



**MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL  
POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING  
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM  
SEPTEMBER 2020**

## Contents

1. [Provision of Employer Guidance](#)
2. [Scope and Remit](#)
3. [Ensuring Understanding of Basic Requirements](#)
4. [Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits](#)
5. [Risk Management](#)
6. [Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support](#)
7. [Monitoring](#)
8. [Assessment of Leader Competence](#)
9. [Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits](#)
10. [Vetting and CRB Checks](#)
11. [Parent/Carer Consent](#)
12. [Requirements to Ensure Effective Supervision](#)
13. [Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances](#)
14. [Insurance of Off-site Activities and Visits](#)
15. [First Aid](#)
16. [Inclusion](#)
17. [Planning & Risk Assessment](#)
18. [Using an External Provider](#)
19. [Adventure Activities Licensing Requirements](#)
20. [Transport](#)
21. [Farm Visits](#)
22. [Water Margin Activities](#)
23. [Water-based Activities](#)
24. [Swimming](#)
25. [Residential Visits](#)
26. [Medication](#)
27. [Overseas Visits](#)
28. [Overseas Expeditions](#)
29. [Exchange Visits](#)
30. [Weather and Clothing](#)
31. [Definition of 'Adventurous Activity'](#)
32. [Adventurous Activities](#)
33. [Approval of staff to lead an Adventurous Activity](#)
34. [Emergency Procedures](#)
35. [Accident and Incident Reporting](#)
36. [The Value and Evaluation of Learning Outside the Classroom](#)

Appendix 1 – [Adventurous Activities](#)

[Contacts](#)

Figure 1 – [Categories of Activity and Levels of Approval](#)

Figure 2 – [Adventurous Activities Categories](#)

## Introduction

Nottingham City Council (NCC) acknowledges the immense value of off-site/educational visits, Learning Outside the Classroom and related activities to young people, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed. Please see the Outcomes and Benefits document in the EVOLVE Resources section for more information.

This document provides concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of learning outside the classroom.

To assist in the planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits, NCC uses the EVOLVE web-based management system. As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources and information, staff records and visit history, gateway access for parents, etc. Access to EVOLVE can be found at [www.nottinghamcityvisits.org.uk](http://www.nottinghamcityvisits.org.uk)

EVOLVE must be used for all residential, overseas and adventurous visits, and is recommended for most visits – see Section 6 **Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits** and Section 19 **Planning**.

### 1. Provision of Employer Guidance

The national online guidance resource [OEAP National Guidance](http://oeapng.info/) (**Guidance for the Management of Off-site visits and LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom) activities**) is an invaluable reference document, which should be read alongside this policy. It is available from:

<http://oeapng.info/>

If information in this policy is in variance to the advice in **OEAP National Guidance (NG)**, the advice in this Policy should be followed. If Managers or EVC's require further information or advice they should contact the Educational Visits Adviser.

It is a legal expectation that employees **must** work within the requirements their employer's guidance; therefore employees must follow the requirements of "OEAP National Guidance", as well as the requirements of this Policy Statement and their School/Establishment Policy.

Where another employer (such as the Governing Body of a Voluntary Aided school or Multi Academy Trust) wishes to opt into NCC guidance, systems and processes for supporting and monitoring learning outside the classroom activities, they should produce a policy statement that makes this clear.

Where an NCC employee commissions learning outside the classroom activities, they must ensure that such commissioned agent has either:

1. adopted NCC or OEAP National Guidance

or

2. have systems and procedures in place where the standards are not less than those required by OEAP National Guidance.

## 2. Scope and Remit

The scope and remit of this document follows the outline presented in the OEAP National Guidance document ([Status Remit and Rationale](#)) and applies to most situations, where, adults acting in the course of their employment take (or deploy staff/commission suppliers to take) responsibility for children and young people engaging in learning outside the classroom activities. Staff responsible must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this guidance, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

The following terms may all be used to capture this range of ventures, experiences and environments:

- Off-Site Visits
- Outdoor Learning
- Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)
- Educational Visits

### Responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety when learning outside the classroom with the employer:

- For community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools, pupil referral units, and statutory youth groups, the employer is the local authority. These establishments **must** adhere to this guidance document.
- For academies, foundation schools, free schools and voluntary-aided schools, the employer is usually the governing body or proprietor. If using NCC guidance, this should be clearly stated. If not using NCC guidance, establishments are advised to ensure that the systems in place are as robust as those of NCC.

For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the OEAP National Guidance document: [Requirements & Recommendations for Employers](#) (Legal framework and employer systems)

All persons involved in a visit have a specific responsibility, which they should be clear about prior to the visit taking place. Establishments should have a Visits Policy to clarify responsibilities and procedures.

For guidance on developing an Establishment Visits Policy refer to the **Establishment Visits Policy** template in the **Resources** section of EVOLVE and the **OEAP National Guidance** document: [How to write an Establishment visit Policy](#).

### Role-specific Requirements and Recommendations

OEAP National Guidance sets out clear and detailed responsibilities and functions of specific roles that relate to roles found within management structures, schools and other child settings.

Refer to the following links

- [OEAP National Guidance Checklists](#)
- [OEAP National Guidance Roles and Responsibilities](#)
- OEAP National Guidance document: [Planning Basics](#)

## 3. Ensuring Understanding of Basic Requirements

As an employer, NCC is required to ensure that its employees are provided with:

- Appropriate guidance relating to Learning Outside the Classroom activity;
- Appropriate training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood;
- Suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated;
- Access to advice, support and further training from appointed Advisers that have specific expertise, competence and professional understanding of the guidance, the training and expectations set by current good practice.

a. The **appropriate guidance** for the management of learning outside the classroom in NCC is this document and the OEAP National Guidance.

b. The **relevant training courses** in support of delivering this policy in NCC are:

1. **NCC Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Training-** all NCC establishments are required to have a current, NCC-trained EVC in post.

To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for educational visits, establishments must appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who will support the Head of Establishment. (In small establishments the EVC may also be the Head or manager).

The EVC should be specifically competent, as outlined in the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>.

<https://oeapng.info/evc/>

If the EVC does not have the professional background and competence for this task it will be the responsibility of the Head/Manager to fulfil this role.

2. **NCC Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Update Revalidation** - all NCC educational establishments are required to ensure that their EVC undertakes a formal revalidation every 3 years.
3. **NCC Visit Leader Training** – this course is strongly recommended for all those who lead Learning Outside the Classroom activities. Currently, there is no revalidation requirement. Leaders must be current in their knowledge of expectations of good practice, so update refresher training is strongly recommended to maintain competence.
4. **Visit Emergencies Training** – This course is designed to support establishment Head's and EVC's in their planning for visit emergency eventualities.

c. For the purposes of day-to-day **updating of information**, NCC EVC's and Visit/Activity Leaders are directed to the news section on EVOLVE.

d. Where an employee experiences problems with finding the material they are looking for, or require clarification or further **help and guidance**, they should contact their establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), or the **Adviser nominated by their employer**.

#### 4. Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits

NCC uses an online system for notification and approval called EVOLVE. A key feature of this system is that Learning Outside the Classroom activities requiring approval are automatically brought to the attention of the employer. Those visits and activities not requiring approval may be viewed, sampled or monitored using the database and diary facilities of the system.

All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by their establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

##### Approval

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow for approval.

Approval is normally delegated to the Head of Establishment for all visits, except for the following visit types:

- **overseas**
- **residential**
- those involving an **adventurous activity/remote location** as defined in [Section 30](#)

The above three types of visit (Category C) are 'authorised' within the establishment, but are 'approved' by NCC via EVOLVE. These visits must be planned and submitted using EVOLVE. It is recommended that other visits (classified as "None of the above" on EVOLVE, or Category B) are also planned and approved on EVOLVE (See [Planning](#) Section 9). Some examples of Category 'B' and 'C' visits are given in Figure 1, with some further definitions of 'adventurous activities' given in Figure 2. See also section 24, Definition of an Adventurous Activity and section 25, Adventurous Activities.

In approving visits, the Head of Establishment and EVC should ensure that the visit leader has been appropriately inducted/trained, and is competent to lead the visit, see [Section 12](#)

A member of staff intending to supervise or instruct an adventurous activity, as defined in [Section 30](#) must be specifically approved by NCC to do so, see [Section 32](#)

What does 'Visit Approved by LA/Adviser' mean?

When the Headteacher authorises a visit on EVOLVE, they confirm that the visit complies with school and employer policy, and that in their opinion the Visit Leader and any accompanying staff are competent to supervise the visit. This task can only be the responsibility of the Headteacher/Senior Management, as the Adviser does not have first-hand knowledge of the intended participants or the competence of the staff team to make this decision.

The Adviser therefore relies on the Headteacher to make an appropriate professional judgement prior to authorising visits, by taking all aspects into account, including but not limited to:

- The competence of the visit leader
- The competence of the accompanying staff
- The ages, level of maturity of pupils, including those with special needs
- The intended learning outcomes
- The proposed itinerary
- The contingency plans (Plan B) in place

The Adviser works on the basis that the Headteacher should not submit the visit for approval if he/she is not satisfied with the intended arrangements. 'Approved by LA/Adviser' therefore confirms that the school appears to have followed the employers stated procedures, based on the information provided and scrutinised.

##### Establishment Educational Visits Policy

As part of this policy, we will be supporting DfE advice and recommending that 'Schools must set out health and safety arrangements in a written health and safety policy' or operational guidance. A template policy is available on EVOLVE (in the Resources section) and outlines how establishments can manage '**regular and routine visits**', **known as Category A visits**, by developing operational guidance for their Local Learning Area underpinned by training and monitoring. The LA has authority to request any such requirement both as the employer and under section 29(5) of the Education Act 2002. (DfE Advice on legal duties and powers for LAs, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, February 2014).

The establishment policy should reference this Policy document and define local arrangements.

Refer to the Establishment Educational Visits Policy template in the Resources section of EVOLVE and the **OEAP National Guidance** document: [How to write an Establishment visit Policy](#).

Some examples of Category 'A', 'B' and 'C' visits are given in [Figure 1](#), below, with some further definitions of 'adventurous activities' given in [Figure 2](#), below.

