



Offsite Activity Management System

(ECOAMS)

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Epsom College Off-site Activities Management System

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I) Introduction

The College seeks to encourage Educational visits, off-site and residential activities as part of both the curricular and extra-curricular programmes and supports the vision of Learning Outside the Classroom (<http://www.lotc.org.uk/>). There are a wide range of tangible and intangible benefits from such activities including improving knowledge and experience, increasing individual awareness, confidence and abilities as well as fostering teamwork and developing leadership potential.

However we must put in place a common and agreed system to ensure that such activities are managed safely and successfully. This should not be seen as a bar to undertaking such visits or as threat to professional competence but as an aid to ensure beneficial outcomes. As long as we follow ‘current best practice’ in undertaking such activities we will discharge our responsibilities, especially our duty of care, to our pupils and colleagues in a positive and effective way.

The starting point for planning and executing any such activity must be the current Health and Safety guidelines. The system is built on the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) *Health and Safety of Learners Outside the Classroom* (HASLOC) (2009), which replaces the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) ‘good practice guide’ *Health and Safety of pupils on Educational Visits* (HASPEV) (1998) and the 3 HASPEV supplements (2002) available at www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits. It will also seek to conform to best practice as suggested by teaching union publications.

Overall responsibility for Health and Safety for anything in this area ultimately rests with the employer ie the Headmaster and the College Council but all employees have responsibilities as well to:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others’ health and safety;
- Co-operate with their employers;
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions;
- Inform the employer of any serious risk.

The purpose of the Epsom College Off-site Activities Management System (ECOAMS) is to define policy in the light of current best practice, to manage the risks associated with the wide range of activities undertaken by the College and to audit the management steps to ensure that required standards are achieved (Appendix 27)..

On-site and off-site activities involving pupils operate within a legal framework defined by statutory instruments or regulations derived from related Acts of Parliament or ‘framework directives’ from the European Parliament. The most relevant statutes which provide regulations, codes of practice and guidelines are:

- | | | | |
|------|--|---|--|
| i) | Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) | - | defines employers’ and employees’ responsibilities. |
| ii) | Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) | - | sets the requirements for Risk Assessments (RAs) under European Directive. |
| iii) | Children Act (1989) | - | Places specific requirements on |

Protection of Children Act (1999)		<p>those with substantial access to children, who need clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), established under Part 2 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000). This Disclosure allows for checks on the suitability of a person for work with children and depending on the level of the check (Enhanced, Standard or Basic) will yield details of Criminal record (Police National Computer (PNC) and Local Police files) covering convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings. Also details from lists held by the Department of Health (DoH) (Consultancy Index) and the DfES (List 99).</p>
iv) Occupiers Liability Act (1975 & 1984)	-	Define a safe environment for those visiting or allowed access to premises.
iv) Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act (1995) Adventure Activity Licensing Regulations (1996)	-	Registered Licences must be held by commercial providers of Caving, Climbing, Trekking & Watersports confirming appropriate and effective safety management systems.
v) The Reporting of Injuries, Disease or Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) (1985)	-	Defines the reporting of specified serious injuries or incidents to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).
vi) Package Travel, Package Holiday and Package Tours Regulations (1992)	-	Protects consumers against tour operators' inaccuracies and insolvency, by making organiser or retailer strictly liable for the contract details being carried out. They establish what information must be provided in brochures, other advertising material and contracts.

Most of ECOAMS follows current professional practice within the College, as explained in the *Common Room Handbook*, and merely pulls together what is already being done into a unified system which can be monitored by the Director of Extra-curricular Activities (DEXA). For any category of activity there will be a 'Normal Operating Plan' (NOP) based on the 'Risk

Assessment' (RA) , concerned with the Code of Conduct and pupil behaviour management during transport, undertaking activities and free time, and an 'Incident Management Plan' (IMP).

The DEXA takes on the roles of both the Outdoor Education Advisor and Educational Visits Coordinator required in LEAs and maintained schools. This formal recognition of both functions helps the College fulfil its Health and Safety obligations in the area of off-site visits by ensuring that College guidelines are clearly stated and enforced. It is also essential that these guidelines are subject to review, both in the light of internal experience but also through the experience of the wider education community and society as a whole. The system is partly controlled by legislation but also relies heavily on Common Law, which is therefore subject to update and change in the light of legal decisions. It is therefore essential that College staff regularly check their responsibilities and methods in order to conform to the guidelines in ECOAMS.

Off-site activities fall into four categories, which will require different responses:

- A) Regular 'short' distance day trips eg matches, theatre trips or visiting off-site training facilities, which are usually school led.
- B) Irregular and longer distance day trips within the UK eg one day training courses, which are usually school led.
- C) Residential trips within the UK eg CCF camps, field courses
 - i) Using licensed or other providers
 - ii) School led
- D) Residential trips abroad eg Sports tours, trekking trips
 - i) Using licensed or other providers
 - ii) School led

School led means the activity is totally organised, undertaken and completed by the College. Therefore the organiser is immediately responsible for the safe supervision of the pupils and the activity.

These trips may contain an Adventure element, which will need particular attention in the risk assessment.

In most cases those trips that fall into categories A & B will not need the involvement of the DEXA on each occasion, although at the start of each term there should be a review of the health and safety issues covering all the trips, and staff involved in such trips should be trained in the basic management issues, and be familiar with the relevant elements of ECOAMS. Current best practice suggests that parental consent will not be needed for each trip separately as long as it is laid down in published documents that pupils will be expected to take part in these as part of their studies or routine activities eg games.

Copies of this document and the relevant form are available on the College Network through the Administrative system or directly from the DEXA.

II) Philosophy

Problems on visits are usually the result of a series of poor decisions, with accidents the result of a compendium of errors, each made in isolation in a low risk situation.

The legal basis for dealing with off-site visits is defined under current Health and Safety Legislation as outlined above. The key concept is the common law 'duty of care', which is defined in terms of what a reasonable, prudent (ie 'good') parent would do. Duty of care can be subdivided as pastoral duty of care and technical (higher) duty of care, which may be delegated to an external, qualified adult. This does not replace the overriding pastoral duty of care required from all Epsom College staff on such visits and staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency and take life-saving action in an extreme situation. Duty of care cannot be delegated and on residential trips operates 24 hours per day.

Should a pupil suffer injury or loss as a result of 'negligence' (acts or omissions by someone with duty of care in which this is breached by falling below the standard of care required in the circumstances to protect others from the unreasonable risk of harm ie responsibility, being careless, resulting in death or injury), on the part of the responsible member of staff then the parents or guardians could sue. It would be a 'criminal offence' if the member of staff had acted recklessly or deliberately to cause harm in this negligent action.

Most pupils in today's safety conscious and risk averse world may be totally unaware of potential dangers and have little feel for certain kinds of hazard outside their urban or suburban street experience. This puts added weight of responsibility on supervisors and demands a greater degree of training and firmness in taking charge of excitable and impressionable adolescents.

In considering off-site visits it is important to take the knowledge and experience of the group into consideration as this will help determine the level of risk. Our pupils, from inland suburbia, will therefore need to be trained more carefully, with more in-depth risk assessment, for rural trips.

A) Types of visit

1) Visits with adventurous activities:

Adventurous activities introduce pupils to a sense of adventure, respect for the elements, respect and appreciation of the natural environment, individual responsibility, realistic discipline and, in controlled conditions, an element of personal risk.

Adventure activities are those which have intrinsic hazards above those met with in the everyday life of the participants and which need to be controlled through careful supervision, normally by a competent person with specialist skills in the activity (Higher duty of care).

These activities need to be carefully planned, sensitively supervised and sufficiently well thought out to reduce the element of risk to an acceptable level through the identification of risk and the application of risk management measures.

Activities can be graded according to risk level and these therefore demand different levels of response and degree of planning:

- *Category A:*

These present no special risk and can be safely supervised by staff judged competent to lead educational visits.

- *Category B:*

These are activities for which safe supervision requires the leader, as a minimum, to have undergone an additional familiarisation or induction course and been approved as appropriately qualified by the DEXA.

An National Governing Body (NGB) award such as the Basic Leadership Award (BELA) or Professional or Voluntary organisation qualifications eg First Aid Certificate or Lifesaving qualification may also be relevant as a measure of competence in this category.

