

Educational / Out of School Visits Policy

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SLT Liaison: G Wright

Wardle Trust Policy



Wardle
Trust

INTRODUCTION

This policy states that the Wardle Trust and its partner schools will follow RMBC guidance and approval procedures when taking students out of school.

APPROVAL

DfE'S Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 19 – 20 & Part 1 supplement: 'Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits Para 10 - available from the Outdoor Educational Advisor, Rochdale MB Council (known in this document as the OEA) or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits. All visits must be approved by the Headteacher of the Trust establishment and school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). In approving visits, the Headteacher and EVC should ensure that the Educational Visits Checklist has been complied with, and that the Visit Leader has been appropriately trained and inducted. Wardle Trust expects the EVC, Headteacher, and Governing Body to exercise appropriate professional judgement when approving or assessing visits, and expects the school to seek advice from RMBC's OEA where necessary. Any visit that is not approved must not proceed.

For visits that are NOT :

- a. overseas *or*
- b. residential *or*
- c. involving an adventurous activity as defined on page 15/16.

The Trust delegates all aspects of the approval of these visits to the Headteacher.

This delegation is conditional upon compliance with the Educational Visits Checklist and appropriate training/induction of the Visit Leader, and that his/her competence is properly assessed and judged to be satisfactory.

For visits that ARE :

- a. overseas *or*
- b. residential *or*
- c. involving an adventurous activity as defined .

In addition to approval by the EVC and Headteacher, these visits must also be specifically approved by the OEA via the RMBC EVOLVE system. Forms should be submitted to RMBC - online through EVOLVE www.rochdalevisits.org as early as possible in advance of the visit taking place. Although the normal turn around for RMBC approval will be one week, it is recommended that you apply for approval as soon as is practicable. Note: for overseas expeditions as defined on page 9, a different procedure applies and Outline Approval should be sought up to 24 months prior to the expedition taking place.

Depending upon the nature of the visit and the systems in place within the school, RMBC may request additional information to be forwarded prior to granting approval. Following online submission of the form, RMBC will notify the EVC and Headteacher with one of the following options:

- a. Approval granted.
- b. Approval granted, subject to forwarding additional requested information.
- c. Approval pending, subject to EVC consideration of additional requested information.
- d. Approval not granted (reasons will be given).

A member of staff intending to lead (i.e. instruct) an adventurous activity (as defined on page 15/16) must be specifically approved to do so by the headteacher as advised by the RMBC's OEA.

Please contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if you require further advice.

EDUCATIONAL AIMS OF VISIT & DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

All visits must have clearly defined educational aims, which are appropriate to the needs of the group generally, and to individuals within the group specifically.

Following a 2002 amendment to the Disability Discrimination Act by the Special Educational Needs Act 2001, it is unlawful for any school to discriminate against disabled pupils (current or prospective) because of their disability, without justification - which must be both material and substantial to the particular case. You are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid pupils being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or pupils at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. See www.disability.gov.uk.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety on Educational Visits with the employer:

All persons involved in a visit have a specific responsibility that they should be clear about prior to the visit taking place. These responsibilities may be seen on a continuum, from pupils, through adult helpers, teachers, Visit Leader, EVC, Headteacher, governing body, to Trust.

For further information on 'Responsibilities', please refer to:

DfES Part 1 supplement: 'Standards for LAs in overseeing Educational Visits Para 5-11

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 11-34

- Available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits.

COMPETENCE TO LEAD

The single most important factor in ensuring the safety of participants involved in an Educational Visit is the competence of the Visit Leader. No staff member will be allowed to accompany a trip/visit outside of school until they have undergone basic competency training. A two hour

induction program organised by the OEA will consider issues related to trip/visit Organisation, Health and Safety, Communications and Pupil Welfare. The aim of this induction is to raise basic awareness of the safe and secure practice that needs to be embedded into every offsite activity.