## Notification

Heads and EVCs should establish timescales for submission of visits that allow time for proper scrutiny – and for any necessary modifications to be made. Some flexibility may have to be allowed for contingencies, but a culture of late submission of visits should not be permitted as it tends to result in poor planning. Generally, the lead in period should be proportional to the complexity and nature of the visit – so, for example, residential and overseas visits normally require a longer 'lead –in' period.

Visits requiring NCC Approval should be submitted (to NCC) at least 4 weeks prior to departure to allow for the possibility that the form is returned for clarifications or for arrangements to be amended. Failure to do so may mean that NCC has insufficient notice to grant approval. Visits submitted within 1 week of departure will be 'processed' instead of approved. In this instance, if the visit proceeds it must be understood that this is without the approval of NCC and the Head/Manager accepts full responsibility for providing approval. Processing the visit allows for accurate reporting and trend analysis.

NCC aims to look at forms within 10 working days – but remember the form may be returned with queries or comments that require amendments and resubmission prior to approval.

Where a contract is to be signed and a deposit paid, the application should be submitted with an outline plan before a commitment is made in case of any major issues. In some cases this may mean a visit form is initially submitted 12 to 18 months prior to proposed departure. Further details can be added at a later stage.

## 5. Risk Management

As the employer, NCC has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level – as far as is reasonably practicable. This requires that proportional (suitable and sufficient) risk management systems are in place, requiring NCC to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. NCC strongly recommends a "Risk-Benefit Assessment" approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes, see document on **Outcomes and Benefits**. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that the residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) may be "acceptable". HSE endorse this approach through their "**Principles of Sensible Risk Management**" and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is no legal or NCC requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any

significant and reasonably foreseeable risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual, or harm several people. NCC EVC Training ensures that establishments are directed towards an electronic portfolio of example generic risk assessment templates which are reviewed annually (August/September). These risk management materials can also be accessed via the Resources section on EVOLVE

**It is strongly recommended that establishments adopt and adapt these materials. On completing any risk assessments, the establishment should ensure that the documents are signed (physically or digitally) and dated. The risk assessments must be shared with the visit team (including, where appropriate, volunteers) and relevant information communicated to young people.**

Visits that include adventurous activities commonly involve delivery by an external provider (see Section 18) and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing their delivery. As such, the providers' risk assessment does not need to be requested from the provider, and **does not need to be attached to EVOLVE**.

Alternative arrangements (Plan B) should be included within the planning process where appropriate. For example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, and will become more 'risk aware'. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [4.3c Risk Management – an overview](#)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: Risk Management – [What to record and how](#)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: Risk Management – [Some practical advice for leaders](#)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Risk Management Good Practice](#)

## **6. Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support**

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has:

- either suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality;
- is at serious risk;
- or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

As an employer, NCC is committed to providing emergency planning procedures to support establishments in the event of a critical incident. Advice and guidance can be found on the Intranet, under Emergency Planning. The Emergency School/Education Base guide can be accessed by schools who have bought into Nottingham City Council Health and Safety Provision (<http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nccextranet/index.aspx?articleid=20315>)

Also, Refer to OEAP National Guidance documents relating to **Emergencies** and **Critical Incident Management**

If an incident does occur there is a useful Checklist for Managers found in the Resources section of EVOLVE

**To activate support from NCC, the following telephone numbers should be used:**

**Normal office hours: 876 4608/ 876 4609 or 07985 381931**

**Outside normal office hours – Nottingham on Call: 915 1640/ 915 1633**

**Andrew Smith (Educational Visits Adviser) should also be notified on 07944 038678**



These numbers should be carried by leaders at all times during an activity but should only be used in the case of a genuine emergency. Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people, their parents/guardians or any outside organisation.

## 7. Monitoring

As an employer, NCC ensures that there is sample monitoring of Learning Outside the Classroom activities undertaken by its establishments by attaching such monitoring duties to its officers and by delegating these tasks to establishments. Such monitoring should be in keeping with the recommendations of OEAP National Guidance. There is a clear expectation that the monitoring function is a delegated task, principally carried out through systems put in place by the establishment EVC.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [Monitoring](#)

## 8. Leader Competence

To be deemed competent, an NCC Visit/Activity Leader, or Assistant Leader must be able to demonstrate *the ability to operate to the current standards of recognised good practice for that role*.

All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities.

OEAP National Guidance sets a clear standard to which NCC leaders **must** work. The guidance can be found at: <https://oeapng.info/>

Staff involved in activities and visits must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff. Establishments should view the original documents and certificates when verifying leader's qualifications, and not rely on photocopies.

Where a Volunteer Helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the Risk Assessment Volunteer briefing.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [“Good Practice Basics”](#)

## Assessment

OEAP National Guidance provides clear advice regarding the assessment of leader competence. It is an expectation of NCC Policy that all NCC leaders and their assistants have been formally assessed as competent to undertake such responsibilities as they have been assigned in line with the OEAP National guidance.

The EVC and/or Head of establishment must consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (Check Visit History on EVOLVE).
- b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits (has s/he completed Visit Leader Training?)
- c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- d) Is the leader an employee of the local authority/establishment?
- e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision-making abilities?
- g) What experience has the leader of the participants they intend to supervise?
- h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?

- i) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- j) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- k) If leading adventurous activities, has the leader been 'approved' by the NCC?
- l) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [Assessment of Activity and Visit Leader Competence](#) and [Assessment of Competence](#)

## 9. Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits

NCC Heads/Managers, Curriculum Planners, EVCs and Visit/Activity Leaders must take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [Charges for Off-site Activity](#)

## 10. Vetting and DBS Checks

Establishment employees who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have *regular access* to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

For the purposes of this guidance:

- *frequently* is defined as "once a week or more";
- *intensively* is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight.

When using volunteers: if the volunteer is under direct supervision by an employed member of establishment staff (that has a DBS check), the volunteer may not need a DBS check. Please consult [DFE guidance](#) for further information.

It must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. The placement of an adult within a situation of trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always have been appropriately and thoroughly risk assessed

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: ["Vetting and DBS Checks"](#)

## 11. Parent / Carer Consent

Section 35 of the Education Act 2004 states: '*Where a visit is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time, then parental consent is not necessary although it is recommended good practice to ensure that parents are informed*'.

See DfE [Guidance](#)

The DfE's [Consent for school trips and other off-site activities form](#) can be used to gather annual consent.

### Good Practice

- a. Even though 'consent' may not be required for activities that take place during school hours and which are a normal part of a child's education, it remains good practice to inform parents. This can be done in a

variety of ways such as information on enrolment; school prospectus; policy documents; website. Be clear about the need for a broad and balanced curriculum and that children will not always be on the school site.

- b. Where consent is required, make sure that parents and carers have sufficient information to make informed consent about the participation of their child. Where a one-off blanket consent form has been used to obtain parental consent, it is essential that such blanket consent is turned in to informed consent prior to a visit. Parents must be given information about the visit and the nature of their child's participation and given the opportunity to withdraw consent should they wish them not to participate.
- c. Even though a parent/carer may have signed an annual consent form, we recommend that visit specific consent forms should be sent out for category 'C' visits.
- d. Parents should be given the opportunity, and prompted, to update the school regarding changes to medical and dietary information.

If schools choose to adopt a version of the DfE 'one-off' consent form they will need to put in place separate arrangements for ensuring that essential information is kept up to date including:

- Emergency contact names and numbers
- Medical conditions and dietary needs

**NCC** recommends that establishments continue to use specific **EV4** consent forms for more complex visits.

*download*

### **Taking copies of consent forms on visits**

There is no requirement for visit leaders to carry evidence of consent on visits in the UK, however, they **must** be taken on any visit abroad.

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** documents: [Parental Consent](#)

## **12. Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision**

In general terms, the Law does not prescribe activity-specific staffing ratios; but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is "effective". However, as an exception to the above, Ofsted and DfE guidance prescribe ratios for Early Years, see [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#)

Effective supervision should be determined by proper consideration of:

- age (including the developmental age) of the group
- gender issues; such as mix of accompanying staff
- ability of the group (including special learning needs, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc)
- nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions
- staff competence

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Head is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration and risk assessment should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits, including their own children. Heads/Managers

and EVCs should review the risk assessment to consider whether the presence of a supervisor's child will require these assessments to be modified. **Staff taking their own children on a visit should not be included in the calculation of the overall staff ratio i.e. there must be sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced staff to safely manage the group without them if necessary.**

#### **Children of group leaders (and other supervising staff) who do not attend the school**

There are a number of issues of concern if staff propose to take their own children on a visit, for example:

- The child may not be insured if they are not on roll at that school
- Staff may be distracted by dealing with their own children, particularly if they are tired or unwell and this may compromise their ability to carry out their responsibilities for the rest of the group effectively
- There may be additional costs incurred, which should be met by the staff member.
- The child is physically able and of a similar age to the group if taking part in activities

**The Head/Manager must specifically check if insurance cover is in place for the child/children concerned.**

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** documents: [Group Management and Supervision](#) , [Ratios and Effective Supervision](#) , [Vetting and CRB Checks](#)

### **13. Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances**

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. Establishment policy should clarify the circumstances where a preliminary visit is a requirement.

Regarding External Provider selection, **NCC takes the view that where a provider holds the LOTC Quality Badge there should be no need to seek further assurances. If the provider does not, establishments should use the EV2 form as part of the checking process. This can be found in the Resources section on EVOLVE.**

Refer to: **OEAP National Guidance** document [Preliminary Visits and provider Assurances](#)

### **14. Insurance for Off-site Activities and Visits**

Employer's Liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and **NCC** holds a policy that indemnifies it against claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover extends to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. NCC also holds Public Liability insurance, indemnifying it against claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff. The indemnity covers activities such as off-site activities and visits organised by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible.

Some level of Personal Accident Insurance is provided for all **NCC** employees in the course of their employment, providing predetermined benefits in the event of an accident. However, Visit/Activity Leaders should be advised that they should consider taking out additional limited personal accident cover either through NCC, privately, or obtain cover through a professional association.

**NCC** Visit and Activity leaders should contact the local authority Insurance Section, **0115 876 4322** to seek clarification of the above, including any circumstances requiring early notification of specialist activities to the insurer. They should also ensure they have obtained current information regarding any special policies that may be available to offer more comprehensive cover.