Group leaders of such activities should be experienced in supervising such activities and be fully aware of the responsibilities. They will generally have a formal qualification.

- *Category C:*

These are activities for which safe supervision demands a recognised course of training with a recognised higher level qualification from a NGB. Leaders should also have appropriate experience in the activity both as participants and as leaders.

Training, accumulation of experience and assessment may lead to an appropriate NGB qualification or a local or site specific qualification.

Organisers of such Category B & C activities should look to ensuring that new members of staff, interested in these activities, are encouraged to obtain relevant qualifications and should apprentice such staff on trips to ensure continuity.

Group leaders should remember that in assessing risk account must be taken of the environment in which the activity will take place. Proximity to water, cliffs or steep ground, high altitude or winter conditions will lead to an activity being assessed in a higher category.

For some activities the College is able to offer local validation for leaders with the following provisos:

- These are for restricted/named environments
- They are for Epsom College employees
- They require periodic revalidation
- They are not automatically transferable

This will be based on verifiable proof of experience as well as appropriate qualifications. Leaders will be expected to have regular experience of instructing in the activity as well as on site experience in terms of appreciation of the nature of the site and the risks of abnormal conditions.

When assessing competence of leaders it must be reminded that technical competence, even when recognised by a NGB qualification, NVQs, local validation, or site specific assessment , is

not the only criterion. Verification of other qualities is required including maturity, general supervision skills, ability to relate to different groups and these will develop within the apprentice system.

The acquisition of competence is the process of learning from accumulated experience, therefore the key areas are participation and appropriate training. Training enhances personal experience and may accelerate development of sound judgement, but does not replace it.

These activities may use licensed providers or be school led.

a) Using Adventure Activity providers

The following activities require a licence when sold by commercial companies or when local authorities provide them with/without charge to young people under 18, unaccompanied by a parent and are all Category C activities:

Caving: the exploration of underground passages, disused mines, or natural caves, which requires the use of specialised equipment or expertise;

Climbing: climbing, sea-level traverses, abseiling or scrambling over natural terrain or certain man made structures which require the use of special rock-climbing or ice-climbing equipment or expertise;

Trekking: going on foot, horse (pony), pedal cycle, skis, skates or sledges over moorland, or on ground over 600 metres above sea level when it would take at least 30 minutes to reach an accessible road or refuge. Off-piste skiing requires a licence;

Watersports: this comprises sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rafting and windsurfing, on the sea, tidal waters, inland waters at a location where any parts of those waters is more than 50 metres from the nearest land, and turbulent inland waters. Rowing is exempt.

When using adventure facilities offered by a commercial company or local authority the group leader should check whether a licence is required and if so that a valid licence is held under the *Activities Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995* and the associated *Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996*.

The Adventure Activities Licensing Service, 44 Lambourne Crescent, Cardiff Business Park, Llanishen, CARDIFF, CF14 5GG (Tel 01222 755715 Fax 01222 755757, www.aals.org.uk, Email: info@aals.org.uk) can check on licence status of a provider.

A licensed provider does not necessarily have to hold a licence for all its activities as many will be covered by Health and Safety legislation alone.

Holding a licence means that a provider has been inspected and the Licensing Authority are satisfied that appropriate safety measures are in place.

Schools providing for their own pupils are exempt from licensing requirements as are commercial bodies and Local Authorities where activities fall outside the scope of the regulations.

Providers may be accredited under alternative schemes such as NGBs. These organisations should be consulted to establish a provider's safety provision.

When using non-licensed providers the following points should be covered in writing by use of the appropriate form (Appendix 25):

- Risks have been assessed;
- The provider's staff are competent and qualified to instruct and lead pupils of the group's age range on the activity and that they have clearly defined roles and responsibilities;
- The equipment is appropriate and its safe condition is checked before each use;
- Operating procedures conform to the NGBs' guidelines as appropriate.
- Clear management of safety systems is in place with appropriate security arrangements;
- There is appropriate public liability insurance
- There is appropriate provision for First Aid;
- There is a Child Protection policy;
- There are emergency procedures, the staff are competent in these procedures and will hold emergency contact details for the group and be able to notify next of kin and alert the group leader, and that the group will have a fire drill as soon as possible on arrival at the venue.

Contact with other schools that have used the venue may be of use and the provider should be asked for such information.

The group leader should also confirm that adequate arrangements are in place for supervision and recreation during the evenings and between activities.

The group leader and staff retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times during activities even when they are instructed by a member of the provider's staff. The provider is responsible for the safe running of an activity. There should be clear procedures for handover and handback of pupils between the responsible staff. Everyone, including the pupils must have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school staff and provider's staff.

Group leaders and support staff should have a clear idea of what the activity involves and should approach the instructor, at an appropriate safe interval, if they are concerned that pupils may be at unnecessary risk.

b) School-led Adventure Activities

School-led Adventure Activities have the following distinctive advantages over using activity centres:

- Teachers work with the same pupils over several years in a 'club' environment, hence they know the pupils and their behaviour in different circumstances;
- Pupils can progress over the years to high standards in the activity;
- Pupils are encouraged to plan some of their activities and develop self-reliance;
- Pupils involved with school-led adventure activity programmes are more likely to continue with the activity unsupported once they have left the school;
- Parents will frequently attain a greater understanding of what pupils are involved in.

These have a positive impact on the RAs.

If a member of the College staff is to organise, lead and instruct pupils on adventure activities they should complete the appropriate paperwork as laid down in this document. The DEXA must be satisfied that:

- The group leader and other supervisors are competent to act as leaders and/or instructors of the pupils in the activity, given that some pupils may be novices. Competence should be demonstrated by holding the relevant NGB award where relevant;
- The group leader is competent in safety procedures and the planning of adventurous visits;
- Activity guidelines, structures and procedures have been followed;
- Specialist advice from technical advisers has been obtained as appropriate;
- An appropriate risk assessment has been completed;
- The supervision will be appropriate;
- There is adequate First Aid provision, expertise and equipment within the group;
- The Incident Management procedures include activity specific measures, and that supervisors are competent to carry them out;
- The equipment is appropriate, safe and in good condition;
- Every pupil is suited to the activity and is properly prepared and equipped.

Care must be taken if non Common Room instructors or unlicensed providers of adventure activities are employed, rather than contracted with, for any activity that would otherwise need a licence to trade as the College then would take full legal responsibility for all aspects of that activity.

2) Fieldwork

Fieldwork at the College covers a wide range of activities in a number of environments from urban to rural and from coasts to mountains. The Heads of Department concerned should take note of the comments on visits that apply specifically to their fieldwork and follow the appropriate planning and approval steps. Special note should be taken of work in or by water (Rivers, ponds/lakes, coasts), near steep slopes or in high altitude and exposed locations and risk management should be in place to cover these. Note should also be taken of the implications of remote supervision and careful planning included to cover this in the submitted RAs.

3) Visits with specific risks

a) Coastal visits

Many of the incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers quite apart from those associated with swimming (see below). The following points should be taken into account when planning any coastal activity:

- Tides and rip-tides, especially in association with headlands, gently sloping beaches, mudflats and sandbanks are potential hazards. It is therefore essential that account is taken of tide tables when planning access. Emergency routes should be considered.
- Group members should all be aware of the meaning of warning signs and flags.
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outfalls etc;
- If recreational time is allowed careful consideration should be given to which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- Cliff tops are highly dangerous, even during daylight. Groups should keep to paths at all times and must respect safety signs and barriers. Very careful consideration should be given to safety and legality if it is planned to use mountain bikes on coastal paths.

In the planning phase group leaders should make use of the information and advice on the nature and location of hazards available from the local coastguard, harbour master, lifeguard or tourist information.

b) Activities in or around water (see also Appendix 29)

Swimming

i) Sea or other natural waters

Swimming or even paddling are potentially dangerous activities for school groups. They should only be allowed as formal, directly supervised activities in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Even under these conditions supervisors should keep all members of their group in sight *at all times*, with at least one supervisor in the water looking inland and another on land looking seawards in the best position for surveillance. Constant vigilance is essential and supervisors should not swim themselves, unless helping a pupil in distress, nor join in games. One member of the supervisory staff should have a formal lifesaving qualification from the RLSS.