When accessing the competencies of a member of staff to lead a visit, the EVC should consider the following:

- a. What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- b. Is the leader an employee of Wardle Trust?
- c. Has the leader a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of the subject to concern for the pupils' well-being?
- d. Does the leader possess the necessary organising ability?
- e. Is the leader competent in risk assessment and risk management?
- f. What experience has the leader of the pupils he/she intends to lead?
- g. What experience has the leader in leading, or assisting in the leading of similar visits or activities?
- h. What experience has the leader of the environment/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 an adventurous activity, has the leader been 'approved' by EVC?
- l. Is the leader aware of, and able to comply with all relevant guidelines?

The EVC should alert the headteacher of the relevant Trust partner school if there is a doubt regarding the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit and at the same time, the school should contact the RMBC Outdoor Educational Visits Advisor to seek advice.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to Pupils/staff, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce the risks to a level which, in professional judgement of the person carrying out the risk assessment is deemed to be acceptable. The process is applicable to all visits.

There are three 'levels' of risk assessment. These are summarised below and further detailed in: DfES

Part 1 supplement: 'Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits' Para 17–36

a) Generic – (normally already in place)

This is guidance which remains constant regardless of the nature of the visit, such as:

- school policies, guidelines issued by RMBC, DfES, Duke of Edinburgh Award, National
- Governing Bodies, etc. Schools may draw up their own generic policies for routine - activities, e.g. where using particular venues regularly, or for transport, etc. Relevant - aspects of any Generic risk assessments must be shared with those involved in a visit.

b) Event Specific Risk Assessment (ESRA) – (carried out in advance of the visit)

This considers any significant hazards or risks relating to a visit that are not covered within the Generic systems, and should take into account the venue, activities, group, transport, plan B, etc. ‘Significant’ implies those hazards that could result in serious harm or affect several people. The process should identify the hazards, which might be affected by them, and the measures in place to control the risks. These must be recorded (normally by the Visit Leader) using Form EV5 (or alternative) and approved by the EVC before the visit takes place. A blank and an example of a completed form can be obtained by visiting the Evolve website. To inform future visits, it is good practice to record any amendments on the form following the review of the visit.

c) On-going – (carried out throughout the actual visit)

The on-going monitoring of all aspects of the visit by the Visit Leader and other staff is the single most important aspect of risk management and hence safety. Risks should be monitored throughout the visit, and where appropriate activities modified or curtailed to suit changed or changing circumstances. This is the responsibility of all involved in the visit, not just the Visit Leader. To inform future visits, it is advisable to record on-going risk assessments during subsequent visit review. See also DfES Part 3 supplement: ‘A Handbook for Group Leaders’

An activity should only take place if, in the professional judgement of the Visit Leader and/or supervising members of staff, the residual risk following implementation of the control measures is deemed to be acceptable.

Relevant aspects of the risk assessment process should be shared with staff and helpers involved in the visit, as well as pupils, and where appropriate parents.

Pupils who are involved in a visit’s planning and organisation, and who are well prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. It is therefore good practice to involve pupils in the risk assessment process. See: a) DfES Part 1 supplement: ‘Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits’ Para 29–31 and Annex 1 of same. b) www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=3111

For further information on ‘Risk Assessment’, please refer to:

DfES Part 1 supplement: ‘Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits

Para 17-36

DfES Part 2 supplement: ‘Standards for Adventure’ Para 35-42

DfES Part 3 supplement: ‘A Handbook for Group Leaders’ – ‘Ongoing risk assessment’

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits’ Para 37-46

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

STAFFING, RATIOS, AND SUPERVISION

The school must ensure that there is an appropriate supervision level at all times, and that this level of supervision has been approved by the EVC and Headteacher, and is in accordance with the policy, with reference to HASPEV (DfES 1998).

The school purposely does not stipulate specific ratios, as to do so can be misleading due to the fact that all visits vary. The level of supervision for a visit must be based on risk assessment of the individual visit, and will be determined by such factors as:

- a. the type, level and duration of activity;
- b. the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including consideration of special and additional needs;
- c. the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- d. the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;
- e. the contingency, or 'Plan B' activities.

