

## 1.6.3 Activities and Transporting Children

### Regulations and standards

#### England:

- [Regulation 9: The enjoyment and achievement standard](#)
- [Guide to the enjoyment and achievement standard](#)
- [Regulation 12: The protection of children standard](#)
- [Guide to the protection of children standard](#)

#### Wales:

- Regulation 43: Premises, facilities and equipment overarching requirement  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/43/made>
- Regulation 57: Health and safety

### Scope of this chapter

The term 'Activity' means any activity undertaken with a child away from the home or school. This includes home contact, educational visits, the transporting of children to court or other appointments, taking children to and from school, on trips, holidays, days out or outdoor activities - within the UK and abroad.

The procedure is designed to apply to group activities but the principles apply to the undertaking of activities with one child.

Where a series or range of activities are necessary (the transporting of children to and from school, a series of supervised contacts or routine activities), the arrangements should be agreed with the Home Manager in advance, and a date set for the review of the arrangements.

### Relevant guidance

#### **Department for Education Advice on Health and Safety for Schools, including School Trips**

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## **1. Pre-Activity Planning and Authorisation**

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The following should be read/applied 'as appropriate', depending on the type of activity/trip. The general principle is that activities and trips must be properly planned and authorised, even 'short trips' to the shops. However, it is not suggested that it is necessary to fulfil all the arrangements listed, unless they are appropriate to the activity/trip. If in doubt, the Home Manager must be consulted.

As soon as it is known an activity or series of activities are likely or necessary, the Home Manager must be consulted and should oversee and approve all arrangements or delegate another person to act on the Home Manager's behalf. All arrangements must be recorded and signed off by the Home's Manager or delegate.

If only one member of staff is taking part, it is always assumed that person is in charge or responsible for the activity. Where more than one staff is taking part, one person must be designated Shift Leader (or person in charge) and other staff should be given other responsibilities/roles as necessary. These other responsibilities must be overseen by the Shift Leader and approved by the Home Manager.

The Shift Leader should complete a Risk Assessment (see **Section 6, Risk Assessments**) which must be 'signed off' by the manager.

The Shift Leader must prepare and produce a route, timetable or schedule for the activity, including dates, times of travel, vehicle(s) to be used, the location of planned breaks, places/locations to be visited and people to be visited.

The Shift Leader must identify the children who will be taking part in the activity and consider what arrangements or plans must be made, taking account of:

- a. **Care Plan, Placement Plan** or other relevant plans;
- b. Recent/relevant events/incidents;
- c. Group dynamics, staff/child relationships;
- d. Child Protection Issues;
- e. Violent or other offending behaviour;
- f. The healthcare or mental health needs of the children;
- g. Level associated with Drug/Alcohol etc. misuse;
- h. Level of disability and associated special needs.

The Home Manager must approve the arrangements, ensuring that the best interests of the child are accounted for; in these circumstances the staff/adults taking responsibility for the child must be provided with relevant information about the child to enable the activity to be undertaken safely.

The Shift Leader must ensure the child/staff ratios are adequate to meet the needs of the children and the risks posed. For example, where there is a risk of violence, hazardous activities are undertaken or remote locations are used.

Where there is a risk of confrontational or violent behaviour, the Shift Leader/Home Manager must ensure that staff undertaking the activity are suitably trained and are familiar with procedures and guidelines contained in this manual relating to Behaviour Management (See: **Managing Behaviours Policy**), Incidents and the use of **Physical Intervention**.

The Shift Leader must ensure that parent(s) have been consulted/informed and consents obtained (**Placement Plans** for Looked After Children contain a Consent form).

All staff must carry ID cards.

## **2. Insurance**

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The Shift Leader must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place.

When arranging overnight activities a copy of the accommodation centre insurance will be required.

With regard to off-site activities, places such as open spaces may not have insurance therefore careful consideration must be given before participating in the activity.

## **3. Financial Arrangements and Meals**

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The Shift Leader must decide what financial arrangements are necessary, and agree them with the Home Manager. The Home Manager must decide how finances will be recorded.

The Shift Leader must ensure that adequate arrangements are made for meals, breaks; taking account of the dietary, healthcare and cultural needs/choices of the children, staff and carers.

## **4. Transport Arrangements - General**

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Also see **Section 5, Transporting Children**

For distances in excess of 200 miles, two drivers will be required; drivers must share the driving equally.