Group leaders should:

- Be aware that many children who drown are strong swimmers;
- Ascertain the level of the pupils' swimming activity (see parental Consent Form App 10)
- Be aware of local conditions, such as currents, weeds, soft or shelving or uneven or unstable bottom, using local information sources;
- Designate a safe area of water for use by the group and carefully brief the group about limits;
- Avoid crowded beaches where observation is more difficult;
- Be aware of the dangerous effects of sudden immersion in cold water;
- Be aware of the dangers of prolonged immersion;
- Be aware of the dangers of swimming too soon after a meal. Ensure that pupils have not eaten at least half an hour before swimming;
- Be aware of the dangers of paddling, especially for younger pupils;
- Ensure the activity is suitable for the pupils, especially any with known disabilities or medical conditions (see parental Consent Form App 10)
- Ensure that buoyancy aids are used where appropriate;
- Be aware of the position of safety equipment and the location of assistance;
- Have means of summoning help;
- Carry out regular head counts;
- Be aware that it is not always easy to tell when a pupil is in difficulty;
- Adopt and explain the signals of distress and recall.

ii) Swimming pools

Teachers should monitor the risks of swimming activities and adjust supervision levels for their individual groups as necessary.

If considering the use of a swimming pool not used before or monitoring the hazards of a regularly used pool it is advisable to observe and check the following:

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified lifeguards (National Pool Lifeguard Qualifications)?
- Is the number of pupils/students supervised by one qualified adult fewer than 20?

- Where there is no lifeguard the group leader should stay at the poolside at a raised location. In such circumstances the group leader, or a designated teacher, should have a relevant life saving award and be accompanied by an appropriate number of supervisors;
- Is the water temperature appropriate?
- Is the water clear?
- Is there regular testing of water quality?
- Are there signs clearly indicating the depth – is there a shallow end and is the water there shallow enough?
- Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- Does the pool cater for pupils with disabilities?
- Is there a poolside alarm?
- Is there a poolside telephone?
- Are the resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment, and is there someone trained to use them?
- Is an Incident Management plan displayed?
- Are normal operating procedures available?
- Is the swimming pool room, in the case of an indoor pool, locked when not in use?
- Is there a changing room for each sex?
- Are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- Does the pool cater for any particular religious or cultural factors?
- Can clothes and possessions be stored securely?
- Have the pupils been instructed how to behave in and around the water – running, fighting, diving, buddy system (no-one to swim alone)?

c) Afloat

Group leaders should ensure that the safety guidelines as laid down by the NGBs are rigorously adhered to.

Follow best advice as to safe practice in terms of supervision and safety considerations. Remember that staff ratios will be higher as too many pupils make unrealistic demands on the competence of a single adult.

The group leader should be trained to the standard recommended by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority.

Remember the guidelines:

- Craft should be properly and regularly maintained and regularly checked and inspected before every use;
- Life jackets should always be worn;
- There should always be means of obtaining help eg VHF radio, mini flares, whistles, mobile telephones, torches;
- Account should always be taken of local conditions – check with the local experts;
- Always obtain a current weather forecast;
- Regular headcounts;
- Action in emergency – checking group safety;
- Copies of route plans and ETRs left at base;
- Inland waters – precautions against Weill's disease

d) Trekking

Group leaders should ensure that the safety guidelines as laid down by the NGBs are rigorously adhered to.

Follow best advice as to safe practice in terms of supervision and safety considerations. Remember that staff ratios will be lower as too many pupils make unrealistic demands on the competence of a single adult.

The group leader should be trained to the standard recommended by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority. Whilst there is no legal requirement for a leader to hold any specific qualification best practice suggests that a qualification suitable for the environment should be held by at the leaders.

Remember the guidelines:

- There should always be means of obtaining help eg VHF radio, mini flares, whistles, mobile telephones, torches;
- Account should always be taken of local conditions – check with the local experts;
- Always obtain a current weather forecast;
- Regular headcounts;
- Action in emergency – checking group safety.
- Emergency rations;
- Copies of route plans, with escape routes, and ETRs left at base;
- Awareness of the risks of hypo- and hyper-thermia, exhaustion etc;

e) Climbing

Group leaders should ensure that the safety guidelines as laid down by the NGBs are rigorously adhered to.

Follow best advice as to safe practice in terms of supervision and safety considerations. Remember that staff ratios will be lower as too many pupils make unrealistic demands on the competence of a single adult.

The group leader should be trained to the standard recommended by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority.

Remember the guidelines:

- There should always be means of obtaining help eg VHF radio, mini flares, whistles, mobile telephones, torches;
- Account should always be taken of local conditions – check with the local experts;
- Always obtain a current weather forecast;
- Regular headcounts;
- Action in emergency – checking group safety.

f) Skiing

Group leaders should ensure that the safety guidelines as laid down by the NGBs are rigorously adhered to.

Follow best advice as to safe practice in terms of supervision and safety considerations. Remember that staff ratios will be lower as too many pupils make unrealistic demands on the competence of a single adult.

The group leader should be trained to the standard recommended by the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority.

Remember the guidelines:

- There should always be means of obtaining help eg VHF radio, mini flares, whistles, mobile telephones, torches;
- Account should always be taken of local conditions – check with the local experts;
- Always obtain a current weather forecast;
- Regular headcounts;
- Action in emergency – checking group safety.

g) Farms

Farms are dangerous environments, even for the people who work on them. The main risks to be considered during planning include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards of disease, especially food poisoning (E coli 0157) and other infections.

Check the farm is well managed, has a good reputation for safety standards, maintains good washing facilities with clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit is usually a good idea.

Basic safety rule mean that teachers should never let pupils:

- Place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their mouths after feeding them;
- Eat until they have washed their hands;
- Sample any animal foodstuffs;
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- Ride on tractors or other machines;
- Play in the farm area.

4) Residential Visits

Issues to be considered include:

- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils' – the group leader should obtain, in advance, a floor plan of the reserved rooms.
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults.
- There is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation;
- The whole group knows the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits (are instructions in English/otherwise clear?), its regulations and routine and that everyone can identify key personnel;
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors. In the light of the Caroline Dickinson case security is now an important issue. Windows and external doors should be closed and locked.
- The manager of the accommodation should be asked for assurances that the staff, including temporary workers, have been checked as suitable for work with young people;
- Locks on doors should work in the groups' rooms, but appropriate access should be available for teachers at all times;

5) Visits abroad

a) General

Visits abroad are hugely rewarding for all concerned but careful planning is essential to maximise the benefit and manage the potentially increased risk. All the comments above apply equally to visits abroad but there are additional factors that must be considered, not least because legislation may be different from the UK.

There are various methods of organisation:

1) Own visit

This does not use the help of an outside body. Such visits would be considered as a 'package' holiday which involves the combination of any two of:

- Accommodation
- Transport
- Other tourist services not ancillary to transport

and as such fall under Directive 90/314/EEC and the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tour Regulation 1992 (The Package Travel Regulations) unless they are 'occasional' or part of an educational course programme.

When using our own transport it is important to consider the following:

- Drivers are familiar with driving the coach or minibus in the countries being visited and those en route;
- Familiarity with EC regulations on the fitting of tachographs, maximum limits on driving time and minimum requirements for breaks and rest periods for vehicles with more than 9 passenger seats and statutory equipment eg 1st Aid kit and warning triangle;

- Familiarity with domestic traffic rules of countries being visited and those en route;
- Possession of appropriate licences and documentation;
- Awareness of right-hand drive traffic, especially as passenger doors will open into moving traffic;
- Awareness of carrying capacity and loading requirements.

The DTR can provide information on legal requirements for travel abroad as can the embassies of countries involved in the visit.

2) Using a tour operator

Group leaders should ensure that the chosen operator is reputable as part of the risk assessment. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) licences travel organisers and tour operators selling air seats or packages with an air transport component. The Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) is a legal requirement and provides security against a licence holder going bust. A travel agent does not need to be an ATOL holder if acting as an agent of an ATOL holder. However in these circumstances the group leader must check if the whole package is ATOL protected and, if not, there are other forms of security for refunds of advance payments and the cost of repatriation in the event of insolvency.

There are seven bonding bodies approved by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI):

- Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)
- Federation of Tour Operators Trust (FTOT)
- Association of Independent Tour Operators Trust (AITOT)
- Passenger Shipping Association (PSA)
- The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)
- Yacht Charter Association (YCA)
- The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust (ABTOT)

Tour operators in the European Economic Area (EEA) are covered by Directive 90/314/EEC. Group leaders using such an operator should check that it satisfies the requirements of the national legislation implementing the directive. Details may be available from national tourist offices or embassies/consulates.

