



Community Services: Education

Argyll House
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To: Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

School Excursions and Educational Visits

This circular should be read in conjunction with the outdoor education guidance which gives overarching guidance for individual activities such as swimming, hill walking, sailing, abseiling etc. (management circular 1.26)

Organisers of any excursions and visits should also read Circular 3.14 regarding Insurance.

1 Introduction

- 1.0 School excursions and educational visits can involve an element of risk. While organisers of activities cannot give guarantees of safety to participants (or their parents) it is essential nevertheless that all possible precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of all involved. Taking account of the staff:pupil ratio the expectation of the authority would be that all supervising staff would undertake their responsibilities towards children and young people with the same seriousness as would be expected of a prudent parent.
- 1.1 Excursions and educational visits are an important and valuable part of our educational system. The objective of this circular is to clarify the procedures to be adopted and to enhance the quality of these visits.
- 1.2 Every effort should be made to ensure that excursions and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of additional support or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, religion etc. Current legislation means that, wherever possible, disabled people should have the same access as non-disabled people in their access to education. If an excursion is to cater for participants with additional support needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

1.3 Head Teachers/Campus Principals are reminded that the authority has agreed that **only those visits which are educational in nature should be permitted during term time.**

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher/Campus Principal to draw the following requirements to the attention of staff planning and organising educational excursions and visits and to ensure that the instructions are complied with and the implications of the instructions are fully understood:

- All educational day visits, excursions and off-campus activities taking place under the auspices of the school at any time during the calendar year must be officially approved by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager delegated to act on their behalf and a note of any visit out-with the village/town area should be sent to the School Services Support Manager;
- If there is a day trip that involves the whole school where no member of staff will be left in school on any given day, the completed Appendix 1 form must be sent in advance to the Education Office in Dunoon (School Services Support Manager);
- A copy of Appendix 2 giving approval for all residential and overseas visits must be submitted to the Education Office in Dunoon (School Services Support Manager), **prior to a trip taking place**, which will maintain a register of such visits for record purposes;

General Points

1.4 While for school children and young people over the age of 16 years a greater degree of personal responsibility might be assumed, the rules and guidance given in this circular continue to apply. Parents of young people aged 16 to 18 years retain a responsibility in law to continue to provide advice and guidance. Accordingly, Head Teachers/Campus Principals should ensure that parents of young people in this age group are kept fully informed of any school excursions or educational visits in which their sons or daughters will be involved so that, as parents, they are in a position to discharge their responsibilities.

1.5 Head Teachers/Campus Principals should ensure that leaders-in-charge emphasise to children and young people the levels of cooperation expected, standards of behaviour required, and the importance of avoiding behaviour which might bring the school into disrepute. Under no circumstances should the consumption of alcohol by young people involved in a school sponsored excursion be approved or condoned. Leaders-in-charge require to be aware of the possibility of inappropriate behaviour by individual young people and have appropriate agreed strategies ready if necessary. If behaviour prior to the excursion could lead to exclusion from the

excursion, this should be made clear to the child/young person/parent and the consequences that they may not be able to get a refund for the sums paid to date.

2 Child protection

This part of the circular outlines the child protection issues which leaders-in-charge need to take into account when planning a school trip or excursion.

- 2.1 Leaders-in-charge should make themselves thoroughly aware of the Education Service child protection procedures. If further advice or clarification is required, the designated school child protection coordinator will be the first point of contact, and thereafter the senior manager with designated responsibility for child protection within the Education Service.
- 2.2 All staff involved with an excursion should be familiar with the need to prevent child abuse, to understand signs that a child is at risk or has been harmed, and to respond appropriately if he or she has concerns. Bullying causes significant harm and upset to children, particularly when away from home, and prevention and responses to bullying must also be considered.
- 2.3 Staff should plan to minimise situations where children are at risk of inappropriate contact with adults, or other children and young people; inappropriate conduct between peers; or situations where children may be at risk of abuse. Staff should also plan for appropriate responses to concerns and systems of communication, support, notification to other services and record keeping. Please refer to the authority child protection guidance and Education Management Circular 3.23 on Child protection for more information.
- 2.4 All adults who have the charge of children and young people have a responsibility to ensure that they are not harmed and are properly cared for. Children and young people with a problem will choose to speak to a person they trust, irrespective of the role and status of that person. It is therefore essential that all education staff are familiar with the authority guidelines on child protection.
- 2.5 For the protection of both adults and young people, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone with a young person wherever possible.
- 2.6 It may be that not every adult member of the party has been trained in child protection, especially where volunteers are used on an occasional basis. Adults participating in school trips must receive at least basic training from the school's Child Protection Officer. Other adults participating on the trip e.g. parents sitting on a bus with children on the way to a Pipe Band competition without responsibility should be given a simple information sheet to raise awareness. It is essential, however, that any adult with a degree of responsibility has received child protection training.

