaced the Enhanced Disclosure for staff working with vulnerable groups.

5.1 Staff

Teaching and Non-Teaching staff from schools may:

- i) Already have been PVG checked by Aberdeenshire Council to do regulated work with children. For this group of staff, their existing PVG check will cover them to work with children on off-site activities.
- Or**
- ii) They may have an existing Enhanced Disclosure check. This would have been carried out when they took up post and pre-dates the introduction of the PVG scheme. This check will cover them to work with children from their own establishment on off-site activities until Aberdeenshire Council carries out PVG checks to replace existing Enhanced Disclosures. Establishments will be advised by EL&L when this process begins.
- Or**
- iii) They may have had no Disclosure check for their post as their appointment to their post pre-dates the introduction of the Enhanced Disclosure scheme and the PVG scheme. Staff in this position can continue to work with children, from their own establishment, on off-site activities. PVG checks to replace the existing Enhanced Disclosures held by staff will also pick up those members of staff who do not have a Disclosure check. Staff who are carrying out overnight excursions with pupils and do not have at least an Enhanced Disclosure check should obtain a PVG check ahead of the planned retrospective checks being carried out and should arrange this with their Head of Establishment

5.2 Volunteers / Helpers

In considering if a volunteer requires a PVG check the following questions should be considered:

- (i) Will the volunteer have the opportunity to have unsupervised access to children to whom they are not related or to whom they have no family relationship?
- (ii) Will the volunteer be in sole charge of children?
- (iii) Will the volunteer's usual duties involve caring for children or teaching, instructing or supervising the children?
- (iv) Will the volunteer's usual duties include providing advice or guidance to children?
- (v) If the answer to any of these questions is yes then consideration should be given to whether the volunteer is helping out on a regular basis rather than being used in an emergency, for example, to cover for someone who is ill and cannot attend at short notice.

If the answer to question v) indicates that this is emergency cover only then a PVG check may not be required.

If the answer to question v) is that this helping role is part of regular duties then a PVG check will be required.

5.3 Volunteers on Off-Site Activities Involving Overnight Stays

If an off site excursion involves a single overnight stay and the volunteer is not in sole charge or supervising children as per 5.3) above, a PVG check will not be required for this single one-off trip.

If however this excursion carries on for more than one night then the volunteer will need to be PVG checked. In this case it is not considered to be a “one-off”

5.4 Assistance with Decisions on PVG Checks.

Guidance on the use of volunteers in establishments has been issued and this will be of assistance to you.

In addition to this, please feel free to contact the EL&L PVG team to discuss individual situations.

You must ensure that you leave adequate time for a PVG check to be carried out, should this be required.

6 Leader and Staff Competence

Language capability

- Many excursions are language based and thus normally include language staff as Visit Leaders or staff members.
- In the case of excursions further afield or with visits for reasons other than language, it is important that there is someone who is fluent in the local language, can adopt a liaison role and who can act in the interests of the party. Ideally this person must be available 24 hours. Visit leaders should ensure this is in place prior to the visit.

Experience

- Host family visits are frequently led by colleagues with considerable experience and expertise and it is important that this experience is shared.
- Visit Leaders and accompanying staff may be promoted, move establishments or retire and thus a wealth of experience and expertise may be lost. It is important that visits include ‘succession planning’ and any future Visit Leader has the opportunity to learn as much as possible as an assistant leader in the first instance.
- Visit Leaders should ensure that 24 hour access is available to a competent person that has all necessary background knowledge of the host culture.

7 First Aid Cover

The risk assessment will inform the first-aid cover that is required. Approved External Providers of Adventurous Activities will have appropriate first-aid cover in place.

Most off site excursions should be accompanied by a staff member who is trained with a current qualification in first aid. Consideration should be given to more than one first aider for larger parties and in circumstances where the party may be split and in different locations.

A travelling first aid kit should be taken and should be readily accessible throughout the excursion. The first aid kit will normally be kept in the care of the qualified first aid person.

The Visit leader should be aware and have taken account of any existing medical conditions and/or special needs that group members may have (children and adults). This information will normally be sought on parental consent forms or the school's '**Supporting pupils with medical needs**' forms. Visit Leaders must carry clear written instructions relating to the administering of any medication required to party members.

Where first aid has been administered, normal recording and reporting procedures must be followed.

There are **3 designations** recognised by the council. Visit Leaders should consider the appropriate level of first aid cover for their particular excursion:

1. **Appointed Person:** No formal first aid training but the individual with identified responsibility for calling for assistance when required. This would be appropriate only in circumstances where outside first aid and/or medical assistance would be readily available throughout the excursion.
2. **Appointed Person (Aberdeenshire Foundation First Aid course):** Someone who has been trained in emergency aid and basic resuscitation. Training is at least 6 hours duration. This would be appropriate in circumstances where the group may be remote from immediate assistance for part or all of the excursion but where medical assistance could reasonably be expected to be on scene within 15-20mins
3. **First Aider (HSE guidelines):** Someone who has undertaken a first aid course of at least 24hrs duration (usually 3 days training) and run to HSE guidelines. This would be appropriate in circumstances where there is a perceived high risk of injury and/or where the group are likely to be remote from medical assistance for significant periods.

Provision for First Aid must be considered an essential aspect of any adventurous activity that takes place, regardless of its nature or location. Except where activities are on-site (e.g. rock walls), there must always be at least one of Designations 2 or 3 present.

As activities become more technical and as the locations used become more remote from outside assistance, then the need for staff to be well trained in First Aid becomes increasingly important.

Where staff are leading or supervising adventure activities, the technical qualifications they require to hold in order to do so will in turn require them to hold appropriate and current First Aid qualifications in order to maintain the validity of their technical award.

All holders of the council's 'in-house' awards must also hold a valid First Aid certificate if they wish to use their award/s to supervise groups in that capacity.

A number of First Aid Training Providers offer First Aid training that is specifically designed for remote or wilderness environments. (e.g. [BASP](#), [Outwardly Mobile](#) etc) This type of first aid training is strongly recommended for staff who are likely to be operating in these environments.

8 Training and Qualifications of Staff and Volunteers

It is part of the Head of Establishment's responsibility to ensure that staff have the appropriate competences to lead and accompany excursions. Competence is derived from a blend of **experience and training**.

It is the staff member's responsibility not to operate outside the scope of their competence. This applies particularly in circumstances where a duty of care for others has been accepted.

The technical qualifications required by staff for the supervision of adventurous activities and the role and limitations of these are detailed in the guidance sections for each [activity](#).

Many staff may be operating on the basis of qualifications that they already hold and/or have acquired through their own efforts and resources. It is essential that the currency of these qualifications is maintained if they are to continue to operate. Simply holding a certificate does not constitute a 'qualification' in its own right. Certification needs to be backed up by regular current practice and by regular revalidation of the award held.

If **Heads of Establishments** are left in any doubt about the currency or validity of qualifications held by members of staff in this context then they should seek advice from the Adventurous Activities Consultant.

A database of technical competencies and qualifications of Council staff is managed by the Adventurous Activities Consultants in line with the requirements of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations. In addition to this, **photo-copy evidence of technical competencies and/or qualifications held by staff must be kept available for inspection by [AALS](#) Inspectors within each establishment's administrative system.**

The Head of Establishment will allocate or agree the tasks that staff will undertake based on informed judgment of the competence of the member of staff in relation to the task concerned. In the context of off site and outdoor learning the competencies that need to be evaluated fall within two broad categories.

1. Personal skills (often referred to as soft skills) are those attributes of judgment, leadership, organisation skills, and interpersonal skills that are essential to any learning activity.
2. Technical skills (often referred to as hard skills) are those that pertain to the particular activity.

National Governing Body (NGB) Awards

The National Governing Bodies of all off site and off site and outdoor sports and adventurous activities administer schemes of training for coaches, instructors, and leaders. In virtually all cases these schemes provide the preferred form of training for staff/volunteers undertaking those activities. Lists of schemes are included under each [activity](#).

NGB awards tend to focus on the more technical aspects of coaching, instructing and teaching and do not normally presume to evaluate the personal and interpersonal skills of candidates. Most (if not all) NGB Awards require the holder to also hold a first aid certificate. The award becomes invalid if the required first aid certificate is allowed to expire.

In-House Training

In cases where **either** an activity has no appropriate NGB **or** there are perceived gaps in an NGB scheme of training and awards, it would be normal for an employer to develop its own in-house training schemes.

Aberdeenshire Council operates in-house training schemes for:

- Low Hills – walking on upland, non-mountainous terrain.
- Rockwall Climbing
- Cycling
- Pool kayaking

These schemes are managed and training is provided by the Adventurous Activities Consultants.

Water Safety & Rescue Training

As with First Aid the need for currency water-based rescue skills for staff/volunteers involved with watersports is recognized. The form of safety & rescue skills required may be specific to each water activity and are specified within the guidance for each activity. Awards should be updated at the frequency required by the awarding body. See in particular “[Swimming in Natural Waters](#)”.

9 Adventurous Activity Equipment held by Establishments

All technical equipment used in the delivery of Adventurous Activities must be designated as ‘Fit for Purpose’ by an appropriately qualified ‘**technical advisor**’ appointed by the council.

In addition, technical equipment including **Personal Protective Equipment** must be:

- Used and stored in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations
- Visually condition checked by a qualified instructor on each occasion they are used.
- Their use monitored and recorded in accordance with the recommendations of the appropriate Governing Body and/or the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.
- Subject to periodic testing in accordance with the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations.
- Be disposed of appropriately when beyond working life

Proper records relating to equipment stocks must be maintained. These records should include for each separate item:

- Date of purchase
- Discard date (shelf or usage life as per manufacturers guidelines)
- Checking and testing policy
- Checking & testing records.
- Name and signature of employees carrying out checks & tests.

Staff delegated with responsibility for storing, maintaining and issuing specialist equipment must have received appropriate training.

Clear policies must be in place to ensure that specialist equipment is only issued to those who are appropriately qualified to use it. Annual inspections of adventurous equipment will be carried out by the Adventurous Activities Consultant appointed by the council and a report with recommendations submitted to the Head of Establishment with copies to their respective line managers. Any “must do” recommendations must be implemented with immediate effect.

Hired Equipment: Licensed Providers

Where equipment is hired from AALA Licensed providers, all of the above may be assumed and no further action is required.

Other Equipment: Unlicensed Suppliers

Where technical equipment is being hired or loaned from unlicensed suppliers, it MUST be assessed and designated as ‘Fit for Purpose’ by the Adventurous Activities Consultant.

10 Special Considerations

10.1 Water Hazards

When drawing up risk assessments particular attention should be given to potential water hazards.

This will be obvious in the case of water based activities but may not figure in your mind when planning excursions to cities and places of general interest which might have large water courses running through them or parks with bodies of water that are often a magnet for groups. Additionally, water hazards usually need to be considered when planning other, non water based adventurous activities. For example, hill walking may involve crossing streams that, when in spate, can quickly become un-crossable torrents and rock climbing at sea cliffs can be particularly hazardous in tidal areas. Statistics show that risks associated with water are higher than other naturally occurring hazards, partly due to the unpredictable nature of water and the lack of awareness and understanding of the associated risks. With this in mind water hazards training for anyone contemplating leading excursions is

Swimming in the sea or other natural waters.

Swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the waters of river, canal, sea or loch should never be allowed as an impromptu activity. In-water activities should take place only when a

proper risk assessment has been completed and proper measures put in place to control the risks.

Any planned swimming activity that takes place in areas that are **NOT** specifically designated for bathing and do not have lifeguard surveillance in place should be regarded as an **Adventurous Activity** and is **notifiable**. The rules and procedures for **Swimming in Natural Waters** can be found in the [Guidance](#) section of [Combined Rock and water Activities](#)

10.2 Excursions involving overnight stays.

Residential stays put additional demands upon staff in both the planning and supervision of excursions.

At the planning stage Visit Leader must ensure that:

- The accommodation has adequate security measures in place. Group accommodation should be lockable but staff must have access at all times.
- The organisation that owns or manages the accommodation has checked all staff who work there for their suitability to work with young people or vulnerable adults.
- The accommodation complies with local fire regulations and that adequate fire alarm and evacuation procedures are in place, taking account of any participants with additional support needs. This may require a written statement from the provider.
- The accommodation has adequate security measures in place. Group accommodation should be lockable but staff must have access at all times.

Where the accommodation provider is an [Approved External Provider of Adventurous Activities](#) the above checks will have been made as part of the council's vetting process and may be assumed.

In all cases the Visit Leader must ensure that:

- Staffing ratios and supervision rota allow for effective supervision 24 hrs per day and have built-in flexibility in the event of a participant requiring a high level of supervision.
- For mixed gender groups there are both male and female staff and that the accommodation provides separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities.
- The group will have exclusive use of the immediate accommodation allocated to them.
- Staff accommodation (at least those on duty) is adjacent to the group's accommodation.
- Fire and emergency evacuation procedures take account of any participants with additional support needs. This may require a written statement from the provider.
- The accommodation is able to cater for participants with additional support needs including disabled access, and dietary, cultural or religious requirements.
- Measures are in place to provide first aid and for the seeking of outside medical help.

Where the accommodation provider is also an activity provider and supervision responsibilities are shared between the provider's staff and accompanying establishment staff, the Visit Leader must ensure that there will be a clearly agreed handover of responsibility from one to the other.

Early in the visit the Visit Leader must:

- Orientate participants as to the accommodation layout.
- Brief participants on the fire alarm, evacuation procedures and muster stations in the event of a fire.
- Ensure that participants are briefed on what's expected of them, any rules that are to be imposed and the mutual responsibilities everyone has in regard to communal living.

10.3 Excursions Abroad

Since it is usually implicit that excursions abroad have a residential element, the above rules on excursions involving overnight stays will apply.

- **Staffing ratios:** are there particular supervision issues relating to being abroad that will require more favourable ratios?
- What dedicated staff will you have from the excursion provider?
- **Language differences:** participants should be encouraged to communicate and consideration should be given to providing participants with some common words and phrases. At least one of the staff should be reasonably fluent in the local language.
- **Cultural differences:** participants should be briefed about local conventions, codes of conduct, laws, dress codes and attitudes to gender.
- **Food and drink:** Participants should be made aware of any dangers attached to local foods or drinking water.
- **Urban safety and security:** some towns and cities may be intrinsically more dangerous than participant's home environment and a careful briefing would be required.
- **Wildlife:** In the UK we are not used to wildlife that presents a real threat to life. This may not be the case overseas.
- **Currency:** provide advice on security, exchange rates and forms in which to carry money. Where the local culture demands the carrying and use of large quantities of cash, this must be considered as part of the risk assessment and adequate arrangement made for the safety of those on the excursion and any increased risks as a result of the cash being carried and used.
- **Vaccination:** establish whether vaccinations are required in the countries to be visited and ensure these are carried out in good time. Guidance should be sought from a General Practitioner. The publication: [*'Health Advice for Travellers anywhere in the World'*](#) will be a useful source of reference and is available at Post Offices
- **Travel Insurance:** all group members must have travel insurance that includes medical treatment abroad and repatriation.
- **Visas/Passports:** ensure that all participants have valid passports and visas if required at an early stage in planning. It is recommended that the Visit leader retains a photocopy of passports/visas for emergency use.
- **Medical help:** For travel in the EU, participants should carry an E111 Card, available from Post Offices and completed by their parent. This is a certificate of entitlement to free or reduced cost treatment. It is still advisable to have a substantial contingency fund available to pay for treatment if required. Payment can be reclaimed later through travel insurance.

- **Emergencies:** Visit Leaders should know how to contact the nearest British Embassy or Consulate. They should know how to contact the emergency services.
- **Climate:** Visit Leaders need to be fully aware of additional precautions required. These could include sun screening, monitoring fluid intake to prevent dehydration, or additional clothing for extreme cold.

If booking through a travel agent or tour operator:

- Ensure that they are appropriately bonded providing security against insolvency. The form of bonding should be approved by the Dept of Trade and Industry (Refer to [European Package Travel regulations](#))
- Ensure that, where air travel is involved, the tour operator is ATOL Licensed.

If organising your own trip:

- Ensure that you comply with the European Package Travel Directive
- Ensure that your vehicle conforms with local traffic regulations and that you are insured for overseas travel.
- Special regulations apply to taking minibuses abroad and advice should be sought from the appropriate Department of Transport.

10.4 3rd World Travel Excursion / Expedition Checklist

In many respects, the areas to be considered for excursions to 3rd World countries are the same as travel in other countries. However when we consider our travel and excursion arrangements against a radically different social, cultural, economic, legal and political background, the infrastructure and support, taken for granted in other parts of the World, cannot be relied upon. In these environments items which otherwise would be given cursory consideration become important for the safety of the party , influence decisions on whether a trip can go ahead and the overall success of the excursion.

The checklist below is not intended to be exhaustive. It is provided as a list of the main areas to be considered in your planning, your risk assessment and your dynamic risk assessment when travelling and in country. You should consider how this list should be amended to reflect the demands of your trip.

Key Planning and Preparation Areas	Actions required	Actions completed - date
Planning & Self Sufficiency		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessments -- Travel Company • Risk Assessments -- Establishment • Travel/adventure company - approved provider? • Contingency plans that will work and have been shared • Repatriation routes and methods to UK • Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice and position for the country and other countries on any potential repatriation route 		
Vehicle & Travel Safety		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel methods & modes • Travel distances / duration • In country travel providers • Briefings for participants on keeping safe while travelling 		
Personal & Accommodation Security		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country / location within / political climate / Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice • Specific behaviours to be followed or avoided • Kit and personal possessions, what's appropriate, keeping it secure, use/displaying in public etc... • Impact of location and environment -- Known critical locations • Personal security awareness and practise prior to trip • Accommodation security • Locally provided security arrangements • Incident reporting strategy/process • Insurance 		
Activities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities - adventurous activity provision • Parent/Carer approval for adventurous activities • On location adventurous activities delivery by travel/adventure company • On location adventurous activities delivery by local provider approved by the travel/adventure company 		
Staffing Issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EL&L staff experience / competency/ supervision methods to be used • Travel/adventure company staff experience / competency • Roles and responsibilities division especially in remote locations • Staff duty hours -- potential for fatigue and impaired judgement • ELL Staff roles and ratios for activity delivery • Travel/adventure company staff roles and ratios for activity delivery • Total number of staff - never less than 3 needs to operate in many cases • Meaning of down time in the locations and its use • ELL Staff roles in down time • Travel/adventure company staff roles in down time • Parent helpers (if applicable) -- experience / competency • 		

Pupil Issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total young people numbers, age group and ratios • Responsibility and behaviour issues • Young people self organizational issues • Additional Support Needs • Parental/Carer restrictions on activities 		
Health Risks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical issues (known) -- staff and pupils • Medication and delivery for known conditions • Disabilities • Potential environmentally related medical issues -- staff and pupils • Disease prevention strategies • Medical evacuation, treatment and UK repatriation bridge • First aid skills and kit decisions 		
Cultural Awareness & Conflict Management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour protocols – understanding of • Cultural sensitivity eg gender roles • Awareness of conflict triggering behaviours • Spokesperson – who speaks • Religious issues and protocols/ Political stability 		
High Impact Crimes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft / Assault / Kidnap • Personal Response and resolution strategies • Group Response and resolution strategies • Incident reporting strategy/process 		
Finance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised as per Appendix in EL&L Off-Site Excursion Guidance • Payment arrangements while abroad • Local currency security • Emergency financial arrangements 		
Contingency Plan		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation from the country • Evacuation from remote locations • Evacuation strategy if group split up • Alternative routes out of the Country • Additional visa requirements if alternative route used. 		
Equipment required		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group • Staff • Young people 		
Communications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full details with UK base contact • Strategies for remote areas • Check in times and frequency if appropriate. • Emergency Communication Strategies • Young people and use of mobile telephones 		

For additional information regarding Overseas Excursions see Appendix 12

11 Insurance

The Council's Public Liability policy will cover any injury or loss incurred by individuals due to the negligence of the council or its employees (including volunteers who are working under the instructions of the council). Refer to Aberdeenshire Council Volunteers Policy.

