



# **RULES AND GUIDANCE FOR OFF-SITE EXCURSIONS, INCLUDING ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES**

Guidance for:  
Moray Education Establishments

Appendix One - Management of Excursions  
Roles and Responsibilities

## **APPENDIX ONE - MANAGEMENT OF EXCURSIONS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1.1 Moray Council's Rules and Guidance for Off-Site Excursions builds on the Scottish Governments "Going Out There" framework. This Appendix details the administrative and managerial requirements for the organisation and management of excursions. It identifies the key individuals that have a role in planning or delivering excursions. Depending on the size of the excursion and/or establishment, several of the key roles may be carried out by a single individual.

1.2 It is essential that all those involved understand their responsibilities and that there are clear channels of communication through the management system, from policy makers, through heads of establishments to participants and parents.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY WITHIN THE COUNCIL'S SERVICES**

1.3 **Corporate Directors** The Corporate Directors have responsibility for all matters of safety within their service departments, including excursions, and for ensuring that appropriate policies are provided and effectively communicated to senior officers, managers and heads of establishments.

1.4 **Senior Officers, Managers and Heads of Service** Senior officers or central management have the responsibility for communicating policies to establishments and for providing support to heads of establishments in the implementation of these policies. They have no direct role in the provision of excursions but are responsible to the directorate for a general oversight of good practice and application of council policies. They need to be aware of the legal implications for themselves and for Moray Council in the management of excursions.

1.5 **Central Officer** Responsible for the effective administration of Moray Council's excursion policy including arrangements for planning, approval, monitoring, training and audit. These arrangements should provide heads of establishment and Visit Leaders with ready access to their employer's policies and guidance. This includes direct access to technical advice on visits and additional field monitoring assistance. Arrangements should enable Visit Leaders to be clear about their role and to feel supported.

1.6 Moray Council should provide learning opportunities for Visit Leaders in risk management and approaches to risk education, combined with developmental experience of planning, preparing for, and supervising visits. A key area for development is the ability to make dynamic risk assessments that take account of changing circumstances. Training should include opportunities to consider the benefits of outdoor learning and its contribution to attainment, achievement and well-being across the curriculum. This role is responsible for ensuring establishments have access to technical advice and support.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT ESTABLISHMENT LEVEL

1.7 **Head of Establishment** The Head of Establishment has responsibility for ensuring safe practice and for the implementation of Moray Council's safety policy. Within larger establishments many of the functions relating to the management and co-ordination of external visits may be delegated to a member of the establishment's Senior Management or Leadership Team (SMT/SLT). The Head of Establishment is to ensure that:

- a. Proposed events have appropriate, achievable and well defined aims.
- b. All employees and volunteers have appropriate experience and training.
- c. Party leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise excursions properly.
- d. Party size, group size and ratios of staff/volunteers to participants conform to the guidelines.
- e. Appropriate information is provided to participants and parents or guardians.
- f. Parental consents are sought and received where necessary.
- g. A risk assessment has been carried out.
- h. Transport arrangements are appropriate and conform to council policy.
- i. Child protection procedures are in place and will be followed.
- j. Contingency arrangements are in place.
- k. The financial and insurance arrangements are adequate.
- l. The particular requirements of those with additional support needs are considered, including arrangements for medication.
- m. Adequate first aid arrangements will be in place.
- n. A **visit leader** has been designated for the event and he/she has a clear understanding of his/her roles and responsibilities.
- o. A **base contact person** is appointed and identified to the visit leader, and where necessary to parents (e.g, out of school term time).
- p. Contact arrangements are sufficient for all eventualities and will enable a co-ordinated response to any incident that may occur.
- q. Staff and volunteers involved understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

r. 'Checking out' and 'checking in' procedures at the beginning and end of the activity/event are in place.

s. In all cases the responsibility to approve each event rests with the Head of Establishment.

**1.8 Delegated Members of staff** Some or all of the above responsibilities may be delegated to other appropriate staff in an establishment. In such cases the responsibilities must be clearly stated and understood by all concerned. The overall responsibility for the excursion remains with the Head of Establishment.

**1.9 Visit Leader** The Visit Leader or Party Leader is the person in whom the Head of Establishment has placed responsibility for the leadership and safe conduct of the excursion. These responsibilities may be shared and/or delegated to supporting staff or volunteers, provided the allocation of responsibilities is clearly communicated and understood.