- 2.7 All adults who are in substantial and unsupervised contact with children **must** be subject to an enhanced PVG (Protection of Vulnerable Groups) check before working with children including volunteers and parent helpers. Where some of the party helpers are volunteering adults and/or parents, full instructions should be given as to their responsibilities regarding the degree of supervision to be exercised.
- 2.8 There are some circumstances in which the leader-in-charge may judge that the limited level of contact by certain adults means an enhanced PVG check is not necessary. This would be limited to situations such as:
- an occasional involvement as a helper or driver on a day excursion in which other staff are PVG checked and have received child protection training, and in which the adult will not take or have unsupervised or sole supervision of children; or
 - the short-term involvement by an individual or contractor with a group of children during their excursion, where the group continues to be supervised at all times by the group leader and staff who are PVG checked and trained in child protection.
- 2.9 Care must be taken to consider suitable supervision for activities such as sports and swimming (e.g. changing rooms), personal assistance for disabled children, and night-time care and safety during residential activities. In circumstances such as these an enhanced PVG check and child protection training are considered essential.

3 Participants with additional support and medical needs

- 3.0 Head Teachers/Campus Principals should make every effort to include participants with additional support or medical needs in excursions, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures which may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Participants with additional support needs

- 3.1 Staff should use the planning stage and associated risk assessment to consider how the needs of the participants who require additional support can be met. The following factors should be taken into consideration:
- How might the participant best be able to take part in and benefit from the activity?
 - Does the activity need to be adapted to enable the participant to take part to the best of their ability?
 - What additional or different resources are necessary?
 - Who will be responsible for ensuring that instructions are clearly explained to the participant?

- Will additional supervision be necessary?
- 3.2 It may be helpful to the participant if one of the supervisors already knows them well and appreciates their needs fully. The leader-in-charge should discuss the visit with the parents of participants with additional support needs to ensure that suitable arrangements have been put in place to ensure their safety.

Participants with medical needs

- 3.3 All staff should be aware of participants' medical needs and medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets containing details of each participant's needs and any other relevant information provided by parents is one way of achieving this.
- 3.4 Special arrangements, in line with authority policy, for the safekeeping and administration of medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required. If appropriate, a volunteer member of staff should be trained in administering medication, if they have not already been so trained, and should take responsibility in a medical emergency. If the participant's safety cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to ask the parent or a care assistant to accompany a particular participant.
- 3.5 The leader-in-charge should discuss the participant's individual needs with his/her parents. Parents should be asked to supply the following information, much of which is relevant to day to day school activities and will therefore already be held in school:
- details of medical conditions;
 - emergency contact numbers;
 - the participant's GP's name, address and 'phone number;
 - written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage and frequency) and parental permission to administer;
 - parental permission if the participant needs to administer their own medication or agreement for a volunteer member of staff to administer - parents should provide advice and information to assist with the preparation of an emergency plan;
 - information on any allergies or phobias;
 - information on any special dietary requirements;
 - information on any toileting difficulties, special equipment or aids to daily living;
 - special transport needs for participants who require help with mobility.
- 3.6 Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing wheelchairs on transport and at residential centres etc, if appropriate. If ramps are not going to be available in certain places, the organisers may wish to arrange to take

portable ramps with them. The leader-in-charge should at an early stage assess whether manual handling skills will be needed and, if so, whether training should be sought.

- 3.7 All adults supervising the excursion should be given the opportunity to talk through any concerns they may have about their ability to support participants. If leaders-in-charge are concerned about whether they can provide for a participant's safety or the safety of other participants on a trip because of a medical condition, they should seek general medical advice from the school Health Service or further information from the participant's parents.
- 3.8 Leaders-in-charge should ensure that the insurance policy covers staff and participants with pre-existing medical needs. See Education Management Circular 3.14.

4 Residential and overseas visits

This part of the circular refers to residential visits (with one or more overnight stays) within the United Kingdom and foreign visits which take place under the auspices of schools at any time during the calendar year.