The Council strongly recommends that, especially where excursions are of longer than one day's duration, establishments ensure that participants and staff have appropriate travel insurance to include personal accident, loss or damage to luggage/money and cancellation/curtailment cover. For overseas excursions cover should include medical expenses and repatriation cover.

Personal accident and/or travel insurance for young people remains the responsibility of parents. If the purchase of travel insurance is to be left to individual parents and staff then they should be informed of this requirement. Alternatively Visit Leaders may consider purchasing group cover. One option available would be "School Journey Insurance" available from the Council's insurer, Zurich Municipal.

Where **adventurous activities** are included in the itinerary, Visit Leaders should advise parents or adult participants to ensure that the travel insurance policy they purchase provides appropriate cover for the activities to be undertaken. There are a number of insurers who specialize in adventure activity travel insurance.

Further information about insurance issues advice can be sought from the council's Insurance section within the Finance Dept.

12 Travel Arrangements and Transport

12.1 Where transport is provided by the establishment.

Transport is likely to be by Council owned minibus or in one or more member of staff's own private car.

Only persons who have completed the Aberdeenshire's minibus training are permitted to drive Aberdeenshire Council or establishment owned minibuses when carrying passengers.

Self-drive hire minibuses: Heads of Establishment should satisfy themselves that staff members who intend to drive minibuses have the required competencies to do so and are adequately insured. Competence implies an experienced driver who has prior experience of driving minibuses.

Regardless of other responsibilities and status, responsibility for the conduct of passengers and the safety and integrity of any load, both carried or towed, lies with the driver of the vehicle.

All passengers should have a forward or rearward facing seat and all seats should be fitted with approved seatbelts. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that seat belts are worn where fitted.

For participants with additional support needs, the establishment must ensure that transport arrangements are appropriate and, where necessary, provide an escort (passenger assistant).

If using their own private vehicle, staff must ensure they have a valid license and appropriate insurance cover for the activity. Where appropriate, staff should seek the advice of their insurer, informing them of the activities they intend to undertake for Aberdeenshire council.

All those driving council vehicles must hold a relevant, valid licence, together with the appropriate insurance.

On long journeys due consideration must be given to driver hours required and the length of the driver's day. (*The Highway Code suggests a 15 minute break in every 2 hours driving*) The limitations imposed by the [European Work Time Directive](#) should also be taken into account.

It should be recognised that **driver fatigue** is a very high contributory factor to road traffic accidents and this should be taken account of as part of the risk assessment process.

All staff are expected to follow the relevant road traffic legislation.

Luggage should be carried so as not to obstruct aisles or exits. There are specific rules related to towing trailers with minibuses. Good advice can be obtained from the Community Transport Association

Drivers are expected to:

- Inspect the vehicle before use
- Never use a faulty vehicle. Use an alternative vehicle or make alternative arrangements if a fault is found.
- Report all faults on Aberdeenshire vehicles.

Staff should take careful account of weather and road conditions. On no account should staff place themselves or passengers at unnecessary risk.

When setting down passengers from a mini bus the vehicle exit door should be kerbside, so that passengers do not have to enter the carriageway. This may not be possible when travelling abroad and extra care should be exercised.

Vehicles should where possible be parked on the same side of the carriageway as the activity to minimise the need for persons to cross the carriageway.

12.2 Where transport is contracted to a carrier

Only reputable operators should be used. Operators must hold a current [PSV Operators License](#). They should be asked to provide evidence of:

- A current operator's license
- Competence of their drivers
- Appropriate insurance cover

Visit Leaders should ensure that for long journeys, particularly to mainland Europe or beyond, that there are sufficient drivers available to prevent driver hours being exceeded. Drivers on

'down time' should be encouraged to get proper rest and NOT fulfil the role of co-driver that requires them to remain alert. The responsibility for the driver is the contractors however, the Visit Leader has a duty of care for the party and a responsibility to intervene where they consider the party is being placed at risk.

Supervision of passengers

Whilst it is the driver that can be held accountable for unruly behaviour on his/her bus it should NOT be left to the driver to impose the discipline required to maintain acceptable behaviour. In practice it is not possible to supervise young passengers and concentrate on driving at the same time. Responsibility for the conduct of passengers needs to be accepted by the Visit Leader. This also implies that where establishments provide their own transport, the risk assessment should identify where additional supervision is required. Where participants have additional support needs it is important to refer to any support plans they may have to check on particular access requirements.

For further advice and assistance contact the [Public Transport Unit](#).

13 Financial Planning

The Visit Leader should ensure that parents have early written information about:

- The costs of the excursion
- What proportion of the overall cost they will be expected to pay.
- The timetable for payments
- The banking and accounting arrangements
- How any residual monies left after the excursion or event will be used or distributed.
- How cash will be managed on the excursion and be kept secure.
- The Insurer is aware of situations where significant amounts of cash will be carried.

Financial accounting procedures should be agreed with the Head of Establishment and in line with Council policy. They should be available for inspection by parents on request. A sample Financial records form

Establishments need to consider how any additional cost will be funded (e.g. extra staffing) that may arise from the inclusion of participants with additional support needs.

In addition, on excursions to countries where the financial infrastructure is not well established, the use of credit cards and travelers cheques etc may not be possible or desirable. Where the excursion members will be carrying large amounts of money, this needs to be made explicit in the risk assessment for the excursion and the arrangements for the management and safe handling of this cash made clear. Specific advice on security, handling, the import of large amounts of cash into the destination country and insurance may be required to keep excursion members safe and to allow the excursion to go ahead.

See Appendix 8 for more information.

13.1 European Package Travel Regulations

This legislation was introduced primarily to protect consumers who pay monies up front for package travel, from the risk of tour operators becoming insolvent. If your excursion or event will be more than 24hrs duration and includes the provision of transportation and accommodation in exchange for payment then the regulations probably apply.

If an excursion has been booked through a tour operator or travel agent then these agencies should conform to the regulations and provide the appropriate protection.

This protection can, under the regulations, be provided in one of three ways:-

1. Bonding: e.g. ATOL or ABTA
2. Insurance
3. Trust funds

If Visit Leaders are making travel arrangements themselves on behalf of the group then care must be taken to ensure that the regulations are complied with.

A fact sheet on the regulations can be found on the DTI web site:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics1/guide/packtravel.htm>

14 Communicating with Parents.

Parents/carers must be appropriately informed about all off-site excursions involving their children whether these are local and part of the normal establishment's activities or special excursions to far away places. It is imperative that parents are sent, along with a consent form if required, detailed information about planned excursions as early as possible in the planning process. The information provided must be sufficient to enable parents to make an informed decision about their child's participation and to ensure that participants are properly dressed and equipped for the experience. More complex excursions such as outwith the UK are often best communicated by face to face meetings in addition to written communications.

The prior written consent of a parent of children or of those vulnerable adults who require it must be obtained. A [Parental Consent Form](#) should be used for this purpose.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 requires Aberdeenshire Council to have the written consent of both parents who have and are currently exercising parental responsibilities and rights with respect to a child aged under 16 years **before that child can participate in an educational excursion outside the UK.**

In certain cases it is acceptable to seek 'blanket parental consent' to cover a number of excursions planned as a series of events to take place over a period of time provided that the excursion conforms to **ALL** of the following:-

- It is a routine Category 1 type excursion.
- It doesn't include any adventurous activities or overnight stays.
- The activities involved happen within and as part of the normal working day of the establishment and participants are expected to return to the establishment before the end of the working day.

eg. A series of home & away sports fixtures, geography field trips etc

Versions of the standard parental consent form can be made available via the Authority in a number of different languages and these should be obtained and sent to parents who may have difficulty reading an English language version.

15 Preparation of Young People, Parents Staff & Volunteers.

Undertaking an off site excursion will be very exciting for children and young people and the standard of behaviour normally exhibited within the establishment may be put to the test.

Visit Leaders should consider the standards of behaviour expected of children and young people on the excursion, to make the excursion a success and to keep them safe, and plan how that standard of behaviour can best be achieved.

This may mean involving those going on the excursion on the preparation of the risk assessment, for example, to help them develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own behaviour and safety.

How lapses in behaviour will be dealt with will need to be explained to those on the excursion and to parents so that they are clear on what is expected, how any issues will be handled and who will meet the cost in the event of a participant being returned /accompanied home early for behavioral reasons.

Consideration needs to be given to the use of mobiles on the excursion by children and young people and how communication back to parents, email, social networking etc will be managed.

Staff helping on the excursion will all need to be clear on the standards of behaviour expected of the children and young people and how the excursion will be handled. This will help ensure a consistent approach is used by all staff and a successful excursion takes place.

16 Plan B

While it is hoped that all excursions will be successful and go to plan, things do go wrong from time to time and alterations to schedules may need to be made, for example. Prior to the excursion, clear and complete copies of the excursion plan, the details of excursion participants and back up arrangements must be prepared and lodged with the back up team at the establishment. This back up team needs to be contactable throughout the full duration of the excursion and be clear on actions to be taken should an emergency arise or changes of plan need to be made. Consideration needs to be given as to how this will be handled and the arrangements ; alternative plans need to be agreed by the Head of Establishment before the excursion is allowed to proceed.

17 Home Exchange Visits- See appendix 13

18 Accountability within the Council's Services

18.1 Director of Service

The Directors of Services have responsibility for all matters of safety within their Department including excursions and for ensuring that appropriate policies are provided and effectively communicated to Senior Officers, Managers and Heads of Establishments. They need to be made aware of the legal implications for themselves and for the Council in the management of excursions.

18.2 Senior Officers, Managers & Heads of Service

Senior Officers or central management have the responsibility for communicating policies to establishments and for providing support to Heads of Establishments in the implementation of these policies. They have no direct role in the provision of excursions but are responsible to the Directorate for a general oversight of good practice and application of Council policies. They need to be aware of the legal implications for themselves and for the council in the management of excursions.

18.3 Adventurous Activities Consultant

Aberdeenshire Council has engaged the services of a [Safety Management Consultant for Adventurous Activities](#). They are acknowledged experts in the field and will provide specialist advice on safety and other operational issues. They have responsibility for:

19 Roles and Responsibilities at Establishment Level

19.1 Head of Establishment

The Head of Establishment has responsibility for ensuring safe practice and for the implementation of the Council's safety policy relating to off-site excursions. Within larger establishments many of the functions relating to the management and co-ordination of external visits may be delegated to a senior member of staff.

19.2 Delegated Members of staff

Where some or all of the above responsibilities are delegated to a senior member of staff, the responsibilities must be clearly stated and understood by all concerned. In all cases the ultimate responsibility for the approval, conduct and management of excursions remains with the Head of Establishment.

19.3 Visit Leader

The Visit Leader is the person in whom the Head of Establishment has placed responsibility for the leadership and safe conduct of the excursion. Some appropriate share of these responsibilities is assumed by others who may be colleagues from the establishment or staff from other agencies.

19.4 Other Staff

Other staff accompanying excursions and who are given supervisory responsibility, whether paid or voluntary, act as employees of the council.

Specialist staff may be involved to provide instruction or coaching in specific activities. This could be the Visit Leader, other members of staff, freelance staff engaged for the purpose or external providers.

19.5 Base Contact Person

This person has a crucial role in the safety management system and will normally be a senior member of staff. The designated person should be appointed by the Head of Establishment/Authorizing Officer and will remain 'back at base' and be contactable 24hrs a day throughout the duration of the excursion.

He/she is responsible for:

- Ensuring they obtain sufficient information from the Visit Leader.
- Checking the group out at the beginning and checking them in at the end
- Acting as an emergency contact between the Visit Leader, the establishment and parents
- Initiating the 'overdue return' plan

The Base Contact Person will stand down once the excursion has returned to base.

19.6 Participants

All participants should, as far as is reasonably practicable, take responsibility for ensuring that:

- The activity suits their needs and abilities.
- They conform to any instructions or guidance on matters of safety and good order given by the Visit leader or other members of staff before or during the activity.
- Any distress, concern, or discomfort arising during, or resulting from, the activity is drawn to the immediate attention of the Visit leader or their immediate supervisor.
- Keep a lookout for anything that may harm either themselves or anyone else in the group and tell the Visit leader or their supervisor about it.

The responsibilities of parents and guardians in re-enforcing and encouraging responsible attitudes in young people must be recognised and accepted.

19.7 Parents of young participants.

Parents must be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on an excursion. Parents should be given sufficient information in writing and should be invited to attend any briefing sessions.

Parents should:

- Be informed as to how best to prepare their child for the excursion by reinforcing the notified code of conduct.
- Be aware of and agree to arrangements for sending participants home early if necessary and to meet the costs incurred.
- Provide the Visit Leader with emergency contact information as requested.
- Disclose to the Visit Leader all relevant information about their child's psychological and physical health that may be relevant to their participation. This would normally be done via the consent form. Refer to Supporting Medical Needs Policy

20 Changes of Plan

On the day, all may not go according to plan. An important contributing factor to safety lies in there being enough flexibility to change or modify the nature of the planned activity in the face of adverse factors such as weather, road conditions, group numbers and ill-preparedness of individuals for the planned activity.

A decision to change the plan may be made either by the Visit Leader on the basis of his/her own recognized experience and technical expertise, or on the advice of another member of the staff team delegated with responsibility for the conduct of the excursion..

In either case, if the changes made involve the activity taking place in a different location or is likely to result in a delayed return, **the Visit Leader must notify the Base Contact Person prior to commencement of the excursion.**

21 Young People and Staff with Additional Needs

Where additional support needs exist, the levels of supervision should be appropriate to these needs. The judgment of staff/volunteers skilled both in meeting additional support needs and the principles of good practice contained throughout this document should be relied upon.

In some cases the format of activity and its venue may need to be adjusted to suit the individuals involved and in some cases it may not be possible to safely include an individual in the activity even after “reasonable adjustment” has been made.

Equipment and other resources deployed may need particular consideration.

The number of staff and the range of expertise and competencies should be determined by the needs of the individuals within the group and the nature of the activity. While particular competencies may be required to support participants with additional support needs, it is desirable that, with participant and parental consent, relevant information is shared with the group. This will enable group members to participate as fully as possible and be mutually supportive

(Refer to Appendix 6)

22 Personal Safety

Staff

- Staff must be aware of issues relating to personal safety, and personal and professional protection, especially in order to avoid situations which could lead to accusations of improper conduct.
- **Young People**

- It is strongly recommended that young people have a copy of the Child Safe Leaflet 'Travel-Safe ...Advice for Children and Young People' 2001 and that they and their parents read it. See section 7.4

23 Behaviour and Sanctions

23.1 What if the young person breaks the rules?

Young people participating in an excursion must be briefed on the behaviour code. Such codes should be drafted in consultation with the young people participating in the trip and should be realistic.

Although the organisation will have discussed all the rules to be followed during an excursion, including no smoking, no alcohol or time away from the group, young people may break a rule while away. Some organizations state that if one of the rules is broken, the young person will be sent home. Such a policy may present both legal and practical difficulties, and the circumstances in which this policy will be implemented, and the practical arrangements, need to be carefully considered.

If the young person is to be sent home, the organisation should have pre-planned how that is to be accomplished in terms of:

- Parental contact to obtain their permission to send a young person home.
- Action when a parent refuses to co-operate or is not available to collect and/or receive the young person.
- Payment of the return fare at the time, particularly if the young person is abroad. This may apply even if the parent has signed an agreement that he or she will pay for an early return ticket if the young person misbehaves,
- Recovery of the early return costs from parents who may dispute the organisation's reasons for returning the young person without taking legal proceedings.
- Accompanying the returning young person if the parents cannot collect him or her. Can the organisation spare a member of staff and who will pay?
- A potential breach of contract where there has been a payment for the excursion. The young person should only be sent home if there is a clear and serious breach of the rules by the young person.

24 RESPONSE TO EMERGENCIES

Emergency situations can occur despite the best precautions and therefore contingency planning and consideration of emergency procedures are necessary. Planning for emergencies should help to ensure that the consequences of an incident are handled efficiently and sensitively and do not progress arbitrarily.

24.1 External Providers

Organizations providing accommodation, activities or other services involving the acceptance of a duty of care should have their own emergency response procedures with which group leaders and other staff should normally co-operate fully. In addition Visit leaders must familiarize themselves with the procedures outlined in this section to enable them to fulfill any additional responsibilities and make prompt and appropriate notifications.

24.2 Planning for Emergency Situations

The principles outlined provide a format for response and communication for Council groups encountering misfortune whilst away from their normal base. They should be used as a framework around which establishments develop their own more detailed plans to suit their particular situation.

The effectiveness of all such plans depends heavily upon the staff concerned being familiar with their specific duties and responsibilities. The role of each individual must be understood by all concerned. Lines of communication must be confirmed or established for each planned excursion. A list of key individuals is shown in Chapter 4 - **Management of Excursions**

The emergencies flow chart identifies the different **Levels of Emergency** and represents the required channels of communication during the containment phase. The subsequent investigation procedures are an entirely separate but essential process.

24.3 Emergency Response Card

An Emergency Response Card provides party leaders and their assistants with a summary of prioritized actions in the immediate aftermath of an accident or other emergency.

Visit Leaders **must** take with them a laminated copy of the emergency response card when they leave the establishment. The card must be kept close at hand for easy reference throughout the duration of the excursion. Both the flow chart and the emergency response card are schematic. Common-sense should prevail in the preparation of plans and in subsequent actions.

24.4 Preparation of Plans- Establishment and Area

Detailed arrangements will need to be made by each establishment. These will reflect the nature and size of the establishment and the nature of the activities planned or anticipated. The use of previously prepared Action Cards should be considered.

Individual roles need to be carefully considered, especially in very small establishments (e.g. one or two teacher primary schools). Frequently a member of staff may find that they are undertaking two or more roles e.g. the Head of Establishment may also be the Visit Leader, with the base contact role performed by their Depute or another member of staff or, in some cases a spouse or a parent.