Further information may be sought from:

- DTI – regulations governing tour operators;
- The Schools and Group Travel Association (SAGTA) – an independent association with a members' code of good conduct and safety rules with all members in ABTA;
- Voluntary bodies such as the School Journey Association;
- The Foreign and Commonwealth's (FCO) Travel Advice Unit – helps intending travellers avoid trouble by providing information on threats to personal safety arising from political unrest, lawlessness, violence etc.

Contact details are available in HASPEV via the DEXA.

Group leaders should spend a great deal of care on the planning and preparation phase. Ideally this should include an exploratory visit but if this is not possible then as much information should be gathered as possible on the area and facilities from:

- The provider
- The FCO Travel Advice Unit (www.fco.co.uk);
- Other schools who have used the facilities/visited the area;
- The local authority/schools in the area to be visited;
- National travel offices in the UK;
- Embassies/consulates;
- Travel agents/tour operators;
- The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, a national charity for personal safety, who have produced a book '*World Wise: your Passport to Safer Travel*', a video of the same title and information on the internet. Contact details are available in HASPEV via the DEXA;
- The internet, books and magazines.

Staffing ratios need careful consideration as they will vary according to the activity, pupils' age and gender, the location and efficient use of resources. A minimum of 1 adult to 10 pupils is advisable plus one adult, with at least two of the adults being teachers. It is essential that there are enough adults to cover an emergency. Mixed gender groups must have at least one male and one female teacher.

Care must also be taken over pupil preparation. Factors to consider include:

- Language – particularly common phrases;
- Culture eg body language, rules and regulations of behaviour, dress code, local customs, attitudes to gender etc;
- Drugs, alcohol-usage;
- Food and drink – group members should be warned of the dangers of drinking tap water in certain countries. In some countries it is safer to drink bottled water, and care needs to be taken with raw vegetables, salads and unpeeled fruit, raw shellfish, underdone meat or fish, especially from street stalls;
- Money – how to carry money and valuables discreetly eg money belts, zip armlets. If larger amounts of money will be needed, it is advisable to take travellers cheques. Advice should be given as to the appropriate amount of pocket money and the type of currency to carry. With younger pupils group banking arrangements should be considered.
- How to use phones abroad, money required (A BT contact card allows calls to be charged to the home number) and the code for phoning home;
- What to do in emergencies.

Contact with parents is an essential part of preparation and parents should be given opportunities to meet staff and others taking pupils overseas. Written information and briefing meetings should be built into the preparation phase with clear details on timings, itinerary, activities to be undertaken and the level of risk involved.

Care should be taken over health requirements and the group leader should check whether vaccination or prophylactic medications are necessary and ensure that all members of the group have received them in good time. Check whether the country requires proof of vaccination. The San is a very good source of information and the School Doctor will take care of Boarders' needs. Arrangements can also be made to cover Day pupils via the San. The Department of Health has a publication '*Health advice to Travellers Anywhere in the World*' which gives advice on vaccination.

Emergency medical facilities should be investigated and factored into the risk assessment. Some of these may be available through reciprocal health care arrangements in EC countries to EU nationals through form E111 from the DSS which is a certificate of entitlement to free or reduced cost treatment and which must be completed by the child's parents and is available from the Post Office or Free Phone 0800 555777. Private insurance is still recommended as not all health problems may be covered. It is advisable to take a contingency fund as treatment may need to be paid in advance with money claimed back later.

Comprehensive insurance is vital and extra cover may be required beyond that offered by the College policy (Appendix 11). This is especially true if adventurous activities are involved. Specialist insurance is readily available and the cost should be factored into the charge for the trip. Care must be taken over insurance for valuable personal possessions eg cameras.

The group leader will need to check relevant legislation, particularly health and safety eg fire regulations for the area to be visited.

One of the adults in the group should be able to speak and read the language of the visited country, or at least enough to cope in emergencies. It is also advisable that pupils have a basic knowledge of the local language. If this is not possible then a local representative will be needed.

The group leader must ensure that all members of the group have valid passports and visas (if appropriate) in the early planning stages.

Photocopies of the group's passports should be taken for emergency use.

If the group includes pupils whose national or immigration status or entitlement to a British passport is in doubt it is advisable to make early enquiries of the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Directorate (contact details are available in HASPEV via the DEXA). Pupils who are not nationals of any EU member state may need a visa to travel from the UK. However they may receive visa exemption as part of a school group. Details and forms are available from the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges (contact details are available in HASPEV via the DEXA). Pupils other than EU nationals will require a separate passport and may need to use separate passport control channels from the rest of the group. This must be taken into account in planning the transfer of the group through passport control and should involve a member of staff responsible for monitoring this.

If a child is subject to a care order, foster parents will need to ensure that the Social Services Department consents to any proposed trip. If a pupil is a ward of court the Headmaster should seek advice from the court in relation to school trips and activities abroad well in advance.

Group leaders and their deputy should carry in sealable waterproof bags:

- Travel tickets, passports and visas with photocopies of passports and visas plus separate list of passport and visa numbers;
- Copy of the contract with the centre/hotel/tour operator as appropriate;
- Medical papers eg form E111
- Parental consent forms and permission for group leader to authorise emergency treatment on parental behalf and emergency contact details (home & work);
- Copy of school contact details;
- Copies of group nominal roll including essential medical histories;

- Details of insurance arrangements and contact details;
- Name, address and telephone number of group accommodation and tour operator;
- Location of local hospital/medical services;
- Location and contact details of the nearest British Embassy/Consulate;
- Passport size photo of each member of the group;
- Copy of the ECOAMS Incident Management Procedure (Appendix 14) with copies of the First Aid treatment log (Appendix 17a) and Incident report form (Appendix 17b).

The following information should be left at College in the possession of the NSC with a copy to the School Office and Bursar:

- Itinerary and contact number/address/e-mail address of the group;
- A list of group members and their details;
- Copy of the parental consent form with emergency contact details (home & work);
- Copies of travel documents, insurance documents, medical papers;
- Copy of the contract with the centre/hotel/tour operator as appropriate;

This information should be available at all times either through the office or the NSC.

During the visit pupils should carry a laminated card, in the appropriate language, for use if they get lost asking the reader to reunite them with the group at the accommodation/meeting point, or to take them to the police station. They should also carry the group leader's name and contact telephone number. Every group member should carry an appropriate amount of foreign currency at all times eg money for telephone (or an appropriate phone card).

Group identity should be readily identifiable via clothing/headwear/badges/backpack but no student should display their name clearly on their clothing – this could result in them being isolated from the group by an apparently friendly, personal call.

At all stages of the visit the group leader should ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem. All staff should know the location and contact details of the nearest British Embassy/Consulate, information which may also be made available to older pupils.

Procedures should be in place to cover the event of contact with local law enforcement agencies.

Group leaders should be aware of the prevalence in some countries of particular diseases and what action should be taken should a member of the group become infected.

Group leaders should carefully monitor the group for health problems and should offer immediate assistance. It is therefore vital that groups are properly equipped with appropriate first aid material. Care should be taken in equipping such kits appropriate to the environment. Many health problems on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep and pupils should be monitored to avoid these difficulties. Group leaders should take these into account at the planning stage and take appropriate control measures to prevent these risks. If appropriate parents should be asked to provide suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses. Group members should be advised about the dangers of over exposure to the sun, over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headaches, dizziness and nausea. In warm climates it is essential to keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing – preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres. Similarly in colder and

wetter climates it is vital to conserve body heat and appropriate clothing should be worn. In areas of unfamiliar cuisine pupils should be encouraged to eat sensibly and to avoid street food

and drink. In warmer environments personal hygiene becomes an even more important issue. Older pupils should be warned about the health dangers of piercing and tattooing.

b) Exchange Visits

The success of an exchange visit largely depends on a good relationship and communications with the partner school.

Individual school exchanges differ from other visits abroad in that pupils will spend most of their time with host families and are, therefore, not always under the direct supervision of school staff. Host families will not be subject to English Law.