- 4.1 Application for permission to arrange educational and foreign visits should be made to the Head Teacher/Campus Principal who must give formal approval in all cases before any contractual arrangements are made with travel firms. A copy of the completed appendix must be sent to the School Service Support Manager at Argyll House prior to travel. The organisational procedures noted below must be followed.
- 4.2 The Head Teacher/Campus Principal must:
- (a) receive a written application from the member of staff organising the visit (appendix 2) seeking approval in principle to proceed with the preliminary arrangements for the visit;
 - (b) clearly designate an overall leader-in-charge of the group;
 - (c) ensure that adequate supervision has been arranged given the nature of the group and the activity; a ratio of at least one adult to 10 children and young people would be appropriate with an increased level of supervision for children with additional support needs or for higher risk activities; in the case of a mixed group, adults of both sexes should be the norm, but the organiser may wish to consider appropriate supervision taking account of the nature of the individual excursion or visit;
 - (d) provide, in cases where some of the staff are volunteering adults or parents, full instructions as to their responsibilities and the degree of supervision to be exercised;

- (e) inform the parents or carers fully of the nature of the activity and obtain written agreement to participation on the consent form which must be used for this purpose (EV5); the only exception would be where a young person over 16 years has left home and as a result has the full legal capacity and responsibility of an adult notwithstanding being, in law, still a minor;
- (f) agree the final list of participants having regard to parents' or carers' wishes, medical records and other relevant factors;
- (g) ensure that participants are properly insured; please refer to Education Management Circular 3.14 on Insurance for children and young people, teachers and adults taking part in school excursions and activities;
- (h) name a person who is not participating in the excursion or visit to act as a school liaison officer; the named person should have all the necessary information about the visit; for trips abroad or of a long duration, it may be felt advisable to arrange a second school liaison officer as a reserve - see part 7 on emergency planning;
- (i) confirm to his or her satisfaction that all reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure the safety of all participants;
- (j) ensure that appropriate information is obtained with regard to potential hazards, eg cliffs, sea swells, rip tides, marshy ground etc; it must also be ascertained that the centre or sites to be visited:
 - i are suitable locations for the type of activity;
 - ii have adequate facilities for domestic, social and teaching requirements of the visiting group including separate accommodation for males and females;
 - iii are within convenient travelling distance of the outdoor facilities and resources where the planned activities are to take place;
- (k) be fully satisfied as to the capability of the travel company viz:
 - i tour operators should be able to produce evidence of suitable insurance and, if not a member of the School Travel Forum or ABTA, be able to demonstrate that it operates under a code of conduct equivalent to that of the former (see paragraph 8.3 for contact information); the tour operator must comply with all relevant European Union travel directives; tour operators should have a child protection policy and this should be read in advance and approved by the leader-in-charge as part of standard risk assessment procedures;
 - ii Head Teachers/Campus Principals should ensure that where a travel company is required to take a group by private coach to, from and during destination that the bus driver(s) and guides (if appropriate) have been

properly vetted and enhanced PVG checked; if the company has not undertaken such procedures for its staff, then at no time should the company staff have unsupervised contact with the children or young people;

- iii any minibus used during an excursion or visit must have lap and diagonal seat belts fitted to every passenger seat; **leaders-in-charge must ensure that all members of the party wear a seat belt whilst travelling.**

4.3 The leader-in-charge must:

- (a) obtain approval for the excursion or visit from the Head Teacher/Campus Principal (appendices 1 and 2);
- (b) plan the activity, eg dates, location, costs, transport, food, additional protective and distinctive clothing, equipment and other lead personnel;
- (c) organise the supervision in accordance with 4.2(d) above using parents and/or volunteers as appropriate;
- (d) ensure that all necessary PVG checks have been completed;
- (e) issue a written statement to the participants about the nature and cost of the activity, including details such as travelling arrangements;
- (f) arrange a briefing meeting with the participants, including staff and parents as appropriate to ensure that everyone is aware of the rules relating to the centre or venue being used as a base for the activity and is prepared to adhere to them;
- (g) collect signed consent forms and make appropriate arrangements for dealing with payments in accordance with Education Management Circular 1.10 on School funds procedures manual; copies of these consent forms should be held in the possession of the leader-in-charge throughout the visit for reference purposes and by the Head Teacher and/or school liaison officer;
- (h) make arrangements to hire or purchase any necessary equipment and book accommodation as required;
- (i) notify the appropriate local agencies such as Police, Coastguards and Mountain Rescue Services when visiting isolated locations;
- (j) designate one of the party leaders to be responsible for first aid arrangements, any welfare issues and any medication which has to be taken by members of the party; and to ensure that all members of the party have a current EHIC card enabling free or reduced medical treatment when visiting European Community countries;
- (k) ensure that the behaviour of the group in terms of respect for property and the privacy of local residents is acceptable by observing the outdoor access code,

seeking access permission for entry across farmland or private land, and restricting noise both in and around the venue at all times but especially between 11.00 pm and 8.00 am;

- (l) observe the Council policy on smoking;
- (m) be aware that incidents can occur leading to allegations being made about the behaviour of the group or individuals; such allegations include drug abuse, theft and vandalism to property within the vicinity of an outdoor centre or camp, access to alcohol, gambling, sexual misconduct and promiscuity or other behavioural issues;
- (n) be aware of the possibility of such occurrences, as noted in (m) above, occurring during residential activities and be particularly vigilant throughout the duration of the visit or excursion; careful planning and a full programme normally reduce the chances of such incidents happening;
- (o) ensure that everyone is aware of the general behaviour requirements and absolute importance of avoiding the kinds of behaviour described in (m) above and the need to obey any instructions given by staff;
- (p) ensure that everyone is aware of the sanctions which may be applied in the event of misconduct and the circumstances in which some or all of the party may be required to return early;
- (q) ensure that everyone is aware of the fire precautions and evacuation procedures and any facilities which should be used; a fire drill must be carried out on the first full day after arrival.