The EVC will advise regarding the appropriate level and suitability of staffing for every visit. A visit must not go ahead where the EVC is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

The Visit Leader should follow the current good practice guidance detailed below, which includes aspects such as regular head counts, delegation of duties to other adults, etc.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits. The risk assessments for the visit should reflect these considerations.

For further information on 'Supervision', please refer to:

DfES Part 2 supplement: 'Standards for Adventure' Para 43-57

DfES Part 3 supplement: 'A Handbook for Group Leaders'

DfES 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 69-84

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

The EVC will contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if further advice regarding staffing and supervision on visits is required.

REMOTE SUPERVISION

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits, even though at times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down' time in a town, etc. This is known as 'remote' or 'indirect' supervision.

Wardle Trust acknowledges the immense educational benefits that unaccompanied activities can potentially bring to young people within the secondary school sector and fully supports and encourages unaccompanied activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. The Trust is unlikely to support unaccompanied activities within its primary school sector.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account such factors as: prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility); the venue; the conditions; the activity taking place; preparatory training; the competence of the supervising staff; etc.

Parental consent must be obtained prior to the 'remote' supervision of pupils.

For further information on 'Remote Supervision' please refer to:

DfES Part 2 supplement: 'Standards for Adventure' Para 48

DfES Part 3 supplement: 'A Handbook for Group Leaders' loose insert

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'

Chapter 4 Para 95-96 '*Preparing pupils for remote supervision*'

Chapter 3 Para 82-84 '*Remote supervision*'

Chapter 8 Para 176-180 '*Remote supervision during adventurous activities*'

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Parents and those with parental responsibility should be made fully aware of the likely risks and their management, so that consent or refusal can be given on a fully informed basis. Information to parents must therefore include full details of the activities to be undertaken and venues, together with the supervision arrangements and any other relevant information. All possible alternative activities (including 'Plan B' arrangements) must also be included within the information given to parents. The Parental Consent form should therefore either list the activities to be undertaken, or should refer to the 'Information Letter' which contains this information.

For further information on 'Communicating with Parents', please refer to:

DfES Part 2 supplement: 'Standards for Adventure' Para 40 '*Acknowledgement of Risk*'

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 110-122

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

INSURANCE

Wardle Trust has a travel insurance scheme.

For all visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher, and Educational Visits Coordinator to determine whether any additional insurance should be taken out. The school should particularly consider the need for additional insurance for residential activities, or those involving adventurous activities or hazardous environments.

The responsibility for arranging adequate insurance cover rests with the Head of Establishment in conjunction with the organiser for each journey.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and

Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card – formerly E111). See www.dh.gov.uk

For further information on 'Insurance', please refer to:

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 143-156

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

TRANSPORT

Parents must be made aware of the intended form of transport, and their consent obtained.

PRIVATE CARS

Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Headteacher, and the relevant class of insurance must be held and a copy of the certificate retained by the school. Drivers must be in an appropriate state of physical and mental health, and are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate child restraints are used – see RMBC Child Restraint Guidance on www.rochdalevisits.org

MINIBUSES

Wardle Trust requires that drivers of minibuses are appropriately trained and have successfully undertaken the relevant practical assessment and theory examination with a recognised training provider. Drivers must be in an appropriate state of physical and mental health, and must ensure that all relevant legal requirements are met. Appropriate supervision must be available.

- a. An operational policy should be drawn up where a school owns or hires a minibus.

b. See also:

- DVLA www.dvla.gov.uk Select 'Online leaflets', download INF28 'Driving a minibus'
- ROSPA 'Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice' 2002 www.rospa.com/pdfs/road/minibus.pdf
- MIDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) www.communitytransport.com
- DfES 'Licensing Incidental Drivers of the School Minibus'
www.teachernet.gov.uk/docbank/index.cfm?id=9680

COACHES

For coach travel, please note that the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) is currently in the process of developing a 'kitemark' scheme, which will guarantee a particular standard of service that will be appropriate to schools. See www.cpt-uk.org during the interim period, schools should ensure that only reputable coach companies are used, and should check the suitability of services offered.

