

1. An introduction to East Riding of Yorkshire Council's "Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits"

1.1 The purpose of the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance

East Riding of Yorkshire Council's "Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits" comprises 2 main sections:

- The **Code of Practice for the Management of Offsite Visits (CP)** gives an overview of National and Council policy regarding offsite visits, and describes the key management roles and responsibilities involved. This section is particularly useful for Senior Managers (for example, in schools - the Headteacher, Educational Visits Coordinator, and Governors).
- The **Visits Guidance (VG)** provides practical guidance to all those who are responsible for overseeing, organising and leading offsite visits. This section is particularly useful for Visit Organisers and Assistant Leaders, and for the Managers who oversee and approve visits. The Visits Guidance includes, and should be read in association with, the Council's **Generic Risk Assessments (GRA)** which identify common hazards associated with offsite visits, and suggest control measures to consider in order to minimise the risks involved to an acceptable level.

Both the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance have linked **Appendices** which provide additional supplementary information, including photocopyable proformas, which might be useful for those organising and leading visits. The appendices can be located at the end of relevant chapters, and also in a separate Appendices section. **CPA** documents are appendices linked to the Code of Practice and **VGA** documents are appendices linked to the Visits Guidance.

The LA's "Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits" provides employees with detailed, helpful guidance regarding good practice, and visit leaders should ensure that they are familiar with the current guidance, and understand the general principles involved. However, by definition, guidance is seldom rigid or prescriptive, and therefore visit leaders and managers may still need to discuss and agree at times what is acceptable, and to interpret the guidance according to what is reasonable and practicable in each circumstance.

1.2 Policy statements

East Riding of Yorkshire Council's "Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits" – incorporating the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance (together with the Generic Risk Assessments and associated Appendices):

- represent the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's policy and guidance in relation to all Offsite Visits - which may be defined as all activities (apart from those stated below) that involve children or young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundaries of their normal school/establishment/centre or residential home premises, whilst in the care of the school or other service. Offsite visits include all forms of "educational visits", "outings", and "trips", but do not include work experience or college placements (which are dealt with in separate guidance), or travel between split sites (for which specific guidance should be provided by each particular school/establishment) or the supervision and direction of PE/sporting activities (for which specialist PE guidance is provided by the Association for Physical Education - AfPE).
- state the Council's policy and provide guidance to all those who have responsibility for overseeing, organising and leading offsite visits.
- should form the basis of each school's or establishment's own "Offsite Visits Policy" (N.B. all schools should have their own Visits Policy which has been formally approved by their Governing Body within the past 3 years. Staff should know how to access this policy, and they

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should be familiar with its contents - see Appendix CPA 6.2 "Establishing an Offsite Visits Policy – guidance notes" and CPA 6.3 "Model Offsite Visits Policy template").

- should be readily accessible and familiar to all those who have responsibility for overseeing, organising and leading offsite visits.
- should be accepted and complied with by all those who have responsibility for overseeing, organising and leading offsite visits.
- replaces any previous guidelines published.
- will be continually reviewed and updated to ensure that current good practice is followed. A major review and revision will occur every 4 years. If urgent changes and updates need to be made in the interim period, all relevant schools and establishments will be notified immediately and information will be displayed via the Educational/Offsite Visits webpage at www.eriding.net. All documents are dated and important revisions will also be dated accordingly.
- reflect, and should be used in conjunction with, the "National Guidance" (NG) relating to the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom. This guidance is provided by the National Outdoor Education Adviser Panel (OEAP). It provides the basic foundation of current national guidance regarding offsite visits, and is available online at <http://oeapng.info/>
- take into account guidance provided by current and past UK governments, including:
 - **Departmental advice on legal duties and powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies** (DfE guidance 2011) - see website: <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00191759/departmental-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools>
 - **School trips and outdoor learning activities – tackling the health and safety myths** (Health and Safety Executive 2011) – see website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>
 - **Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits – A Good Practice Guide** [HASPEV] 1998 (reprinted 2001)
 - **Health and Safety – Responsibilities and Powers** (produced by the DfES in 2001)
 - **Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits** [produced by the DfES in 2002]
 - **Standards for Adventure** [produced by the DfES in 2002]
 - **A Handbook for Group Leaders** [produced by the DfES in 2002].
- do not attempt to set out in detail the full safety requirements associated with the delivery of every sport or activity. It is acknowledged that activity or group leaders, in the course of obtaining professional qualifications, national governing body awards or local authority assessment, will have acquired and demonstrated the necessary knowledge and skills to lead groups competently and safely.
- do not provide specific guidance for Work Experience or College Placements. These matters are dealt with under separate policy and guidance.
- do not provide specific guidance for safe practice in sport and physical education activities. Guidance in these matters can be obtained from the document "Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport" produced by AfPE (see website: <http://www.afpe.org.uk>).
- aims to support and encourage offsite visits by giving visit leaders and managers the relevant advice and information to plan and lead visits competently and confidently.

1.4 Getting to know the LA's "Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits"

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- Key management personnel (e.g. for schools - Governor i/c visits, Headteacher, Educational Visits Coordinator) are encouraged to read and become familiar with the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance and to undertake training provided by the LA for new managers as soon as possible after taking up their posts.
- All other staff who take responsibility for leading or assisting to lead visits should also be familiar with this Guidance. Whilst it is important to have an overall knowledge and understanding of the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance, the contents are designed more for reference, than for reading from cover to cover. It is particularly important therefore that visit organisers and managers know where and how to access those sections that are relevant to them when required. Each section of ROVER has a direct weblink to the relevant chapter of the Visits Guidance so visit organisers can access relevant information quickly.
- Senior Managers/Headteachers and other staff with responsibility for overseeing visits (for example, in schools the Educational Visit Coordinator, Heads of Department, and Governors) should ensure that all staff who are responsible for overseeing, organising or leading visits are familiar with the whereabouts and contents of the LA's "Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits". Visit organisers are asked when seeking approval and authorisation to confirm that they are familiar with, and have organised their visit in accordance with, the Local Authority's Visits Guidance.
- Users should understand that the sample forms provided within the appendices are not mandatory and may not be necessary for all visits – they are available for schools/establishments to use and adapt to their own needs, if required.

1.4 Further guidance and advice

- Further guidance or advice concerning any issues arising from these policy documents may be obtained by contacting:

**ERYC Educational Visits Officer,
Improvement and Learning Service, County Hall, Beverley, East Yorkshire, HU17 9BA
Telephone 01482 392417 Fax. 01482 392490
Email taff.bowles@eastriding.gov.uk**

- Additional technical advice or information regarding, for example, specific legal or insurance issues, may be obtained by contacting the relevant Local Authority department via the County Hall main switchboard: Telephone 01482 887700

1.5 Access to the Code of Practice and Visits Guidance

- All Local Authority and national government guidance on Offsite Visits, together with other relevant information, can be viewed by accessing the ERYC Offsite Visits and Outdoor Learning webpage via www.eriding.net (see link to Educational Visits and the LA Visits Guidance and Forms). There are also direct links to this site from ROVER online. Staff that have responsibility for overseeing, organising and leading offsite visits should visit this website regularly for news about offsite visits and any updated information and guidance.
- A brief summary of the Visits Guidance is provided on the first page of each chapter. Managers may wish to print hard copies of these summary pages to provide staff with Visits Guidance Summary booklet, but it should be made clear that these pages only provide the basic information, and that reference to more detailed guidance is usually required via the website above.