Academies must make their own insurance arrangements.

Appropriate insurance must be in place for all visits.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: "[Insurance](#)"

## 15. First Aid

**First aid provision should form part of the risk assessment for all visits. This will help to determine first aid staffing and equipment.**

On each visit one of the staff must be prepared to take the lead in managing first aid and take the role of appointed person. It is recommended that a competent first aider accompany visits, with a readily available first aid kit and the arrangements for providing first aid must be clear to all staff involved.

Competence may be recognised by prior knowledge and experience, or, preferably, as a result of formal training. Leaders are encouraged to attend a course run by a reputable training provider. It is a requirement for staff to upload their first aid certificates onto their EVOLVE profile.

It is strongly recommended that at least one of the school staff on any residential visit holds a current First Aid qualification.

The level of staff competence, which may be required will depend on many factors including:

- The nature of the programme and whether it is residential (**see note above regarding qualification**)
- Whether the programme includes adventurous activities
- The numbers in the group
- The extent to which "outside" first aid assistance is available (e.g. at a residential centre)
- The environment and particularly whether it is abroad or remote.
- The health and medical needs of group members.

First aid requirements for Early Years are specified and must be adhered to; see [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

If staff are delivering outdoor and adventurous activities, the activity leader (and/or assistant) must hold a current First Aid certificate and carry a suitable first-aid kit. Where employees hold National Governing Body (NGB) qualifications, they will normally be required by the governing body of the sport to hold a current first aid certificate for the award to be valid.

Advice and assistance in arranging these courses can be obtained from the Educational Visits Adviser Andrew Smith ([Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk](mailto:Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk)).

Refer to **OEAP Employer Guidance** document: [First Aid](#)

Further guidance on managing [first aid](#) is available on the NCC School's Extranet, in the Health and Safety section, under 'First Aid Training in School'.

## 16. Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that learning outside the classroom activities are available and accessible to all. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every *reasonable* effort should be made to find a

venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Establishments should take all *reasonably practicable* measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy.

Employers, Heads/Managers, EVCs and Visit Leaders should be aware of the extent to which inclusion is or is not a legal issue.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [Inclusion](#)

## 19. Planning & Risk Assessment

### PLANNING

EVOLVE provides a means of recording planning during the planning phase, and enables the EVC and Headteacher to contribute to, support, and monitor the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of generic policies, the EVOLVE Visit Form, and any Event Specific Notes and/or attachments. The planning process may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is appropriate to the needs of the group.

Many aspects of planning will normally already be in place in the form of existing policies and guidance, such as the school's own Educational Visits policy, Local Authority policy, etc. These, in conjunction with the EVOLVE Visit Form may be sufficient for a particular visit, as it is not necessary to duplicate generic policies on EVOLVE.

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event. This is endorsed by HSE in Principles of Sensible Risk Management

Alternative arrangements (Plan B) should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

The extent of planning required for each visit relates to the complexity of the visit, see:

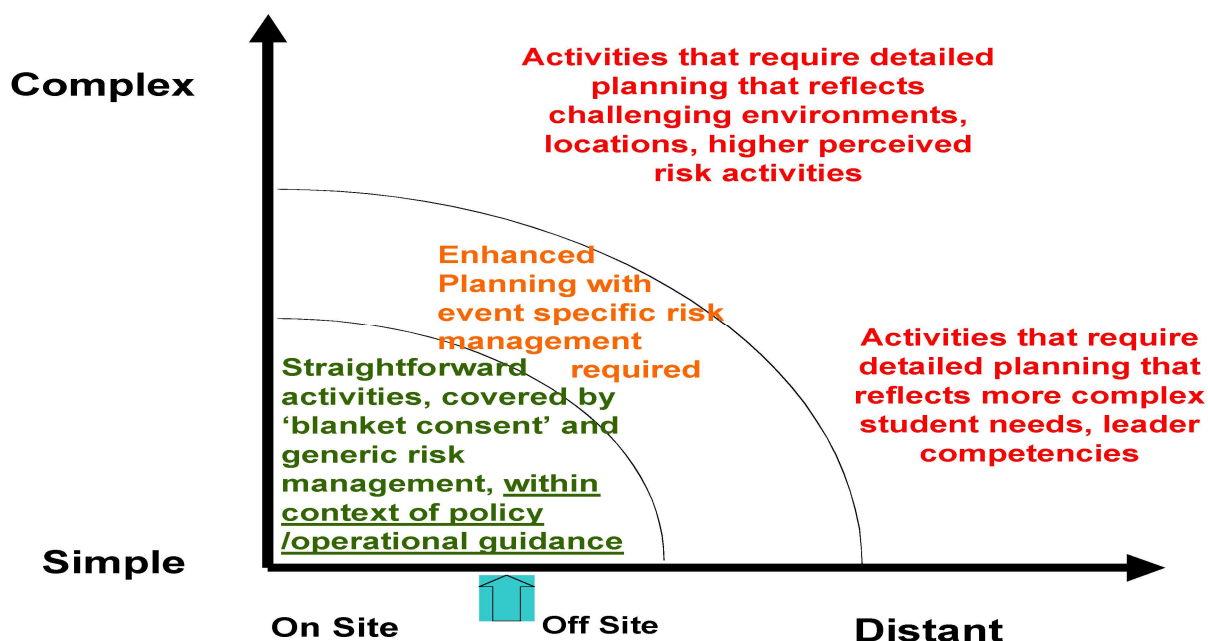
- Diagram: [Planning and EVOLVE](#)
- OEAP National Guidance document: [Visit Leader Checklist](#)
- OEAP National Guidance [RADAR](#) model: based on SAGED: Staffing, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.

The degree of complexity of a particular plan or policy (along with its supporting procedures) will need to reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity.

These variables can be remembered as “**SAGED**” as explained below.

- Staffing requirements – trained? experienced? competent? ratios?
- Activity characteristics – specialist? insurance issues? licensable?
- Group characteristics – prior experience? ability? behaviour? special and medical needs?
- Environmental conditions – like last time? impact of weather? water levels?
- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport? residential?





Refer to LOTC National Guidance document: [“Planning Basics”](#)

Refer to LOTC National Guidance Power Point: [“Planning Visits Off-site Activity and LOTC”](#)

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce the risks to a level, that is deemed to be acceptable. It asks:

- What could go wrong? and
- What are we going to do about it?

The process is applicable to all activities. There are 3 ‘levels’ of risk assessment relevant to off-site activities:

- Generic – (normally already in place)

This is guidance which remains constant regardless of the nature of the visit, such as National Guidance, Local Authority Guidance, School Policies, etc. To aid participation and reduce bureaucracy, schools should draw up their own generic policies for routine activities, e.g. where using particular venues regularly, using transport, etc., and should consider designating an ‘Extended/Local Learning Area’ for local visits.

- Specific Risk Assessments/Event Specific Notes – (recorded before the activity takes place)

This should identify any significant risks relating to an activity that are not covered within generic guidance and policies, together with the measures in place to manage these. ‘Significant’ refers to those risks that could result in serious harm or affect several people. The process should consider SAGED (Staff, Activity, Group, Environment and Distance), as well as Plan B options. Risk Assessments/Event Specific Notes are normally completed by the activity leader, either via the online ESN feature in EVOLVE, or by using the risk assessment templates in EVOLVE Resources.

- Dynamic / On-going – (carried out continuously throughout the activity)

The on-going monitoring of all aspects of the visit by the activity leader and other staff is the single most important aspect in the risk management of visits, and hence safety. Risks should be monitored constantly, and where appropriate activities must be modified (e.g. Plan B), or curtailed to suit changed or changing circumstances. This is the responsibility of all involved in the activity, not just the leader.

It is not possible to eliminate all risks, but these should be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. An activity should only take place if, in the professional judgement of the leader, the residual risk following implementation of any control measures is deemed to be acceptable.

Relevant aspects of the risk assessment process should be shared with staff, parents and young people.

To inform future visits, it is good practice to record any significant issues following the visit evaluation on EVOLVE.

Where an adventurous activity is to be delivered by an external provider, the provider will have responsibility for managing the activity (see Section 18). As such, the provider's risk assessments do not need to be requested from the provider, and do not need to be uploaded to EVOLVE. See National Guidance document [6a FAQ Asking for a provider's risk assessments](#)

See National Guidance documents:

4.3c Risk Management – an overview

4.3g What to Record and How

4.3c Risk Management – some practical advice for leaders

## **Safety During the Visit**

Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that all participants understand what is expected of them. This includes any 'rules' that will be in place. These 'rules' should be in line with the school code of conduct and be re-emphasised as appropriate during the visit.