Where the base contact role is undertaken by a person who is not a member of staff the function will be limited to the relaying of information in a predetermined manner.

It must be recognized that many events will take place out of normal office hours. Planned emergency contact arrangements must take account of this.

24.5 When an excursion is overdue the scheduled return time

It is important that a systematic approach is adopted in responding to the late return of excursions. This should ensure there is no dramatic over-reaction to simple unavoidable delay but should equally ensure a prompt response in circumstances where the overdue return may be the result of a serious incident.

The Visit Leader must make every effort to inform the base contact of any significant delay in order to circumvent unnecessary worry and response. Failing this the following procedures should be implemented:

Excursion overdue by:	Status	Actions & Response
More than 1 Hour	Heightened awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. General awareness raised – looking out for safe return2. Re-assure any concerned relatives3. Telephone visit leader or to last known point if possible
More than 2 Hours	Low key search	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Initiate a low key search of general area where group are expected to be. Include expected location of vehicle.2. Use local people/knowledge where possible. Have they been seen?3. Treat as Level 2 incident
More than 4 Hours	Full scale response	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Notify police and initiate full scale search2. Treat as Level 3 incident until further details are known

Safe return of the excursion MUST always be reported as soon as possible.

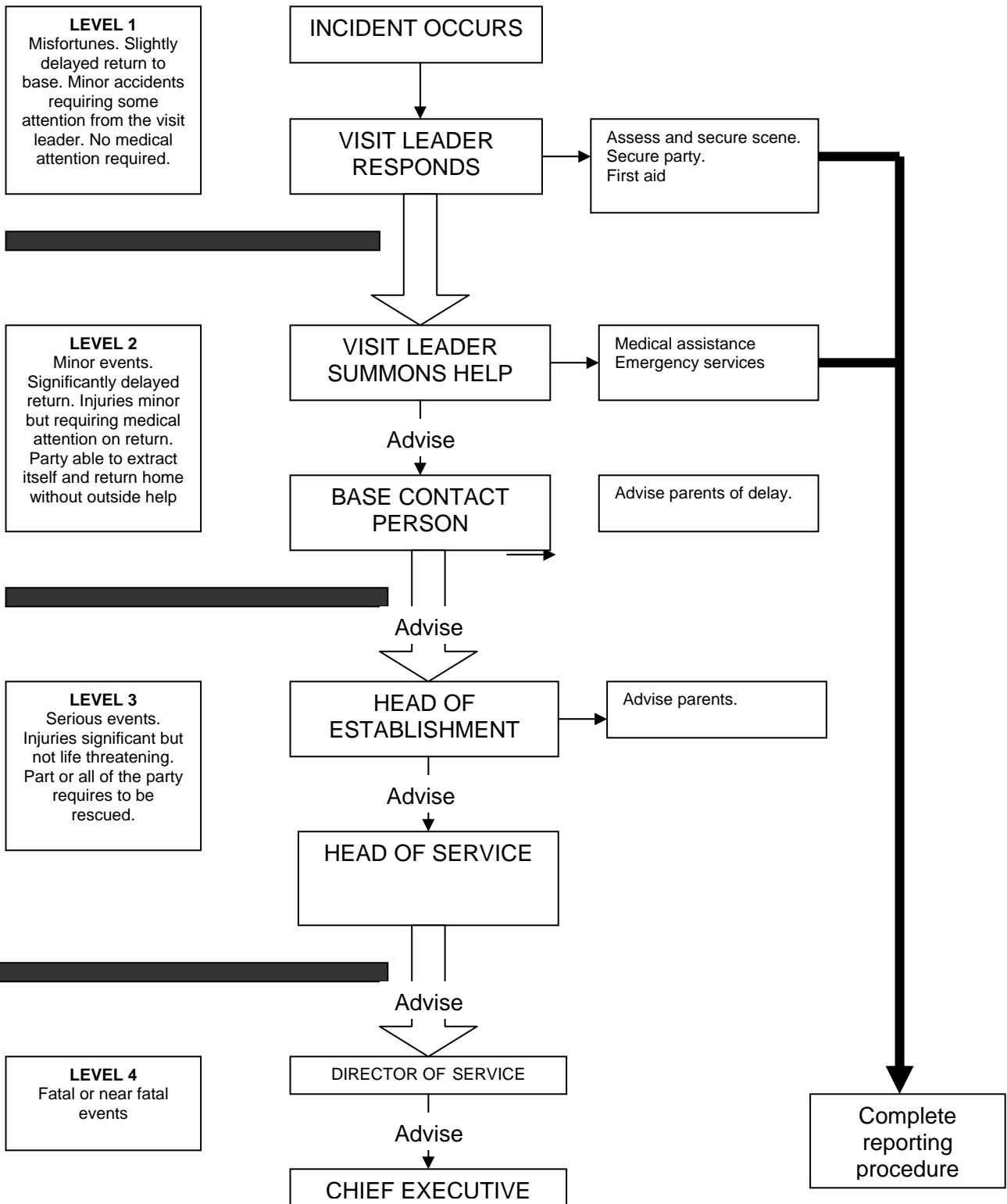
Travel Time:

Where groups are operating in relatively remote locations and there is significant travel time (more than 30mins) between the activity venue (where the vehicle is parked) and base, expected time of return should be based on the time of expected return to the vehicle and not to base. This will prevent unnecessary time loss in initiating an appropriate response.

The Visit leader MUST contact the Base Contact Person by telephone as soon as possible after returning to their vehicle.

A timely phone call to base should forestall an unnecessarily vigorous response to a delayed return.

24.6 Emergency Response Flow Chart



24.7 Investigation of Incidents

Although the response to an emergency and any subsequent investigation have common threads, they should always be regarded as entirely separate management functions.

Investigation procedures must be designed to cater for various levels of incident and to allow sensitive handling of situations arising from unplanned circumstances. Fig 2 below provides guidance on the designations of staff that should be involved for the various levels of incident.

Figure 2 – Investigation of Incidents

Level of Incident	Investigating Officer	Investigation Contributors	Circulation of Report
Levels 1 & 2 inc. Near misses	Head of Establishment	Relevant Establishment staff. Participants. AA Consultant	Grants & AA Officer. AA Consultant Principal H&S Adviser
Level 3	Principal Health and Safety Adviser	Head of Establishment & relevant Staff. Participants. AA Consultant	All above PLUS Head of Service
Level 4	Head of Resource Management in conjunction with the Principal Health and Safety Adviser	Head of Service. Head of Establishment & relevant Staff Participants Grants & AA Officer AA Consultant	All above PLUS Head of Service. Chief Executive

The investigation should be an information gathering exercise. As such it should be carried out in a reasonably informal and non-judgmental manner. The intent is to seek the causes of incidents in order to inform the ongoing development of good practice.

Investigation does not automatically imply incompetence or negligence.

Where, as a result of the investigation, there is a possibility of disciplinary or other action being followed the investigating officer must exercise caution to ensure that one process does not compromise another. Advice from Senior Officers and/or Personnel Services should be sought before proceeding with the investigation of the incident.

Near misses must be investigated as low level incidents by the Head of Establishment. The investigating officer will draw upon the observations of staff and participants in a form they feel appropriate.

Investigation Report

The investigation Report template is provided at Appendix 16

25 Useful Websites

Useful Websites	
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20444/48944	
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/breakfast/4012173.stm	December 04 BBC interview with Charles Clarke
http://www.globalgateway.org.uk/	
http://www.fco.gov.uk/	Foreign & Commonwealth Office
http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAdviceForTravellers/	Good advice related to health
http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/	Good advice related to health
http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/	'Safeguarding Children in Education' Sept 2004 DfES/0027/2004 plus other relevant documents
http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/familyandcommunity/childprotection/otheragencyroles/irsc/IRSC_Guidance_Documents/	Raises awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour
http://www.leargas.ie/youth/publications.html	Irish Youth Organisation with advice for exchanges
http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-ie-youth-exchange.htm	One of many relevant pages of information on youth exchanges
http://www.cyec.org.uk/	Commonwealth youth exchange website
http://www.youthcouncil.ni.org.uk	Youth exchange guidelines for good practice
http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/	Disclosure Scotland and PVG checks information

Useful Resources and Reading

“The Protection of Young People in the Context of International Visits”

City of Edinburgh Education Dept.

Obtainable from:

Publications Unit,
City of Edinburgh Education Department,
Level 2,
Wellington Court,
10 Waterloo Place,
EDINBURGH EH1 3EG
Tel: Wendy Laird, 0131 469 3328, E-mail wendy.laird@educ.edin.gov.uk

“Safe and Well” - Scottish Government Publication 2005

“Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility”

Scottish Office Publication 1998

www.child-safe.org.uk

Arrange of pamphlets and publications are available

“Advice for Schools”

“Advice for Host Families”

“Advice for Parents and Guardians”

“Advice for Young People”

For further information about AALS go to: www.aals.org.uk

For further information on the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations, go to “***Guidance from the Licensing Authority on the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004***”, ISBN 978-0-7176-6243-2, available from HSE Books.

www.hse.gov.uk

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



**Education, Learning &
Leisure**

OFF SITE EXCURSIONS

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Excursion Planning Sample To Do List

General

	Name	Date
At the Time of Initial Approval from Head of Establishment		
Educational and other objectives clarified and agreed		
Staff roles initially agreed		
PVG disclosures obtained		
Gender balance of accompanying staff determined		
Nature of administrative and financial arrangements agreed		
Provisional dates agreed		
Approximate costs		
Initial approval sought (Form)		
Initial Planning		
Carry out risk assessment		
Staff competencies appropriate inc First Aid		
Additional support needs identified		
Provisional bookings made:		
• Venues		
• Accommodation		
• Transportation		
• Providers		
• Services / Resources		
Information to parents prepared and sent		
Consent forms sent		
Financial arrangements in place		
Insurance arrangements in place		
Base Contact person appointed		
Later Preparation		
Participants established & parental consent/consent forms returned		
Individual & group needs identified		
Confirm bookings:		
• Venues		
• Accommodation		
• Transportation		
• Providers		
• Services / Resources		
Detail plan finalized - incl. all contingencies		
Plans conform to Excursions policy		
Prepare teaching material specific to event		
Clarify staff roles & interim tasks		
Ongoing briefing to participants		

Check control measures in place		
Final Preparation		
Final authorization from head of establishment		
All administration & financial arrangements finalized		
Briefing and handover of files to Base Contact		
Briefing to staff and copies of risk assessment		
Briefing to participants		
Check on resources and equipment - party & individual		
Any new medical, dietary and other additional support needs		
At the Start of the Event		
Weather and other related forecasts		
Role call of all participating - grouping and supervision arrangements		
Contingency plans understood by all		
Emergency Response card carried		
On return		
Equipment returned, repaired, renewed		
Review and feedback		
Evaluation and Reports (if any) prepared		

3rd World Travel -- Excursion / Expedition Checklist

In many respects, the planning and things to be considered for excursions to 3rd World countries are the same as travel in other countries. However when we consider our travel and excursion arrangements against a radically different social, cultural, economic, legal and political background, the infrastructure and support, taken for granted in other parts of the World, cannot be relied upon. In these environments items which otherwise would be given cursory consideration become important for the safety of the party and the success of the excursion.

The checklist below is not intended to be exhaustive. It is provided as a checklist of the main areas to be considered in your planning, your risk assessment and your dynamic risk assessment when travelling and in country. You should consider how this list should be amended to reflect the demands of your trip.

Planning & Self Sufficiency			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessments • Travel/adventure company - approved provider? • Contingency plans that will work and have been shared • Repatriation routes and methods to UK • FCO advice and position for the country and other countries on the repatriation route 			
Vehicle & Travel Safety			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel methods & modes • Travel distances / duration • In country travel providers • Briefings for participants on keeping safe while travelling 			
Personal & Accommodation Security			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country / location within / political climate / FCO advice • Specific behaviours to be followed or avoided • Kit and personal possessions, what's appropriate, keeping it secure, use in public etc • Impact of location and environment -- Known critical locations • Personal security awareness and practise prior to trip • Accommodation security • Locally provided security arrangements • Incident reporting strategy/process • Insurance 			
Activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities - adventurous activity provision • Parent approval for adventurous activities • On location adventurous activities delivery by travel/adventure company • On location adventurous activities delivery by local provider approved by the travel/adventure company 			
Staffing Issues			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EL&L staff experience / competency/ supervision methods to be used • Travel/adventure company staff experience / competency • Roles and responsibilities division especially in remote locations • Staff duty hours -- potential for fatigue and impaired judgment • ELL Staff roles and ratios for activity delivery 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel/adventure company staff roles and ratios for activity delivery • Total number of staff - never less than 3 needs to operate in many cases • Meaning of down time in the locations and its use • ELL Staff roles in down time • Travel/adventure company staff roles in down time • Parent helpers (if applicable) -- experience / competency • 			
Young People Issues			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total numbers, age group and ratios • Responsibility and behaviour issues • Self organizational issues • ASN • Parental restrictions on activities 			
Health Risks			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical issues (known) -- staff and pupils • Medication and delivery for known conditions • Disabilities • Potential environmentally related medical issues -- staff and pupils • Disease prevention strategies • Medical evacuation, treatment and UK repatriation bridge • First aid skills and kit decisions 			
Cultural Awareness & Conflict Management			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour protocols understanding • Cultural sensitivity eg gender roles • Awareness of conflict triggering behaviours • Spokesperson – who speaks • Religion / Status / Politics understanding 			
High Impact Crimes			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft / Assault / Kidnap • Personal Response and resolution strategies • Group Response and resolution strategies • Incident reporting strategy/process 			
Finance			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment arrangements while abroad • Local currency security • Emergency financial arrangements 			
Contingency Plan			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation from the country • Evacuation from remote locations • Evacuation strategy if group split up • Alternative routes out of the Country • Additional visa requirements 			
Equipment required			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group • Staff • Young People 			

Notification of a School/ Establishment Category 2C Excursion .
2c: All excursions to countries outwith Europe, USA or Canada.
All exchange visits to any location

All category 2C excursions need to be alerted to the ELL Excursions Group at email address as early as possible in the excursion planning process. Category 2C excursions are approved by the Head of Establishment with the support of the ELL Excursion Group. This form is used to give early notice to the ELL Excursion Group that a 2C excursion is being considered.

Name of School/ Establishment	
Contact Name Designation	
Date submitted	
Contact Email address and telephone	
Destination under consideration	
What stage has the planning reached?	
Is this an exchange visit ? Outline of the exchange.	
Date and duration of excursion	
Purpose of the Excursion	
Anticipated Activities , adventurous and non-adventurous	
Accommodation	
Anticipated numbers of participants Anticipated numbers of staff Numbers of non staff /volunteers	
Is an external provider being used to organise the excursion?	
Name of the Company if known.	

Please complete and email this to : Ellexcursions@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Members of the ELL Excursion Group have access to this email address and will respond to you.

Head Teacher/Head of Establishment Excursion Aide Memoire to help when considering permission for excursions to go ahead.

	Heading	For Head To Give Initial Planning Permission	
1	Objective	What are the main objectives of the visit ? Does it fit with the needs of the children? Why the excursion is desirable?	
2	Activity	What activities will be undertaken? Inclusive approach demonstrated. ? Any Adventurous activities ?	
3	Participants	What children will take part? How is this decided? Are the numbers limited? Reasons for groups or individuals who are unable to attend? How will the needs of those unable to attend be met?	
4	Location	Is it an appropriate location? Category of location from ELL Guidance? Is it a single location? Any overnight stays or home exchanges? How difficult will the location be for all group members? 3 rd World visit issues see checklist.	
5	Transport/ Journey	Journey and travel details? How will the transport be provided and who will do that?	
6	Safety	What could go wrong? Risk assessment completed for all aspects of excursion, activity and target group. No medium or high risks. Specific Risk assessments adventurous activities completed. Suitable first aid cover will be provided. "Plan B" arrangements identified and risk assessed?	
7	Supervision	Excursion leader from the school identified and support. PVG requirements met. Supervision/gender numbers & mix specified suitable for the group and all aspects of the excursion ? Suitable external provider supervision for their activities. What are the arrangements for the supervision of activities and down time, is there a Code of Conduct?	
8	Staff Skills	Skills of staff and volunteers are appropriate. Qualifications & experience appropriate? Volunteers have required skill set?.	
9	Provider	Activities, to be delivered by an outside provider are clear. A suitable outsider provider has been identified. Criteria for selection were set and followed. Provider expectation of staff is clear and can be met?	
10	Notifications and procedures	Aberdeenshire Council procedures for notification of this excursion have been identified and followed.	
11	Communication with Pupils & Parents	What information will be provided for parents? What consents will be sought? What happens if a pupils pulls out or is prevented from going on the trip? What opportunities will parents have to ask questions? What are the communication arrangements? Up to date medical, medicines and conditions information has been/will be obtained.	

		Up to date parental emergency contact details will be obtained.	
12	Cover	Staffing cover requirements and costs been identified.	
13	Finance	Estimates of costs have been identified. Costs met by young people and parents have been identified and agreed with Head. Financial and cost management arrangements have been agreed with the Head. Where does financial liability lie, with the school or with parents?	
14	Insurance	Insurance requirements identified	
15	Review	What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the visit?	

Head Teacher/ Head of Establishment Excursion Aide memoire

	Heading	For Head to Give Authority for the Excursion to go ahead	
1	Objective	Clear statement of objectives and how these meet the needs of the group.	
2	Activity	Clear detailed list and description of all the activities, type and downtime arrangements.	
3	Participants	Full list of children ,staff and volunteers attending. Clear list of individual needs and how these will be met. Inclusive approach demonstrated and supported.	
4	Location	.Appropriate guidance has been followed for the country and locations to be visited? Duration of the excursion and the number of overnight stays. Locations and nature of the sites to be visited. Level of difficulty for all group members? Will all of the target group be able to access the location? 3 rd World checklist used as appropriate.	
5	Transport /Journey	Journey/Transport specified for each stage of the excursion. Transport used complies with the necessary Aberdeenshire Council standards.	
6	Safety	Full risk assessments completed. No medium or high risks. Risk assessment meets the needs of individual children and party members. Where external providers are providing activities the handovers from staff are clear. First aid arrangements are clear. Medical cover arrangements are clear. "Plan B" arrangements have been specified. Response and on call for emergencies are clear. They cover the full duration of the excursion.	
7	Supervision	Excursion leader from the establishment identified with support staff. Supervision levels and gender mix is appropriate for group needs.	
8	Staff Skills	Staff have the necessary skills and qualifications for the excursion. A basic skill set for volunteers has been provided.	
9	Provider	Activities to be delivered by in house providers are clear. Activities to be delivered by staff are clear. Activities to be delivered by external providers are clear. Providers for each section of the excursion have appropriate skills, qualifications and experience. External providers of adventurous activities are registered providers with Aberdeenshire Council.	
10	Notifications and procedures	Aberdeenshire Council procedures for notification of this excursion have been followed. Where required, Adventure Scotland have been notified and have provided advice.. This advice has been followed.	
11	Communication with Pupils & Parents	Complete information has been provided to parents and young people. Necessary parental permission s have been obtained. Medical, medicines and conditions information have been up dated. Parental emergency contact details have been up dated. Full detailed itinery will be provided to parents.	