4.4 In planning safe accommodation the leader-in-charge should ensure that:

- (a) the group's immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group's use where possible;
- (b) staff (of both genders where appropriate) have sleeping accommodation on the same floor immediately adjacent to the participants' accommodation;
- (c) there is a staff member present on that floor whenever the participants are there;
- (d) child protection arrangements to protect both participants and staff have been thoroughly considered;
- (e) where hotel or hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visits;
- (f) in the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion; don't be lulled into a sense of false security by local assurances, such as "no need

to lock doors in this part of the country"; the presence of the group may attract unwelcome attention that is unusual in the locality;

- (g) where possible, internal doors are lockable but staff must have reasonable access to the participant accommodation at all times;
- (h) where participants' doors are locked, staff have immediate access, as necessary, to a master key;
- (i) all staff and participants know the emergency procedures and escape routes in the event of a fire; where windows and doors are locked against intrusion at night, ensure that alternative escape routes are known and that all fire doors function properly.

4.5 (a) Where an unmanned outdoor centre is used the leader-in-charge must ensure that participants are fully briefed on all matters relating to health and safety in the building. This must include:

- i fire drill and fire risks;
- ii health and safety regulations;
- iii a notice with clear instructions for contacting the nearest medical services, police, fire brigade should such emergencies arise;
- iv familiarisation with the layout of the centre and its environs;
- v any particular rules and regulations which relate to the use of the centre;

(b) in other venues or centres the leader-in-charge should liaise with the officer-in-charge to ensure that full information is available regarding the above.

4.6 Before leaving an unmanned centre, the leader-in-charge should:

- (a) turn off all lights and electrical appliances;
- (b) turn off all water taps and gas appliances;
- (c) ensure that all doors and windows including fire exits are secure;
- (d) ensure that the building is left clean and tidy; basins, toilets and other equipment and utensils should be cleaned;
- (e) ensure that coal fires are cleaned out, blankets folded, floors swept and waste bins emptied;
- (f) report any damage or breakage to the caretaker of the centre.

4.7 Where travel by ferry is to be undertaken the leader-in-charge must:

- (a) give careful consideration to the supervision arrangements required if children and young people are to be allowed access to the areas of the vessel made available to the travelling public; .

- (b) ensure the wearing of a lifejacket by any pupil on a trip in an “open “ vessel with no guardrails and carry out risk assessments on any other type of ferry travel to assess the requirement of the wearing of lifejackets;
- (c) reassemble the children and young people party in good time before the ferry docks to carry out a roll check prior to disembarkation;
- (d) where at any time it becomes apparent that a member of the party cannot be accounted for, approach a crew member and formally indicate "One of my party is missing; please inform the master"; it is thereafter the responsibility of the master of the vessel to take appropriate action.

NB In the case of a "man overboard" incident the party member witnessing it should immediately inform a crew member and thereafter the party leader.

4.8 The Head Teacher/Campus Principal must:

- (a) ensure that the leader-in-charge is aware of the aforementioned procedures;
- (b) ask the leader-in-charge to:
 - i prepare a general assessment of the excursion or visit in terms of the programme, domestic arrangements, instructional or teaching work undertaken and the response by the participants;
 - ii comment on the accommodation and general cleanliness of the building (if a centre is used) with appropriate recommendations for improvement;
 - iii comment on the behaviour of the group throughout, highlighting any problems or incidents which occurred;
- (c) report any accidents and misadventures to the appropriate Head of Service;

School exchanges (home stay)

4.9 School exchanges, whether within Scotland or overseas, offer children and young people a unique opportunity to provide enriching insights into other cultures and family lives. Home stays can also allow a significant saving on accommodation costs but bring with them additional complications in terms of supervision, child protection and individual responsibility. Due to these factors, home stays are more suitable for secondary aged children and young people. It is recommended that children under 12 should stay together as a group in suitable accommodation.

4.10 Home stay exchanges fall into one of two categories:

- (a) where children and young people from an authority school are staying with host families;
- (b) where families from an authority school are playing host to visiting children and young people.

The following arrangements are applicable to both categories.