Pupils must be aware of the ground rules agreed between the group leader and the host family. Many of the considerations already applied to residential and day visits also apply here. In addition the following should be ensured by the group leader by use of the appropriate form (Appendix 28):

- A good personal knowledge of the host school and counterpart;
- Satisfactory 'pairing' arrangements. The partner school should tell the host families of any special, medical or dietary needs of their guests, age and gender;
- Matches should be appropriate in terms of age, gender and maturity;
- Parents, pupils and the host school should be clear about arrangements for collecting and distributing pupils to families, and for transporting pupils throughout the visit;
- The DEXA/NSC should retain a list of all the children involved and their family names and addresses;
- Pupils living with host families should have easy access to their teachers, usually by telephone;
- Pupils living with host families have been carefully briefed as to cultural differences and have clear guidelines to and expectations of their behaviour;
- Parents should be made aware that their children living with host families will not always be under direct teacher-supervision.

Care should be taken over vetting host families. Group leaders using agencies to arrange exchange or home stay visits should be aware that the agency has some responsibility for vetting the host families otherwise if making own arrangements they should be clear about procedures in the relevant country for vetting the suitability of host families including criminal background checks insofar as they are available.

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

B) Supervision of pupils on activities

For every visit there will be a group leader who manages the whole visit. At time supervision will be with the group leader directly and at other times with individual supervisors. Under certain circumstances the group leader will manage the group as a whole, however, for most activities it is better for groups to be small, each with a supervisor.

Supervision works best when:

- The aims and objectives of the visit are clearly understood by everyone involved with the visit/activity;
- Everyone on the visit understand the supervision arrangements and expectations;
- The visit and activities have been carefully risk-assessed and will be properly risk-managed;
- Participants have been involved in the overall plan, including the risk assessment;
- Clear guidelines for standards of behaviour have been agreed and supervisors set the necessary example.

There are three levels of supervision and the nature of the activity, the environment and the age and needs of pupils will dictate which is the most appropriate as well as the supervision ratio (Appendix 8). It is important to consider this during the planning stage and especially in the risk assessment. It is important that supervisors know how closely participants should be supervised in these different circumstances.

The three levels are:

a) Direct/Close

The presence of a member of staff at all times the group are undertaking activities. The supervisor will:

- Have prior knowledge of the group;
- Carry a list of all group members;
- Have checked appropriate clothing, footwear and equipment is fit for purpose;
- Have a prior knowledge of the venue;
- Regularly check the entire group is present;
- Have appropriate access to first aid;
- Be responsible to the group leader for the supervision of their group and their health and safety.

b) Indirect Remote

Shadowing of groups or agreed contacts at regular intervals at agreed points.

c) Remote

Some activities eg the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme or fieldwork, require pupils to work in small groups without direct supervision. It is important to encourage independence and investigative skills and some of the time on such visits may be unsupervised. Particular attention must be paid to the training of these pupils and the information provided before

supervision can be withdrawn. It is also vital that parents fully understand the implications of this aspect of the visit, in published information or during a briefing, and have agreed to this. The group leader remains responsible for pupils even when not in direct contact with them.

The training given must be sound and thorough and should be assessed separately with groups only permitted to take part if competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and Incident Management procedures. Instructors should hold appropriate qualifications or experience to provide the necessary level of training. The group leader should be satisfied that the pupils have acquired the necessary skills and have the necessary experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement to be left without direct supervision in the given environment while undertaking the given activity. Participants should:

- Be familiar with the type of environment;
- Have appropriate clothing, footwear and equipment which has been checked for fitness for purpose;
- Clearly understand the boundaries;
- Have clear lines of communication between the group and the supervisor;
- Be monitored at appropriate intervals;
- Have the supervisor in the vicinity;
- Be clear about arrangements for the abandonment of the activity;
- Know the point at which the activity is completed;
- Know and understand Incident Management procedures.

The supervisor should carefully monitor the group's progress and an alert should be provided if groups do not report back when expected. Managing such an eventuality should be part of the IMP, including search techniques, and appropriate emergency back-up services should be provided. Use of mobile phones during emergencies must also be considered, remembering that they will not work in all environments. Groups should have emergency contact numbers of supervisors and supervisors should have the mobile phone numbers of group members.

The withdrawal of direct supervision should be the culmination of a gradual four stage process:

- Accompanying the group (Direct/Close)
- Shadowing the group (Indirect Remote)
- Checking regularly at agreed locations (Indirect Remote)
- Checking occasionally at agreed locations (Remote)

Pupils should be familiar with all equipment used or taken without direct supervision and, in addition to training, an initial element of adult supervision in the use of equipment may be required. The condition and suitability of any equipment, particularly safety equipment, taken or used during these activities should be assessed separately.

Where larger groups are involved a supervisory pyramid should be employed, with adults responsible for a group of named pupils, who should be known to the adult. Each adult should report to the Group Leader.

Where indirect or remote supervision is applicable pupils should be arranged in a buddy system with a minimum group size of two buddy pairs (that is 4 pupils). This allows for 2 pupils to seek help, leaving one behind to assist, should a pupil get into difficulty. Pupils should be given clear spatial and temporal boundaries, with regular reporting times especially for younger

pupils. A designated base location for staff should be manned at all times and a clear emergency rendezvous, which maybe the base location or pick-up point, should be given to pupils, as should instructions as to their behaviour if they become separated or lost.

There should be clear rules as to supervision, including the example set by adults, as part of the NOP and supervisors must be competent in ensuring that the standards of behaviour set out in the visit's Codes of Conduct, based on *Guidance for Pupils*, are met.

The positioning of supervisors relative to groups should be defined in the NOP and all supervisors should be provided with an **Incident Management Procedure Card** ('Action on') derived from the IMP.

Potential dangers can occur when rearranging groups. In particular:

- When a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities;
- When groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor;
- During periods between activities;
- When small groups reform into a large group.

It is therefore important that the supervisor:

- Clearly takes responsibility for the group when their part of the programme commences, particularly making certain that all group members are aware;
- Clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information about the group and ensuring that the group members are aware of their next leader/supervision arrangements.

For all supervision, the supervisor:

- Will normally be a teacher or other member of staff;
- Is responsible for the safety of their group at all times;
- Will have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives;
- Needs to anticipate potential hazards and act where necessary;
- Continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions;
- Needs to exercise appropriate control of the group;
- Needs to set an appropriate example during all phases of the visit;
- Will have a clear understanding of the Incident Management procedures and be equipped to carry them out.

For all supervision, the participant will:

- Know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact them;
- Have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions;
- Not normally be on their own;
- Alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties;
- Have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated;
- Understand the expected standards of behaviour.

School staff are responsible, on the College's behalf, for the pupils' health and safety **at all times** during the visit, including on residential trips recreational time and during the hours of sleep.

Adults who are not school staff should not be allowed regular unsupervised time with the pupils unless they have undergone the same child protection measures as the College staff ie they must have an enhanced CRB check. The group leader should be satisfied that adults not on the College staff are aware of the Child Protection Policy by signing a copy of the appropriate form (Appendix 28) and have demonstrated a competence to be in charge of pupils on the activity and are aware of the. It must be remembered that health and safety responsibilities, for which the employer is ultimately responsible, cannot be delegated by the group leader.

Supervision also involves the school management through the NSC. The group's progress should be monitored by previously agreed lines of communication.

III) Methodology

A) Planning the visit

Whatever the nature or length of the visit it is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off. This involves considering the practical details of executing such visits including considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise, and making plans to reduce them to an acceptable level. The headmaster is legally responsible for all visits but he delegates the detailed planning to the organiser or group leader via the DEXA who must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is competent to do so and has the necessary relevant experience.

1) Aims of the visit

Planned offsite activities must have a clearly defined objective or objectives whose success can be assessed. These must reflect the ethos of the College and lead to the development of pupils' experience and skills in the academic/cultural/sporting/adventurous domains. As part of the development of planning of the visit the benefits to the individual pupil must be clear through the concept of Individual Development Plans. Although visits should be enjoyable, 'fun' is not the sole objective.