12	Cover	Staffing cover has been agreed and arranged.	
13	Finance	Actual costs for the excursion have been agreed with the Head. Pupils costs have been agreed with the Head. Financial management processes are being used to oversee the management, completion and closure of the project.	
14	Insurance	Insurance requirements met	

APPENDIX 2

Initial Approval Request Form

(Specimen for internal use)

This form must be submitted to the Head of Establishment for approval before excursion arrangements are made.

Category of Excursion

Category	Description		Tick
1a	Excursions within the UK without adventurous activities		
1b	Excursions within the UK with adventurous activities		
2a	Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada without adventurous activities		
2b	Excursions to Europe, USA or Canada with adventurous activities		
2c	All Excursions to countries outwith Europe, USA or Canada. All exchange visits to any location		

Excursion Details

Name of Excursion			
Name of Visit Leader			
Visit Leader's relevant qualifications and experience			
Destination			
Brief Description Of Excursion including educational objectives			
Date and times of Excursion			
Eligible Year/age Groups			
Estimated Numbers Participating		Participants	Staff (Please name)
			Other Adults (Please name)
*Please note that where excursions involve an overnight at least one reserve member of staff must be identified.			

Costs	
Will staff cover be required?	
Approx total cost per participant	
Proposed total cost to be paid by Establishment	

All staff accompanying this proposed excursion have discussed cover implications with their line managers. I have checked the Establishment's calendar for potential clashes and have discussed cover implications with the appropriate staff.

Signature of Visit Leader _____ Date _____

Approval by Head of Establishment

I do/do not authorize the proposed excursion subject to/for the following reasons

Date: _____

Signature of Head of Establishment

APPENDIX 3

Excursion Risk Assessment.

A Selection of factors that will influence decision making

Checklist

Consider	Comment	Action
Staff experience in off-site supervision and leadership		
Competence of staff in general and with regards to specific activities		
Ages and range of abilities of the young people		
Medical conditions of young people and staff		
Behaviour issues, recent history, previous experiences		
Additional needs of group members		
Young people's self organisational skills		
Parental restrictions		
Mode of travel, length of journey, overnight stays while travelling, accommodation arrangements		
Environment, location, situational factors		
Likely weather		
The activity and requirements of the location		
Level of First aid cover required		
Medical Umbrella available, this includes level of support, access, speed of response, evacuation arrangements, local political stability.		
Any cultural or religious factors		
Security		
Contingency plans		

Risk Assessment Template



Education Learning and Leisure	Risk Assessment Template
Establishment :	Member of staff completing :
Date Completed:	Completing Staff Signature and Date:
Description of Activity:	Activity Location:
Head of Establishment:	Head of Establishment signature and date:

Areas Covered in This Risk Assessment			
Staff/Instructor/Supervisor competence		Equipment	
Ability of the Group		Weather	
Supervision		Emergency Procedures	
Transportation/Journey		First Aid / Medical / Medication	
Environment / Location		Electricity	
Activity		Chemicals	
Security		Insurance	

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Staff /Supervisor /Instructor Competence	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff competent to supervise group activities. • Activity provider has provided evidence of their staff competence and a risk assessment of the activity. • Activity premises are inspected by Local Authority so would not be required to provide a risk assessment. • Staff PVG checked. • Other relevant measures noted in 5th column → 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Ability of the Group Ability Inclusion Individual support plans Supervision ratio Disabled/mobility issues Medical needs Sick bag disposal Gloves Apron First aid travelling kit Mobile phone Guardian information	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ratio of staff to young people is set dependent on need. • Individual pupil support plans are available to establish individual / group ability. • Identify departure time, contact numbers, finishing time, pick up, set down locations and instructions. • Identify any specific medical / dietary needs. • If necessary obtain guardian advice / permission. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column -> 	<p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Supervision Ratios Activities Special needs Overnight	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ration of staff to young people is set dependent on the need. • Supervision levels are set as required to undertake or support the activity provider. • Supervision levels are set as required for overnight stay. • Supervisors' Disclosure Scotland checked. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk ?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Transportation / Journey Staff, volunteer, cars/insurance. Contact/ mobile phone numbers. Route to be followed. Departure/ arrival times & guardian information. Insurance. Competent bus contractor. Bus suitable for disabled. Storage of equipment/ food Lost client/ vehicle. Client sick / soiled.	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff, volunteers have vehicle insurance and the cars are not overloaded. • Ensure the bus company is approved by the Council PTU. • Walking routes are safe. • Ensure all loose equipment is correctly stored / secured. • Ensure all are aware of the activity, location, car park, map etc. • Have a head count list for each vehicle. • Carry a fully charged mobile phone ready for use. • Ensure the base phone number is available. • Supervision levels are correct for the group. 	High Medium Low			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other relevant measures note in 5th column →				
--	--	---	--	--	--	--

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Environment / Location Location Terrain Possible weather conditions	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff, where possible, have undertaken a prior visit to the area/location/activity. • An activity risk assessment is available for the activity provider if required. • Specific instructions are available to staff and young people. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk ?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Activity Activity provider risk assessment. Activity provider informed of group / individual ability. Who will provide the activity supervision? Block booking. Access. Emergency Procedures. Disabled facilities. Supervision. Toilets. Food.	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A risk assessment is available for the activity. • An activity provider risk assessment is available. • Activity provider informed of group/ individual ability. • Identify who will provide the activity supervision. • Where possible block book the group for easier supervision. • Ensure suitable disabled arrangements. • Discuss emergency arrangements where the activity identifies the necessity. • Identify where staff will provide assistance for example toileting. • Food allergies identified 	High Medium Low			

		<p>to food provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other relevant measures note in 5th column →				
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk ?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Security Personal Vehicle While travelling Down time Campsite Accommodation Finance and equipment	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Aberdeenshire vehicles locked when not in use. • Accommodation locked at appropriate times. • Local information taken into account re campsites. • Aberdeenshire activity provider information sought re activity sites. • Group briefed on personal safety, local culture, what will cause offence etc. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column→ 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Equipment Suitability Trained staff to operate Group competence	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire equipment suitable for the activity, if not, withdraw from the activity. • Activity providers' equipment suitable for the activity, if not, withdraw from the activity. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Weather Travel Conditions suitable Clothing suitable for the activity Alternative plan/ based information Ability of group for likely weather conditions	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the road/ travel conditions are suitable. • Ensure that the group has suitable clothing / footwear for the activity. • Have an alternative plan available and ensure the base is kept informed. • Consider the effects of bright sun and exhaustion. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Emergency Procedures Plan available? Base contact available and skilled? Supervisory ratios Suitable contingency plan. First aid kit and first aiders.	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have an emergency plan agreed with the base. • Carry a mobile phone and have the base number available. • If necessary use a land line. • Ensure the First aid supervisory ratios are suitable. (In some situations competent person may be a member of the group if trained/ competent to operate emergency arrangements) • A first aid kit is available. • If Low hills a HSE trained first aid person is required. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
First Aid / Medical / Medication Permission Staff available Staff training Storage First aid	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information sought from parents/guardians re parents letter. • Staff competent and willing to administer medication. • Suitable storage identified. • Ensure the First aid supervisory ratios are suitable. (In some situations competent persons may be a member of the group if trained/competent to operate the emergency arrangements) • A first aid kit is available. • If Low hills, a HSE trained first aider is required. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	<p style="text-align: center;">High</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Medium</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low</p>			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Electricity Electrical equipment	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment tested / suitable. • Other relevant measures not in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Chemicals Cleaning/ washing Activity related Others	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allergies identified • COSHH identified • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Insurance Council third party Personal accident Overseas cover Litigation potential	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All activities organised under Aberdeenshire Council will be covered third party by the Council insurers. • Comprehensive cover can be purchased from the Council Finance dept. • Other relevant measures note in 5th column → 	High Medium Low			

Potential Hazard and Risk area	Who might be harmed? Please tick.	What are you already doing to reduce the risk? Circle the bullet points of the control measures to be put in place.	Circle the Risk level with control measures in place. If High or Medium the control measures must be re-examined	Indicate anything else you need to do to manage the risk?	Who will take this action? By When?	Action now done? Name Date
Other areas for consideration	Young people Staff Supervisors Instructors Helpers Public Others		High Medium Low			

APPENDIX 4

Parental Consent Form for Excursions Within the UK and abroad

Below is a sample of a Parental consent form which can be used for excursions within the UK. This can be used to gather the necessary information and permissions from parents and can be adapted to suit the needs of the school and the excursion.

For excursions outside the UK please note that the signature of **both** parents of the child or young person will be required. A sample form to gather the permission of both parents is provided at the end of this Appendix.

Parental Consent Form for Excursions Within the UK

Parental Consent Form

Name of participant Age

I confirm that I am the Parent/Guardian with parental rights and responsibilities for the above named.

<u>Initial here</u>

Excursion Details

Excursion to: (location)
on: (dates)
Provided by: (establishment)
and Led by: (party leader)

I confirm that I have provided up-to-date details about my child/ward and understand that I must up-date this information should there be any last minute changes that may affect the excursion.

<u>Initial here</u>

I confirm that I have received the activity information details accompanying this form. I understand the nature of the activity(s) to be undertaken by my Child/Ward and consider Him/Her fit to take part.

<u>Initial here</u>

I confirm that I have provided active contact details and understand that I should be available if required to collect my child/ward from the excursion venue.

<u>Initial here</u>

I confirm that I give permission for my child to be transported to fixtures either by school minibus or by a member of staff's car.

<u>Initial here</u>

I understand "Aberdeenshire Council provides third party public liability insurance for all our excursions. Parents who require personal injury or accident cover for their child/children should organise this privately".

<u>Initial here</u>

I confirm that I have read and understood the statement about insurance.

<u>Initial here</u>

I understand "The planned excursion will take place according to Aberdeenshire Council's Excursion Policy and a copy of the policy is available for inspection at www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk The excursion has been risk assessed and every effort will be made to minimize risk. Nonetheless a totally risk free environment is unrealistic and in signing the parental consent form I am asked to acknowledge that a degree of residual risk remains. It is not anticipated that risks will exceed those incurred in normal day to day living."

I confirm that I have read and understood the statement about Residual Risk

<u>Initial here</u>

For water-based activities only:

I certify that my Child/Ward **is / is not* water confident and that he/she **can/cannot* swim up to 50 meters.

Delete as appropriate.

<u>Initial here</u>

Emergency contact Details

It is important that either yourself or another adult prepared to take temporary responsibility for your child/ward is contactable for the duration of the activity/event. Please give details:

Name of person to contact
Address

Home Tel No: Work Tel No:
Relationship to participant

Name of Parent/Guardian with parental rights and responsibilities:
(Block Capitals)
Relationship to participant
Address

Home Tel No: Work Tel No:

Signature: Date:

Medical Information and Consent:

In the event of an emergency, it is important that the person in charge of the group has the necessary information about any medical condition which could affect the care and treatment of your child/ward. All information requested will be treated in strict confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the inclusion of your child/ward in the activity. It is in the interests of your child/ward that full and accurate information be given.

Recent surgery for Date

Any known allergy to medicine (e.g. penicillin)

Is your child undergoing treatment by a doctor? (If so, please give details)
.....

Any medical condition which a doctor should know before carrying out treatment (e.g. Asthma)
.....

Please state any restrictions you wish to place on emergency medical treatment
.....

Please give details of any special diets e.g. vegetarian/diabetic/no specific "E" numbers etc.
.....

Details of any special cultural or religious considerations that you would wish to be made.
.....

Any additional information
.....

Name of Family Doctor
Address:

Tel No:

I hereby consent to the submission of the above-named to emergency medical or surgical treatment including the administration where necessary, of a local, general, or other anesthetic.

I understand that in terms of the Act of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991 my child/ward may also consent to his/her own medical treatment if the doctor attending is of the opinion that he/she understands the nature and consequences of such treatment.

Initial here

Declaration

I hereby give consent for my child/ward to take part in the above activity and confirm that my initials placed in the boxes above indicate that I fully understand the various implications of my consent. I also understand that it is my responsibility to inform the visit leader of any significant changes to the information I have provided about my child/ward between now and the excursions taking place.

Signature Date:

NB If you are unable to initial any one or more of the boxes above but still wish your child/ward to take part, please contact the party leader.
If you are having difficulty with reading or translating this form and the information sent with it you should contact the visit leader.

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE UK

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 requires Aberdeenshire Council to have the written consent of both parents who have and are currently exercising parental responsibilities and rights with respect to a child aged under 16 years before that child can participate in an educational excursion outside the UK.

Those who have parental responsibilities and rights are:

- the parents of a child who were married at the time of the child's birth or later whether or not they are still together
- the child's mother
- the father of a child who is not married to the child's mother but who has reached an agreement under Section 4 of the Act with the child's mother and registered that agreement in the Books of Council and Session in Edinburgh
- any person, as directed by the Court, e.g. a guardian, or where the Court has made a Residence Order in favour of an unmarried father or grandparents, etc.

Those listed above retain parental responsibilities and rights unless they are removed by a court.

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE UK

AUTHORISATION OF FOREIGN TRAVEL

All information given below will be treated as confidential and will be disposed of according to data protection legislation.

Establishment			
Excursion to		Ref No	
Dates			
Excursion Leader			

1. Details of Participant and Parent/Carers	
Participant's Name	
Parent / Carer (1)	
Address	
Telephone Number (home)	
Email	
Parent / Carer (2)	
Address	
Telephone Number (home)	
Email	

2. For excursions involving travel outwith the UK, the written consent of both parents is required.

I give permission for Participant's name to take part in this excursion and travel with the school outside the UK to the destinations identified by the excursion leader.

Parent / Carer Name	Date
Parent / Carer Signature	
Relationship to Child	
Parent / Carer Name	Date
Parent / Carer Signature	
Relationship to Child	

APPENDIX 5

Informing Parents

Aberdeenshire Council policy requires that parents should be informed at an early date with full and explicit information about off-site excursions. Employees designated as visit leaders of an excursion must ensure that a communication containing the information that is relevant to the planned excursion is sent to parents in advance of the excursion taking place. A check list of key information is listed below.

Specimen Information Sheet Check List

	ITEM	NAME	DATE
1	Name and designation of the person authorizing the activity.		
2	Name of establishment/base promoting the activity (School/Community Education Centre/Care Facility etc.)		
3	Name of external organization(s) contracted to provide some or all or some of the activities.		
4	Names(s) and designation(s) of Visit leader responsible for the planning and conduct of the excursion. Names & qualification(s) and experience of staff supervising the activities Name(s) and qualification(s) of any other staff/volunteers accompanying the excursion.		
5	Number in group: Males _____ Females _____		
6	Age range of group.		
7	Detailed statement on proposed activity including location, duration and demand likely to be made on participants.		
8	Preparatory training undertaken/completed and level of ability which participant must possess before they are permitted to take part.		
9	Details of proposed programme including: Transport (type, pick-up and dispersal points and timings). Accommodation (location, description, telephone number). Meals/food arrangements. Supervision.		
10	Clothing to be worn or carried		
11	Total cost and financial arrangements.		
12	Codes of conduct/behaviour expected and sending home procedures if these are not met.		
13	Guidance on spending money		
14	Equipment being provided.		
15	Names, addresses and telephone numbers of Base Contact.		
16	Procedures to be followed in an emergency by parents, staff and Base Contact persons.		
17	Statement of insurance-cover provided for members of the group by the Council and/or School/Centre/Organisation. (see the Procedures)		
18	Medical services provided or available to the party during the course of the excursion.		

19	Safety Management and Acknowledgement of risk: Sample statement:--		
20	Any other relevant information.		

“The planned excursion will take place according to Aberdeenshire Council’s Excursion Policy and a copy of the policy is available for inspection at www.Aberdeenshire.gov.uk . The excursion has been risk assessed and every effort will be made to minimize risk. Nonetheless a totally risk free environment is unrealistic and in signing the parental consent form you are asked to acknowledge that a degree of risk will always remain. It is not anticipated that risks will exceed those incurred in normal day to day living.”

Parents should be asked to acknowledge this, when giving their consent for their child/guardian to take part.

NOTE: It is essential that the attention of parents is directed to the need for returning all relevant information, so that, in the event of an emergency, accurate information is readily available.

Appendix 6 Accessible School Trips/Excursions For The Inclusive School

<p>Aberdeenshire Accessibility Strategy</p> <p>Accessible School Trips/Excursions For The Inclusive School</p> <p>Example Scenarios</p>
--

Disability	Situation	Less favourable treatment	Is it justified?	Is decision likely to be lawful?
Tourette's Syndrome	Pupil is banned from going on a school visit because he used abusive language towards a supply teacher who was unfamiliar with the boy's needs.	Being banned from going is less favourable treatment for a reason related to his disability.	The school argue that the inclusion of the boy on the visit would make the maintenance of discipline impossible.	No - the usual reasonable adjustments which normally managed the boy's condition were not carried out.
Deaf pupil	Pupil is banned from taking part in a school theatre visit because of her disruptive behaviour at lunchtime at the local shops.	Being banned from going is less favourable treatment but not for a reason related to her disability.	The ban is justified.	Yes -it is likely to be lawful.
Learning disabilities	Pupil is not offered theatre trip on the basis that he would not understand the play.	Not being given the opportunity to go is less favourable treatment for a reason related to his disability.	This is a general assumption.	No – it is likely to be unlawful.
Cerebral palsy	Pupil prevented from taking part in a 12 mile hike while at an outdoor activity centre.	Not being given the opportunity to go is less favourable treatment for a reason related to her disability.	Having carried out a risk assessment, the teacher decided she could not take part for health & safety reasons.	Yes – the decision was based on a risk assessment.

Disability	Situation	Less favourable treatment	Is it justified?	Is decision likely to be lawful?
Mobility – wheelchair user	An exchange trip is offered to pupils studying Italian in a secondary school. Accessible transport arrangements are made and a suitable host is identified who can accommodate a pupil who uses a wheelchair. At the last minute the Italian host drops out. The pupil is unable to go on the exchange.	Not being able to go is less favourable treatment.	Yes – cancelling the trip would disadvantage the other pupils.	Yes – the decision was taken only after the school had tried to identify reasonable adjustments.
Epilepsy	The parents of a nine year old boy with epilepsy ask the head teacher to keep confidential the existence of and the nature of their child’s disability. Their son’s medication has been effective in reducing the number of fits that he has and he is unlikely to have a fit in school. The school plans a trip to the swimming pool which they say the boy cannot attend.	Yes - not being given the opportunity to go is less favourable treatment for a reason related to his disability.	Yes - on seeking professional advice the head teacher is told that it would be unsafe for the boy to go swimming without informing the staff at the pool. The parents do not want them to be told.	Yes - the head teacher decides that the safety of the child dictates that he should not go swimming unless staff at the pool can be told.