4.11 Prior to an exchange, there needs to be appropriate contact between both schools involved in the exchange. This may precipitate an advance planning visit. Planning should include sharing agreed standards in relation to:

- authority guidelines in relation to educational excursions and exchange visits;
- child and young person behaviour;
- house rules;
- undertaking of safety agreements;
- sleeping arrangements.

4.12 All children and young people involved in an exchange should agree with the school an appropriate code of conduct to be observed during an exchange. This should include being sensitive to the privacy of others in the house, having respect for the host's property and an undertaking to keep their living space tidy. The contents of this agreement should be discussed and agreed with parents. Any code of conduct has to recognise any existing guidelines on appropriate behaviours contained in Education Management Circulars.

4.13 It should be made clear to exchangees that host parents have a right to establish reasonable 'house rules' that they have to observe during their stay. These 'house rules' should reflect existing norms and routines within the host's home.

4.14 Families should sign an undertaking of safety to provide a safe and secure home environment for the visiting child or young person. This would include a commitment to observe a child or young person's dietary and religious needs as appropriate, provide suitable accommodation and a confirmation that no member of the household has criminal convictions for violent or sexual offences.

4.15 If an authority establishment is playing host to visiting children and young people, that educational establishment has to satisfy itself that none of the host families include any child who is known to be 'at risk', or if possible, whether any adult residing in that home is considered to pose a risk to children or young people. Host families should undertake an enhanced PVG check. If there are any concerns with regard to the host family, under no circumstances should an exchangee be placed in that home.

4.16 Sleeping arrangements should be carefully planned in accordance with the following standards.

- The child or young person should only be sharing a room with a person of the same sex. Ideally, if there is to be room sharing, there should not be a large age gap between the children or young people concerned.

- The child or young person should have his/her own bed (even if this is a fold up or temporary guest bed).
- Access to night time bathroom facilities should not be via an adult's bedroom.
- Access to a bedroom or other room used by adults or people of the opposite sex should not be via the child or young person's bedroom.
- The child or young person should be provided with privacy for dressing and undressing.

5 Day excursions and visits, including farm visits

This part of the circular refers to school excursions or visits which involves children and young people being away from the school without incurring an overnight stay. A note of all day excursions out-with the village/town area be sent to the Education Office in Dunoon (School Services Support Manager) prior to the trip (an email outlining the date and nature of the trip is all that is required unless the whole school is involved, if this is the case then Appendix 1 form should be sent).

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher/Campus Principal to ensure the suitability of travelling arrangements and changing accommodation. Consideration should be given also as to the appropriate level of supervision. A ratio of at least one adult to 10 children and young people is the recommended maximum with an increased level of supervision for children with additional support needs or for higher risk activities; in the case of a mixed group, adults of both sexes should be the norm, but the Head Teacher may wish to consider appropriate supervision taking account of the nature of the individual excursion or visit. On occasion an offer may be made by parents to transport pupils and this would no doubt generally be accepted however the following guidelines should be followed in negotiating arrangements:

- No charge should be levied on pupils individually;
- The scheme devised should not be such that individual children might be debarred from taking part in the activity;
- A check must be made to ensure that the offerer has valid insurance;
- The standard PVG process should be applied (see management circular 1.56).

5.2 It is of prime importance that clear procedures are followed for approval to be given to an excursion or visit. In schools such visits must have the formal written approval of the Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager designated to act on their behalf.

5.3 The Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager designated to act on their behalf must:

- (a) formally approve the excursion or visit and the arrangements made for the organisation, supervision and implementation of the activity (appendix 1);
- (b) clearly designate an overall leader-in-charge of the party;
- (c) ensure that the level of supervision by responsible adults is appropriate to the nature of the excursion or visit;
- (d) provide, in cases where some of the supervising staff are volunteering adults and/or parents, full instructions as to their responsibilities regarding the degree of supervision to be exercised; this is particularly important where some adults may not have undertaken an enhanced PVG check. Under no circumstances should adults who do not possess an enhanced PVG check have unsupervised access to children;
- (e) inform the parents or carers fully of the nature of the activities and obtain written agreement to participate on an appropriate form (EV5); where forward planning envisages a programme of visits and excursions during a session it is appropriate to obtain previous consent for the programme and not for individual events; young persons over 16 years can agree participation on their own behalf but Head Teachers/Campus Principals should ensure that full information is made available to parents;
- (f) ensure that the location for an excursion or visit is appropriate for the activity and where possible make arrangements for a preliminary visit by an appropriate person to any destination or location;
- (g) ensure that appropriate information is obtained with regard to potential hazards.

