

THIS DOCUMENT, was reviewed for the 2018-19 school year, replacing the previous version, of Sept 2017
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London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Children's Services Policy and guidance governing:

- **Educational Visits**
- **Off-site activities**
- **Adventure Activities**
- **Learning Outside the Classroom**

Note.

This policy was revised in 2002, 2013 and 2017 and reviewed in 2018. The first written guidance of 2002: VENTURING SAFELY is detailed and of good quality. There are though, references to posts of responsibility such as the advisory teacher for outdoor education, which no longer exist. This revised policy advice does not render VENTURING SAFELY inadequate, but simply brings policy in line with the current local provision and National Guidance. If you have access to VENTURING SAFELY, it continues, alongside more recent guidance referred to in this document, to provide much good, practical advice for planning and conducting visits as well as assessing risk. It will sit alongside this revision.

1 Introduction

Every year, a large number of children and young people participate in educational visits or off-site activity sometimes including an adventurous activity as part of their educational experience or personal development. These activities and opportunities are integral to a rounded educational experience, which excites, challenges, motivates and stimulates learners. This policy sets out how the Children's Services of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham will support the leadership of this aspect of learning, including health and safety requirements so that young people can safely discover and learn from the world beyond their classrooms and settings. This policy and guidance document recommends the adoption of online advice and guidance provided by the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel (OEAP) as the principal source of advice and guidance. The National Guidance (NG) is adopted within the local authority policy, as the source of guidance to schools, adults and other settings. This web – based resource has the features expected of online resources, being dynamic, regularly updated and interactive where it needs to be. As such, it will be fit for purpose into the future. This policy and guidance does not replace the imperative for schools and responsible adults to make health, safety and well being their highest priority. Schools and other centres must have a clear chain of responsibility and adopt risk assessments, which are fit for purpose. These need to take account of the nature of risks and state clear procedures and expectations of supervising adults, in order to maintain the health and safety of young people. The following policy and guidance will support schools and

supervising adults in assessing risk, reviewing their existing procedures and making improvements or introducing changes where needed.

2 LEGAL BASIS

The coalition government took steps to reduce the burden of administrative demands made on schools. This included reduced requirements governing educational visits. Guidance entitled

Health and safety: Advice on legal duties and powers dated June 2013 replaced many previous documents¹. In addition, the DFE draws attention to advice provided by the Health and Safety Executive²

The national advice was reviewed in 2015 and now includes guidance for schools to produce an **EMERGENCY PLAN**:

DFE Guidance: Emergency Planning and Response (see link below)

The 2013 guidance on Health and Safety has a lighter emphasis on parental consent than previously the case. This is reduced to a single consent for activities which are part of the curriculum provided by the school, with the exception of high risk activities which require detailed forward planning. Parents must be informed of all visits, but for the majority, no additional consent is required. The single parental consent remains. The form is available at the link below³

THE 2015 EMERGENCY PLAN guidance⁴ includes a broader range of potential emergencies:

“Your emergency plan should be generic enough to cover a range of potential incidents that could occur, including:

- serious injury to a pupil or member of staff (eg transport accident)
- significant damage to school property (eg fire)
- criminal activity (eg bomb threat)
- severe weather (eg flooding)

¹ <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00191759/departmental-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools>

² <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

³

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety/f00191759/departmental-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools/parental-consent>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/emergencies-and-severe-weather-schools-and-early-years-settings>

- public health incidents (eg flu pandemic)
- the effects of a disaster in the local community

However, it is important to make an assessment of the nature of risk in each visit. Different types of visit present varied risk. Schools need to gauge the level of risk and set out the response to manage those risks.

Your emergency plan should cover procedures for incidents occurring during and outside school hours, including weekends and holidays. You should also include emergency procedures for extended services, such as breakfast clubs, after-school clubs and holiday activities.”