APPENDIX 6a

Training Requirements for Staff Accompanying Participants With Disabilities

Guidelines For Establishments

Purpose of Guidelines

- 1.1. The purpose of guidelines is to provide advice to establishments on the training of staff who accompany participants with disabilities on transport. This includes home – school transport and transport for excursions. Although this was written with schools in mind this applies to all Council excursions.

Background

- 1.2. The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires that pupils with disabilities are able to participate fully in school trips and that transport provided for all school trips is accessible to pupils with physical disabilities.
- 1.3. A person is disabled if "he/she has a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial or long term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities".
- 1.4. The Authority must therefore ensure that identified staff accompanying such pupils are supported through appropriate training.
- 1.5. In addition, staff escorting pupils with additional support needs on home – school transport also require support through appropriate training.
- 1.6. The requirements and arrangements for training are outlined below.

Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS)

- 1.7. All staff as described in 2.3 and 2.4 who accompany pupils are required to undertake training to ensure a basic level of competency.
- 1.8. This will be through the Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS). Information on this is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.9. This training should be complemented by additional training to support pupils with specific needs as described in 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 below.
- 1.10. All staff with a responsibility for pupils with a disability on school transport should have the opportunity to undertake PATS training.
- 1.11. PATS training will take around 7 hours to complete and will cover the role of the accompanying member of staff, assisting and supervising pupils with additional support needs.
- 1.12. It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that new staff or staff accompanying pupils for the first time attend PATS training.
- 1.13. Where necessary core training should be complemented by additional training to support pupils with specific needs as described in 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 below.

First Aid Training

- 4.1 The risk assessment for a school trip will identify the measures that should be in place. They may range from ensuring that a mobile telephone is available to summon help to ensuring that an accompanying member of staff has a Basic First Aid Certificate (one day course for 'appointed person').
- 4.2 For attendance on the Basic First Aid course, schools should complete the First Aid Justification Form on Arcadia:

<http://arcadia.ad.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/Intranet/E&RShare.nsf/0/7ACCD7EAAD1663DB8025728F005148E9?OpenDocument>

Training to Support Specific Medical Needs

- 5.1 There are a number of pupils with a range of medical conditions e.g. epilepsy, diabetes etc. Medical conditions will be recorded in the pupil's Managing Accessibility Plan (MAP).
- 5.2 It is essential that staff accompanying such pupils should know how to react to any emergency situation should it arise. Advice on procedures will be identified in the MAP and shared with staff as appropriate.
- 5.3 Special schools and some secondary schools may be able to offer school-based training for specific medical needs. Otherwise schools should contact their school doctor where applicable for advice on training.
- 5.4 Parents and, where appropriate, pupils should be given the opportunity to provide information and advice for the MAP.
- 5.5 Any training that is undertaken should be noted on the MAP.

Wheelchair Awareness Training

- 6.1 There are a number of pupils, mainly in special schools but increasingly in primary and secondary schools, who are wheelchair users.
- 6.2 Identified staff who accompany or work with such children must undertake wheelchair awareness training which will include transferring the pupil from the wheelchair to another situation.
- 6.3 As each wheelchair is designed to meet the individual needs of a pupil all training will be school-based.
- 6.4 Schools should contact the pupil's Occupational Therapist for advice. Parents &, where appropriate, pupils should also be consulted. Any training, such as Moving & Pupil Handling, that is undertaken should be noted on the MAP.
- 6.5 Some pupils, who are wheelchair users, may be able to board transport with the aid of mobility aids. Other wheelchair users will remain in their wheelchairs whilst being transported in an appropriate vehicle.

Moving Children with Physical Disabilities

- 7.1 Some children may require support to board transport. This will be identified through the MAP. For smaller children who require moving from buggies to booster cushions, training will be through of the Authority manual handling programme. This can be accessed through Arcadia.

Pupils with Challenging Behaviour

- 8.1 Where a pupil has particularly challenging behaviour this should be identified on the MAP.
- 8.2 Staff accompanying such pupils should be provided with support from the pupil's school to enable them to manage the pupil's behaviour.
- 8.3 Training is also available through the authority's website, Aberdeenshire Events: <http://www.aberdeenshireevents.org.uk/event>
- 8.4 In some cases consideration may be given to providing the pupil with their own separate transport, following discussion with the Quality Improvement Officer and Additional Support Needs Manager.
- 8.5 For advice on providing appropriate seat restraints or seat belts, schools should contact the Public Transport Unit (PTU), telephone no: 01224 665191.
- 8.6 Any measures put in place to support a pupil's behaviour should be recorded on the MAP.

Pupils with Visual or Hearing Impairment

- 9.1 Pupils who are visually or hearing impaired may have a MAP, which will identify the measures in place to support them.
- 9.2 For advice on training to support these pupils, schools should contact the Sensory Support Service (01224 744786). Any training that is undertaken should be recorded on the MAP.

Training for Escorts

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Training for escorts will be carried out through Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS) and will be delivered by an accredited trainer.
- 1.2. This will enable all escorts to be provided with core training.
- 1.3. Where necessary core training should be complemented by additional training to support pupils with very specific needs. It is expected that this would be arranged and/or delivered through schools.

2. CONTENT OF TRAINING

The training covers three modules:

Module A

2.1.1 *The role of the passenger assistant or escort*

This is the foundation module and covers the role and responsibility of a passenger assistant including legal and practical issues.

Module B

2.1.2 *Assisting passengers with disabilities*

This module includes boarding and alighting from vehicles and safety information concerning wheelchair users.

Module C

2.1.3 *Supervising Children and Young People with Special Needs*

This includes supervising children and young people with autism, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and emotional or behavioural difficulties.

3. PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1. The training takes about 7 hours and will be spread over 1 ½ days, not necessarily consecutive.
- 3.2. For the full day the approximate timings will be 9.30 am – 11.30 am and 12.30 pm – 2.30 pm.
- 3.3. The timing for the half-day will be similar to the above.
- 3.4. The timings have been arranged so that the escorts arrive at school with their pupils on the designated school transport and leave school on the school transport. This avoids the need for cover to be provided.
- 3.5. For the half-day part of the training, the travel arrangements will be as in 3.4. Escorts should remain in school for the other half-day and it is hoped that schools will be able to gainfully use the staff.
- 3.6. Schools hosting the training should provide a room suitable for around 10 participants and the trainer.
- 3.7. Coffee breaks and lunch breaks should be arranged to fit in with the school day.
- 3.8. The training will be delivered through a series of PowerPoint presentations. The trainer will provide all the necessary equipment.

- 3.9. A minibus will also be required. This will be arranged by the Public Transport Unit. Where possible booster cushions and car seats should also be available.
- 3.10. Escorts will be paid for 2 days to attend the training and appropriate time sheets should be completed.
- 3.11. Time sheets and invoices for catering should be sent to the Additional Support Needs Manager, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen AB16 5GJ, for coding/payment.

October 2012

APPENDIX 6b

Transport Arrangements For Pupils With Disabilities GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOLS

1. Purpose of Guidelines

- 1.1 The purpose of the guidelines is to provide advice to schools when they are arranging transport for pupils with disabilities to enable them to take part in a range of school activities.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 requires that pupils with disabilities are able to participate fully in school trips and that when necessary vehicles provided for all school trips are accessible to pupils with physical disabilities.
- 2.2. A person is disabled if "he/she has a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities".
- 2.3. There are an increasing number of pupils in Aberdeenshire schools with disabilities and therefore consideration must be given to
 - a) identifying suitable transport, ensuring that these pupils can be transported appropriately
 - and
 - b) improved training for staff accompanying such pupils.
- 2.4. Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) (Scotland) legislation requires that drivers undergo appropriate checks. It is also important to ensure that drivers are properly trained and qualified for the type of vehicle that they are driving.
- 2.5. The Authority's Public Transport Unit (PTU), based in Woodhill House, is responsible for organising transport between home and school for pupils entitled to such provision.
- 2.6. The PTU does not arrange transport on behalf of individual schools for trips. This is a school responsibility and therefore schools must take into account a number of issues when undertaking this task. These are outlined below.

3. Definition of "School Trip"

- 3.1 For the purposes of these guidelines a trip refers to any journey that pupils undertake where the school arranges transport.

4. Selecting a Competent Transport Contractor

- 4.1. Requests for the use of a minibus should be made to the PTU. Requests for other forms of transport should be made directly to the transport contractor.
- 4.2. Before selecting a transport contractor schools should identify those pupils who have specific requirements for transport e.g. wheelchair access.
- 4.3. Where wheelchair users are transported, an appropriate accessible vehicle must be used and all specialist equipment, including fixings, must be provided and used in accordance with manufacturers' requirements and all appropriate legislative requirements.
- 4.4. Vehicles with up to and including 16 passenger seats must be equipped with seat belts which should be used by pupils. All coaches must be equipped with seat belts or other approved form of restraint appropriate for the age and weight of the pupil. Where a double deck vehicle is used, pupils in Primaries 1 – 3 should be carried on the lower deck.
- 4.5. Where vehicles are adapted to carry more than eight passengers, the contractor should have a current United Kingdom Public Service Vehicle Operator's License, a Community Bus Permit, a Minibus Permit or the European equivalent
- 4.6. The following information must be provided by all contractors:
 - a) Bus company name and address
 - b) Operator licence number with expiry date. This must identify if it is standard national or standard international (the latter is required for trips abroad).
 - c) A copy of their insurance cover including details of European cover where necessary.
 - d) Details of drivers' names together with evidence that they have successfully undergone the PVG check.
- 4.7. The Driver's Identification Card issued by the PTU is sufficient evidence.
- 4.8. PTU are able to provide a list of suitable contractors who could be used as many will provide home to school transport. Other contractors may be used provided they meet the competency criteria. An up to date list of contractors and competency criteria are available from PTU on request.

5. Risk Assessment

- 5.1. A risk assessment must be undertaken prior to any school trip taking place.
- 5.2. This should include consideration of the appropriateness of activities and the adjustments to be put in place.
- 5.3. Where a pupil has support needs an appropriate adult should carry out the pupil-specific risk assessment.
- 5.4. The pupil's parents may also be able to provide information and advice.
- 5.5. Awareness raising should be available and information should be shared with staff as appropriate.

6. First Aid

- 6.1. The risk assessment will identify the measures that should be in place. They may range from ensuring that a mobile phone is available to summon help to ensuring that an accompanying member of staff has a Basic First Aid Certificate.

7. Emergency Procedures

7.1 Procedures should be available for emergencies:

- breakdown - responsibility of driver
- accident - responsibility of driver/school
- sickness - responsibility of school
- first aid - responsibility of school
- weather - responsibility of school

These must be shared with school staff prior to a school trip taking place.

8. Driver Responsibilities

- 8.1. Drivers are appointed by a commercial contractor (through the PTU contract) or if you have an Aberdeenshire Council vehicle, by Aberdeenshire Council.
- 8.2. It is the responsibility of the employer in either case to ensure that the driver has received appropriate training.
- 8.3. Guidelines are being prepared for school staff who drive school minibuses.
- 8.4. The driver is responsible for the safe loading of the vehicle including:
- operation of the vehicle
 - operation of hoists
 - position of the wheelchair/buggy
 - securing of the wheelchair/buggy
 - securing/fitting the child seat
 - securing/fitting the booster seat
 - fitting seat belts
 - secure loading of additional equipment e.g. walking frames, bags
 - ensuring all persons are seated before moving the vehicle

9. Escort Responsibilities

9.1.1 The escort is responsible for the pupil including:

- assisting the pupil from the school to the vehicle
- delivery of the pupil to the appropriate person at the school
- ensuring the comfort and safety of the pupil
- ensuring the pupil is correctly loaded and secured
- ensuring the pupil remain in their seat whilst the vehicle is moving
- support should a pupil become ill or agitated during the journey
- ensuring the driver is not disrupted whilst operating the vehicle
- provision of first aid as specified in the Pupil Support Plan where required
- assisting in the loading and unloading of the pupil
- delivery of the pupil to the parent/carer

10. Head Teacher Responsibilities

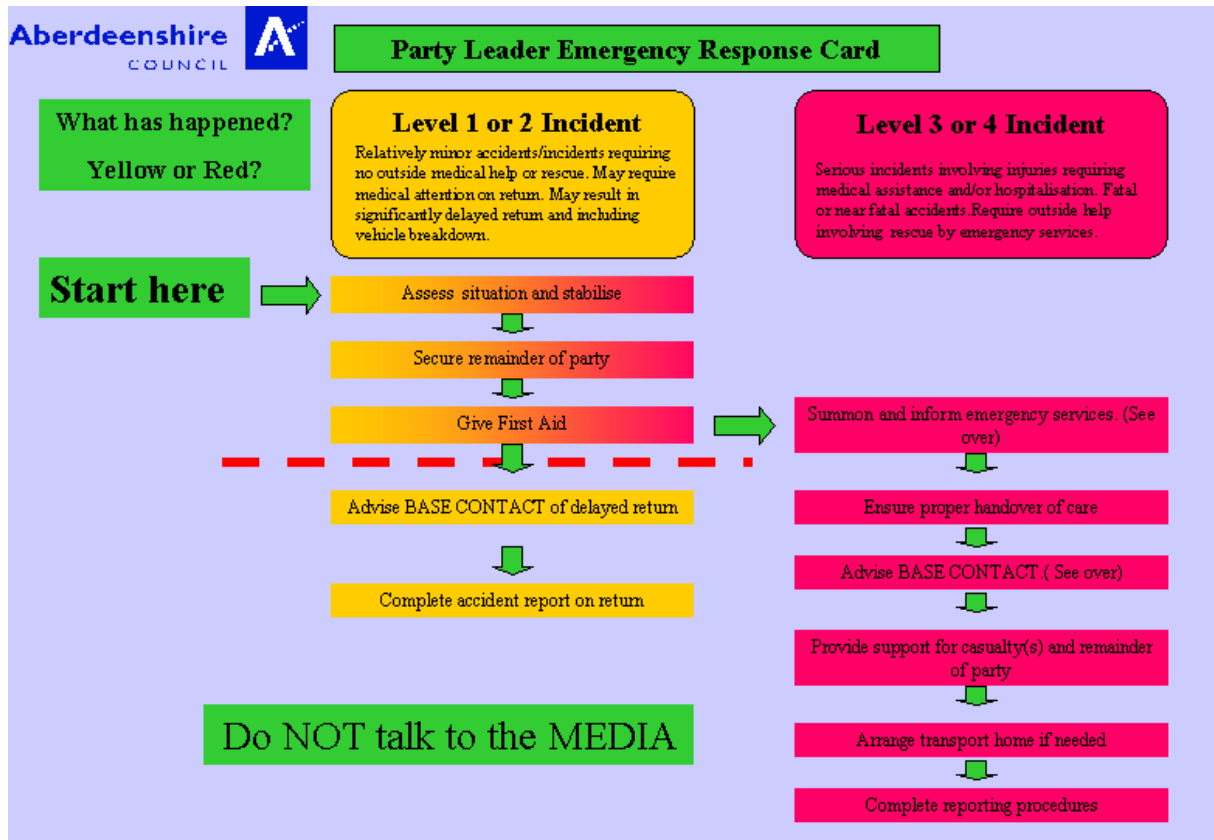
- 10.1 Escorts are appointed by the Head Teacher of the school that the pupil attends.
- 10.2 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher or a nominated member of the school senior management team to ensure that the escort has received appropriate training (see guidelines on training requirements) and to supervise and support them in their work.
- 10.3 Where escorts reach the age of 65 and are still required then an over 65 risk assessment must be carried out (details from Human Resources).

11. Funding for school excursions

- 11.1 Inclusion of pupils with disabilities in line with legislation may result in additional costs e.g. the provision of an additional adult.
- 11.2 Schools should consider how they intend to address this as part of the initial planning process for the excursion.

APPENDIX 7

Emergency Response Card



EMERGENCY SERVICES

Landline

999

Mobile

112

Police

Mountain
Rescue

Coastguard

Ambulance

Fire

Information you need to provide if possible:

- Your name
- Your location
- What happened
- Location of casualty(s)
- How many hurt
- Condition of casualty(s)
- How many in party
- Time of incident
- Any treatment given

Advise BASE CONTACT

The BASE CONTACT needs to know:

- What has happened. Stick to FACTS.
- Who has been injured
- Nature and extent of injuries – only what you know. Don't speculate.
- Where the injured have been taken – contact details
- What you plan to do next

BASE CONTACT details:

APPENDIX 8

Financial Management Approval and Planning for Off-Site Excursions

Financial Management Approval and Planning Process for Off-Site Excursions		
Excursion plan and Financial Viability statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excursion outline plan constructed Brief financial viability statement written 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excursion plan submitted for Head of Establishment approval Financial Viability statement submitted to Head of Establishment for approval
Excursion Finance Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Party Leader and Excursion team prepare outline Costings / Finance Plan Excursion Team member designated to liaise with the School Finance Administration person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline Costings / Finance plan submitted for Head of Establishment approval
Detailed Excursion Finance Management Plan	<p><u>Plan to detail:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting process and balance spread sheets Banking arrangements in the School fund Payment arrangements pre departure Payment arrangements on the excursion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash Cash security Travel cards Travellers cheques Money management: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan submitted for Head of Establishment for final approval and copy to be held by Head of Establishment Establishment administrator to be involved and process as appropriate from School Fund Account to Oracle Payment system Money forms, access and availability discussed with Banking Institution and Travel Company

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff responsibilities • Security arrangements • Young person's pocket-money amounts • Young person's pocket-money payment arrangements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash management plan to reflect the threat level, security and finance arrangements appropriate to the country and region. Consideration to be given to the major world area divisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe • USA • 3rd World • Currency Exchange • Insurance cover • Contingency funds and access to arrangements • Fund raising strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Establishment to discuss in particular 3rd World currency conversion and payment arrangements with relevant agencies • Head of Establishment to discuss where appropriate with the Local Authority insurance officer. • Head of Establishment to provide as appropriate contingency finance support arrangements • Head of Establishment to agree it follows the Establishment's fund raising and charitable giving and funds raising policy
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<p>Operational Finance arrangements on the excursion</p>	<p><u>Plan to be implemented as per agreement:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support documentation to be carried • Staff to implement cash management plan to reflect the threat level, security and finance arrangements appropriate to the country and region <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Europe ▪ USA ▪ 3rd World ▪ Currency Exchange ▪ Security ▪ Contingency funds and access • Staff to implement money management as per: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocated duties and responsibilities • Agreed security arrangements • Agreed currency exchange procedures • Agreed payment regimes • Allocated young person's pocket-money security duties and responsibilities. • Allocated young person's pocket-money payment arrangements • Contingency funds arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Establishment and base contact hold copies of the full plan and the implementation protocols • Head of Establishment and base contact aware of agreed contingency finance support arrangements
<p>Post Excursion Accounting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and expenditure balance sheet prepared for audit • Surplus monies agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance sheet submitted to Head of Establishment and School Administrator for scrutiny and signing off • Balance sheet available for audit by Aberdeenshire Scrutiny and Audit Team and an FOI request • Head of Establishment

			discussion and surplus monies returned or allocated as per Establishment policy

Financial Records

EXCURSION BOOKING AND PAYMENT RECORD													
	Excursion to:				Date:								
INCOME													
	Names	Contact	Total Fee Payable	Deposit Required	Date Paid	Balance due	Instalt 1	Date Paid	Instalt 2	Date Paid	Instalt 3	Date Paid	Total Paid
1													
2													
3													
4													
5													
6													
7													
8													
10													
11													
12													
												TOTAL FEES PAID	
OUTLAYS													
	Item		Cost										
TOTAL OUTLAYS			£	-									
CLOSING BALANCE													

APPENDIX 9

Information For Base Contact Person

It is a vital link in the safety management chain that the Base Contact Person has sufficient information to enable him/her to respond promptly and appropriately in case of emergency or simply to changes of plan or significantly delayed return.