**1.10** The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the safety of individuals and the group at all times. In particular he/she will be responsible for:

- a. Ensuring the implementation of Moray Council's Off-Site Excursions policy.
- b. Ensuring that all participants in their care are adequately briefed.
- c. Ensuring that all participants are suitably prepared and equipped.
- d. Effective liaison with other staff involved in the programme.
- e. Ensuring that the base contact person has all the information they require to fulfil their role.
- f. Taking account of any additional support needs.
- g. Making arrangements for any medical or dietary requirements.
- h. Ensuring there is adequate first aid provision.
- i. Ensuring a risk assessment has been carried out and that other staff/adults are appropriately informed.
- j. Checking the group out at the beginning of an event and checking them in at the end.
- k. Carrying out a continual dynamic risk assessment and using their judgement to amend or curtail the excursion or activities if required for the safety or well-being of participants.
- l. The nominated visit leader will often be the most experienced member of the staff team and should retain overall control of the event regardless of his/her status within the day to day management structure of the establishment.

1.11 **Assistant Leaders** Other adults, whether staff or volunteers, accompanying excursions and who are given supervisory responsibility. Assistant Leaders are to:

- a. Assist and support the Visit Leader in carrying out his/her responsibilities and respect the fact that final responsibility for decision making during the excursion lies with the Visit Leader.
- b. Take responsibility for the safety and well-being of participants as delegated by the party leader. They are to ensure they act within the remit of their qualifications and experience.
- c. Consider stopping the activity or excursion and notifying the visit leader if they believe the health and safety of those in their care is compromised.

1.12 **Specialist Staff** Other adults may be included in an excursion to provide instruction or supervision of activities. These may be the visit leader, other members of establishment staff or volunteers, or staff from external providers. Specialist staff have responsibility to ensure that:

- a. All equipment is checked for suitability and safe condition.
- b. They operate within Moray Council's safety policy.
- c. They adhere to NGB or other relevant codes of practice.
- d. They act within the scope of their experience and training.
- e. They are appropriately insured to the scope of the activity.
- f. Acceptable supervision ratios are maintained

1.13 **Base Contact Person** This is a crucial role in the safety management system and will normally be a senior member of staff. The Base Contact person should be appointed by the Head of Establishment/authorising officer and will remain 'back at base' and be contactable 24hrs a day throughout the duration of the excursion or event. He/she is responsible for:

- a. Ensuring they obtain sufficient information from the Visit Leader.
- b. Acting as an emergency contact between the Visit Leader, the establishment and parents/guardians.
- c. Acting as a routine point of contact and support for the Visit Leader. The Base Contact is to coordinate the 'checking in' and 'checking out' procedure with the Visit Leader.
- d. Initiating the 'overdue return' plan if the group fail to make a rendezvous.

- e. The base contact person will stand down once the group have returned to base.

1.14 **Participants** All participants should, as far as is reasonably practicable, take responsibility for ensuring that:

- a. They conform to any instructions or guidance on matters of safety and good order given by the Visit leader or other members of staff before or during the activity.
- b. Keep a lookout for anything that may harm either themselves or anyone else in the group and tell the Visit Leader or activity supervisor about it.
- c. Any distress, concern, or discomfort arising during, or resulting from, the activity is brought to the immediate attention of the Visit Leader or supervisor.

1.15 **Parents** Parents and guardians have a responsibility for reinforcing and encouraging responsible attitudes. Parents/guardians must be made aware of this responsibility and accept it as part of giving consent for their child to attend an excursion. Parents must be given sufficient information, in writing and by invitation to attend any briefing sessions, to enable them to make an informed decision on whether their child should attend any excursion. Parents should accept the following responsibilities:

- a. Use the information provided to prepare their child for the excursion.
- b. Help reinforce the notified code of conduct.
- c. Be aware of, and agree to, arrangements for sending participants home early if necessary and the need to meet the costs incurred.
- d. Provide the visit leader with emergency contact information as requested.
- e. Disclose to the visit leader all relevant information about their child's physical, medical and mental health that may be relevant to their participation in the excursion. This would normally be done via the consent form. Refer to the Supporting Medical Needs Policy