For information and guidance on 'Transport', please refer to: DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 123-142 - available from the school EVC or download via www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

WEATHER, CLOTHING AND SURVIVAL

Where appropriate, the leader should obtain and be able to act upon appropriate, recent, weather forecasts. Local advice must be obtained where appropriate.

All participants should be adequately clothed and shod. Needs will be determined by:

- a. The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- b. Likely changes in weather;
- c. The experience and strength of the party;
- d. The nature of the visit and environment.

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

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

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

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

For further information on 'Residential Visits', please refer to:

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 195-196

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

VISITS ABROAD

Wardle Trust 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.

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.
- b. Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation.
- c. Transport systems have been assessed as safe for use.

The Visit Leader should consider the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk (From the 'Home' page, go to 'Services' and then 'Travel Information by Country', then select the country to be visited). This should be downloaded and circulated amongst the staff team. Within this page there are a variety of direct links which include those to the British Embassy / consulate (where in existence). For FCO general enquiries: Tel. 020 7008 1500. For travel advice: Tel. 0870 606 0290.

For pupil exchange visits:

- a. Wardle Trust follows RMBC who have adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel guidance document entitled: '[Young People's Exchange Visits](#)', dated 2005. Available from the Outdoor Education Adviser. Schools are required to adhere to this guidance.
- b. Further information may be obtained from the British Council (Learning) Tel. 020 7389 4880 www.britishcouncil.org/education.

c. The following 'Child-Safe / Travel-Safe' publications are recommended:

- 1) Advice for Schools
- 2) Advice for Parents & Guardians
- 3) Advice for Host Families
- 4) Advice for Pupils

(Note: The 'Advice to Schools' booklet encompasses the other three booklets)

See www.child-safe.org.uk (click on 'Child-Safe/Travel-Safe' in the blue box).

d) 'The Protection of Young People in the Context of International Visits 2002' is recommended. Contact: City of Edinburgh Council Education Department. Tel. 0131 469 3328 Fax. 0131 469 3311 For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card - formerly E111). See www.dh.gov.uk

For Overseas Expeditions see below.

For further information on 'Visits Abroad', please refer to:

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 197-239

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

Overseas Expeditions

Wardle Trust 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.

Overseas Expeditions (for the purposes of this document) are defined as those which typically take place in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries. (The definition of remoteness may include consideration of population density, topography, transport, the availability and quality of emergency services and so on)

RMBC places stringent requirements on Overseas Expedition providers, and Wardle Trust would be required to allow up to 18 months for RMBC approval to be granted.

Further guidance is contained within 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 1'

(GOE1) This should be requested from RMBC and considered when the proposal is initiated (normally 18-24 months before the venture). This guidance includes a checklist of vital aspects that must be considered prior to the school making a commitment with an external provider. In particular, schools should consider the educational aims of the visit, that appropriate progression takes place, and that the requirements relating to 'Best Value' are met.

Unless specific exemption has been granted by RMBC, it is a requirement that the Visit Leader attends the one day 'Overseas Expeditions and Fieldwork: a Course for Teachers and Youth Leaders' organised by the Royal Geographical Society and endorsed by the national LAs' Panel. See: www.rgs.org/eac email: eac@rgs.org

The EVC will contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if further advice is required regarding overseas visits.

WATER 'MARGIN ACTIVITIES

This section applies to learning activities that might 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.

Wardle Trust acknowledges the immense educational benefits that water-margin activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages water-margin activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

Prior to engaging in water-margin activities, the school should consider whether the aims and objectives of the visit could be suitably met by other means.

The definition above is critical:

At the outset the school should decide whether the activity:

- a. falls short of this definition (in which case this section does not apply)
- b. does fall within this definition (in which case the below requirements apply)
- c. exceeds this definition (in which case the Section below applies)

All staff involved in water-margin activities as defined above should be conversant with, and must adhere to guidance contained within the document: 'Group Safety at Water Margins', produced by DfE in conjunction with CCPR. It is a RMBC requirement that a copy of this document must be made available to all supervising adults in advance of the visit. - available from the school EVC or downloaded from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

As with all Educational Visits, there should be an alternative fully risk-assessed 'Plan B' that could be used where conditions dictate, and for which parental consent has been obtained.