5.4 The leader-in-charge must:

- (a) obtain formal approval for the excursion or visit from the Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager designated to act on their behalf (appendix 1);
- (b) plan the activity, eg dates, location, costs, transport, food, additional protective or distinctive clothing, equipment and leaders;
- (c) organise the level of supervision in accordance with 5.1 and 5.4(c) above and with the approval of the Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager designated to act on their behalf;
- (d) arrange full briefing of the participants as applicable to ensure that everyone is aware of the rules relating to the excursion or visit;
- (e) make appropriate arrangements for dealing with payments in accordance with Education Management Circular 1.10 on School funds procedures manual;

- (f) notify, where the activity requires it, local agencies such as police, coastguards and rescue agencies.

5.5 Where travel by ferry is to be undertaken the leader-in-charge must:

- (a) give careful consideration to the supervision arrangements required if children and young people are to be allowed access to the areas of the vessel made available to the travelling public;
- (b) reassemble the children and young people party in good time before the ferry docks to carry out a roll check prior to disembarkation;
- (c) where at any time it becomes apparent that a member of the party cannot be accounted for, approach a crew member and formally indicate "One of my party is missing; please inform the master"; it is thereafter the responsibility of the master of the vessel to take appropriate action.

NB In the case of a "man overboard" incident the party member witnessing it should immediately inform a crew member and thereafter the party leader.

5.6 The Head Teacher/Campus Principal or a senior manager designated to act on their behalf must:

- (a) ensure that the leader-in-charge has carried out the aforementioned procedures;
- (b) ask the leader-in-charge to:
 - i prepare a brief, general statement of the visit in terms of programme, instructional and teaching work undertaken and the response of the participants;
 - ii comment on the behaviour of the group, highlighting any problems or incidents which occurred;
- (c) report any accidents and misadventures to the appropriate Head of Service;
- (d) ensure that copies of relevant documentation are retained as outlined in the relevant appendices.

Farm visits

5.7 Farm visits can be deeply rewarding experiences for children, particularly younger children. However, the proximity to animals carries with it an increased risk of disease or infection. Therefore, special care should be given to the planning and supervision of such visits. Please see part 8 for further information.

5.8 When visiting farms, leaders-in-charge should ensure that:

- eating areas are separate from those where there is any contact with animals;
- there are adequate clean and well-maintained washing facilities;

- there is clearly signed information for visitors on the risks and the precautions to take;
- there is adequate trained adult supervision wherever children can come into contact with animals and need to wash their hands;
- all children wash their hands thoroughly immediately after touching animals and before any eating or drinking;
- shoes are cleaned and then hands are washed on leaving the farm.

5.9 Supervising staff should never let participants:

- place their faces against the animals;
- put their hands in their own mouths after touching or feeding the animals;
- eat or drink out-with designated picnic areas;
- eat or drink until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- touch animal droppings - if they do then wash and dry hands;
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area, or in other areas that are out-of-bounds such as grain storage tanks, slurry pits etc.

5.10 Leaders-in-charge should consider suggested supervision levels for very young children of:

- individual supervision by an adult for every child younger than 12 months;
- a supervision ratio of one adult for every two children between ages one and two.

6 Off-campus activities (curriculum related)

This part of the circular refers to curricular activities which take place off-campus **but in the proximity of the school**, eg investigations into local history or geography, biology related fieldwork, shopping or traffic surveys, practical map work, sketching local landmarks, visits to a local library or museum, use of community sports facilities. Such activities generally take place within the normal teaching timetable and fall into the following two categories:

- (a) where children and young people remain in a group under the close supervision of a teacher;
- (b) where children and young people are expected to carry out a curricular activity on their own initiative without direct supervision of a teacher.

6.1 Where children and young people remain in a group under the close supervision of a

teacher it is unnecessary to obtain parental or carer consent as this will have been consented to by parents through the consent handbook, however the teacher-in-charge must:

- (a) obtain written approval for the activity from the Head Teacher/Campus Principal (appendix 1); where a series of activities are planned, approval need only be obtained for the programme and not for individual events;
 - (b) leave in the school a written statement detailing the date, time of departure and time of return, names of children and young people and staff involved and the nature and location of the activity;
 - (c) ensure that the normal limitation on class size is maintained;
 - (d) ensure that there is proper supervision and that the participants conduct themselves in a reasonable manner and with due consideration for the general public.
- 6.2 Where children and young people are expected to carry out a curricular activity on their own initiative without the direct supervision of a member of staff the teacher in charge must:
- (a) obtain written approval from the Head Teacher/Campus Principal (appendix 1);
 - (b) inform parents or carers fully of the nature of the activity and obtain their written agreement (EV5);
 - (c) ensure that the children and young people are fully briefed beforehand including work to be undertaken, precise areas of study, responsibilities, behaviour, potential hazards and time of return to school;
 - (d) maintain such reasonable oversight of the children and young people as circumstances permit in order to minimise risk and abuse of the privilege.