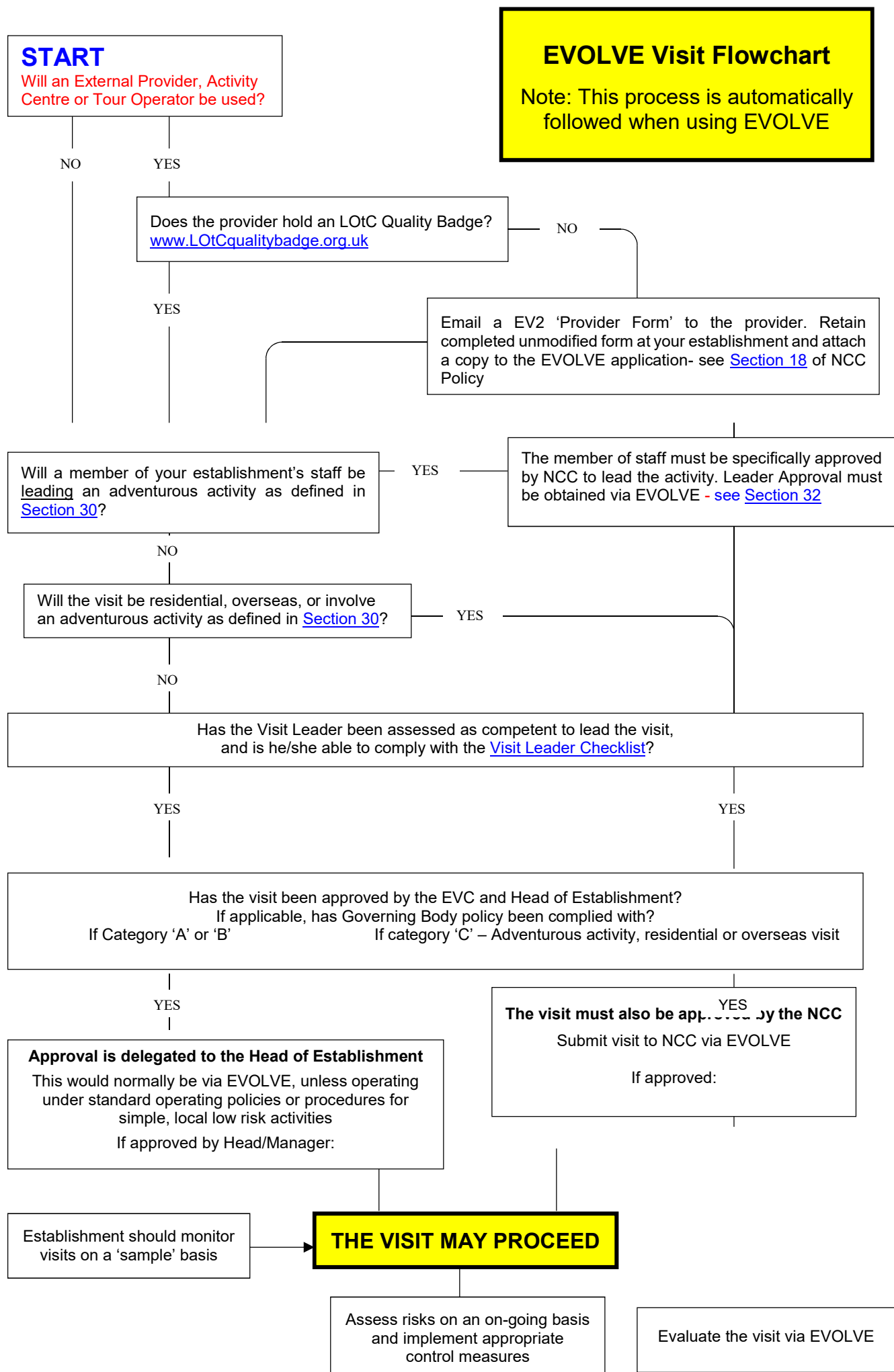
Monitoring and risk management of the visit must be on-going, and this contributes towards quality, enjoyment and safety.

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (or switch to Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

Following the visit, the visit leader should record any significant issues as a note on EVOLVE, for both reference and to inform future visits.

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Responsibilities of Visit Leader](#)





## 18. Using an External Provider

An 'External Provider' normally provides one or more elements on an activity or visit involving instruction, staffing, guiding, and supervision. This may be, for example:

- an Activity Centre
- a Ski Company
- an Educational Tour Operator
- an Overseas Expedition Provider
- a Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff
- a Freelance Instructor of adventurous activities
- a Youth Hostel (where instruction is provided)
- a Voluntary Organisation (e.g. Scout Association), where instruction is provided

For the purposes of NCC approval, an External Provider is **NOT**:

- a Campsite
- Museums, galleries, etc
- Tourist attractions
- Theme Park
- Farm
- a Coach, Train, or Airline company
- a Local Authority Swimming Pool staffed by nationally recognised lifeguards
- a Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by a member of your establishment's staff with an approved Leader Approval Form (LAR) / Activity Leader Form (ALF) ([Section 32](#) applies)

These would be classed as 'Venues'

### Residential Settings

You must make reasonable checks to ensure that the accommodation is suitable for your group. There should be appropriate security arrangements to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation, separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities with staff accommodation close to participants' accommodation. In the UK accommodation should comply with UK legislation. If abroad, the accommodation complies with fire, health and safety legislation which applies in the country concerned.

Refer to **NCC Generic Risk Assessment**: Accommodation, found in the Resources section on EVOLVE

Some residential settings may hold a LOTC Quality Badge. If not, it may be helpful to use the EV2 Form to gather this information (and retain evidence). Alternatively you could carry out a pre-visit and take a checklist. Indicate on your EVOLVE application how you have checked out the accommodation.

## 19. Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations

If a provider's activities fall within the scope of the AALA licencing scheme, establishments should gain assurances via the LOTC Quality Badge accreditation or via the EV2 Form.

For further information, please contact the Educational Visits Adviser.

Refer to OEAP National Guidance document: [AALA Licensing](#)

## 20. Transport

Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it. Schools and other establishments can use the specific transport risk assessments, found in the Resources section of EVOLVE to support the planning of their visits. All national and local regulatory requirements **must** be followed.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey. Careful consideration should be given to the use of employee/volunteer driven vehicles.

The Visit Leader should ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company, one way this can be fulfilled is through the use of the “Why Nott” Transport Quotation Service operated by Nottingham City Council. Quotes can be obtained by emailing [why.nott@collegest.org.uk](mailto:why.nott@collegest.org.uk).

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance document: “Transport”**

## 21. Visits Involving Animals

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

Refer to **Farming & Countryside Education**: [www.face-online.org.uk](http://www.face-online.org.uk)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Farm Visits](#)

Refer to **NCC Generic Risk Assessment** on Farm Visits, found in the Resources section of EVOLVE

## 22. Water Margin Activities

This section applies to:

**Activities that take place near or in water – such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow\* water. It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft.**

\*In this context, paddling means walking in shallow sheltered water (below knee height on the participants).

Establishments must decide whether the activity:

- a) Falls **within** the definition in bold above - in which case the guidance below applies,  
*or*
- b) **Exceeds** the definition in bold above - in which case this is a water-based adventurous activity and [Section 23](#) applies.

All staff involved in water-margin activities should be conversant with the guidance contained within [Group Safety at Water Margins](#). This document must be made available to, and understood by, all supervising adults in advance of the visit.

NCC approval is not required for water-margin activities, but the leader must have previous relevant experience, and must have been assessed as competent to lead the activity by the EVC and/or Head of Establishment.

Refer to **NCC Generic Risk Assessment**: ‘Water Margins’ and ‘Paddling’, found in the Resources and Guidance section on EVOLVE

## 23. Water-Based Activities

For clarification of the differences between water-margin and water-based activities see [Section 22](#)

NCC fully supports and encourages water-based activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The following are not regarded as adventurous activities for the purposes of NCC approval:

- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools - see [Section 24](#)
- Water-margin activities as defined in [Section 22](#)
- Use of commercial craft, tourist boat trips, and similar activities for which young people would not normally wear personal buoyancy.

With the exception of the above, all other forms of water-based activities are regarded as adventurous activities, and as such require LA approval.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) **An external provider** - see [Section 18](#)

*or*

b) **A member of your establishment's staff** – see [Section 32](#)

In order to participate in water-based activities, participants should be water confident. Participants who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to consideration of all factors, including the activity itself and supervision arrangements. The level of water confidence of all participants must be known by the activity leader prior to the commencement of water-based activities.

Activity Leaders should be specifically competent and have knowledge of the water conditions/hazards (and potential changes) that might be encountered, and prepare accordingly. Local advice must be sought where appropriate, e.g. coastguard, harbour master, other site users, etc.

Personal buoyancy conforming to the appropriate National Governing Body and relevant BS EN standard for the level of activity undertaken must be worn at all times by all participants in water-based activities, except, at the discretion of the activity leader.

## **24. Swimming**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken. For paddling refer to [Section 22](#) Water Margin Activities.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and lifeguarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

**Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities. The following criteria apply:**

**For Swimming pools (lifeguarded) NCC Approval is not required:**

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly lifeguarded pools abroad, the establishment's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water and that this will be maintained at all times where participants are in the water. Contact with the pool in advance to inform them of numbers and any special requirements is essential.
- Unless suitably qualified and trained in the Normal Operation Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for the specific pool to be used, the establishment's staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision and perform a 'spotting' role as additional eyes and ears for the lifeguard. This especially applies when using lifeguarded pools in hotels.
- For swimming lessons, the NCC establishment should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

**For further guidance refer to the NCC Generic risk assessment for Use of Swimming Pools on Visits, found in the Resources section of EVOLVE.**

**Refer to National Guidance: [Swimming Pools](#) and [Open Water Swimming](#)**

**For open water swimming and pools without lifeguards refer to [Appendix 1 Adventure Activities & Overseas Expeditions](#)**

## **25. Residential Visits**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that residential visits can potentially bring to children and young people, and fully supports and encourages residential visits that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

### **Supervision on Residential Visits**

Mixed parties engaged in journeys involving an overnight stay should normally be accompanied by at least one adult of each sex. In this case the responsible adult may be a parent or student over the age of 18, acceptable to the group leader, assessed as being suitable by the Head/Manager and have undergone DBS checks in accordance with employer guidance.

Decisions about the visit leadership team gender balance should be taken as part of overall consideration about staffing ratios and appropriate supervision. All parties should agree and consent to the arrangements.

Staff retain a duty of care for young people throughout the visit – even if a provider is delivering activities or assisting with overnight supervision. They are always responsible for pastoral care and must be able to deal with an emergency effectively, at all times.

**Establishments should have clear written policies relating to staff conduct on residential visits. Staff must not smoke in front of young people and should smoke away from buildings and clearly it would be unprofessional for staff to be intoxicated on any visit. There are clear disciplinary procedures in the terms and conditions of employment**

**of staff in relation to Drugs and Alcohol. Policies should be discussed with volunteers as part of their briefing / induction.**

Heads, EVCs and Visit Leaders should check:

- That suitable and sufficient Insurance is in place for all participants (including staff and volunteers)
- All staff have been had appropriate DBS checks
- The accommodation is suitable for the group (for example the provider may hold a LOTC Quality Badge, or should complete the relevant sections of the OV2 Form (The OV2 Form should be attached to the EVOLVE application). Also refer to [Section 18](#)

Refer to **OEAP Employer Guidance** document: [Residential Visits Mindmap](#)

Refer to **NCC Generic Risk Assessment for Accommodation**, available in the **Resources** section on EVOLVE.