(opening description of guidance.... see footnote 4)

The emergency Planning process is supplemented by the Civil Protection procedures of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham. When planning, schools must take note of the **emergency planning contacts identified in section 17 of this document**. This is in addition to the school's own emergency contact procedures.

Headteachers, governing bodies and local authorities remain liable for ensuring the health and safety of their employees and children in maintained schools and settings. Schools are advised to provide sufficient guidance, training and clear structures for the assessment of risks and educational benefits, so that children have a rich educational experience in a safe environment.

Risks to pupils, staff, volunteers, governing bodies and the local authority include:

- risks which arise from consideration of the requirement to ensure health and safety under the **Health and Safety at Work act 1974** and the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**. This legislation in particular, imposes duties to manage risks and offer protection.
- safeguarding and child protection risks
- reputational risk
- the risk of poor quality educational provision and safeguarding measures in the eyes of the community, governors, parents and external evaluators such as Ofsted

The government guidance sets out the responsibilities of local authorities in controlled, voluntary aided and community schools. It does not require specific actions on the part of local authorities, rather reminds local authorities that they:

“may give a direction concerning the health and safety of persons (including pupils) on the school's premises or taking part in any school activities elsewhere.”

However, should anything go wrong, it is made clear that individuals are unlikely to be held to account and that the employer will be liable. It is necessary to provide clear structures and guidance, which balance risk and safety, rather than leaving issues relating to children’s wellbeing to be tested in the courts.

3 DEFINITIONS

Adventure Activities

Activities that take place in challenging environments that can present technical or environmental complexity in the organisation or delivery of the activity. Many adventure activities have well established National Governing Bodies that train, assess and validate the competency of staff to lead in the activity.

Educational Visits

All visits with a group of young people that leave a school site, to journey to another location, either during the school day, or for extended periods beyond the school day. This usually does not include work experience or activity in schools on split sites. The activity is planned and organised by the school.

Off-site Activities

Activities that occur away from the base of regular work with children or young people organised by staff who work within Children’s Services.

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)

Activity that takes place on the school site, and further afield. Some of this work will be covered by Educational Visits.

Children and Young People

All young people under the care of Children’s Services, whether from a school or other setting.

Staff

In the context of this policy, Staff are defined as any employee of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, any agency worker or volunteer working for the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham and the Members of Barking & Dagenham Council.

4 APPLICATION OF POLICY AND GUIDANCE

This policy and guidance applies to any of the following activities when undertaken by children and young people under the supervision or control (whether pastoral or direct) of London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

- staff, or which are facilitated by the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham i.e those schools for which it is the employer
- Off-site activities, visits or excursions;
 - Activities that fall within the remit of Learning Outside the Classroom
 - Adventure Activities.

Academies and Free Schools are not bound by this policy, but are encouraged to consider the advice and guidance provided to ensure the health, welfare and safety of young people.

This policy applies to staff regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

5 SOURCES OF GUIDANCE and compliance

The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham formally adopts the advice and guidance provided by the **OUTDOOR EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL (OEAP)**

“**OEAP Employer Guidance**” is signposted as the source guidance for this policy. Schools can access this guidance direct at the OEAP website: <http://oeapng.info/>

The advice offered by OEAP can be used in conjunction with the previous local guidance provided by the LBB&D manual; “VENTURING SAFELY”

6 LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND GUIDANCE:

This Policy has links and relates to a number of other guidance documents and standards which are signposted in the OEAP guidance and other sources including:

- Adventure standards for D of E expeditions
<http://www.dofe.info/en/content/cms/doing-your-dofe/activities-sections/expedition/>
- Qualification requirements for staff leading adventure activities
- The use of private cars, employment of staff and recruitment of volunteers
- Classroom Quality Badge <http://lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/quality-indicators>
- **Venturing Safely** Safety in Outdoor Education Procedures and Guidelines LB Barking & Dagenham 2002
- LBB&D Health and Safety at Work policy
<http://lbbd/hr/health-and-safety/hs-policy-arrangements/index.htm>
- Health and safety: Advice on legal duties and powers For local authorities, school leaders, school staff and governing bodies DFE June 2013
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/335111/DfE_Health_and_Safety_Advice_06_02_14.pdf