7 Emergency planning

All adults in charge of children and young people during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the children and young people are safe and healthy at all times. If an accident happens, then all staff have a responsibility to attend to the casualty as best they can and safeguard the uninjured members of the group.

7.1 Emergency planning is an essential part of planning a school visit. The leader-in-charge has responsibility for emergency planning. Prior to the visit he or she would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that appropriate back up cover has been arranged. The leader-in-charge should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used.

7.2 The leader-in-charge would be expected to take charge in an emergency. The main

duties of the leader-in-charge during an emergency include:

- establishing the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ensuring that all the group are safe and looked after;
- establishing the names of any casualties and arranging immediate medical attention for them;
- ensuring that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures;
- ensuring that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are kept together and adequately supervised at all times; if possible a female teacher should accompany female children and young people and a male teacher with male children or young people;
- noting all details of the incident to pass on to the school and local authority; these should include: nature; date and time of the incident; location of the incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; name of witnesses and others involved; other contacts; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- informing the school liaison officer; the school liaison officer's number should be accessible at all times during the visit; it is worthwhile to establish reliable two-way communications via telephone, fax and e-mail; mobile 'phones, though useful, can be subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures;
- notifying the police if necessary;
- completing the appropriate accident report forms immediately upon return.

7.3 The school liaison officer's main duties include:

- ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency;
- liaising with the local authority; the school liaison officer should act as a link between the group and the local authority and arrange for the group to receive assistance as necessary; the appropriate Head of Service must be informed immediately - see appendix 1 of Education Management Circular 1.21 for contact numbers;
- contacting parents; details of parents' contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit; the school liaison officer should act as a link between the group and parents; parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency;
- notifying insurers, especially if medical assistance is required;
- notifying the provider or tour operator (if appropriate) and
- reporting the incident using appropriate local authority forms, if necessary.

7.4 If the media become involved, the Head Teacher/Campus Principal should contact the Authority Communications Team who will be able to assist with appropriate responses to requests for information. Please see part 8 for contact information.

7.5 No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties. Liability, if any, will be determined through subsequent investigation.

7.6 After a serious incident it is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised. This can include children and young people or staff who are not members of the excursion party. In some cases reactions do not surface immediately. Schools in this situation

have sometimes found it helpful to contact local community support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy. Please see part 8 for contact information.

8 Further information

- 8.0 Education Personnel should provide advice on PVG checks for volunteers, or this can be gained direct from PVG Scotland (<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/>). Advance planning is essential to ensure that staff and volunteers can be PVG checked well in advance of excursions if this will be necessary.
- 8.1 The booklet *Health and safety on educational excursions*, and its 3 supplements *Standards for local authorities in overseeing educational excursions*, *Standards for adventure*, and *A handbook for group leaders* are available to print and download from <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/> and <http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/>. Further printed copies of this guidance and the supplements are available free on request from the Scottish Government Education Department, Schools Directorate, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ; telephone number 0131-244 0943.
- 8.2 The Health and Safety Executive leaflet *Five steps to risk assessment* is available to print and download at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>.
- 8.3 The School Travel Forum code of conduct and associated safety management standards can be accessed at <http://www.schooltravelforum.com/>.
- 8.4 Further guidance on farm visits is contained in *Guidelines for farm visits* published by the Royal Highland Education Trust, Royal Highland Centre, Ingliston, Edinburgh EH28 8NF; telephone number 0131-335 6227.; website address <http://www.rhet.org.uk/>.
- 8.5 The Argyll and Bute Communications Team can be contacted via: Public Relations Office, Kilmory House, Lochgilphead; telephone numbers 01546 604171.
- 8.6 Counselling services can be arranged through: HR, Whitegates, Lochgilphead; telephone number 01546 604036.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Community Services

June 2017

Appendix 1 – Day Trips

(copy to be sent to Authority if whole school involved)

Argyll and Bute Council: Community Services: Education

Application form for the approval of educational day visits and journeys

Form of application for permission to arrange educational excursions

1 Name of school

2 Location(s) to be visited

3 Date of Trip:

Departure Time:

Return Time:

4 Number participating

(a) Children and young people

Male

Female

(b) Supervising teachers

(c) Other adults

5 Mode of travel

6 Usual features of education excursion (if any; eg skiing, mountain climbing etc)

7 Please state the names and addresses of all persons other than children and young people or teachers of the school who, it is proposed, should be permitted to participate in the educational excursion

To the Head Teacher/Campus Principal

I request your approval for the proposed visit, full details of which are outlined above.

Signature _____ Date _____
[Leader-in-charge]

Print Name _____

This section to be completed by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal

1 I have studied this application and am completely satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organisation and staffing.

Approval is given.

2 To the leader-in-charge:

(a) please ensure that I have all relevant information including a final list of members and a detailed itinerary at least seven days before the party is due to leave.