## 26. Medication

### Non-prescription medicines and residential visits

**In Schools** the NCC policy is that non-prescription medicines should not normally be given to pupils. This policy is designed to protect the best interests of the child, as well as those of staff. It considers several factors:

- the child may well be able to return home if s/he is unwell;
- generally the child will return home at the end of school and a parent/guardian can administer medication if appropriate;
- it should be relatively straightforward to visit a doctor, if required.

However, this approach may be inappropriate **on a residential visit**. For example: If a child develops toothache during the night, or a young woman is suffering from period pains, it may be both impractical (and inappropriate) to call a doctor or visit casualty. In some circumstances (during a long coach journey to France for example) it may be difficult to visit a doctor to deal with a problem such as a migraine. Considering the circumstances, it may be appropriate, in accordance with the expectation of the 'duty of care' (which the group leader holds), for him/her to use judgement and common sense (as a parent would) and provide a mild painkiller,

The DfE's guidance regarding medicine's must be followed:

- *"no child under 16 should be given prescription or non-prescription medicines without their parent's written consent*
- *a child under 16 should never be given medicine containing aspirin unless prescribed by a doctor. Medication, e.g. for pain relief, should never be administered without first checking maximum dosages and when the previous dose was taken. Parents should be informed*
- *schools should only accept prescribed medicines that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration, dosage and storage. The exception to this is insulin which must still be in date, but will generally be available to schools inside an insulin pen or a pump, rather than in its original container*
- *all medicines should be stored safely. Children should know where their medicines are at all times and be able to access them immediately.... Medicines and devices such as asthma inhalers, blood glucose*

*testing meters and adrenaline pens should be always readily available to children and not locked away. This is particularly important to consider when outside of school premises e.g. on school trips*

- *a child who has been prescribed a controlled drug may legally have it in their possession if they are competent to do so, but passing it to another child for use is an offence. Monitoring arrangements may be necessary. Schools should otherwise keep controlled drugs that have been prescribed for a pupil securely....and only named staff should have access. Controlled drugs should be easily accessible in an emergency. A record should be kept of any doses used and the amount of the controlled drug held in school*
- *school staff may administer a controlled drug to the child for whom it has been prescribed. Staff administering medicines should do so in accordance with the prescriber's instructions. Schools should keep a record of all medicines administered to individual children, stating what, how and how much was administered, when and by whom.*
- *when no longer required, medicines should be returned to the parent to arrange for safe disposal. Sharps boxes should always be used for the disposal of needles and other sharps*
- *Where a child has an individual healthcare plan, this should clearly define what constitutes an emergency and explain what to do, including ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of emergency symptoms and procedures.*
- *If a child needs to be taken to hospital, staff should stay with the child until the parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance. Schools need to ensure they understand the local emergency services cover arrangements and that the correct information is provided for navigation systems.*
- *Governing bodies should ensure that their arrangements are clear and unambiguous about the need to support actively pupils with medical conditions to participate in school trips and visits, or in sporting activities, and not prevent them from doing so".*

**(DfE: [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#))**

It must be emphasised that the group leader would take this role on a voluntary basis. Establishments should clarify their approach to prescribed and non-prescribed medicines in their Visit Policy. They will need to obtain parental consent for providing non-prescription medicines. Alternatively, this could be incorporated into the main consent form for the visit.

**For further advice, please refer to OEAP NG: [Medication](#)**

## **27. Overseas Visits**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that overseas visits can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages overseas visits that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

**For all visits** it is essential that consideration is given to the following:

- a) Culture: food and drink, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs.
- b) Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation.
- c) Transport methods have been checked for suitability.

- d) Advice should be sought regarding the need for inoculations (or other treatment) to be taken as a precautionary measure prior to the visit.
- e) In some countries, parental permission must be sought and an affidavit signed allowing another adult (Visit Leader) to take a child into and out of the country.
- f) Adequate insurance cover and emergency planning

The visit leader should consider the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) ('Home' page, 'Travel & Living Abroad', 'Travel Advice by Country'). All relevant FCO information should be circulated amongst the staff team.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) and <https://www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do>

Refer to the NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Visits Abroad, found in the Resources section of EVOLVE.

### **Organising your own visit**

Visit Organisers who decide to arrange travel independently may seek the advice and help of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) Travel Advice Unit or the government funded Central Bureau for Educational Visits (CBEVE).

Under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992, schools may themselves become organisers, where they contract directly with hotels and apartments for accommodation and with an airline, coach or ferry company for transport and/or with others for excursions.

As an organiser, however, the school would have to provide sufficient guarantee for the refund of money paid over and for the repatriation of the consumer in the event of insolvency.

Group leaders organising their own visits should be aware of the EC Directive on Package Travel, Package Holidays and the Package Tours Regulations 1992, as mentioned above.

These regulations impose obligations and liabilities on the "reorganiser" or "other party to the contract" in the case of package travel. Schools organising their own educational visits abroad should be able to justify why their visit is not within scope of these Regulations.

- A "package" is a combination of any two of: accommodation, transport and other tourist services. To be exempt from the Regulations, a package should not be a regular event.
- The regulations should not apply for visits that have a clear educational aim and are part of the curriculum of the pupils. Schools should therefore clearly state the main educational aim(s) of the visit on their visit approval forms.
- The package travel regulations are quite complex and schools unsure of their situation should contact the Department of Trade and Industry or CBEVE. The DTI advise that school ski trips (which are voluntary activities undertaken by some pupils) fall within the regulations unless they are organised only occasionally. Schools are therefore advised generally to organise ski visits through bonded tour operators. For schools making their own accounts under the control of a trustee may be the only realistic option.

Refer to **National Guidance:** [Overseas Visits](#)

## **28. Overseas Expeditions**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that overseas expeditions can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages overseas expeditions that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.



Overseas Expeditions (for the purposes of this document) are defined as those, which typically involve journeying in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries.

There are stringent requirements on Overseas Expedition providers, and establishments may therefore need to allow **up to 18 months for NCC approval to be granted**. A 'Note' (for the attention of the LA) should be added to the EVOLVE Visit Form as soon as possible during the planning stages.

Overseas Expeditions will only be approved by the local authority if the provider either:

- a) Holds an LOTC Quality Badge [www.LOTCqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.LOTCqualitybadge.org.uk) **or**
- b) Provides a statement of compliance with [Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3](#)  
*and conforms to BS8848*

The contract for the expedition **must** be with the school not direct with parents (refer to Section K: Contracts and Legal Issues, of the above guidance).

For providers that do not hold a LOTC Quality Badge, 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3' should be referred to when the proposal is initiated. This document contains information for both establishments and providers, and includes a checklist of vital aspects that **must** be considered prior to the establishment making a commitment with an external provider. Overseas expedition providers are required to comply with the minimum standards specified in this document.

When planning an expedition and selecting a provider, establishments should particularly consider the educational aims of the venture, that appropriate progression takes place, and that the requirements relating to value for money are met.

Visit leaders may find it beneficial to attend a relevant CPD course organised by the Royal Geographical Society [www.rgs.org](http://www.rgs.org)

Refer to NCC Generic risk assessment on Overseas Expeditions found in EVOLVE, in the Resources section

Refer to National Guidance: [Overseas Expeditions](#) and [Mind map overseas Expeditions](#)

## 29. Exchange Visits

NCC has adopted the **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Exchanges and Homestays](#) found in the Resources section of EVOLVE

NCC establishments are required to adhere to all relevant aspects of this guidance when organising exchange visits and homestays.

Suitable and sufficient selection and vetting of host families should occur. Control measures and contingency plans outlined in the above guidance should be put in place.

Refer to the British Council (Learning) [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Exchanges & home-stays](#) and [Mind map Student Exchange](#)

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Overseas visits](#)

Refer to NCC Generic Risk assessment on Foreign Exchange Visits, in the resources section of EVOLVE.

**Overseas Expeditions:** refer to [Appendix 1 Adventure Activities & Overseas Expeditions](#)

## 30. Weather and Clothing

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed according to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;

- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;
- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

### **31. Definition of an 'Adventurous Activity'**

**The following activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and require NCC approval via EVOLVE:**

- All activities in 'remote/open country' (see below)
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- Use of powered safety/rescue craft
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Water skiing
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Rock climbing (including climbing walls)
- Abseiling
- River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Coastering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration
- Shooting and archery
- Snowsports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including dry slope
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Horse riding
- Motor sport – all forms
- High level ropes courses
- Off road cycling/ mountain biking
- 'Extreme' sports
- Trampoline parks
- Other activities (erg. initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above

Refer to Figure 2, below.

'Remote/Open country' is normally defined Moorland (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level) or Mountain (more than 600m above sea-level and/or from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time (2.5km) to reach any accessible road or refuge). However, this is an arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the Educational Visits Adviser, Andrew Smith (Tel:0115 947

6202, e-mail: [Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk](mailto:Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk) ), if you think this might apply. For level of competence required to lead in remote/open country see the NCC Walking Risk assessment found in the Resources section of EVOLVE.

For further details on adventure activities refer to section 29, below.

For the purposes of NCC approval, the following activities are **not** regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require approval. However, these activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the EVC and Head of Establishment is competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or on non-remote country paths
- Field studies - unless in the environments stated in 'open country'
- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions (including commercial 'show caves')
- Pedal go-karts
- Ice skating (rink)
- Farm visits
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities as defined in [Section 22](#)

Please contact Andrew Smith, Educational Visits Adviser if there is uncertainty over whether a particular activity requires NCC approval.

## **32. Adventurous Activities**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that adventurous activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages adventurous activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) **An external provider** - see [Section 18](#)

The provider must hold an [LOtC Quality Badge](#) or complete an OV2 Form

Note: If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.

Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care.

*or*

b) **A member of your establishment's staff** - see [Section 32](#)

This person must be specifically approved by NCC to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

For further details on adventure activities refer to [Appendix 1 – Adventure Activities and Overseas Expeditions](#)

## **33. Approval of Staff to Lead an Adventurous Activity**

### **Procedure for Obtaining Approval**

Staff who wish to **lead** (i.e. supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity, as defined in [Section 29](#), must first upload details and scanned copies of all relevant qualifications (e.g. instructor certificates, first aid, etc.) to the 'My Details'

section of their EVOLVE account. Staff should update this record as required (e.g. when first aid training is renewed). The staff member should then submit an Activity Leader Form (ALF) to NCC via EVOLVE.