RMBC approval is not required for water-margin activities (as defined above), but the leader must have previous relevant experience and their competence to lead the activity must be ratified by the EVC and Headteacher.

Please contact the Outdoor Education Visits Adviser if you require further advice on Water-Margin Activities.

WATER-BASED ACTIVITIES

Wardle Trust acknowledges the immense educational benefits that water-based activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages water-based activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

Except for those activities outlined below, all forms of water-based activities (e.g. swimming, canoeing, raft building, river walking, etc.) are regarded as adventurous activities and as such require LA approval.

Swimming in UK public pools (see Swimming section below), and water-margin activities that do not exceed the definition above are not regarded as adventurous activities and therefore do not require LA approval.

The responsibility for the safety of participants in a water-based activity will rest with either:

- a. an external provider (in which case the provider must complete Form EV4),
- or*
- b. a member of school staff (in which case this person must be specifically approved by RMBC to lead the activity, Form EV3).

In order to participate in water-based activities, pupils should normally be water confident. Pupils who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to risk assessment, and taking into account factors such as the activity taking place and supervision arrangements. Reference to National Governing Body guidelines may help in this process. The level of water confidence of all pupils must be known by the activity leader prior to the commencement of water-based activities, and this information should be requested from parents prior to the visit taking place.

Leaders should have a 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 must be worn at all times by all participants in water based activities, except, at the discretion of the leader, where the activity: a) takes place in a swimming pool, or b) is 'swimming'.

For further information on 'Water Activities', please refer to:

DfES Part 2 supplement: 'Standards for Adventure' Para 35-42

DfES Part 3 supplement: 'A Handbook for Group Leaders'

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits - or contact the Outdoor Educational Visits Adviser for further advice.

Swimming

Wardle Trust 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.

Pupils must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities. The following level of lifeguard supervision applies:

Swimming pools (UK public)

Note: RMBC Approval is not required for this activity.

- a. 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 teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- b. School staff retain a pastoral role for pupils at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.
- c. Unless suitably qualified (as below) school staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding.
- d. For swimming lessons, schools should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the pupils are qualified according to the guidelines given below.

Swimming pools (other: e.g. hired pool, hotel, etc.)

Note: RMBC Approval is required for this activity.

If suitable lifeguarding arrangements are not provided by the hotel then the Visit Leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety. The visit leader must ensure that there is a qualified lifeguard (current NPLQ or equivalent) in attendance. This could be a member of school staff, or a senior student. The role of the lifeguard is to:

- Keep a close watch over the pool and the pool users, exercising appropriate levels of control (Note: the lifeguard should remain on the poolside at all times except in the case of an emergency when it may be necessary to clear the pool if no other responsible/qualified person is present).
- If necessary, brief pool users in advance regarding 'rules' (e.g. No diving, running, etc.)
- Communicate effectively with pool users
- Anticipate problems and prevent accidents
- Intervene to prevent behaviour which is unsafe
- Carry out a rescue from the water
- Give immediate first aid to any casualty

The above must be accomplished in the context of the normal operating procedures for the pool and the emergency plan. These should be obtained before swimming takes place, and full familiarisation of the systems described should be walked through at the pool. Most importantly, staff should be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who in the hotel will provide back up for the lifeguard during an emergency. Staff will also need to ascertain whether they have exclusive use of the pool or whether other guests are able to swim at the same time. Other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

If a senior student holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency lifeguard action, and supervision should remain the responsibility of teachers.

Open water swimming

Note: RMBC Approval is required for this activity.

For free swimming activity

- a. a valid National Beach Lifeguard Qualification administered RLSS UK (or equivalent in the country visited) see www.lifesavers.org.uk

For structured or programmed activity

- b. a valid RLSS UK Emergency Response (Activity Supervisor) Award or
- c. a written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.