2) Group considerations

Planning of the visit must take into account the likely composition of the group to be taken:

- Age
- Gender
- Previous experience
- Capability
- Numbers
- Match to proposed activity
- Fitness for activity
- Social and cultural background

Selection of group members should be based on:

- Being known to the leader

- Behavioural record
- Interest in aims of the visit
- Previous experience
- Maturity
- Gender balance

With care taken over catering for individual special needs:

- Mobility
- Behavioural
- Psychological
- Medical

3) Staffing considerations

The following points should be taken into account when planning staff support:

- Ratio of staff to numbers in the group
- Ratio of staff to needs of group members or activity requirements
- Local or National requirements or guidelines
- Criminal clearance issues

Selection of staff should therefore involve consideration of:

- Experience of this activity/location/age group
- Personal qualities – relationships, management skills, maturity, interest
- Staff qualifications for this activity (1st aid, driving)
- Staff fitness for the activity

Clear role should be established for all staff and other adults involved with clear lines of communication

4) Programme considerations

The programme must be matched to the group's capabilities, interests and the experience and qualifications of staff available. It must also be matched to the suitability of the group equipment and resources as well as personal clothing, footwear and equipment available as well as the environmental conditions, especially weather or seasonal factors.

5) Risk Assessment (RA)

Employers are legally required to complete RAs and these are usually carried out by the group leader and should be completed well before the visit and approved by the DEXA.

A RA need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. It does not generally require technical formulae nor professional health and safety expertise but specialised information may be necessary the person assessing the risk (the Risk Assessor) should be competent to do so.

RAs are an on going process which involves identifying possible risks and, equally importantly, identifying the appropriate control measures. If the current control measures do not reduce the residual risk to an acceptable level then what extra needs to be done to achieve this? Pupils

must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. **If the risks cannot be contained, in the judgement of the DEXA, then the visit must not take place.**

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The Risk Assessor should consult previous risk assessments (available through the DEXA) as appropriate. Once the current RA is completed the Risk Assessor should record it on an appropriate form (Appendix 12) and give copies to all adults on the visit with the details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. A copy should also be provided to the DEXA as part of the ECOAMS so that approval can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place.

Frequent visits to local venues may not need a RA every time but it is essential not to become complacent and such generic RAs need review and the activities careful monitoring (see below).

The group leaders and staff should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

Before booking venues or trips the group leader should obtain written or documentary assurance that providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

Detailed advice on RAs can be obtained from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (<http://www.hse.gov.uk>) with its booklet *‘Five steps to Risk Assessment’* (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>), *‘A Guide to Risk Assessment Requirements’* (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg218.pdf>), *‘Reducing Risk: Protecting People’*.

Also of interest are The Adventure Activities Industry Advisory Committee (AAIAC) *‘5 steps to Risk Assessment for Adventure Activities’* and *‘Worked examples in Risk Assessment’* and the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) *‘Adventure activities: five steps to risk assessment’*.

The group leader/risk assessor should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- The location, routes and modes of transport;
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- The ratios of teachers and supervisory staff (Appendix 8);
- The group members’ age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- The special educational or medical needs of pupils;
- The quality and suitability of available equipment;
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- Incident Management procedures;

- Most problems on school trips stem from:
 - Lack of food;
 - Dehydration;
 - Lack of sleep;
 - Danger of overexertion in heat
 - Sunburn/ sunstroke
 - Overestimating the capabilities of young people
- Pupil management is therefore a significant element in avoiding such problems including clothing and appropriate equipment, fluids, sunscreen, sunglasses.
- Incidents fall into two categories:
 - a) Minor incidents (dealt with on site)
 - b) Major incident (involving other agencies)
- ◆ (a & b) Dealing with the incident – immediate action :

First Aid - This requires a level of certified competence from supervisory staff, not just having the contents of the accompanying first aid kit. Care must be taken in assessing the level of first aid appropriate based on:

- The numbers in the group;
- The nature of the activity;
- The environment;
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be;
- The distance to the nearest hospital.

and staff should be suitably qualified (especially for overseas and adventurous trips), with a good working knowledge of first aid. First aid should be available and accessible at all times and group members should know how to obtain it. The group leader must ensure that an adequate first aid kit for the activity and environment is taken on the visit. The HSE recommends as a minimum where no specific risk has been identified:

- a leaflet giving general advice on first aid;
- six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings;
- one large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approximately 18 x 18 cm;
- two triangular bandages;
- two safety pins;
- individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes;
- one pair of disposable gloves;
- a resuscitator (for hygienic expired air resuscitation)

All adults must know how to contact the emergency services. For further advice on first aid see the DfES publication '*Guidance on First Aid in Schools*' and be prepared to give consent in case of emergency medical treatment being required; permission granted through the parental signature on the consent form. Copies of consent form must be carried ;

- (a & b) Managing the whole group - it is essential that all members of the group know what to do and what is expected of them in the event of a problem. There must be clear briefings about arrangements with clearly defined lines of communication;

- (a & b) Assessing the situation;
 - (a) Continuing with the activity or (a & b) returning to base;
 - (b) Implement procedures governing contact with:
 - Emergency services;
 - Organisation/centre;
 - Immediate family;
 - Media;
 - (b) record essential information;
 - (b) post incident care of the group;
 - If such a problem develops Appendix 14 covers the appropriate management system.
- How to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue;
- What to do if a member of staff is injured or falls ill;
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

There are 3 levels of RA:

a) Generic

These apply to an activity wherever and whenever it takes place. Assessing activities often need specific expertise and should be available from the activity provider, tour operator or NGB. It is intended to develop a suite of generic RAs applicable to College activities (Appendix 13). On-site RAs should be utilised if such activities are offered off-site. Such RAs should be reviewed regularly (at a maximum of every 3 years) and updated in the light of experience, especially in response to reported incidents.

b) Visit/site specific

These represent modifications of the generic RAs in the light of the conditions at the site of the visit. Control measures will need to be assessed in terms of the site and will need specific recording.

c) Ongoing/dynamic

Group Leaders will need to continuously update their risk assessment during the visit and these will be recorded during the post-visit evaluation. These are normally judgements and decisions taken as they arise and may be the result of objective observation eg weather changes leading to route change or subjective feelings eg feeling of increased unease in the party as the activity proceeds. These responses will be governed by best practice as informed by the generic and visit/site-specific RAs. Changes to the itinerary, incidents, changes to the weather may bring pupils face to face with unexpected hazards or difficulties and give rise to the need to re-assess risk.

Of particular importance are:

i) The effects of weather:

- Overheating/dehydration – hyperthermia
- Sunburn/sunstroke
- Extremes of cold and wet – hypothermia

The risk assessment should cover appropriate clothing for the expected weather and steps to avoid these problems eg water bottles and replenishment, salt intake, diet. Regular checks on the local weather forecast are essential to inform decisions on appropriate clothing; whether water/caving activities might be in areas prone to flash floods; whether climbing or trekking at altitude might be subject to dramatic changes of weather; potential for fallen trees; route blockage by snow etc

ii) Also:

- Illness
- Behaviour
- Relations with other groups
- Changes in supervision

iii) Emergencies.

Any of these may need a reassessment and appropriate change in itinerary, as long as the alternative plan has been subject to a RA. Changes in supervision may have to be implemented if one supervisor has to give prolonged 1:1 attention to a participant. The group leader may have to reassess the supervisory roles of the other adults to ensure that all participants know who is responsible for them. Activities may need to be amended until the other adult returns.

Group leaders should trust their knowledge of the young people and their professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change in plan.

There must be a clear statement of conditions that would lead to an activity being modified or aborted and what action to take under these conditions.

The RAs should also take into account problems posed by the medical history of participants as reported by the Parental Consent Form (Appendix 10). Care must be taken not to exclude pupils on health grounds and group leaders should explore the requirements demanded by such conditions by contact with the parents, GP and consultant. If the health problem still involves an unacceptable risk despite extra control measures then this must be explained to the parents who may wish to withdraw the pupil.

6) Child Protection

- a) Those involved with offsite visits must be familiar with the College's Child Protection policy as issues may arise from pupils outside the formal school context.
- b) For non staff led visits the higher duty of care is delegated to staff employed by the provider. It is important to confirm that the provider has a Child Protection policy and that staff have been CRB checked.

7) Exploratory visits

Proof of quality control is needed before a venue is used. This involves assessment of:

- The style of the programme;
- Is the programme suitable for the group?
- Is the programme tailor made?

- Are there clearly defined roles and responsibilities?
- Is the management of the individual student acceptable?
- Is activity and site specific Risk Assessments available?
- Is there an integrated IMP?
- What is the insurance cover and is specific cover required?
- Instructors qualifications;
- AALA licence (as appropriate);
- Are Child Protection procedures in place.

An exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a trip abroad or on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in an unfamiliar location.

In other cases the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit, wherever possible, to:

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the visit and can cater for the needs of staff and pupils in the group;
- Obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue;
- Obtain advice from the manager;
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.

If, in the last resort, an exploratory visit is not feasible then the group leader will need to consider how to complete an adequate assessment of the risks. A minimum measure would be to obtain specific written information from the venue which includes their risk assessments for the activities and sites used, confirmation of Child Protection procedures ie their staff are CRB checked (form at Appendix 25), references from other schools who have recently visited it and from local organisations such as tourist boards.

Many College visits involve taking new groups of students to the same location each year. As some factors will change from year to year it is prudent to re-assess the risks each time, even when the group leader stays the same. The evaluation mechanism built into ECOAMs will help this process.

8) Other considerations

Other factors which should form part of the planning stage include;

- The facilities/equipment the group will need to take on the visit;
- The facilities/equipment to be provided at the venue;
- Staff training needs;
- The designation of someone to record the details of the visit and carry accident forms etc;
- Transport arrangements;
- Insurance arrangements;
- Information to the provider;
- Communication arrangements;
- Supervision ratios;
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return;
- Information to parents;
- Preparing pupils;

- Incident Management arrangements;
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early.

9) Finance

The group leader should ensure that parents have early written information about the costs of the visit. A clear budget should be in place covering anticipated costs and income with a clear audit trail established. Strict financial control is required with receipts and accounts for chargeable items and working through the Accounts Department ensures a secure and verifiable system. Contact with the Accounts Department should be made once permission to go ahead with planning the trip has been given. A separate account should be established with the accounts department to control the visit's receipts and payments. Receipts should be issued for all monies received. Agreement should be reached with parents in advance as to whether surplus funds are returned or retained for future visits or procedures for cost overruns. A full balance sheet should be prepared on return as part of the feedback and evaluation procedure. Appendix 19 should be used to help in this.

B) Preparing pupils

Pupils who are involved in the planning of a visit and who are well prepared will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Therefore providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of the visit's preparation. Pupils must clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will involve. This includes the standard of behaviour and why rules must be followed. Behaviour management is a key issue as lack of control and discipline can be a major cause of accidents. College codes of conduct for behaviour on visits are laid out in Appendix 21 and signed copies should be obtained, especially for residential trips. Pupils should also be informed about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit/activity;
- The background information about the place to be visited;
- Basic foreign words where appropriate;
- Relevant foreign culture and customs;
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- Why safety precautions are in place;
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- What standard of behaviour is expected;
- Appropriate and inappropriate personal and social conduct as per the rules in *Guidance for Pupils*;
- Who is responsible for the group;
- What specific personal clothing, footwear or equipment is required for the proposed activities;
- What not to bring back either within the UK or from abroad eg drugs, knives, fireworks etc;
- What to do if approached by anyone from outside the group;
- What to do if separated from the group;
- That agents of law enforcement abroad are often less tolerant than in the UK;
- Incident Management procedures.

The group leader should ensure that the pupils are capable of undertaking the proposed activity. Challenges should be encouraged but pupils should not be coerced into activities of which they have a genuine fear. Clothing, footwear or equipment must be checked as being appropriate for the proposed activities.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should be withdrawn from that activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils should be sent home early. Parents and pupils should be told in advance about the procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, how a pupil will be returned home safely, and who will meet the cost. If a member of staff is required to accompany the returnee then a member of staff should travel from the College to collect, rather than threatening the viability of the trip by reducing the number of accompanying staff.

Every effort should be made to ensure that visits and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate. The College operates an inclusive policy and this should be borne in mind, irrespective of special needs, medical conditions, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc. All pupils should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible and the trip should be appropriate to all pupils' needs.

Pupils should be actively involved, where feasible, in the RA process to help develop a grasp of risk management and encourage communication, teamwork, improved learning and performance, problem solving, information processing, reasoning, enquiry and evaluation.

Areas of consideration would include:

- Teaching about hazards, risks and risk control;
- Recognition of hazards, assessment of consequent risks, steps taken to control the risk to themselves and to others;
- Using information to assess the immediate and cumulative risk;
- Managing their environment to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others;
- Explaining the steps taken to control risks.

C) Contact with Parents

Accurate and up to date information must be passed to and obtained from parents. They should be given all relevant facts about the trip including:

- a) Nature and purpose of visit ; what activities are planned;
- b) dates;
- c) times of departure and return, with a reminder of the times between which staff are prepared to assume responsibility, trip will leave promptly and anyone arriving late may be left behind
- d) staffing - names and number of accompanying staff with name of leader and deputy leader
- e) mode of transport, including name of coach company. If Sixth Formers are to drive their own cars, written parental consent from parents both drivers and their passengers must be obtained. If staff cars are used, the staff concerned must check that they have the appropriate insurance For foreign trips the name of travel company and whether it is ABTA approved.
- f) cost of visit and method of payment, stating what the cost covers and does not cover.
- g) pocket money

- h) dress code including a list of specific personal clothing, footwear or equipment required for the proposed activities;
- i) code of conduct (Staff must reserve the right not to take any pupils who have had a bad track record)
- j) what is expected from pupils involved in the activities
- k) travel sickness instructions
- l) statement about seatbelts on coaches
- m) statement: "This trip/visit is covered by the annual Parental Consent Form. If any of the information given on that form has changed please let me know"
- n) Parental Consent Form to be included if the visit involves hazardous activities (see Appendix 15)
- o) statement "The College Insurance policy only covers serious injuries leading to some form of permanent disability or death. It does not cover loss or damage to personal property"
- p) Insurance details in respect of baggage, accident and medical cover.
- q) Likely date of payments, including the deposit and cancellation arrangements.
- r) Date/dates of parents' meetings.

It is vital that parents should be able to contact their child on extended visits in the event of a home emergency. This should be via the NSC or group leader as appropriate. They should also be able to contact the group in the event of an incident during the visit or late arrival home. Parents therefore should:

- Know the destination details;
- Be aware of the Incident Management contact arrangements at home (particularly important during school holidays) and at all the venues the groups will visit;
- Provide contact numbers for day and night use in an emergency.

Group leaders should arrange for parents to be told by the school of the group's safe arrival. One way is via a 'telephone-tree' where one parent contacts an agreed group who in turn contact a further group. Arrangements may have to be made if pupils wish to speak to their parents individually. This should be agreed before the visit. Parents concerned after a phone call should talk to the NSC.

Further details are covered in Appendix 6.

D) Medical Conditions

All teachers supervising visits must be aware of pupils' medical needs and appropriate emergency medical procedures. This information should be obtained through the use of the appropriate Parental Consent form (Appendix 10) and a summary of the group's needs and other relevant information supplied by parents should be supplied to each supervisor. If the normal operating plan, as determined by the risk assessment, cannot guarantee a pupil's safety then the plan may need to be modified or it may be appropriate to ask the parents or a care assistant to accompany the pupil. All teachers supervising the visit should be given an opportunity to talk through concerns about their ability to support a particular pupil. If medical conditions cause concern the situation should be discussed with the School Doctor and the parents.

The consent form should include:

- Details of medical conditions including allergies/phobias;
- Written details of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times) and parental permission to administer;
- Information on any special dietary requirements;
- Information on other special needs relevant to successful participation in the visit;
- Emergency contact numbers;
- The pupil's GP's name, address and phone number;
- (Information on whether the pupil has spent a night away from home and their ability to cope effectively)
- Permission for the group leader to act 'in loco parentis' to give consent if emergency medical treatment is required

The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

E) Insurance

The group leader must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place. The activity may be covered by the College's insurance (refer to the Bursar), by the activity provider or extra insurance may be needed to cover specific risks.

It is important that parents are fully informed of the responsibilities accepted and the scope of insurance provided and agreement to this forms part of the Parental Consent Form. Copies of insurance schedules should be made available to parents as soon as possible.

Areas that require attention are:

- Employer's liability;
- Public liability;
- Personal accident cover for staff, other adults and pupils;
- Costs of medical treatment;
- Specialised risk activities (often excluded from standard policies) and the costs of evacuation for medical reasons when abroad;
- Damage to or loss of hired equipment;
- Programmed and non-programmed activities;
- Transport and accommodation expenses in case of emergency;
- Compensation against cancellation or delay;
- Compensation for loss of baggage and personal effects, including money;
- Legal assistance in the recovery of claims;
- Failure or bankruptcy of the provider.