The visit leader should complete the Visit Form on EVOLVE as usual. During this process EVOLVE will ask for an Activity Leader Form (ALF) to be completed, which will request further details regarding the proposed venture (e.g. dates, venues, numbers, etc.). The ALF will then be embedded within the Visit Form for that particular visit.

On receipt of a Visit Form (and embedded ALF), NCC will view the proposed activity in the context of the leader's competencies and qualifications.

Where approval is not granted to lead the activity, the Visit Form will be returned to the EVC via EVOLVE, with an attached note. Where this is the case, the activity must not take place.

### **Criteria for Approval**

Approval will normally be given where the leader of the activity has recent relevant experience, is appropriately qualified through the relevant National Governing Body and holds an appropriate first aid qualification. To confirm this, the leader should submit an ALF to the LA via EVOLVE.

In cases where no National Governing Body exists, NCC will make a decision based on factors which may include: technical advice, the leader's stated competence, observed competence, past experience, and attendance at training courses.

Approval will always be subject to a requirement that the leader must act at all times within the remit of his/her qualifications, and in accordance with National Governing Body Guidelines where these exist. Approval may also be subject to other conditions, which will be specified by NCC on the Visit Form. Where there is insufficient information for NCC to make a decision regarding approval, then the applicant may be asked to provide further information (e.g. evidence of awards, experience, and log book details, etc.). In some cases, a meeting with the applicant may be requested by NCC.

Approval to lead an adventurous activity is specific to the technical aspects of the adventurous activity detailed. It is not an indication in respect of other aspects of the visit such as general management and supervision skills, the assessment of which is the responsibility of Head of Establishment and/or EVC.

For further details on adventure activities refer to [Appendix 1 – Adventure Activities and Overseas Expeditions](#).

## **34. Emergency Procedures**

Establishments should ensure that their Health and Safety policy includes arrangements for off-site visits.

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to their establishment's policy on emergency procedures.

For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours:

- A completed [Emergency Card – Visit Leader](#) (or equivalent) must be with the Visit Leader at all times, **and**
- A completed [Emergency Card – Home Contacts](#) (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times, where access to EVOLVE is not possible.

Emergency contact details for the LA are detailed in the contacts section of this document.

Refer to **OEAP Employer Guidance document**: [Critical Incident Management: The Employer's Role](#), [Emergency Planning: The Establishment's Role](#), [Emergency Procedures for Visit Leaders](#)

## **35. Accident and Incident Reporting**

Establishment managers must ensure they meet the requirements of the RIDDOR regulations and good practice. Refer to NCC's procedures and on-line forms.

Academies must ensure they have equivalent procedures to meet the requirements of the law and good practice.

Where an incident or accident occurs on an educational visit, please ensure this is reported to the Educational Visit Adviser, Andrew Smith (Tel:0115 947 6202, email:[Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk](mailto:Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk))

### **36. The Value and Evaluation of Learning Outside the Classroom**

The Ofsted report "[Learning Outside the Classroom – How Far Should You Go?](#)" (October 2008) makes statements in the strongest terms to support the value of Learning Outside the Classroom, including the fact that it raises achievement. NCC Heads, Managers, EVCs and Visit Leaders are strongly recommended to familiarise themselves with the main content of this report.

Refer to OEAP NG document: "[Ofsted and LOtC Summary](#)"

However, it also highlights the finding that *even where LOtC is highly valued and provided to a high standard, it is rarely evaluated with sufficient rigor* – i.e. in the way that classroom learning is evaluated – and a methodology to address this is provided within the OEAP National Guidance document: [Rigorous Evaluation of LOtC: Meeting Ofsted Expectations.](#)

Evaluation is important in order to guide further practice and to assess and evidence impact. It is recommended that establishments record evaluations using the Evaluate function on EVOLVE.

## Appendix 1 – Adventure Activities

### Adventure Activities led by Council/School Employees

#### Contents

<a href="#">Introduction.....</a>	30
<a href="#">Adventure Activity Licensing.....</a>	31
<a href="#">Open Water Swimming.....</a>	31
<a href="#">Hotels &amp; other Swimming Pools without lifeguards.....</a>	31
<a href="#">Canoeing &amp; Kayaking.....</a>	31
<a href="#">Sailing.....</a>	31
<a href="#">Walking and Open Country Activities.....</a>	32
<a href="#">Rock Climbing (including climbing walls and abseiling)....</a>	33
<a href="#">Snowsports.....</a>	34
<a href="#">Camping and camp craft.....</a>	36
<a href="#">Orienteering.....</a>	36
<a href="#">Mountain Biking (and Off Road Cycling).....</a>	37
<a href="#">Combined Water/Rock activities.....</a>	37
<a href="#">Diving.....</a>	38
<a href="#">Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme Activities.....</a>	40
<a href="#">Trampoline Parks.....</a>	40

#### Introduction

This appendix includes specific information relating to the adventure activities, which are most commonly run or organised by Nottingham City establishments. If you are planning an adventure activity for which procedures are not outlined in this section, you should follow the National Governing Body guidance for that activity including any requirements for staff competence, qualifications, safety equipment, ratios, etc. (where this is available). In the absence of such guidance, or if there is doubt, you should contact the Educational Visits Adviser at an early stage of the planning.

The following notes are provided to make clear the range of national and local qualifications available, **and to outline the minimum standards of competence required by Nottingham City Council**. Suggested Staff/student ratios are included - but ratios should always be reviewed as part of the risk assessment. Adventure Activities and Overseas Expeditions require LA approval. Staff planning to deliver an Adventure Activity must first submit a Activity Leader Form (ALF). Refer to:

- [Section 31 Adventure Activities](#)
- [Section 32 Approval of Staff to Lead an Adventure Activity](#)

Where national or local coaching awards exist, they provide a useful benchmark for levels of technical competence, but managers/Heads **and EVCs should balance this with knowledge of the experience and competence of the member of staff to be leading the activity**. Even the most exhaustive of national qualifications is assessed in a matter of days, or at the most weeks. It is usually outside the remit of these qualifications to measure group control, or the ability to deal with difficult or disruptive young people. In many instances, these qualities coupled with a clear understanding of the leader’s own working limitations, are as important to the safe running of activities as good equipment and technical competence.

Where qualifications are specified or relevant, the Manager/Head/EVC must ensure that any employees or volunteers running activities produce evidence of their qualification (original certificates and logbooks must be produced), and copies are uploaded onto EVOLVE. Refer to [Section 32](#) above.

Awards held by instructors / leaders must be currently valid with the National Governing Body, including:

- Paid up membership where required
- Valid First Aid qualification where required
- Evidence of recent / current activity and or revalidation where required

### **Adventure Activity Licensing**

Under some circumstances providing adventure activities to under 18s without a licence can be a criminal offence. Managers/Heads and EVCs must ensure that proposed activities do not breach licensing regulations. Advice is available from the Educational Visits Adviser.

Refer to **OEAP National Guidance** document: [Adventurous Activities](#)

### **Open Water Swimming**

No Open Water Swimming can take place without prior NCC Approval, which MUST be sought before the activity is entered on EVOLVE.

For further guidance and support contact the Educational Visits Adviser, Andrew Smith [www.Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk](mailto:www.Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk) , 0115 947 6202.

### **Hotel (and other) Swimming Pools without lifeguards**

Establishments should check the lifeguarding position in advance. No swimming can take place unless local appropriately qualified staff are available.

### **Canoeing and Kayaking**

**National Governing Body:** British Canoeing

#### **Relevant Qualifications:**

Administers a wide variety of instruction, leadership and coaching qualifications, which are relevant to different circumstances. These qualifications are available in various types of craft. **Canoeing activities must be run by staff/instructors with appropriate BC qualifications.** They must be operating within the remit of their award.

Advice is available from BC or the Educational Visits Adviser.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Canoeing and Kayaking in the resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Sailing**

**National Governing Body:** The Royal Yachting Association

#### **Relevant Qualifications**

Instructor

Senior Instructor

There are separate qualifications for tidal areas.

Staff running sailing activities must hold current RYA qualification(s). They must be operating within the remit of their award: advice is available from the RYA or the Outdoor Education Adviser.

Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Sailing in the resources section of EVOLVE

### **Walking in Remote/Open Country**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that remote-country activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages open-country activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

For the purposes of NCC approval:

‘Lowland country’ is defined as:

Parks, enclosed farmland and fields (NOT moorland, mountain and/or where it is possible to be more than 30 minutes (or 2.5km, whichever is the less) from an accessible road or refuge. (ASSUMES LEADER WITH GROUP)

‘Remote/Open country’ is normally defined as:

Moorland (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level) or Mountain (more than 600m above sea-level and/or from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time (2.5km) to reach any accessible road or refuge).

However, these definitions are guidelines outlining an arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the Educational Visits Adviser if you think this might apply.

Remote/Open country activities are regarded as ‘adventurous’ and therefore these visits require NCC approval.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) **An external provider** - see [Section 18](#).

The provider must hold an [LOtC Quality Badge](#) or complete a Provider Form

Note: If a Provider holds an [AALA licence](#) (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then a Provider Form is still required.

Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a ‘pastoral’ duty of care.

**or**

b) **A member of your establishment’s staff** - see requirements below.

This person must be specifically approved by NCC to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

**The following minimum levels of technical competence apply where a member of the establishment’s own staff intends to lead an open-country activity**

### **Walking (including Hill Walking, Fell Walking, Rambling, etc.)**

**National Governing Body:** The Mountain Training England [www.mountain-training.org/home-nations/england](http://www.mountain-training.org/home-nations/england) and Sports Leaders UK (SLUK) [www.sportsleaders.org/awardsqualifications](http://www.sportsleaders.org/awardsqualifications)

### **Relevant Qualifications:**

#### **SLUK Lowland Expedition Leader (LEL, previously BEL, BELA: formerly BETA!)**

A basic qualification for Leaders wishing to take groups walking or camping in rural areas, in summer conditions (NB. does not include hill walking). The LEL award is a suitable training programme for staff wishing to lead groups in the low-level areas around Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and in other similar areas, using well marked footpaths



without technical difficulties. If staff do not hold this qualification they must be able to demonstrate a comparable level of experience and technical competence

### **MT Lowland Leader Award**

The Lowland Leader Award trains and assesses candidates in the skills required to lead others on walks in lowland countryside and woodland.