In addition, the designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. (A site evaluation form is available from RLSS UK on receipt of a large SAE.)

For further information see:

'Managing Health and Safety in Swimming Pools' HSE books 2003

'Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport' BAALPE guide 2004

'Safe Supervision' ASA, ISRM, RLSS UK et al October 2001

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'

Para 183-189 '*Swimming in the Sea / Swimming Pools*'.

- available from the school EVC or download via www.redbridgevisits.org.uk -
or contact the Outdoor Educational Visits Adviser for further advice.

'OPEN COUNTRY' ACTIVITIES

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

For the purposes of Wardle Trust approval, 'open country' is normally defined as above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access. However, this is a somewhat arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the EVC or contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if you think this might apply.

Open country activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and therefore the overall visit requires RMBC approval (Form EV2).

In addition, the technical competence of the instructor or staff member leading the activity must be ratified. This person will be either:

- a. An External Provider (see below), or
- b. A member of school staff (see below)

Where open country activities are to be led by an External Provider (e.g. an activity centre), Form EV4 ensures that the activity leader/instructor possesses an appropriate level of technical competence. No further action is necessary as regards the technical competence of the activity leader.

Where open country activities are to be led by a member of school staff, then the leader must be approved by RMBC (Form EV3). For approval the leader must demonstrate a minimum level of technical competence as follows:

- a. For leaders of walking groups outside the UK or Ireland, please contact the EVC or the Outdoor Education Adviser for further guidance.
- b. For leaders of walking groups in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland, the appropriate minimum qualification is the Mountain Leader Award (Summer or Winter as appropriate) administered by Mountain Leader Training UK www.mltuk.org or a written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.
- c. 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, and where any hazards within it are identifiable and avoidable, and where wild camping or movement on steep ground is not involved, the appropriate minimum qualification is the Walking Group Leader Award (WGL), administered by Mountain Leader Training UK www.mltuk.org or a written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.
- d. For leaders of walking groups in terrain 'easier' than that defined in c), the leader must demonstrate an appropriate level of competence. This may include one or more of the following:
 - I. The Sports Leaders UK Level 2 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (formerly BELA). This is appropriate for leading groups in lowland areas, and for organising base and mobile camps. See www.bst.org.uk
 - II. Completion of a suitable 'Leader Training' Course.
 - III. A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser.
 - IV. Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated.
 - V. A statement of competence (written or implied) by the Headteacher.

The Outdoor Education Adviser can be contacted if further advice regarding open country activities is required.

SNOWSPORTS

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

Skiing, snowboarding and related activities are regarded as adventurous activities, and the overall visit must therefore be approved by RMBC.

Schools are particularly encouraged to consider the benefits of snowsport visits taking place during term time as opposed to during the school holiday period. These benefits include: greater choice generally, less queuing for lifts, less crowded slopes therefore less chance of collisions occurring, less crowded resort, higher possibility of 'sole use' of accommodation, lessons more likely to be conducted by permanent snowsport school instructors (as opposed to 'casual' instructors), greater likelihood of English speaking instructors, considerable cost savings through avoiding high season (possibly allowing more pupils to participate), etc.

A member of staff intending to organise a snowsport trip (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) must hold the Ski Course Organiser Award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England. Tel. 0121 501

2314 www.englishski.org and must have previously accompanied at least one school snowsport visit.

Pupils may only ski or snowboard when under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent person. This would normally be an instructor employed by the local snowsports school. Schools should therefore consider the merits of fully instructed lessons of 4/5 hours duration per day.

To lead skiing or snowboarding (i.e. without a snowsports school instructor) a member of staff must:

- a. be qualified as below, *and*
- b. have been approved by RMBC, *and*
- c. operate at all times within the remit of his/her qualifications, experience, and competence.

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

- The Alpine Ski Course Leader Award (ASCL) of Snowsport England

Tel. 0121 501 2314 www.englishski.org *or*

- The Alpine Ski Leader Award (ASL) of Snowsport Scotland

Tel. 0131 445 4151 www.snowsportsotland.org.uk *or*

- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'.