The following must be taken into account:

- a. Passenger safety;
- b. Competence of the driver;
- c. Awareness of driver's hours;
- d. Traffic conditions;
- e. Contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown/emergency;
- f. Weather;

- g. Journey time and distance;
- h. Stopping off points for long journeys and toilet breaks - 20 minutes every 2 hours;
- i. Appropriate seat belts or restraints must be used and fastened (see end of this section, below, for requirements);
- j. The transport must have a first aid kit;
- k. A mobile telephone should be taken/carried by the Shift Leader and each member of staff likely to be separated from the Shift Leader. If mobile 'phones are not carried suitable arrangements should be made to enable communication between staff undertaking the activity.

A First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher must always be carried on the vehicle.

Where outdoor activities are planned, suitable First Aid Kits should be carried away from the vehicle.

Before setting out the Shift Leader must ensure that suitable mechanical checks are undertaken in relation to the vehicle.

### **Seat Belts/Restraints**

All young persons and adults are required to wear a seat belt when travelling in any vehicle.

## **5. Transporting Children**

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Also see **Section 4, Transport Arrangements - General**.

Children over the age of 12 may be allowed to sit in the front of vehicles if the arrangement is approved by the Home's Manager.

Children may not hold or be responsible for vehicle keys and may not steer cars or use petrol pumps.

All vehicle occupants must wear suitable seat belts or restraints at all times when in vehicles.

Children must not tamper with or use any controls except, at the discretion of the driver, the radio/stereo.

If it is assessed that a child may be distressed whilst in the vehicle or a child becomes distressed to the extent that the safety of the vehicle or occupants may be compromised, the vehicle must be stopped; preferably in a layby or suitable stopping place. However, the vehicle may have to be stopped at the side of the road or on the hard shoulder of a motorway. In these circumstances, the hazard warning lights should be activated, the occupants should get out of the vehicle and stand well away from the road, and the emergency services must be summoned.

If the safety of the occupants is compromised, with the risk of Injury or Damage to Property, Physical Intervention may be used or the Police should be called to assist. See: **Managing Behaviours Policy** and **Offending and Anti-Social Behaviour – Guidance on when to Involve the Police Procedure**

If the children with a history of violence must be transported, the Shift Leader must ensure the following:

- a. Children must sit in the rear of the vehicle, with each child supervised by a minimum of one member of staff;
- b. Staff must be clear when it may be appropriate to use Physical Intervention and what techniques may be appropriate;
- c. Children must not sit behind, or be able to distract the driver;
- d. The Shift Leader must be satisfied that no items, which could be used as weapons, are available to the child. These could include tools, aerosols, pens etc;
- e. It may be necessary to search the child before the activity starts; see: **Searching Children Procedure**. Care should be taken when getting in and out of vehicles. This is the time when holds are weakened;
- f. Some thought should be given to action on arrival at destination - will more staff be needed? Is a room available? Is it easy to get the car close to the destination, and is it possible to avoid other children becoming involved?
- g. If the potential risks cannot be managed safely, the activity must not go ahead; or must cease and, if necessary, the Police be called to assist.

## **6. Risk Assessment**

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It is not necessary to undertake a separate Risk Assessment for each activity/trip. Where a range or series of activities may be undertaken (the transporting of children to and from school, a series of supervised contacts, the undertaking of routine activities), the Manager may approve a Risk Assessment and associated arrangements such as staffing levels for a period; and then set a date for the review of the assessment/arrangements.

The Home Manager or person delegated to oversee the activity must approve a completed a risk assessment in advance.

A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. It does not generally require technical formulae or professional health and safety expertise, but specialised information for some visits may be necessary and the Home Managers must ensure that the person assessing is competent to do so.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on an activity should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Children must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety and protection of all concerned must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained or managed, the activity must not take place.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations as well as those described in **Section 1, Pre-Activity Planning**

- a. What are the hazards?
- b. Whom might they affect?
- c. What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level?
- d. Can the designated Shift Leader put the safety measures in place?
- e. What steps will be taken in an emergency?

In undertaking the risk assessment, the Shift Leader must consult all other staff taking part and children who are capable of making informed decisions, record the risk assessment, arrange for it to be seen and signed off by the Home Manager and Social Worker and then provide copies for all staff taking part. One copy must be left with the Home Manager.

Frequent activities/visits to local venues such as swimming baths or where a child is transported to and from school may not need a risk assessment for each trip; but the Home Manager must ensure that a risk assessment is completed for the series/range of activities/visits; and a date set for the review of the risk assessment.

Alternatively, a risk assessment which has been agreed for a series or range of activities/visits must be reviewed immediately after any information comes to light or any event/incident which compromises the safety of the children/staffs. In such circumstances, the activities/visits must be suspended until a review has taken place and the manager is satisfied that a suitable new risk assessment has been completed.