### **MT Hill and Moorland Leader**

The Hill and Moorland Leader award offers the opportunity to gain experience and demonstrate technical competence in leading groups on hill walks in areas of the UK and Ireland.

### **Walking Group Leaders Award (WGL)**

Nationally recognised fell walking award for leaders of walking groups in summer conditions, in non-mountainous hilly terrain (Known variously as upland, moor, bog, hill, fell or down), with well-defined obvious boundaries, such as roads and coastlines, where any hazards within it are identifiable and avoidable and where wild camping or movement on steep ground is not involved.

### **MT Mountain Leader Award (ML)**

This award is intended for those who take groups walking and camping in hills and mountains during the summer months, where the use of ropes is not envisaged. Includes movement on steep ground, and leadership on this terrain.

### **MT Winter Mountain Leader Assessment**

This is a separate course, which assesses leaders in the more arduous conditions which can be found in winter, including movement on snow and ice.

### **MT Mountain Instructor Assessment (MIA), Mountain Instructor Certificate (MIC)**

These awards both have the summer ML as a prerequisite, but they require additional rock climbing and mountaineering skills. The latter award also requires the winter “ML” and includes winter climbing on snow and ice.

**For hill walking (excluding low level walks on well-marked public footpaths without technical difficulties) the member of staff/instructor must hold the appropriate MT qualification. They must be operating within the remit of their award: advice is available from MT or the Outdoor Education Adviser.**

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Walking in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Rock Climbing (including climbing walls and abseiling)**

**National Governing Body:** The British Mountaineering Council, and Mountain Training England

#### **Relevant Qualifications**

#### **MT Climbing Wall Award (CWA)**

Remit is artificial climbing walls, with separate endorsements for teaching abseiling and lead climbing.

#### **MT Rock Climbing Instructor (RCI, formerly SPA)**

Nationally recognised qualification for instructing rock climbing on climbing walls and suitable single pitch crags.

#### **Mountain Instructor Award (MIA)**

This requires the summer ML Award as a prerequisite. It includes lead climbing and multi-pitch climbing as well as top roping.

### **Mountain Instructor Certificate (MIC)**

**This requires the Summer and Winter ML Awards and involves lead climbing, top roping, and winter snow and ice climbing.**

Staff running rock climbing or abseiling sessions requiring the use of ropes must hold the appropriate MT qualification. They must be operating within the remit of their award: advice is available from the MT or the Outdoor Education Adviser.

### **Abseiling**

Staff supervising abseiling should be qualified to the standards outlined above (Abseil module required for CWA).

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Climbing and Climbing Walls in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Snow sports**

NCC acknowledges the immense educational benefits that snow sport activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages snow sport activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

Snowsports (e.g. skiing and snowboarding) are regarded as adventurous activities, and the visit therefore requires LA approval through EVOLVE.

There are advantages to snow sports taking place during term-time as opposed to during the establishment holiday period. These include:

- greater choice generally
- less queuing for lifts,
- less crowded slopes (therefore less chance of collisions occurring) and resort
- higher possibility of 'sole use' of accommodation
- lessons more likely to be conducted by permanent snow sport establishment instructors (as opposed to 'casual' instructors)
- greater likelihood of English-speaking instructors
- considerable cost savings through avoiding high season (possibly allowing more young people to participate)

It is strongly recommended that a member of staff intending to organise a snow sport visit (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) should hold the Snowsport Course Organiser Award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England [www.snowsportengland.org.uk](http://www.snowsportengland.org.uk) and must have previously accompanied at least one educational snow sports visit. It is good practice for staffing to include one or more Alpine Ski leader.

Young people may only participate in snow sports when under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent person. This would normally be an instructor employed by the local snow sports school. Establishments should therefore consider the merits of fully instructed lessons of 4/5 hours duration per day.

A member of staff intending to lead skiing or snowboarding (i.e. not using a ski school instructor) must be qualified as below and have been approved by the LA via EVOLVE- see [Section 32](#)

**Skiing:** The minimum qualification to lead skiing on snow is:

- The Alpine Ski Course Leader Award (ASCL) [www.snowsportengland.org.uk](http://www.snowsportengland.org.uk) **or**
- The Alpine Ski Leader Award (ASL) [www.snowsportscotland.org](http://www.snowsportscotland.org)

**Snowboarding:** The minimum qualification to lead snowboarding on snow is:

- The Snowboard Leader Award (SBL) administered [www.snowsportscotland.org](http://www.snowsportscotland.org)

NOTE: A skiing qualification is not appropriate for instructing or supervising snowboarding and vice versa.

Young people must not participate in off-piste activities.

## Helmets

**The wearing of helmets is now highly recommended for all participants including staff. In practice this means:**

- All participants and staff **must** wear approved snow sport helmets, which conform to BS/EN 1077/2007.
- Helmets should normally be worn during snow sport activities, and **must** be worn when local laws or regulations dictate this.
- In specific circumstances, based on risk assessment instructors / staff may determine that they are not required. A risk assessment might indicate that the wearing of a helmet was unnecessary and would or might interfere with the activity. For example, a helmet would not be required for cross-country skiing (langlauf, ski de fond). Helmets might not be required by staff without skis assisting people on or off uplift or “collecting” a group at the bottom of a nursery area. This may also be true for complete beginners learning in a segregated, gentle area through which faster skiers and snowboarders could not pass. If in doubt, helmets should be worn.

Helmets must be correctly fitted and appropriate for purpose. Staff should learn how to fit helmets so that they become competent and are able to spot if they are being worn incorrectly. Where helmets are rented, they should be fitted by the person renting the equipment to you (as are skis etc.). If a parent supplies the helmet, they are responsible for it being in a serviceable condition (at the start of the snow sports tour at least) and fitting correctly. Staff should still check this.

It is possible that hire shops/tour operators will not have sufficient stocks of helmets in place so it is essential to discuss this with them in plenty of time so that adequate stocks can be made available. If you are arranging equipment rental in the UK it is useful to book helmets as part of this package to ensure all participants have suitable helmets. If not, contact your tour operator to ensure all participants will be provided with suitable helmets as part of the equipment package. Provision of helmets should be ‘costed’ as part of the overall package, not as an optional extra.

**Important:** Some resorts in USA or Canada may have unacceptable **liability waiver requirements**. The establishment must check the liability position prior to making a commitment, and should seek advice from the Educational Visits Adviser before booking. All ski companies should be required to fill in and sign the OV2 Provider Check Form – and ask if waiver statements are required.

## Dry slope skiing and indoor slopes with artificial snow

Training on artificial slopes is often used as a preparation for ski trips, and may be used as an activity in its own right. Students should receive instruction from appropriately qualified staff. Instructors can normally be booked in advance at most slopes.

It is recommended that a member of staff should accompany lesson groups (or if not, observe the lesson to ensure appropriate behaviour).

## Clothing:

Helmets worn according to risk assessment and ski slope operator’s guidance– check on availability before booking.

Tumbles on dry slopes can be painful and students should wear thick trousers and have their arms covered. Gloves or mittens should be worn.

Thick socks should be taken.

### **Supervision by staff:**

Students who have/are receiving qualified instruction may be supervised during additional practice sessions after lessons (if deemed appropriate by the instructor), by staff who are experienced skiers and competent to supervise. This must be on the basis that participants all meet the standards of competence required by the venue. Students should not be allowed to ski unsupervised.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Snowsports in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Camping and Campcraft**

Camping may be an end in its own right, or it may provide cheap residential accommodation and the means to engage in other activities. There is no specific National Governing Body but the following qualifications provide useful training and experience of camping:

- **The Lowland Expedition Leaders award (LEL)**
- **The Walking Group Leaders Award (WGL)**
- **'Lowland' and 'Hill and Moorland' Leader with Expedition Skills module**
- **The Summer Mountain Training England Scheme (ML)**
- **Level 2 or Basic Food Hygiene Award – If staff are preparing food for pupils**

**It is particularly important that a qualified first-aider is available during camping trips.**

### **Group Size**

One instructor should not supervise more than ten camping. Both male and female staff should normally supervise mixed groups.

### **Before any trip**

Training should be given in erecting the tents and **especially in the safe use of stoves.**

Permission should be sought to camp.

Communal equipment should be fully checked as well as personal equipment.

### **Emergency Equipment**

An outdoor specific first-aid kit must be available and should contain burn dressings.

**There is a high fire risk from cooking in tent doorways and this should usually not be permitted**

### **NOTE**

Staff responsible for purchasing tents should consider buying tents with entrances at each end, because of the additional safety they provide in case of fire.

Staff should be aware of the dangers involved in refilling Trangia stoves with methylated spirits, and from changing Camping Gaz cylinders. Stoves requiring the gas cylinder to be punctured should not be used (i.e. gas cylinder/bottles should be re-sealable).

Where appropriate, fuel for stoves should be held by the leader/instructor, who should supervise the refuelling of stoves.

If Duke of Edinburgh's Award groups are camping unaccompanied, they should be visited at least once in the evening or morning.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Lightweight and Standing Camps in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Orienteering**

### **National Governing Body**

British Orienteering Federation (BOF)

### **Relevant Qualifications**

BOF Teacher/Leader Level 1/2

BOF Instructor

1. Orienteering is an activity, which can be run at a variety of levels from a school playing field to mountains in wild country areas. Clearly the experience and expertise required of staff will increase with the demands of the terrain, and of course the progress of the group. (At a low level in a familiar area, suitably experienced staff may need no additional qualifications).
2. Staff should be wary of sending individuals off on their own particularly in parks and other open areas in the town. Depending on the circumstances it may be more appropriate to organise the groups into pairs or larger groups. Whistles should be issued for emergency use, particularly in wild country areas.
3. On rugged terrain or in wooded areas participants must wear full leg and arm cover. Footwear should be appropriate to the circumstances.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Orienteering (Establishment led) in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Mountain Biking (and Off-Road Cycling)**

#### **National Governing Body and Relevant Qualifications**

**There is no one body nationally recognised as the “Governing Body” for mountain biking. However, organisations such as [CTC](#) and [MIAS](#) offer training and assessment, which have wide recognition.**

The British Cycling Federation offers advice on touring, etc.