Below is a check list of information that should be passed to the Base Contact prior to departure. Your particular excursion may demand additional items to be checked and made readily available.

ITEM	Confirmed by : Name	Date
Names of participants		
Name & contact details of parents/guardians		
Names and contact details for emergency contact if different.		
Details of itinerary: Locations, dates and expected timings.		
Travel details inc flight numbers and/or coach company details		
Contact details for other contracted providers.		
Group accommodation details.		
24 hr contact details for party leader or other delegated staff member.		
Copies of medical information		
Copies parental consent forms		
Copy of risk assessment		

APPENDIX 10

Further Guidance Sources

Health & Safety on Educational Excursions (HASEE) –

<http://www.bsigroup.com/>
www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/hsee-00.asp

Avoiding ill health at open farms: Advice to farmers with teachers supplement - Agricultural Information Sheet no.23

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais23.pdf

Five Steps to Risk Assessment

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf

Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg179.htm

The Administration of Medicines in Schools - Scottish Executive Education Department -

www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/education/amis-00.asp

A Practical Guide to Safe School Trips – The Scottish School Boards Association, Newall Terrace, Dumfries, DG1 1LW

Health Advice to Travelers Anywhere in the World - Available free from most Post Offices, travel agents and local libraries or Free Phone 0800 555777

Safety on British Beaches - Joint publication by the Royal Life Saving Society and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). Available from RoSPA

Safe Supervision for Teaching and Coaching Swimming - Amateur Swimming Association and others. 2nd edition . Available from RoSPA

Group Safety at Water Margins - Central Council for Physical Recreation

www.ccpr.org.uk

A Practical Guide to Safe School Trips - Scottish School Board Association

www.schoolboard-scotland.com

Safe and Responsible Expeditions and Guidelines for Youth

Expeditions - Young Explorers' Trust, c/o RGS-IBG Expedition
Advisory Centre. £5 inc. p & p or free from website
www.rgs.org/eacpubs

**Quality, Safety and Sustainability - Field Study Centres: A Code
of Practice** - National Association of Field Studies Officers
(NAFSO)
www.nafso.org.uk

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust has produced a range of guidance on
personal safety, including booklets, videos and training courses
www.suzylamplugh.org

Address details for listed Government publications

www.hsebooks.com
www.tso.co.uk

APPENDIX 11

Useful Contacts

Adventure Scotland & AS Training & Consultancy

Tele 01479 811411

Fax 01479 898123

admin@adventure-scotland.com

www.adventure-scotland.com

www.as-training.biz

Government Departments

Scottish Government

www.scotland.gov.uk

The Foreign & Commonwealth
Office's Travel Advice Unit

www.fco.gov.uk

Home Office

www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency

www.mcga.gov.uk

The Royal Society for the Prevention
of Accidents (Scotland)

www.rosipa.com

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

www.suzylamplugh.org

Department for Transport

www.dft.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

Royal Life Saving Society UK

www.lifesavers.org.uk

British Safety Council

www.britishsafetycouncil.org

Unions and Associations

The Educational Institute for Scotland

www.eis.org.uk

Scottish Secondary Teachers Association

www.ssta.org.uk

NASUWT

www.nasuwt.org.uk

Professional Association of Teachers Scotland

www.pat.org.uk

Headteachers Association of Scotland

Association of Headteachers in Scotland

Catholic Headteachers Association of Scotland

www.ahts.org.uk

British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education (BAALPE)

www.baalpe.org

Scottish Parent Teacher Council
www.sptc.info/

Scottish School Board Association
www.schoolboard-scotland.com

National Association of Field Studies Officers

www.nafso.org.uk

Sportscotland
www.sportscotland.org.uk

Travel

Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)

www.abta.com

The British Activity Holiday Association
www.baha.org.uk

Community Transport

www.communitytransport.com

Confederation of Passenger Transport UK
www.cpt-uk.org

Scottish Youth Hostel Association

www.syha.org.uk

Visit Scotland
www.visitscotland.com

Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad (MASTA)

www.masta.org

National Parks

Cairngorms National Park Authority
www.cairngorms.co.uk

Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park
www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

Snowdonia National Park Authority
Youth and School Liaison Officer
Education Service

APPENDIX 12

Additional Information for Overseas Excursions

Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office website, www.fco.gov.uk should be visited both in the early stages and at regular intervals whilst planning a visit to countries that are further afield or that have experienced disasters, conflicts, terrorism or civil unrest problems in recent years. Information regarding the safety of tourists must be accessed on the appropriate site. This information may form the basis upon which insurance companies decide whether or not they will cover visits to such countries. In the event of cover not being provided then the trip must be cancelled.

Cancelling visits at a late stage may incur major financial penalties. These costs may be outside of insurance cover.

Passports

- Some countries have an immigration requirement for a passport to remain valid for a minimum period (usually at least six months) beyond the date of entry to the country. Visit Leaders will need to ensure passports are in good condition and valid for at least 6 months at the date of return. This is a requirement of the country concerned, not the UK Passport Service. Any questions should be addressed to their Consulate or Embassy.
- Personal identification is required in many countries and for visits this is usually in the form of an individual passport.

Visas

- If travel is planned outside British territories, there may be a requirement for a visa to enter particular countries. Visa requirements must be checked with the travel company or contact the Consulate or Embassy of the country to be visited
- Where there are students/young people that are British Dependent Territories Citizens, or a British Overseas Citizen, British Subject, British National Overseas, or a British Protected Person, they may need a visa that is not required by British Citizens
- If there are students/young people with non British passports, they also may require a visa not required by British Citizens. More than one party has had to leave a young person and member of staff behind at Dover having failed to check this prior to the visit.
- The emergency plan for the visit should consider staffing ratios and action in case a member of staff becomes incapacitated or has to leave the visit. If the country visited requires a visa, a back up member of staff must be in possession of an appropriate visa.
- It is recommended that at least 2 photocopies of all passports, visas and other important travel documents are made, one set kept by the home base emergency contact another with the party but separate to the original documents.

Customs and Excise

- All party members students and responsible adults must be made aware of the restrictions that apply to certain goods on entry and exit to the relevant countries. These restrictions differ from country to country and there are also variations at UK customs for some goods depending on whether they were purchased inside or outside of the

European Union. Age restrictions also apply on some goods such as alcohol and tobacco. Alcohol restrictions as laid down by the institutions and ACEL&L apply.

Health

Reciprocal European Health Insurance

- UK residents may be entitled to free medical treatment or at a reduced cost, when temporarily visiting a European Union (EU) country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. Only treatment provided under the state scheme is covered. However to obtain treatment, students will need to carry their European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Not all UK residents are covered in Denmark, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland. Consideration must be given to those individuals who might be excluded from treatment.
- Reference should be made to the NHS Direct and FCO websites for up-to-date information.

Vaccines and Inoculations

- Consideration must be given to vaccinations required. A GP or relevant NHS Department must be contacted at least 8 weeks prior to the visit. Students must also contact their own GPs to exclude potential medication contra-indication problems. The Department of Health and Foreign and Commonwealth Offices are also useful sources of information.

Insurance

Travel insurance is essential for all visits abroad and is usually available via the tour company with whom travel is arranged. It may be appropriate, particularly if unusual circumstances apply, to discuss insurance arrangements with Aberdeenshire Council. It is likely that specific cover may be available through Aberdeenshire Council's Insurers.

There must be a close examination of what is covered and what is excluded in the 'small print'.

For example;

- Visit Leaders must ensure familiarity with the level of existing insurance cover provided by the Council and ensure that it is transmitted in all relevant documentation.
- Check that repatriation is included or just treatment in the country concerned? Visit Leaders should also be aware of the very high costs of medical rescue in unusual circumstances eg Air Ambulances can cost in excess of £50,000 in remote regions.
- Establish whether the costs incurred by parents are covered should they need to come out to stay with students in hospital or accompany them home. The insurance position must be intimated to parents in advance.
- Establish if personal belongings, baggage and money covered.
- The Council insurance department may be able to offer advice.

Legal and cultural differences

It must be explained and discussed with students and parents that the legal definitions of what constitutes a 'child' and a 'criminal offence' vary across European countries, not to mention global differences in such definitions. Crossing the road without using pedestrian crossing points, dropping litter and inappropriate dress are examples of offences punishable by spot fines in some countries, behaviour which some young people would think of as acceptable in the UK. Furthermore, students must be made aware of these differences and the consequences of such actions abroad.

Research prior to the visit in respect of cultural values and differences will pay dividends whilst in the host country. In particular consideration of what constitutes good manners will also help with acceptance in host family homes.

The most secure exchange visits take place with partners and locations where knowledge and understanding have developed over some years. If the exchange or location is a new venue, a pre-visit by the leader(s) followed up by the establishment of robust links in all dimensions of the exchange is essential.

Pre-visits

Where an exchange visit is arranged for the first time or involves a significant number of new staff, a preliminary visit may reassure all parties and provide details and photographs for a parents' presentation. This will assist in reassuring parents. It is a control measure in itself as well as being an opportunity to consider any specific risk assessment first hand. A pre visit is thus strongly recommended. The issues raised above in section 2.8 should be considered during a preliminary visit and discussed with colleagues on both sides of the exchange and will form the basis of any agreement between the exchange partners to ensure commonality of aims, objectives and activities. Agreements reached must include a commitment to the health, safety, well-being, protection and welfare of the young people involved. Written and agreed protocols will assist in the prevention of misunderstanding especially when the exchange is underway.

Emergency Procedures

- Schools/youth service hosts must have an emergency plan for educational visits.
- This plan must outline actions to be followed in case of emergencies including the following:
 1. Contacting staff back at school/youth service, including holiday periods and at weekends.
 2. Whole group evacuation/repatriation
 3. Contingency funding arrangements
- Group leaders must establish the names and contact details of Authority personnel who will act as a 'critical incident response team' and who will provide support in times of trauma.
- Prior to the exchange visit, the critical incident response team should consider exercising the school's emergency plan. This will develop confidence in the processes, check the procedures to be followed and provide a training opportunity for new or inexperienced members of staff.

An emergency plan for the visit should consider the actions in case a member of staff or a young person becomes incapacitated or has to leave the visit. If the country visited requires a visa, a back up member of staff must have prior possession of a visa.

Contingency plans should include alternative back-up accommodation arrangements, in the event that it becomes necessary to move a young person from their host family.

Many exchange visits involving schools are language based and thus normally include language staff as party leaders.

In the case of visits further afield or with visits for reasons other than language, it is important that there is someone who is fluent in the local language, can adopt a liaison role and who can act in the interests of the party. Ideally this person must be available 24 hours. Visit leaders should ensure this is in place prior to the visit.

Personal Safety

Staff

- Staff must be aware of issues relating to personal safety, and personal and professional protection, especially in order to avoid situations which could lead to accusations of improper conduct.

Young People

- It is strongly recommended that young people have a copy of the Child Safe Leaflet 'Travel-Safe ...Advice for Children and Young People' and that they and their parents read it.

Issues relating to Privacy, Taste and Judgement

Mobile Phone protocol

Although mobile telephones can provide a vital link between pupils and their parents, they can also create difficulties particularly camera telephones. There have been occasions when pupils have taken inappropriate photographs of other pupils and adults. An agreed usage protocol needs to be in place.

It is strongly recommended that schools/ youth services have a policy and usage protocol for mobile telephones by young people. Clear instructions should be given to pupils if the decision is taken for them to take telephones abroad, and included in the general Code of Conduct.

Home Entertainment

Visit leaders will need to establish clear policies regarding acceptable internet, Social Networking DVD and video usage

Theatre and Cinema Visits

Related issues to those outlined above should be considered in the event of young people visiting the theatre, cinema, or similar.

Additional Considerations

Young People with Specific Needs

It is widely recognized that young people with additional support needs are more vulnerable to abuse than others and therefore face additional risks whilst visiting abroad. These individuals however also have the right to have their horizons expanded through travelling abroad. In order to make such exchanges possible, the same general guidelines apply but in addition the group leader will have to put into place additional support and more stringent checks and balances.

The following additional procedures and advice is recommended over and above those detailed in the previous section;

- An advanced planning visit is essential for trips involving children and students with ASN.
- A higher ratio of adults/carers is required and there must also be an appropriate ratio of male/female adults. As part of the risk assessment process, it should be considered whether an appropriately trained person be part of the staff team.
- All teachers/youth workers supervising visits should be aware of the young persons' medical needs and medical emergency procedures.
- Check whether travel insurance covers pre-existing health conditions. If not, insure with a company which specializes in policies for these children and young people.
- Assess suitability of host family - ramps, lifts, wide doorways, adapted toilets etc.
- Housekeeping arrangements for disposal of soiled dressings, pads etc.
- Ensure that the sleeping arrangements are appropriate. In some cases bunk beds may not be suitable.
- Frequent contact to be made with student/s and Young People whilst with host family.
- Availability of interpreter, leader trained in signing or other appropriate communication medium.
- Ideally a social area should be available for group meetings, this may not always be possible.

Checklists

Headteachers, Youth Service Managers.

As the senior member of staff with ultimate responsibility are you sure that:

- The appropriate risk assessments have been completed, understood and the visit formally approved and notified ?
- The trip has been carefully planned by a competent staff team and all arrangements comply with policies and guidance?
- Appropriate numbers of teachers/youth workers/group leaders/supervisors will accompany the party providing ratios that reflect the risk assessments?
- A person has been designated as 24 hour home contact who will have immediate access to all the information relating to students and to the trip? Are all staff are aware of this?
- All staff and volunteers are specifically competent, appropriately vetted and Disclosed?
- All group members and students have been fully briefed and are clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit?
- Appropriate training has been given to relevant staff including in particular issues relating to child protection?
- All group members and leaders are equipped to deal with unforeseen contingencies, emergencies, sensitive issues and initiate appropriate emergency procedures?
- All relevant documentation including a list of group member's names and full profiles, together with their host families' address and contact number is lodged in a designated place that allows 24/7 access.
- An appropriate member of staff is available 24 hours a day and has a copy of the above documentation?
- Appropriate training / briefing has been provided for staff, pupils and parents?
- The group leader has sufficient funds and an effective means of communication in case of an emergency? (E.g. mobile phone/satellite phone in remote venues).
- Students/Young People have been provided with "Child Safe" advice?
- Staff and young people are suitably and sufficiently aware of the cultural and legal differences and sensitivities of the host country?
- A review/debrief will take place on return?

Leader (Visit leader/Visit Organiser)

As the party leader are you sure that:

- All group members are adequately briefed about their responsibilities during the visit and know what actions to take in case of emergencies?
- All staff, supervisors, parents and volunteers have been briefed as to their specific roles and responsibilities?
- All staff have been involved at every stage of this visit and that the visit arrangements follow both the schools/youth services policies and meets national best practice?
- The Child Protection officer for the Authority and the appropriate staff in the establishment have been consulted in respect of this exchange and that any recommendations made have been followed?
- Details of the 24 hour contacts and emergency arrangements at both ends of the exchange have been shared with all staff?
- Copies have been made of all relevant documents, passports etc and these are kept in a safe location and separate to the originals?
- You have organised sufficient contingency funds should the need arise for extra expenditure?
- Parental consent forms, medical details and contact details have been copied and shared with relevant staff and host families?
- I understand and I am satisfied with the insurance arrangements.

Parents/Guardians

As parents/guardians have I ensured that:

- I have completed all the requested documentation, including medical details?
- My son/daughter fully understands his/her responsibilities while abroad?
- I have full contact details and know who to contact if there is an emergency?
- I have a complete itinerary and timetable of the visit and understand the purpose of the visit?
- I know of all the activities my son/daughter will participate in and have given appropriate consent?
- I know and have agreed to the Code of Conduct, which applies to the visit?

- I understand my responsibilities in relation to the code of conduct including my specific in the case of the early return of my son/daughter?
- My son/daughter is fully prepared to participate in the trip?
- I had the opportunity to attend a parents' meeting and have all my questions answered?
- I am contactable throughout the duration of the visit and when necessary I will be available to support the code of conduct?

Parent Council

- Is the Parent Council aware of the details of the visit and is it being organized in accordance with school and Aberdeenshire Council policies and procedures?
- Has the Parent Council been asked to fulfill any role in this exchange visit.

Behaviour and sanctions

What if the young person breaks the rules?

- Young people participating in a trip must be briefed on the behaviour code. Such codes should be drafted in consultation with the young people participating in the trip and should be realistic. Banning all smoking may be unrealistic, depending on the age of the young people involved. Banning smoking in rooms, or during the time that the group is taking part in an activity or visit must be insisted on. Banning a young person from smoking outside on their own, or during their leisure time, may not be. Similarly, banning all alcohol consumption, even where there is free leisure time in the evening, may not be realistic in relation to older members of the youth organisation. Both these issues will require discussion, careful consideration and the construction of realistic agreements
- Although the organisation will have discussed all the rules to be followed during a trip, including no smoking, no alcohol or time away from the group, young people may break a rule while away. Some organisations state that if one of the rules is broken, the young person will be sent home. Such a policy may present both legal and practical difficulties, and the circumstances in which this policy will be implemented, and the practical arrangements, need to be carefully considered.

If the young person is to be sent home, the organisation should have pre-planned how that is to be accomplished in terms of:

- Parental contact to obtain their permission to send a child home.
- Action when a parent refuses to co-operate or is not available to collect and/or receive the child.
- Payment of the return fare at the time, particularly if the child is abroad. This may apply even if the parent has signed an agreement that he or she will pay for an early return ticket if the child misbehaves,
- Recovery of the early return costs from parents who may dispute the organisation's reasons for returning the child without taking legal proceedings.
- Accompanying the returning child if the parents cannot collect him or her. Can the organisation spare a member of staff and who will pay?

- A potential breach of contract where there has been a payment for the trip. The young person should only be sent home if there is a clear and serious breach of the rules by the young person.

Bilingual Help Cards

A small pocket sized laminated card with bi-lingual information should be provided to all participating young people.

This card could include for example:

- The young person holding this card may need help.
- Please contact their leader Mr Smith on the following number –
- Please contact their host family at following address . . .
- Please contact their host family on phone number -
- The young person holding this suffers from medical condition XX and may need help.
- Other requests as appropriate.....