(b) your report and evaluation of the visit including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible, but no later than 14 days after the party returns.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal.

Appendix 2 – Residential Overseas Trips

Argyll and Bute Council: Community Services: Education

(Copy to be sent to Authority)

Educational excursions involving residential or overseas visits (including educational cruises)

This application form, when completed by the leader-in-charge, will provide information to the Head Teacher/Campus Principal which is essential before deciding on approval. Not all sections will be relevant to every proposed visit or journey

School

Application for formal approval of journeys and visits

This form should be completed by the leader-in-charge of a proposed visit and submitted to the Head Teacher/Campus Principal for approval at the earliest possible time. When approval is given, one copy should be retained by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal and another by the leader-in-charge. Any subsequent changes in planning, organisation, staffing etc should be communicated to the Head Teacher/Campus Principal for approval. If required, the Head Teacher/Campus Principal should seek approval from the responsible authority.

- 1 Purpose of proposed visit and specific educational objectives

- 2 Places to be visited

- 3 Dates and times

Leaving date	_____	Returning date	_____
Time	_____	Time	_____
	_____		_____

4 Transport arrangements; include the name of the transport company

5 Name of organising company/agency (if any)

6 Proposed financial arrangements

Note No financial or other commitments should be made before approval is obtained.

7 Insurance arrangements for **all** members of the proposed party, including voluntary helpers; include the name of the insurance company

8 Accommodation to be used

Name

Address

Telephone number

Name of Head of Centre

(if available)

9 Details of the proposed travel arrangements and programme of activities; include the name of the travel company

10 Details of any hazardous activity and the associated planning, organisation and staffing

11 Names, relevant experience and qualifications and specific responsibilities of staff accompanying the party

12 Names, relevant qualifications and specific responsibilities of other adults accompanying the party; please indicate if a person has undertaken a successful enhanced PVG check or whether this has still to be done

13 Name, address and telephone number of the school liaison officer who holds all information about the visit or journey

14 Existing knowledge of place to be visited and whether a preliminary visit is intended

15 Size and composition of the group

Age range	_____		
Number of boys	_____	Number of girls	_____
Adult:pupil ratio	_____		
Leader:participant ratio	_____		

16 Parental/carer consent

All forms completed YES / NO

Please attach copy of information sheet sent to parents/carers and the parental/carer consent form.

17 Names of persons with special needs or disabilities or those requiring medication

To the Head Teacher/Campus Principal

I request your approval for the proposed visit, full details of which are outlined above.

Signature _____ Date _____
[Leader-in-charge]
Print Name _____

This section to be completed by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal

1 I have studied this application and am completely satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organisation and staffing.

Approval is given.

2 To the leader-in-charge:

(a) please ensure that I have all relevant information including a final list of members and a detailed itinerary at least seven days before the party is due to leave.

(b) your report and evaluation of the visit including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible, but no later than 14 days after the party returns.

Signed _____ Date _____
Print Name _____

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal.

Appendix 3

Argyll and Bute Council: Community Services: Education

Extra-curricular organised team games

Parental/carers consent form

School

Activity

- 1 Details of activity and travel involved (see attached information sheet provided by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal including note of venues, dates and times).

I agree to my son/daughter (name) taking part in the above-mentioned activity and, having read the information sheet, agree to his/her participation in the activity described. I acknowledge the need for obedience and responsible behaviour on his/her part, and I am aware there is no insurance cover available through the local authority while participating in the activity.

- 2 Medical information

- (a) Does your son/daughter suffer from any conditions requiring medical treatment, including medication? YES / NO

If YES, please give brief details below.

- (b) To the best of your knowledge, has your son/daughter been in contact with any contagious or infectious diseases or suffered from anything in the last four weeks that may be or become contagious or infectious? YES / NO

If YES, please give brief details below.

- (c) Is your son/daughter allergic to any medication? YES / NO
If YES, please specify below.

- (d) Has your son/daughter received a tetanus injection in the last ten years? YES / NO

- (e) Please outline any special dietary requirements of your child below.

I undertake to inform the leader-in-charge or Head Teacher/Campus Principal as soon as possible of any changes in the medical circumstances between the date on which this form is signed and the commencement of the activity.

3 Declaration

I agree to my son/daughter receiving emergency medical treatment, including the use of an anaesthetic if considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

I may be contacted by telephoning the following numbers:

Work _____ Home _____
Mobile _____

My home address is

If not available at above, please contact

Name _____

Telephone number _____

Address _____

Name, address and telephone number of family doctor

Signature _____ Date _____
(Parent/Carer)

This form or a copy must be taken by the leader-in-charge of the activity.

A copy should be retained by the Head Teacher/Campus Principal.