1. Cycling on busy roads is hazardous, particularly with large groups. Routes should be selected to avoid main roads, and all roads if possible. If roads must be used then participants should cycle in single file, if possible with a member of staff at the front and back of the group.
2. Helmets are required at all times.
3. Bikes should be maintained in good condition and checked before use.
4. Although there are many suitable routes in the Nottingham area, staff should be aware that there is not an automatic right of way for cycling on public footpaths or canal towpaths. (Public roads and bridleways can be used - permits are available for some canal tow paths.) Access should be checked where necessary. Group leaders should be conscious of the erosion which can be caused by mountain bikes, and avoid sensitive areas.

#### **Staff Ratio**

At least 1:8. It is recommended to have two staff with the group especially on roads and in wild country.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Mountain biking and Off-Road cycling in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Combined Water/Rock Activities (and other Hybrid Activities)**

**This category encompasses a wide range of activities and environments each with their own level of objective danger. A number of highly publicised accidents have occurred involving hybrid water/rock activities, and they require careful planning combined with judgement and experience. There is no single NGB qualification relevant to these activities, but certain Awards will be more or less relevant, depending on the specific environment. For activities involving movement on steep rock, and/or use of ropes, rock climbing or mountaineering qualifications**

**may be appropriate, but for some gorges, knowledge of caving techniques may be more relevant. Expertise in white water canoeing may enable more effective ongoing risk assessment of water hazards.**

The HSE has produced an information sheet 'Combined water and rock activities: Guidance for providers' available from: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/etis13.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/etis13.pdf)

As there is no single NGB qualification appropriate to all hybrid activities, leaders must hold relevant related qualification(s), supplemented by 'in house' site specific approval following appropriate training, with assessment and certification from an 'in house' expert/technical adviser.

Where combined water/rock activities are planned, ample advanced notice should be given to the LA to ensure that these requirements have been met.

**Refer to NCC Generic Risk Assessment on Combined water/Rock Activities in the Resources section of EVOLVE**

### **Diving**

Diving activities must be delivered by a reputable contractor with HSE approved diving qualifications e.g., PADI, BSAC, NAUI. Diving instructors must have an annual diving medical and be passed fit to dive. The contractor must complete the Diving Contractor's Declaration form below.

All activities and procedures must conform to the [HSE Approved Code of Practice \(ACOP\) for Recreational Diving Projects \(L105\)](#). The Dive Plan and Risk Assessment must be available for inspection.

### **Ratio**

For open water, the ACOP requires the minimum size of the dive team (excluding students) to be three: (one on the surface and two in the water). The person on surface watch has a key role in the event of an emergency, and this person must be:

- Competent
- Well briefed
- Familiar with the dive plan
- Able to raise the alarm and summon further assistance

The instructor/ student ratio should be determined by the dive risk assessment and project plan, but should not exceed the recommended levels of the appropriate diving organisation. It must take account of the age and experience of the students.

Leaders of school/youth groups should note that the maximum group sizes and ratios permitted by some diving organisations can be relatively high and this is an aspect of 'quality', which may be partially affected by commercial pressures rather than just risk assessments based on prevailing conditions. Low instructor to student ratios (less than 1 to 4) and a competent well-briefed surface watch are major factors in the quality and safety of initial dives with young people. The maximum group size and ratio should be clarified and agreed prior to booking.

Whilst the HSE ACOP is not enforceable abroad, it forms a useful basis for checking the suitability of overseas providers, and is a model of best practice.

If teachers or other NCC staff are to take part in diving activities, then technically they are 'diving at work' and it is good practice for them to have a diving medical.

Equipment must be maintained by a competent person in accordance with the Approved Code of Practice and servicing should be recorded.

### Sub Aqua Provider Questionnaire

Provider \_\_\_\_\_ School/Group \_\_\_\_\_

1. Will all sub aqua activities undertaken comply with the Approved Code of Practice (Recreational Diving Projects, HSE 1998)? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Is diving equipment serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's service schedule (and any relevant national or international standards) and have cylinders been tested for fitness for use in accordance with regulations? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is all maintenance carried out by a competent person? Are written records of inspection and maintenance kept, and available for inspection? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do all members of the dive team hold HSE approved diving qualifications at an appropriate level for the planned activities? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which governing body will the dive team operate under? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What will the size of the dive team be (excluding students)? \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Will the dive team include any members of the school / group staff? (If so, state their role)**

8. Have all members of the dive team had a Diving Medical within the last 12 months, and been passed fit to dive? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What will the ratio of diving instructors to students be? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Will a competent well-briefed person be on surface watch (for open water dives)? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Will the surface watch be a member of your staff team? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Has any formal enforcement action been taken against you? \_\_\_\_\_

13. How long has your company been in operation? \_\_\_\_\_

14. How long have the instructors, who will be working with the young people, been in your employment in their present capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

15. About how many young people have undertaken diving courses with your company previously? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What award will the young people be working towards? \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form together with the Dive Plan and Risk Assessment for the training programme.

## The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

For guidance on operating DofE schemes please refer to DofE's guidance, OEAP National Guidance: [Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions](#) and the relevant risk assessment templates for the activities (in the Resources section of EVOLVE)

### Trampoline Parks

In line with OEAP National Guidance and AfPE guidance, visits to Trampoline Parks will not currently be approved. Please contact Andrew Smith, Educational Visits Adviser for further information.

## Contacts

<b>EVOLVE</b>	<a href="http://www.nottinghamcityvisits.org.uk">www.nottinghamcityvisits.org.uk</a>
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<b>Insurance questions</b>	Simon Webb - Insurance Officer Office: 0115 876 5436 E-mail: <a href="mailto:Simon.Webb@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Simon.Webb@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a>
<b>LA Emergency Contact for visits (24 hour)</b>	<b>0115 915 1640/1633 – Nottingham on Call</b>

**OEAP Employer Guidance** <http://oeapng.info/>  
**National Library** [www.national-library.info](http://www.national-library.info)  
**LOtC** [www.LOtC.org.uk](http://www.LOtC.org.uk)  
**LOtC Quality Badge** [www.LOtCqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.LOtCqualitybadge.org.uk)  
**Outdoor Education** [www.oeap.info](http://www.oeap.info)  
**Advisers' Panel**



FIGURE 1

**CATEGORIES OF ACTIVITY AND LEVELS OF APPROVAL**

CATEGORY	LEVEL OF APPROVAL	ACTIVITY	ENVIRONMENT / LOCATION
A	EVC and HEAD OF ESTABLISHMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports fixtures, within the county</li> <li>• School Swimming – formal teaching in life-guarded pools</li> <li>• Regular visits to libraries, places of worship, study support centres, local parks and open spaces, local shops etc.</li> <li>• Fieldwork in environments with no technical hazards. (e.g. Wollaton Park, Bestwood Country Park, Nottingham City Centre etc.)</li> <li>• Visits to local/city museums and Space Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local parks, residential areas and shopping areas.</li> </ul>
B	EVC and HEAD OF ESTABLISHMENT  MUST be entered on EVOLVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Day Visits to museums, attractions and parks some distance from the City. (Conkers, Alton Towers, Farm Visits etc.)</li> <li>• Theme Parks and other tourist attractions</li> <li>• Seaside resorts</li> <li>• Zoos</li> <li>• Ice skating</li> <li>• Swimming in public, lifeguarded, pools</li> <li>• Walking in ‘normal’ country</li> <li>• London</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walks in ‘<b>non-remote</b>’ country <b>Non-remote Country</b> – enclosed farmland, fields, low land forest – not moorland, mountain (above 600m) and/or where it is possible to be more than 30 mins from a road or refuge.</li> <li>• ‘Water Margin’ activity</li> </ul>
C	EVC, HEAD OF ESTABLISHMENT AND NCC  MUST be entered on EVOLVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any visit/activity involving a Residential (overnight stay) element including Camping and ‘school sleep overs’.</li> <li>• Any visit abroad</li> <li>• Any visit involving ‘adventurous activities’, led either by a Centre, an outside provider or staff member (See Figure 2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visits to hazardous environments</li> <li>• Overseas Expeditions</li> <li>• Any water-base activity</li> <li>• Any activity in Winter mountain conditions</li> <li>• Open Country/Remote terrain more than 30mins from a road (above 600m)</li> <li>• Near cliffs or steep terrain</li> <li>• Areas subject to extremes of weather or environmental change</li> <li>• Swimming in non-lifeguarded pools or open water</li> </ul>

**FIGURE 2 ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITY CATEGORIES**

Rock Climbing Abseiling Ice Climbing Gorge Walking Ghyll Scrambling Sea Level Traversing	Canoeing Kayaking Dragon Boating Wave Skiing White-water Rafting Improvised Rafting Sailing Sailboarding Kite surfing Use of powered craft boats Windsurfing	Hillwalking – in ‘open country’ Mountaineering Fell Running Pony Trekking Off Road Cycling Off-piste Skiing	Pot-holing Mine Exploration Caving
Quad biking Go-Karts  Horse Riding	Archery Rifle Shooting Fencing	<u>Remote areas:</u> Orienteering in ‘remote terrain’ Expeditions in ‘remote terrain’ Fieldwork in ‘remote terrain’ and in water.	Climbing Walls High Ropes Courses Dry Slope Skiing Grass Skiing Water Skiing Snorkeling Scuba Diving

These are not exhaustive lists. If you are in doubt about the level of activity you are undertaking, please contact the /Educational Visits Adviser, Andrew Smith, for further advice ([Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk](mailto:Andrew.smith@collegest.org.uk) or 0115 947 6202 ext 238)

There are a number of activities, which are not currently covered by NCC insurance/approved by NCC and cannot, therefore, be undertaken:

- Paint Balling
- Air Sports – paragliding, parascending, gliding, parachuting
- Trampoline Parks
- Inform Offsite/Educational Visits Adviser if you are planning to undertake activities using high ropes courses