Useful Resources and Reading

“The Protection of Young People in the Context of International Visits”

City of Edinburgh Education Dept.

Obtainable from:

Publications Unit, City of Edinburgh Education Department,
Level 2, Wellington Court, 10 Waterloo Place, EDINBURGH EH1 3EG
Tel: Wendy Laird, 0131 469 3328, E-mail wendy.laird@educ.edin.gov.uk

“**Safe and Well**” - Scottish Government Publication 2005

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2010

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/12/09134441/0>

www.child-safe.org.uk

3rd World Travel Excursion / Expedition Checklist

“The most important stage in the process is the planning and preparation. Planning enables risk management strategies to be put in place thus reducing the risks and increasing the chances of a successful expedition”.

In many respects, the planning and things to be considered for excursions to 3rd World countries are the same as travel in other countries. However when we consider our travel and excursion arrangements against a radically different social, cultural, economic, legal and political background, the infrastructure and support, taken for granted in other parts of the World, cannot be relied upon. In these environments items which otherwise would be given cursory consideration become important for the safety of the party and the success of the excursion.

The checklist below is not intended to be exhaustive. It is provided as a checklist of the main areas to be considered in your planning, your risk assessment and your dynamic risk assessment when travelling and in country. You should consider how this list should be amended to reflect the demands of your trip.

Key Planning and Preparation Areas	Actions required	Actions completed - date
Planning & Self Sufficiency		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Assessments -- Travel Company • Risk Assessments -- Establishment • Travel/adventure company - approved provider? • Contingency plans that will work and have been shared • Repatriation routes and methods to UK • Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice and position for the country and other countries on any potential repatriation route 		
Vehicle & Travel Safety		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel methods & modes • Travel distances / duration • In country travel providers • Briefings for participants on keeping safe while travelling 		
Personal & Accommodation Security		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country / location within / political climate / Foreign & Commonwealth Office advice • Specific behaviours to be followed or avoided • Kit and personal possessions, what’s appropriate, keeping it secure, use/displaying in public etc... • Impact of location and environment -- Known critical locations • Personal security awareness and practise prior to trip • Accommodation security • Locally provided security arrangements • Incident reporting strategy/process • Insurance 		
Activities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities - adventurous activity provision • Parent/Carer approval for adventurous activities • On location adventurous activities delivery by travel/adventure company • On location adventurous activities delivery by local provider approved 		

by the travel/adventure company		
Staffing Issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EL&L staff experience / competency/ supervision methods to be used • Travel/adventure company staff experience / competency • Roles and responsibilities division especially in remote locations • Staff duty hours -- potential for fatigue and impaired judgment • ELL Staff roles and ratios for activity delivery • Travel/adventure company staff roles and ratios for activity delivery • Total number of staff - never less than 3 needs to operate in many cases • Meaning of down time in the locations and its use • ELL Staff roles in down time • Travel/adventure company staff roles in down time • Parent helpers (if applicable) -- experience / competency 		
Pupil Issues		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total young people numbers, age group and ratios • Responsibility and behaviour issues • Young people self organizational issues • Additional Support Needs • Parental/Carer restrictions on activities 		
Health Risks		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical issues (known) -- staff and pupils • Medication and delivery for known conditions • Disabilities • Potential environmentally related medical issues -- staff and pupils • Disease prevention strategies • Medical evacuation, treatment and UK repatriation bridge • First aid skills and kit decisions 		
Cultural Awareness & Conflict Management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour protocols – understanding of • Cultural sensitivity eg gender roles • Awareness of conflict triggering behaviours • Spokesperson – who speaks • Religious issues and protocols/ Political stability 		
High Impact Crimes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theft / Assault / Kidnap • Personal Response and resolution strategies • Group Response and resolution strategies • Incident reporting strategy/process 		
Finance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised as per Appendix in EL&L Off-Site Excursion Guidance • Payment arrangements while abroad • Local currency security • Emergency financial arrangements 		

Contingency Plan		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evacuation from the country • Evacuation from remote locations • Evacuation strategy if group split up • Alternative routes out of the Country • Additional visa requirements if alternative route used. 		
Equipment required		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group • Staff • Young people 		
Communications		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full details with UK base contact • Strategies for remote areas • Check in times and frequency if appropriate. • Emergency Communication Strategies • Young people and use of mobile telephones 		

APPENDIX 13

Children & Young People's Exchange Visits

1 Introduction

This guidance will help identify the areas that need to be considered and resolved prior to an exchange visit going ahead. The guidance aims to help visit organizers identify the issues and risks associated with their particular exchange trip, consider the extent to which those risks can be controlled and make the decision to press ahead with the exchange trip or not.

Key principles

- Aberdeenshire Council acknowledges that Exchange Visits provide valuable and often unique experiences for students.
- Such experiences contribute to the four capacities of A Curriculum for Excellence helping to develop confident individuals, effective contributors, responsible citizen and effective contributors. In particular they help to develop self-esteem, self-confidence and independence. They also give the students the opportunity to experience other cultures, to meet and develop new friendships and thus broaden their horizons and knowledge.
- Staying with a host family gives young people both an insight into the culture and a first hand opportunity to use and improve their language skills in a real context.
- In the context of international exchanges all schools and youth services have a statutory duty to ensure that such experiences are carried out with maximum child protection safeguards in place and mechanisms to promote and ensure the welfare of the young people involved.
- By following national best practice and these guidelines it should be possible to establish, manage and maintain safe and productive twinning and exchange visits.

Summary of key guidance

- This guidance must be read in conjunction with the Aberdeenshire Council's Procedures for all Off Site Excursions.
- Expectations and assurances, especially Protection of Vulnerable Group (PVG) checks or equivalent, must be established for all teachers, support staff and host families on both sides of any exchange and these must be fair and reciprocal as far as is reasonably practicable. At a very basic level this may simply be assurances from the host school.
- Specific guidance must be provided for host families about your expectations regarding activities undertaken with the family. This is particularly important where adventurous activities are being undertaken. This may require a definition of such activities to be provided.
- Specific guidance should be provided for students covering personal safety in all the foreseen and potentially dangerous contexts that they may find themselves in.
- It must be borne in mind and clearly explained to parents that exchange visits differ from other visits in that students may not be directly supervised by Aberdeenshire staff whilst they are with host families. Exchanges thus require thorough and carefully planned risk management that addresses the issues relating to all aspects of indirect supervision.
- Careful matching of exchange partners and host families is central to a successful visit.
- In some cases exchanges and visits abroad may take place without students staying in host families homes and may be arranged for a variety of reasons. The information in this document will still be of relevance for these types of visit and organizers should be mindful of the particular challenges that can arrive for young people in these

circumstances.

Preparation and Planning Education Authority Notification

- All exchange visits must be approved by the Head of Establishment with details of the exchange briefed to the Head of Establishment's line manager for information and comment.
- Aberdeenshire Council set a minimum time for this notification, however, schools and youth organisations should provide this information well in advance of such an excursion, before expectations are raised and any significant commitment is made.

Internal Notification

- It is recommended that each school/youth service should have an educational visits coordinator role (evc), that this person is experienced and/or has undertaken training. This person will have a key role with planning, risk assessment and liaison with the all parties and agencies in particular ensuring the Head Teacher/Head of Youth Service is fully briefed at all stages. This person may be a Group Leader. Overall responsibility for authorization rests with the Headteacher / Head of Youth Service.
- Full arrangements for notification and obtaining approval for an excursion are included in the Procedures for all off site excursions document.
- Schools may find it necessary to contact lead officers within the Authority responsible for Child Protection, who should be able to advise Head Teachers on concerns regarding host family suitability and hosting arrangements.

Risk assessment

It is essential that all leaders are involved in this process; risk assessments produced by one person are rarely read or understood by others.

In addition to assessing risks inherent in any educational visit, there are additional risks relating to exchange visits that will require extra consideration. In order to reduce the possibility of harm it will be necessary to consider additional control measures, some of which may be considered by answering the following following questions;

- Are families and students carefully matched with due regard to age, gender, diet, religious belief, special needs etc?
- Are host families, on both sides of the exchange, known to the host schools/establishments, have they been PVG checked and affirmed as suitable. Over and above this is there a hosting agreement and procedures which includes a full spectrum of questions regarding any other contra-indicators?
- In case it is necessary to remove a pupil at short notice, are contingency plans in place?
- Has consideration been given to the safety and well-being of the students during travel, and does this include appropriate drivers and transport whilst with the host family?
- Has consideration been given to the safety and well-being of the students participating, while on the exchange, in what may be classified as adventurous activities within the context of the Aberdeenshire Adventurous Activities Policy and does this include appropriate risk assessments?
- Are students, parents and host families aware of the agreed 24 hour contact number and are fully briefed as to procedures should problems arise.
- Do leaders have daily contact with all students and do students have an agreed 'keyword' that they can use which means '*I need you to visit me immediately*'?

- Will students have access to a phone and/or can they use a mobile phone to call or text messages if necessary to staff? Do they know how to use the phones in the host country and what the various tones mean there?
- Have students been briefed about personal safety in all dimensions of the exchange and have they been issued with written guidance on this? ('Child Safe' produce a useful leaflet titled 'Travel-Safe . . . Advice for Children and Young People').
- Does work experience feature as part of the exchange and if so, has an assessment been made by an appropriate person about any significant hazards the work environment may present?
- Have acceptable and unacceptable activities on 'family days' been discussed and has parental agreement been sought prior to the visit if necessary? For example is there an opportunity to participate in what may be classified as adventurous activities within the context of the Aberdeenshire Adventurous Activities Policy? A visit to a beach and thus swimming would be included in this. For all activities, full parental understanding and consent is required on both sides of the Exchange.

Generic Exemplar Risk Assessments-

See Appendices

Staffing

Ratios

Ratios should be informed by the risk assessment process and the Procedures for All Off Site Excursions, including Adventurous Activities. However the recommended ratios may require to be modified to reflect the circumstances and gender balance of the party. Consideration must also be given to the ease with which a substitute member of staff may be dispatched during the visit, should they be required to cover an incident, emergency or to replace a member of staff. The group leader will be an employee of the Authority and normally a teacher or youth worker, some staff accompanying may however be adult helpers/volunteers and if this is the case the following points should be considered:

Protection of Vulnerable Groups checks

- Exchange organizers need to be clear about relevant procedures for vetting the suitability of host families including PVG checks on both sides, where that is possible, of the Exchange. The ACEL&L lead officer for the PVG scheme will be able to advise on the use of the PVG checks. Als, the Disclosure Scotland website contains useful PVG information.
- In the event of the host school or placing agency not having appropriate measures in place for carrying out a disclosure type of check and other checks to ensure the health, safety and welfare of exchange or home stay pupils, the group leader in discussion with ACEL&L must consider whether the visit should take place.
- The exact equivalent to Disclosure and PVG checks is unlikely to be available in all countries, therefore the group leader in this case must ensure that the host school or agency has a robust vetting procedure of equivalent standard to Disclosure and supported by that Country's Criminal Justice system in order to assess the suitability of home placements.
- This is best achieved if there exists a robust liaison and exchange of information structure between both parties. In the event that such protocols do not exist the group leader in discussion with ACEL&L must consider whether the visit should take place. The vetting process in place for home placements must be clearly explained to parents and

pupils to allow them to judge their own level of confidence in the placement prior to the trip going ahead.

Emergency Procedures

- Schools/youth service hosts must have an emergency plan for the visits.
- This plan must outline actions to be followed in case of emergencies including the following:
 - Contacting staff back at school/youth service, including holiday periods and at weekends.
 - Whole group evacuation/repatriation
 - Contingency funding arrangements
 - Group leaders must establish the names and contact details of Authority personnel who will act as a 'critical incident response team' and who will provide support in times of trauma.
 - Prior to the exchange visit, the critical incident response team should consider exercising the school's emergency plan. This will develop confidence in the processes, check the procedures to be followed and provide a training opportunity for new or inexperienced members of staff.
- An emergency plan for the visit should consider the actions in case a member of staff or a young person becomes incapacitated or has to leave the visit. If the country visited requires a visa, a back up member of staff must have prior possession of a visa.
- Visit leaders should ensure that 24 hour access is available to a competent person that has all necessary background knowledge of the host culture.
- Contingency plans should include alternative back-up accommodation arrangements, in the event that it becomes necessary to move a young person from their host family.

Monitoring of arrangements

Throughout the visit, leaders retain full responsibility for their pupils even if the pupils are remotely supervised within the host family context. This will require suitable and sufficient procedures in place to monitor the home stay on a sample basis, including arrangements for effective communication with students and hosts, together with observation of accommodation, work placements, other locations used and activities participated in during the visit. Where an unsatisfactory set of circumstances exist a team discussion must take place followed by remedial action.

Host Families

There is clearly a need to take every reasonable step to ensure the safety and well being of the visiting children when they stay with the family of our pupils. The vetting of host families on both sides of the Exchange is crucial to ensuring the safety and protection of pupils.

The vetting of host families must include:

- PVG & Disclosure Checks or equivalent procedures
- Verification of family structure
- Written code of Conduct
- House rules

- Home visit checks
- Information sharing and gathering
- Sleeping arrangements
- Family activities
- Adventurous activities. Parental agreement must be obtained
- Transportation including drivers
-

Parents Information and Evening

- It is important that parents are fully apprised about all aspects of the visit in order to make informed decisions including any 'plan B' arrangements.
- Expectations regarding behaviour of students, including circumstances in which parents should be prepared for their children to be sent home early, or to be responsible for the collection of their children. (See Section on 'What happens if Young People break The Rules?')
- As detailed a programme of the entire visit as is possible, including family days and acceptable activities that may be provided by host families. e.g. skiing, swimming, night clubs, etc.
- An explanation of to what extent pupils may, or may not be directly supervised by accompanying staff and how they can communicate with those staff.
- Expectations regarding, downtime, 'curfew' times, bed times, alcohol, smoking, etc.
- Procedures in case students become unwell when with their host family.
- Procedures in case students are not happy in their host family homes.
- Frequently asked questions at parents' evenings include the following:
- Who is hosting my son/daughter and what checks have been made on the accommodation?
- Have the family hosted before and what assurances or checks have been made on their suitability?
- What is the policy regarding free-time, alcohol, smoking, drugs, videos, curfews, bedtimes etc?
- What are the policies and procedures regarding adventurous activities.
- Can I contact my son/daughter and can I contact the group leaders if necessary?
- Can they contact me?
- Can I contact the host family?
- If my child has a problem, how do they contact leaders and how long would it be before they were visited?
- What experience do the leaders have of this particular visit and visits in general?
- What are the travel arrangements and what are the supervision details during travel periods?

Work Experience

Any exchange visit that includes work experience must refer to and be considered in the context of the ACEL&L policy and structure. Where this does not cover work experience abroad, special arrangements must be made, in which case, organisers must contact the relevant Work Experience officer at the earliest possible stage of planning and ensure that appropriate checks and structures are in place in the host country.

Checklists

Headteachers, Youth Service Managers

As the senior member of staff with ultimate responsibility are you sure that:

- The appropriate risk assessments have been completed, understood and the visit formally approved and notified ?
- The trip has been carefully planned by a competent staff team and all arrangements comply with the Aberdeenshire Council policies and guidance?
- Appropriate numbers of teachers/youth workers/group leaders/supervisors will accompany the party providing ratios that reflect the risk assessments?
- A person has been designated as 24 hour home contact who will have immediate access to all the information relating to students and to the trip? Are all staff are aware of this?
- All staff and volunteers are specifically competent, appropriately vetted and Disclosed?
- All host families have been checked, Disclosed or equivalent and assurances provided from the host school or appropriate Authority that they are suitable hosts and homes?
- All group members and students have been fully briefed and are clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit?
- Appropriate training has been given to relevant staff including in particular issues relating to child protection?
- All group members and leaders are equipped to deal with unforeseen contingencies, emergencies, sensitive issues and initiate appropriate emergency procedures?
- All relevant documentation including a list of group member's names and full profiles, together with their host families' address and contact number is lodged in a designated place that allows 24/7 access.
- An appropriate member of staff is available 24 hours a day and has a copy of the above documentation?
- Parents and guardians of young people involved in the trip have full details of where their son/daughter/ward is staying, a full itinerary of the trip and emergency telephone numbers?
- Appropriate training / briefing has been provided for staff, pupils and parents?
- The group leader has sufficient funds and an effective means of communication in case of an emergency? (E.g. mobile phone/satellite phone in remote venues).
- Students/Young People have been provided with "Child Safe" advice?
- Staff and young people are suitably and sufficiently aware of the cultural and legal

differences and sensitivities of the host country?

- A review/debrief will take place on return?

Leader (Visit leader/Visit Organiser)

- As the party leader are you sure that:
- All group members are adequately briefed about their responsibilities during the visit and know what actions to take in case of emergencies?
- All staff, supervisors, parents and volunteers have been briefed as to their specific roles and responsibilities?
- Host families have names and contact numbers in case problems arise?
- Host families are aware that teachers/youth leaders may home visit to check on welfare of guests and this applies to both sides of the exchange?
- All staff have been involved at every stage of this visit and that the visit arrangements follow both the schools/youth services policies and meets national best practice?
- The Child Protection officer for the Authority and the appropriate staff in the establishment have been consulted in respect of this exchange and that any recommendations made have been followed?
- Details of the 24 hour contacts and emergency arrangements at both ends of the exchange have been shared with all staff?
- Copies have been made of all relevant documents, passports etc and these are kept in a safe location and separate to the originals?
- You have organised sufficient contingency funds should the need arise for extra expenditure?
- Parental consent forms, medical details and contact details have been copied and shared with relevant staff and host families?
- I understand and I am satisfied with the insurance arrangements.
- My contact person /partner with the equivalent role to me in the exchange has met our expectations relating to assuring the health, safety and well-being of the young people involved? These expectations have been matched and reciprocated for the return visit?
- I am satisfied that my counterpart in the host country is fully appraised regarding the details and arrangements for this exchange?

Young People

The young people should be given a structured opportunity to consider the following questions:

- Do I know who my host family will be?
- Do I know the address and telephone number of where I will be staying?
- Have my parents/guardian been given this information?
- Do I have a valid passport and photocopies of these?
- Do I know the 24-hour emergency contact number for my group leader in case of a problem?

- Do I know how to alert the group leader if I am not happy?
- Do I know who will be responsible for me on the journey?
- Do I know who will be responsible for me on the visit?
- Do I know where I will be sleeping and who I will be sharing a bedroom with?
- Do I know what to do if I get lost?
- Do I know of any legal and cultural differences or sensitivities of the visiting countries?
- Do I understand all necessary safety issues. Including those applying to an adventurous activity eg the wearing of life jackets, eg the wearing of skiing helmets
- Do I know what is expected of me with regards to my behaviour and the implication of me agreeing to the code of conduct/contract?
- Have I been told about using my mobile telephone/ taking pictures/internet access/video/DVDs etc?
- Am I aware of the extent of control I have over what films/DVDs/videos I watch?

