

Educational Visits Update - Oct 2010

1. Revised ERYC Code of Practice and Visits Guidance

The ERYC Educational Visits Code of Practice and Safety Guidelines are currently being revised, and an updated version should be made available online soon. However, this will need to wait until the revised HASPEV national guidance has been completed, as this clearly might have implications for our own LA guidance. Jan 2010 is probably the earliest.

2. Required training for Headteachers, Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC), and NQT/GTPs (see CPD courses online at www.eriding.net/CPDdata > ed visits)

It is vital that all managers are fully aware of LA policies and procedures and understand their roles and responsibilities regarding the management of educational visits:

- All new EVCs must attend an initial day's training course as soon as possible.
- New Headteachers should attend either an EVC course or a separate headteacher induction course (next is Thurs 11th Nov pm at Bay Primary).
- Existing Headteachers and EVC's are also welcome to attend to refresh their knowledge.
- ALL existing Educational Visits Coordinators should attend a half-day Refresher training session at least every 3 years.

Managers have a duty to ensure that visit leaders are specifically competent and trained

- All NQTs and GTPs are required to undertake Visit Planning and Leadership training provided by the LA.
- All Visit Leaders should regularly receive training (provided by the LA or in-house) in Visit Planning, Risk Management, and the use of ROVER Online. In particular, all new staff should be appropriately inducted/trained.
- Leaders of more complex visits such as ski trips or overseas expeditions should be specifically trained. The Ski Visit Organiser course has been designed for those staff wishing to lead ski visits abroad (next course over 2 twilights 10th and 17th Nov at County Hall)

3. First Aid training (see CPD courses online at www.eriding.net/CPDdata > ed visits)

LA Visit Guidelines recommend that at least one visit leader is first aid qualified (min 6-8 hrs of training). Make sure that any training course booked is relevant to school/children/visits/outdoor contexts. Taff Bowles is offering 3 Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) courses this year. EFAW is a new 6-hour HSE-certificated course in First Aid, but these LA courses will include an added module that has been designed specifically to give school staff competence in dealing with children in real-life and outdoor situations. Since 2009, the HSE also strongly recommends that staff receive 3 hr refresher training every year – this is not certificated, but should be recorded.

4. ROVER Online

- Please notify Taff Bowles if the school has recently changed email address as this will need updating on ROVER.
- Ensure all users have own username/password and record details of their visit leadership experience, relevant qualifications and training in "My Details". Managers can view this information by clicking on "View My Details" and then "In-House Qualifications and Experience" (see left menu).
- Headteachers/EVCs should be able to view all the school's visits – both current and past – by clicking on "View All Visits" and then "All Forms" in school records (see bottom of left menu). Filtered visit reports can also be obtained from here.

5. Adventure activity instructors

Any staff with instructor qualifications for adventure activities who intend to lead activities from school are required beforehand to submit details of their qualifications, experience, and copies of relevant certificates/logbooks to the LA for approval. If the information provided is acceptable a ticked box is displayed in the user's "My Details" alongside the statement "Registered as a LA approved adventure activity provider".

6. Minibus Driving

- New staff wishing to drive minibuses should have D1 on licence and must attend and pass a 1-day MiDAS course (ERYC Transport Services arrange locally).
- Staff without D1 on their licence can obtain D1 by attending a PCV training course – Welwyn LGV Driving (01482 867125) offer courses at reasonable rates.
- Existing minibus drivers must renew their ERYC “qualification” to drive minibuses by attending a MiDAS course within the next 2 years, and thereafter every 4 years.
- Staff should be reminded that new style (photo) driving licences need renewing every 10 years – and drivers should request that D1 remains on new licence or it may be removed.
- The Headteacher, EVC, or other nominated manager should keep a record of all minibus drivers and check at least annually that they are still qualified and fit to drive.

7. Lord Young's recommendations on Health and Safety

Lord Young has now published his review into current health and safety practices. This was commissioned by David Cameron in an attempt to reduce bureaucracy and the perceived ‘compensation culture’.

The key recommendations of Lord Young’s report which may affect school visits include;

- simplify the process that schools and similar organizations undertake before taking children on trips (*N.B. ERYC have always aimed to keep the procedures for organising visits as simple and unbureaucratic as possible, but any suggestions for improving this process further would be welcomed*)
- introduce a single consent form that covers all activities a child may undertake during his or her time at school (*N.B. The LA Visit Guidelines already encourage schools to keep paperwork to a minimum, and to obtain “blanket cover” consent wherever possible. However, there will still be occasions - for example, residential visits - when it is necessary or helpful to notify parents of specific visits to obtain their consent and support*).
- shift from a system of risk assessment to a system of risk/benefit assessment and consider reviewing the Health and Safety Act to separate out play and leisure from workplace contexts (*N.B. This LA has always encouraged a risk/benefit approach based on common sense*)
- abolish the Adventure Activities Licensing Service (AALS) and replace licensing with a code of practice (*N.B. It remains to be seen in practice how compliance to a code of conduct can be maintained without an inspectorate such as AALS*)

The report can be downloaded in full from: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/lordyoung>

8. Overseas expeditions

- For overseas visits and expeditions that require considerable planning and financial commitment, Outline Approval from the Headteacher, Governors and LA should be sought via ROVER well in advance (usually 8 to 12 months) and BEFORE confirmed bookings are made.
- When seeking Outline Approval only, the Visit Organiser should complete sufficient sections of ROVER (perhaps just sections 1 to 6) to enable managers to make a reasonable assessment of the visit, its viability, and acceptability.
- The form should be sent for approval to all relevant levels of management as usual, but an explanatory note should be added that the form is being submitted only for Outline Approval.

9. Auto belays

Following a few reports of serious incidents in the UK involving auto-belays, group leaders who are planning visits to climbing walls or outdoor centres that offer activities requiring the use of 'auto- belays' (e.g. Kingswood , Robinwood etc.) should seek advice as soon as possible from Taff Bowles (Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant)

10. Secondary Schools Outdoor Team Challenge

The next Outdoor Team Challenge is planned for 8th July 2011 at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park. Schools will be emailed details shortly.