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

- The Snowboard Leader Award (SBL) administered by Snowsport Scotland

Tel. 0131 445 4151 www.snowsportsotland.org.uk *or*

- A statement of competence by an appropriate 'technical adviser'.

In recognition of the position of the FIS (Federation Internationale De Ski) & AfPE (Association for Physical Education) RMBC strongly recommends that all snowsports participants should wear an appropriate helmet, unless it is safe not to do so (in particular clearly defined circumstances) school's should move to this position as soon as it is practicable. In any event children under the age of 8 years and all young people involved in racing must wear a helmet at all times.

The law in Italy and Lower Austria (at the time of writing) request that all young people under the age of 14 must wear helmets at all times.

Pupils must not participate in off-piste activities.

Please contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if you require further advice regarding snowsports. See "Guidance" section of the website.

FIRST AID

The level of first aid provision for a visit should be based on risk assessment. The EVC will make a professional judgment as to the level of first aid required for a particular visit. This decision could be influenced by factors such as the environment and proximity to emergency services or professional care. However, as a minimum, Wardle Trust asserts that for all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid.

The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is a basic recognised qualification which may be suitable for routine urban visits, however risk assessment may indicate that a higher level qualification is appropriate in circumstances where it is likely that access by the emergency services may be delayed.

A first aid kit (appropriate to the visit) should be carried.

For further information on 'First Aid', please refer to:

DfES Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 64 – 68 - available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

Guidance on First Aid for Schools: www.teachernet.gov.uk/firstaid

Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs: www.teachernet.gov.uk/medical

- or contact the Outdoor Educational Visits Adviser for further advice.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Schools should draw up an emergency action plan within their Health and Safety policy for Educational Visits.

All staff involved in a visit should be aware of the action to be taken in the event of an emergency. The information contained within the DfE Part 3 supplement: 'A Handbook for Group Leaders' is particularly appropriate, and all staff should be aware of the guidance contained therein, in addition to any school specific procedures. - available from the school EVC or download via www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

For visits that take place outside normal school hours:

- a. A completed Form EV7 'Emergency Card – Visit Leader' must be with the Visit Leader at all times, and
- b. A completed Form EV8 'Emergency Card – School Contacts' must be with the School Emergency Contact(s) at all times.

All staff involved in a visit should be aware of the action to be taken in the event of an emergency. The loose insert contained within the DfE Part 3 supplement: 'A Handbook for Group Leaders' is particularly appropriate,

In an emergency, if it is not possible to reach any of the 'designated school contacts', the leader should telephone the Trust's emergency number +44 07885796966 (daytime) 01484 713712 (out of hours). Procedures have been put in place by the Trust to ensure that contact can be made with senior staff of the school and that the appropriate Trust support systems can be activated.

For further information on 'Emergency Procedures', please also refer to:

DfE Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' Para 240-250

- available from the school EVC or download from www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits
- or contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if you require further advice.

DEFINITION OF A 'ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITY'

The following activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and require RMBC approval:

- All activities in 'open' country
- Swimming (all forms, excluding UK public 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 (Further guidance on www.rochdalevisits.org)
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Abseiling
- River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration
- Shooting and archery
- Skiing, snowboarding, and related activities (including dry slope)
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Horse riding
- Motor sport – all forms
- High level ropes courses
- ‘Extreme’ sports
- Other activities (e.g. initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above

‘Open country’ is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access. However, this is a somewhat arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the EVC who will contact the Outdoor Education Adviser if you think this might apply. The level of competence required to lead in open country section above.

For the purposes of RMBC approval, the following activities are not regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require RMBC approval. However, these activities must be supervised by a teacher who has previous relevant experience and who been assessed by the EVC or Headteacher as competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or on non-remote country paths
- Field studies (unless in the environments stated above)
- Swimming in UK public pools
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go-karts
- Ice skating
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.

- Physical Education and sports fixtures
- Water-margin activities as defined in water-margin section.

Please contact the EVC if you are uncertain over whether a particular activity requires RMBC approval.

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