Parents/Guardians

As parents/guardians have I ensured that:

- I have completed all the requested documentation, including medical details?
- My son/daughter fully understands his/her responsibilities while abroad?
- I have full contact details and know who to contact if there is an emergency?
- I have a complete itinerary and timetable of the visit and understand the purpose of the visit?
- I know of all the activities my son/daughter will participate in and have given appropriate consent?
- I know and have agreed to the Code of Conduct, which applies to the visit?
- I understand my responsibilities in relation to the code of conduct including my specific in the case of the early return of my son/daughter?
- My son/daughter is fully prepared to participate in the trip?
- I had the opportunity to attend a parents' meeting and have all my questions answered?
- I am contactable throughout the duration of the visit and when necessary I will be available to support the code of conduct?

Host Families

This section may require translation into the host language.

- I have supplied the relevant information to the school / youth service to provide assurances as to my/our suitability to act as a host household and I agree to any necessary but confidential checks being completed (signed copy held by school/youth service).
- I have completed and returned the host family form which includes details of other family members and the other living arrangements asked for.
- I have received details of my /our guest/s which includes their diet, any medical concerns, any specific learning difficulties, and religious or cultural issues and any parental concerns.
- I have been informed about 24 hour emergency contact details and who to contact regarding routine problems.
- I am aware of the code of conduct for this exchange and will brief my guest and my family on curfew, bed times, alcohol, smoking, privacy, acceptable TV/DVD/Video viewing and acceptable behaviour in general.
- I am aware of the issues that relate to transporting my guest
- I am aware of suitable/unsuitable activities for family days / leisure time and have the consent of both the parents of my guest and the group leader should I/we wish be considering any activities that fall under the definition of 'Adventurous Activities'. I have been supplied with information and I am aware of the activities that fall into this category.
- I am aware of the purpose, dates, duration and itinerary for the visit.

Parent Council

- Is the Parent Council aware of the details of the visit and is it being organised in accordance with school and ACEL&L policies and procedures?
- Has the Parent Council been asked to fulfil any role in this exchange visit.

Host Family Stay Information Form

Exemplar Host Family Stay Information Form

Name of Host Family:	Name of Guest:
Address:	Address:

Telephone Number:	Telephone Number:
Mobile:	Mobile:

Who lives at this residence?	Names and relationship to host partner
Male Adult/s	
Female Adult/s	
Males under 18 (state ages)	
Females under 18 (state ages)	

Are there any regular visitors likely to have significant contact with your guest? Please give names, gender, relationship to household and ages if under 18	Yes/No

I confirm that:	Our guest will have their own bedroom	Yes/No
	Our guest will share with their exchange partner who is of same sex and similar age	Yes/No
	Our guest will have access to private toilet and bathroom facilities	Yes/No
	If our guest is vegetarian, vegan, has a nut allergy or dietary needs this can be accommodated	Yes/No
	When a private family vehicle is used to transport a young person, this will only take place when the vehicle is:	
	Roadworthy	Yes/No
	Appropriately insured	Yes/No
	Driven by a driver approved by both sides	Yes/No
	That the following named people may drive.	Age

I confirm the statements made above are correct and I accept responsibility/duty of care for caring for this student in a safe and secure environment. I agree to any necessary checks.	
Signed:	Date:

Risks and Control Measures to Consider for Home Exchanges

Hazard	Person/s Affected	Risk	Control Measures
<p>Accommodation Failure to meet basic needs within host family – food, care and attention + a need for privacy .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student rooming arrangements. • Household smoking/ non-smoking. • Can deal with any dietary issues, • Pets 	Pupil	Welfare of pupil compromised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code word established with the pupil to enable them to signal the need for an immediate visit and removal. • Expectations of the visit made clear to the pupil and the pupil's parents. • Pupils briefed in personal safety and behaviour expectations. • Host accommodation visited, vetted and assured by the host school. • Pupils matched to host families. • Information on host families and accommodation gathered.
<p>Host Household Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household members' details during visit. • Disclosure checks or equivalent. • Any health issues of concern. • Contact arrangements for the host and UK family 	Pupil	Safety and well being of the pupil compromised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household members checked with host school taking into account who will be present during the visit. List of questions used to gather information from the host family to match the pupil to the host family. • Relationship established with the host school and pre-visit carried out by staff to check arrangements. • Discussion with host SMT to check any contra indicators picked up in the information gathering. • PVG equivalent check carried out where that is possible. • SMT assurances given on each host family.
Child Abuse safety	Pupils	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host school have adequate vetting procedures for host families (ask if criminal record check available) • Pupils have telephone contact with accompanying teachers at all time. • Check with host families who will have access to the accommodation where the pupil will be staying eg extended family, family friends etc. • Check that there is suitable sleeping accommodation available in the host accommodation.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize a “code word” which young people can use if there is an emergency and they need to get out quickly.
Abuse (drug, alcohol, neglect, physical, verbal, racial, religious, sexual)	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check with SMT at both schools for any known family background not disclosed to all but relevant to Exchange visit. Information evening for parents and pupils prior to Exchange highlighting possible dangers. Final briefing to pupils 2 days before departure Daily briefing/debriefing (except weekend) throughout the Exchange. Buddy system introduced – actively encouraging liaison with staff Access to Group Leader’s emergency phone number 24 hours a day for pupils and parents – pupils given code word. Exchange Staff and Duty Officer have all contact details (address, phone numbers) for pupils during visit Alcohol and smoking are not allowed – parents aware of consequences Pupils’ awareness of alcohol/drug abuse
Lost Pupil	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each pupil will have a card with contact details of staff, the UK school, the host school, accommodation etc in English and host language. Any special needs taken into account with this.
Travel to and from accommodation	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with travel from home school to intermediate destination. Onward travel to final destination. Travel alone or otherwise....arrangements. Emergency arrangements such as volcanic dust closing airports, hold ups and delays etc.
Staying with families: home sickness	Pupil	Pupil safety and well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil and host family clear on arrangements for contacting home school staff. Code word issued to pupil to signal need for urgent contact. Explain expectations / ground rules of Exchange to pupils prior to departure Offer advice on positive attitude, acceptable behaviour at host’s home Encourage contact prior to 1st leg of Exchange and in between visits Discuss access to phoning home Staff support and encouragement
Security at family’s home	Pupil	Pupil safety and security of belongings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage pupils to leave valuables at home in first instance Lock valuables in suitcase when not at the house Exchange Leader collects and keeps passports during the trip Advise that minimal pocket money is needed
General illness and injury	Pupil	Pupil well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical consent forms completed by parents

		being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency contact numbers given to all staff and duty officers, including next of kin of staff accompanying the Exchange. • List of known medical conditions – Exchange families given relevant details. Exchange Leader aware of any known health issues for staff. • All staff aware of common procedures / documentation for health issues • First aid kit carried by Coach Leader • Written notes given to parents at information evening on health and safety – see attached. • Pupils briefed prior to visit on expectations, behaviour etc. • Identify local numbers for doctors/hospital, emergency services
Emergency Procedures and contact numbers	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for dealing with on route emergencies and disruptions. • Contact arrangements during trip to ensure student well and safe. • Code word arrangements and emergency contacts for the student to use. • 24 hr contact numbers for the student and the families (host and staff) plus UK emergency contact number
Activities during downtime with host family	Pupil	Pupil safety and well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity for pupil and host household on what is permissible on downtime activities • Arrangements for travelling in host family vehicles if that is permitted
Local communication equipment, mobiles etc	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each pupil will have mobile phone equipment that will function in country and knows the how to use it, the tones encountered etc. • Adequate credit on phones for duration of the trip. • Pupil familiar with landline call arrangements in country. • Student familiar with “999” type arrangements in country.
Communication with Pupils	Pupil	Pupil safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular health and safety contact arrangements with the student • Contact arrangements for the student • Buddy arrangement in place
Needs of Individual Pupils		Pupil safety and well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and social care needs of individual student. • Any medication and access to further supplies should they be required. Eg inhalers. • Any allergies that might require immediate or quick action by household members or work place colleagues.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E111 and any additional information that may need to be carried by the student. • Dietary requirements • Rules on alcohol, drugs etc. • Any specific identification required to be carried in country
Staff health	Staff & pupil	Staff and pupil well being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for dealing with staff illness and impact on pupil safety should this occur.

Additional Info

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/12/20444/48944>

Vetting host families

234. Exchange or home stay visits can be arranged through agencies, in which case the agency should have some responsibility for vetting the host families. Group leaders making their own arrangements need to be clear about procedures in the relevant country for vetting the suitability of host families including criminal background checks insofar as these are available.

235. If the host establishment or placing agency does not have appropriate measures in place for carrying out checks to ensure the health, safety and welfare of exchange or home stay participants, the group leader should seek further assurances and/or reconsider whether the visits should take place.

Adventure activities using non-licensable providers

If proposing to use a non-licensable provider, the group leader should obtain assurances in writing from the provider that:

- risks have been assessed and that the provider's staff are competent to instruct and lead participants of the group's age range on the activity. Competence could be demonstrated by holding the relevant NGB award where it exists or through successful participation in an NGB approved in-house scheme overseen by an appropriately qualified technical adviser;*
- the equipment is appropriate and that its safe condition is checked before each use;*
- operating procedures conform to the guidelines of the NGB for the activity where this is appropriate;*
- clear management of safety systems is in place;*
- there is appropriate provision for first aid;*
- there are emergency procedures (including arrangements for informing next of kin and for alerting the group leader);*
- that the provider's staff are competent in the procedures and will hold emergency phone numbers and addresses of the group members;*
- and that the group will have a fire drill as soon as possible on arrival at the provider's base.*

Appendix 14

Risk Management Register Guidance Notes

Excursions Risk Examples and Authority Notification Requirements

Risk Management Registers -- Guidance Notes

Risk Rating

One of the key thrusts of the Policy and Guidance document is to ensure that young people on an off-site-excursion have an educationally worthwhile experience and that an effective safety chain operates.

The safety process demands that the **Risks** are assessed along with the **Probability** of them occurring and the potential **Impact** on individuals and/or the group. This allows us to arrive at a **Risk Rating**

The risk rating is a function of the frequency and severity of a risk crystallising. In order to derive the impact of a risk crystallising the following calculation is applied:

1. Identify the greatest Impact from the attached Impact Classification Table – see below.
2. Assess the likelihood of the risk crystallising within the duration of the excursion using the Probability matrix.
3. Plot the Probability and Impact ratings on the grid below to give the Risk Rating. The Risk Rating can also be expressed as a numerical value to assist in the prioritisation of risks falling within the same risk band.

Example a risk with a significant impact (score: 3) and a medium probability (score: 3) will be rated as Significant (score = 3x3 = 9)

Probability ↑	High – Score 4 75-100% chance of occurring within the duration of the excursion	4	8	12	16
	Medium – Score 3 50-75% chance of occurring within the duration of the excursion	3	6	9	12
	Low – Score 2 25- 50% chance of occurring the duration of the excursion	2	4	6	8
	NEGLIGIBLE – Score 1 0 – 25% chance of occurring within the duration of the excursion	1	2	3	4
Impact →		Minor Score 1	Important Score 2	Significant Score 3	Major Score 4

- The matrix can be utilized to assess
Inherent Risk -- the probability and impact of the risk crystallising if no mitigants or controls are in place.
and
Residual Risk -- the probability and impact of the risk crystallising when mitigants or controls are in place.

- If the Residual Risk is either Significant or Major then it will be considered to be outside the Councils Risk Appetite and an action plan to reduce the risk will normally be required.
- Where the risk cannot be reduced to within appetite it will require to be accepted as a Residual Risk above Appetite by the Service Director (Significant Risks). the
- Consideration should be given to the Adequacy (the extent to which the mitigant or control is designed properly i.e. to achieve its objective) and Effectiveness (the extent to which the mitigant or control is being operated or complied with, as designed). Particular attention should be focused on the Major and Significant Inherent Risks as this is where control failings would have the greatest impact.

The Risk Register process is used to help in identifying, assessing, managing, monitoring and controlling the strategic and operational risks associated with any off-site excursion. It captures information on the risks arising from key processes, systems and activities associated with the excursion.

The Risk Register process enables the excursion leader to assess the level of both the inherent and residual risk exposure and determine and detail an approach to the management of the risk in the risk assessment documentation that is required to be compiled for all off-site excursions.

Using the Risk Register process a generic excursions risk register has been created and included in this Policy and Guidance document to assist excursion organizers.

Impact Classification Table for Risks and Risk Issues

Impact	Physical	Financial	Customer/ Staff/ Citizen/	Reputation
	<i>Death or injury to pupils or staff</i>	<i>Potential or actual direct financial loss.</i>	<i>Actual or potential impact arising from either operational failure or management failure which leads to an inability to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Provide a safe off-site Excursion; or</i> <i>Execute our services; or</i> <i>Comply with laws, regulations or policies and procedures.</i> 	<i>Actual or potential impact to the external reputation of Aberdeenshire Council. This includes the views held by any legislative or regulatory body.</i>
Major (4)	Death or serious injury requiring evacuation with medical and emergency services and support and Consular input if abroad	£100,000 plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affecting more than 25% of the pupils or staff. Total failure of 3rd party excursion supplier. Loss of key organisational arrangements resulting in a failure to meet critical processes and deadlines. Management failure at excursion level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High likelihood of (or actual) formal censure by a legislative or regulatory body. Concerted, widespread or recurrent critical coverage of the Council or for a specific event in the media.
Significant (3)	Injury requiring evacuation with medical and emergency services support .	Between £100,000 and £50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affecting between 5% and 25% of the pupils or staff. Partial failure of 3rd party excursion supplier. Loss of key organisational arrangements for a period of time resulting in a significant operational impact. Management failure at excursion level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any event, which may affect our standing with a legislative or regulatory body. An event that may (or has) damage (d) relations with other partners.. Individual press reports in national media that Corporate Communications consider being of material concern to the Council.
Important (2)	Injury requiring locally delivered medical intervention and party organised evacuation.	Between £50,000 and £10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affecting up to 5% of the pupils or staff. Partial failure of 3rd party excursion supplier.. Loss of key organizational arrangements for a period of time resulting in minor operational impact Management failure at excursion level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any event that may (or has) tarnish(ed) our reputation with any significant customer/citizen group, 3rd party, legislative or regulatory body. Actual adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the council.
Minor (1)	Injury requiring locally delivered medical intervention and/or first aid.	Less than £10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affecting a very small number of the pupils or staff. Deteriorating performance of of 3rd party excursion supplier. Loss of non-key organizational arrangements for a period of time resulting in minor operational impact . Management failure at excursion level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any event that may tarnish our reputation with any significant customer/citizen group, 3rd party, legislative or regulatory body. Threat of adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the council.

Excursions Risk Examples and Authority Notification Requirements

Authority Notification and Sign Off Level

Excursion Type	Potential Impact	Inherent Risk			Mitigants & Controls	Residual Risk			Head of Establishment	H of E's Line Manager	Head of Service
		Probability	Impact	Risk Rating		Probability	Impact	Risk Rating			
Excursions within the UK that do not involve adventurous activities, do not require transport and are local to the school	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	1	1	1	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance	1	1	1	HoE only		
Excursions within the UK that require transport but do not involve adventurous activities or an overnight stay	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	1	2	2	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport.	1	1	1	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that require transport involve an overnight stay but do not involve adventurous activities	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	2	2	4	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation	1	2	2	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that do not require transport but involve adventurous activities delivered by Approved External Providers.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	2	2	4	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved provider	1	2	2	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that require transport and involve adventurous activities delivered by Approved External Providers.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	2	3	6	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved provider	1	3	3	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information

Excursions within the UK that require transport and involve both an overnight stay and adventurous activities delivered by Approved External Providers.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	2	3	6	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved provider. Approved accommodation	1	3	3	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that do not require transport and involve adventurous activities which are delivered by an establishment's own trained/qualified staff.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	2	3	6	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved activity qualifications. Adventure Activity Consultants approval	1	3	3	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that require transport and involve adventurous activities which are delivered by an establishment's own trained/qualified staff.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	3	3	9	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Approved transport. Approved activity qualifications. Adventure Activity Consultants approval	1	2	2	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions within the UK that require transport and involve both an overnight stay and adventurous activities which are delivered by an establishment's own trained/qualified staff.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	3	3	9	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation. Approved activity qualifications. Adventure Activity Consultants approval	2	3	6	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information
Excursions outwith the UK but within Europe which do not involve adventurous activities.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Financial, Reputational, Legal action	3	3	9	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation.	2	2	4	HoE only	Line manager for information	For Information

Excursions outwith the UK but within Europe which involve adventurous activities delivered by an external provider.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Finacial, Reputational, Legal action	4	4	16	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation. Approved provider. Adventure Activity Consultants approval.	2	4	8	HoE	Line manager for formal comment	For Information
Excursions outwith the UK but within Europe which involve adventurous activities delivered by the establishments own qualified staff.	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Finacial, Reputational, Legal action	4	4	16	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation. Approved activity qualifications. Adventure Activity Consultants approval	3	3	9	HoE	Line manager for formal comment	For Information
All excursions outwith Europe irrespective of the nature of the activities being planned. All exchange visits to any location	Pupil/Staff injury/fatality, Finacial, Reputational, Legal action	4	4	16	Risk Assmnt. Staff Ratios. Rules & Guidance. Approved transport. Approved accommodation. Approved activity qualifications. Adventure Activity Consultants approval. HT/HoS Dicussion	3	3	9	HoE	Line manager for formal comment	HOS for Formal comment

APPENDIX 15

External Providers & Contractors

Question	Consider
Is the provider reputable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size and reputation of the provider. • Previous experience of them within the school, Council area and wider, as appropriate. • Your level of confidence in how they have dealt with the school, provided information, answered any questions you may have had. • What is their status ie Charitable Trust, Limited company, Partnership, Sole Trader. • Is there size, reputation and your past experience of them commensurate with what you are asking them to provide for you. • What service is the Provider carrying out for you? For example a national rail company compared with a sole trader with 3 minibuses.
Has the provider carried out a satisfactory risk assessment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the provider carry out risk assessments? Either generic or specific for your excursion? Have you asked to see a copy? Has it been provided and do you have confidence in it? • The Authority can advise you on this.
Do they have competent staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What service are they providing for you? • Do they have the staff numbers to deal with that? • Are there specific skills the staff need to have to provide the service? • How do they ensure the staff have these skills and are up to date?

Do they have appropriate public liability insurance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is their insurance provision in line Aberdeenshire's minimum requirements? The Insurance Team within the Authority can advise you on this.
Have they complied with child protection requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What service are they providing for you and what does this mean with regard to child protection? • Do they need to be PVG checked? Are they? • The Authority can advise you on this.
Has the provider been given full information as to the age, ability and make up of the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did they react to that information? • Where there participants with addition support needs? • If so how has the Provider reacted to that? • Have you been left with the impression that the needs of your group have been fully understood and provided for?