Extreme care should be taken over activities abroad and activities of a potentially hazardous nature. Clarification should be sought that such activities are fully covered.

The group leader should ascertain the details of the insurance held by the tour operator.

The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

The group leader should be satisfied that when hiring coaches the company has appropriate insurance.

When using the College minibuses the group leader should check that the College policy is appropriate for the intended journey. If travelling abroad extra insurance may be required. In the case of foreign travel the group leader should ensure that the drivers have valid licences for the countries to be visited or passed through and are properly insured, and that the minibus is appropriately equipped for local regulations. Arrangements for dealing with breakdowns, especially if travelling abroad, must be in place. If using private cars checks should be made as to proper licensing and insurance.

IV Child Protection

Epsom College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff running offsite visits are reminded about the College's Child Protection Policy.

All NOPs for offsite visits must therefore be written with Safeguarding our Pupils in mind. If visits involve help from parents and volunteers then those not employed directly by the College should be made aware of the Child Protection Policy through the mean of Appendix 23 - **Safeguarding Children and Young People Safe Working Practice Agreement**.

Whilst on visits opportunities exist for more relaxed relationships with pupils and all adults need to remember the professional boundaries. Also under such circumstances information relating to Child Protection issues may come to light. If staff are concerned that such cases require further action they would be expected to follow College Policy by reporting concerns to a CPLO as soon as possible

Our Child Protection Liaison Officers (CPLOs) are:

Mr J R L Hartley	Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Dr E A Huxter	Director of EXtra-Curricular Activities

If you are concerned about a child's welfare, please record your concern, and any observations or conversation heard, and report to one of the CPLOs as soon as possible the same day. Do NOT conduct your own investigation.

If your concerns relate to the actions or behaviour of a member of staff (which could suggest that s/he is unsuitable to work with children) then you should report this to one of the CPLOs in confidence, who will refer the matter to the Headmaster

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being.

V) System Implementation

Members of staff planning off-site visits should follow the steps laid out within this system. The DEXA must be satisfied that the aims of visits and trips are both appropriate and achievable with realistic strategies to achieve the aims, assessing aspiration against reality. The DEXA must also be responsible for assessing the competence of supervisors in environments outside the classroom. Qualifications will need to be monitored, gained and updated as part of the professional development system.

a) Categories A & B

For 'routine' visits a generic risk assessment, with site specific annotations as required, should be reviewed with the DEXA at the start of each term. This covers sports fixtures, off-site games, museum visits, Sunday Activities and Theatre trips. There should also be a review of transport arrangements and Incident Management responses.

At least three days before each trip an accurate nominal roll should be posted in the Common Room with accurate travel details, including contact details of the coach firm as appropriate, and estimated time of return.

Non-routine visits should follow the instructions detailed in Appendix 3a.

b) Categories C & D

All such visits should follow the instructions detailed in Appendix 3b.

The CCF already runs its own system and its methodology conforms to ECOAMS.

Remember for all visits a nominal roll and copy of itinerary and timings should be left with the NSC (for the CCF this is the CO) and the School Office. For insurance purposes the nominal roll should also be sent to the Bursar. A list of those on the trip (including staff), plus emergency contact details, must be posted in the Common Room on the 'Absent from College' section.

On return a post-visit report (Appendix 18) including any incidents (Appendix 17) should be submitted to the DEXA. Post-event evaluation is an integral part of safe management of off-site activities and group leaders should be prepared to debrief staff and reflect on the trip in order to prepare a report to inform the DEXA and possibly interested parents. This will allow long term monitoring of such activities with the aim of developing expertise in planning future successful trips. Such information will be kept on file and will be used to update RAs and NOPs. The report should focus on safety and evaluate the success of achieving the objectives, the effectiveness of the planning and the functioning of the current RA in the light of incidents, 'near misses' and other safety issues.

In all cases in the event of any incident on the visit the procedures in the visit IMP based on ECOAMS Incident Management Procedure (Appendix 14) must be adhered to as this lays down clear lines of contact and defines appropriate responses.

Residential Outline permission (Appendix 1a):

(This should be sought well in advance to allow time to complete all the ECOAMS requirements)

- Objectives of visit
- Likely dates, duration, venue.
- Pupil group, staffing.
- Resources, estimate of cost.



Planning:

- Contact the venue – is it suitable for the group?
- What are the transport options?
- Who would lead the group and who would help to supervise it?
- Who would pay for the visit?
- Exploratory visit
- Risk assessment & Child Protection.



Day Trip permission (Appendix 1a) Residential Substantive proposal (Appendix 1b):

- Dates
- Risk assessment (Appendices 13,14)
- Confirmation of Child Protection policy, Certification of provider(s) (Appendices 25,28)
- NOP, IMP (Appendices 14,15)
- Transport (Appendix 9)
- Insurance (Appendix 11)
- Costs (Appendix 19a)
- Group members
- Staffing (Appendix 4, 8)



Non-Residential

- Inform parents as necessary (Appendices 5,6,10,11,20,21)
- Brief pupils
- ↓
- Post Notice in Common Room (list of pupils and staff, itinerary, contact details)
- ↓
- Go on the visit, monitoring risk at all times - record information as to incidents or near misses (Appendix 17a) medical action (Appendix 17b)

Residential

- Initial parental contact
- Collect non-refundable deposits
- ↓
- Final Preparation: Information to and from parents & pupils (Appendices 5,6,10,11,20,21)
- ↓
- Briefing evening – parent, pupils, supervisors
- ↓
- Final Details to NSC and DEXA
- Post Notice in Common Room (list of pupils and staff, itinerary, contact details) with copy to HM's office & Bursar.
- ↓
- Go on the visit, monitoring risk at all times - record information as to incidents, near misses (Appendix 17a) medical action (Appendix 17b)

Evaluation

Final Accounts (Appendix 19b), Post-visit Reporting (Appendices 17,18)

Implementation of ECOAMS (Checklist Appendix 3)

Glossary

Duty of care – Everyone is required to take **reasonable** care in any situation in which harm to someone else could be **foreseen**.

Standard of care – The **level of competence** associated with (required for) the proper **discharge** of one's **professional duties**.

Higher duty of care – Standard of care expected with **increased experience** and **specialist expertise** where, through training and/or experience, one may be expected to **visualise more clearly** the **results of one's actions** in **one's area/s of expertise** (experience).

Negligence – Acts or omissions by one with the **duty of care** in which this is **breached** by falling below the **standard of care** required to protect others from the **unreasonable risk** of harm (Responsibility – carelessness – injury/death or loss).

Vicarious Liability – The employer is responsible for the actions of the employees if a wrongful act is ordered/authorised by the employer. In cases where a wrongful act is perpetrated, despite being not authorised or even expressly forbidden, the employer may still be liable if the wrongful act is connected closely to the nature and requirements of the employment.

Contract – A legally binding agreement in which an offer was made and accepted and specific provisions made. Breach of contract (failing to undertake one or more of the specified provisions/obligations) allows redress to be sought through the courts by suing for damages.

Statute – Legislation created by Parliament in which rules of conduct for the protection of society remain in force until repealed. Statute law is binding on all courts and takes precedence over all other sources of law. Cases involving statute establish criminal liability and are usually initiated by the police or by a delegated agency such as a local council on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive. Fines include fines and imprisonment.

Regulations – Statutory instruments – sometimes called Regulations – provide the administrative detail for statute law. These set out the rules for how the law is to be applied and carry the force of law. Parliament delegates responsibility for devising the Regulations/Statutory instruments to specific authorities such as Ministers of State or the Health and Safety Executive.

Approved Code of Practice (ACOPs) – This is detailed guidance on how to implement legal requirements. ACOPs are advisory and do not have formal legal standing, but are used as benchmarks by the courts.

Common Law – General principles based on judges' decisions and historical local customs which have become formalised over the years to provide case law precedent for areas not covered by statute. This is principally concerned with civil liability involving private parties in which damages are sought, usually in the form of financial compensation.

European Law – Directives introduce standards, through new Acts of Parliament or implementing Statutory Instruments/Regulations while Regulations automatically become law through enabling Acts. These often focus on accident prevention by setting out minimum standards which are enforceable by fines or imprisonment.