The Shift Leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks;

- a. The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- b. The location, routes and modes of transport;
- c. The competence, experience and qualifications of the staff;
- d. Ratios of children to staff;
- e. The group members' age competence, fitness, and temperament, and the suitability of the activity;
- f. The healthcare needs of the children;
- g. The quality and suitability of available equipment;
- h. Seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- i. Emergency procedures;
- j. The need to monitor risks throughout the activity;
- k. The children's backgrounds. i.e. offending, health, absconding, child protection, drugs.

When approving the Risk Assessment and subsequent plan for the activity, the Home Manager should determine what latitude the Shift Leader has to change the plan, the need for a contingency plan; an 'on call' or backup procedure to provide support, advice or direction to the Shift Leader once the activity has started.

## **7. Prepare Children**

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As soon as practicable before the activity is due to start, the children should be notified of the following; and this must be recorded.

- a. The intention to involve the children in the planning;
- b. An explanation of the proposed activity, including its aims and objectives;
- c. Expectations about their behaviour and the implications of poor behaviour;

- d. Appropriate and inappropriate personal contact including sexual activity;
- e. Emergency procedures and safety precautions;
- f. Rendezvous procedures;
- g. Dangers e.g. coastal visits, mountain walking;
- h. What clothing they will require.

## 8. Adventure Activities

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This Section was completely amended: July 2009

If an activity holiday is proposed, the name of organisation, activities involved type of accommodation, address and phone number of organisation should be obtained.

There are a number of checks which must be made on activity holidays.

These **must** be undertaken by the Shift Leader unless the holiday has been arranged by the child's school, the school should be asked to confirm that these checks have been made and that sufficient staff or subcontracted staff will be present to supervise the children.

### 8.1 Organisations registered with the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority

The Social Worker/Shift Leader should confirm that the organisation is licensed with the **Adventure Activity Licensing Authority**. The licence registers the organisation for sports in 4 categories (caving, trekking, mountaineering, water sports) and the conditions in which it is licensed to provide them. The Social Worker/Shift Leader should look for:

- Licence number. This will be a double number e.g.: L1234/R5678;
- You should verify the licence by ringing the Licensing Authority (see link above);
- What sports and conditions it is licensed for.

The licence is an indication of the standard of health and safety the organisation achieves. It also indicates that police checks and references have been taken up for staff.

### 8.2 Organisations not registered with the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority

Some activities, which contain an element of risk fall below or outside of the licensing level and requirements. For organisations not licensed with the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority, the following checks should be carried out:

Ask for the following:

- A list of staff and their qualifications for the activities offered;
- Whether all staff and volunteers hold relevant police / **Disclosure And Barring Service** checks;
- Whether references are taken up on all staff and volunteers;

- Whether the organisation undertakes formal risk assessments on the activities; ask to be sent copy/copies of the risk assessment(s). These should identify risks as well as measures and procedures by which the risks are controlled.

## **9. Accommodation**

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### **9.1. Accommodation (Indoors)**

- a. The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the group's use;
- b. There should be heating and appropriate ventilation;
- c. The accommodation must be safe i.e. locks on doors;
- d. The accommodation must have a fire alarm;
- e. The whole group must be made aware of the layout of the accommodation;
- f. There must be adequate space for storing clothing;
- g. There must be adequate lighting (take a torch);
- h. There should be recreational accommodation/facilities wherever possible.

### **9.2. Accommodation (Outdoors)**

The above should be taken into consideration. For camping, there are numerous additional considerations to be taken into account, e.g. safety issues, security, cooking safety, fire. All concerns should be part of the risk assessment.

## **10. Sleeping Arrangements**

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Wherever possible, there should be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for children and staff. If this is not possible, a rota system must be implemented.

Wherever possible, staff should supervise the children at night (and remain in gender specific rooms).

A rota should be devised to enable the maximum supervision possible. The on call person should not retire until the children have been settled for one hour.

Individual/group needs must be taken into consideration at night e.g. a child may prefer not to sleep in a dormitory setting. Are there any child protection issues? Sleeping arrangements must reflect the fact that staff have considered the individual needs of and associated risks to children on the activity. Sleeping arrangements must be detailed in the plan and approved by the Home Manager.

Security arrangements must be implemented at night. Wherever possible, a child should be prevented from absenting themselves.

## **11. Absence Whilst on an Activity**

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If a child becomes Absent, Missing without consent or Absconded whilst on an activity it will be necessary to follow the procedures set out in **Absent Missing Children/Young People Policy**.

## **Revision History**

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Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018

**End**

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