In addition, in view of recent terror attacks, the **National Governance Association** has produced a guidance note which schools will find helpful. The guidance does not recommend cancellation of trips, but that advice is sought where there is genuine concern

<http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Pupils-and-parents/Pupil-wellbeing/Guidance-on-school-trips-and-supporting-pupils-fol.aspx>

7 EXPECTATION OF COMPLIANCE

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements of their employer's guidance; therefore London Borough of Barking & Dagenham employees must follow the requirements of "OEAP Employer Guidance" (EG), as well as the requirements of this Policy Statement . Agency and volunteer staff are also required to comply.

8 POLICY STATEMENT

The London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (LBB&D) recognises the important role that educational visits, off-site activities, adventurous activities and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) plays in providing a rich and rewarding education for children and young people whatever their age, educational attainment or circumstances.

LBB&D actively supports and encourages such activities. In so doing, LBB&D recognises that this may involve exposing participants to challenges and risks with which they may not be familiar. This policy and guidance, supported by the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel enables schools, governing bodies and others to identify and manage these risks, reducing them to an acceptable or tolerable level, ensuring a balancing of the risks against the benefits of the activity.

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that children and young people are safe, while in their care, both on and off site. Risk assessments and the communication system established by schools, to ensure rapid response to any incidents arising, need to be robust and reliable. Schools should use the guidance set out in this document and that which is signposted from other expert organisations, to ensure that education visits are structured and managed safely.

All activities falling within the scope of this policy should:

- Comply with recognised sector best practice guidance with respect to issues falling within the scope of this policy. For the purposes of this policy, this means compliance with the guidance issued by the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (www.oeapeg.info) unless this guidance is specifically over-ridden by a requirement within this or any other LBB&D health and safety policy;
- Be allocated sufficient resources (time, planning, staff, budget) to enable activities to be undertaken safely;
- Include a risk management process that is informed by a *Risk & Benefit Assessment* where the benefits of the proposed activity are balanced against the risks.

- *Control measures* should also be specified to show how those risks can be managed. There may be some background or residual risk elements remaining and these could be viewed as acceptable. Part of the curriculum and learning for young people is to learn how to identify and manage risk.
- Be monitored to satisfy the Council that the requirements of this policy are being met.

Where risks to participants are viewed as unacceptable, then the activity must not be carried out until further advice has been sought through the Commissioning Director's representative).

9 OUTLINE APPROVAL AND MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES

Where activities involve either travel abroad, or the provision of “adventure activities”, whether led by LBB&D staff or by a third party provider, then *the Council requires that these be notified to the Commissioning Director's representative for outline approval early in the planning stages.*

Where activities that fall within the scope of this policy are being provided by a third party, then the Council will require that:

- Reasonable checks of any external organisations that are contracted to provide any activities, regardless of whether these activities are being carried out on or off-site, are carried out to ensure that they are competent to provide such activities;
- Checks would normally be via an external validation process using an Inspection and Accrediting Body, which may include:
The Adventure Activities Licensing Service,
The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (QB),
Adventuremark or sector approval schemes.
School leaders should obtain published risk assessments from such providers and be satisfied of their rigour and capacity to protect young people

Exceptions

- LBB&D confirms and endorses the Learning Outside The Classroom Quality Badge (OtC QB) scheme as acceptable without further checks required.
- Trewern Outdoor Centre is part of the LBB&D and is considered to have services and control measures which will not normally need additional checks. Periodic joint scrutiny with the Head of Trewern Outdoor Centre, will be used to endorse its on – going quality

To secure these policy objectives, the Council will:

- Establish and maintain systems and procedures to enable schools and settings to comply with the requirements of this policy. Specifically, all

schools and settings will be required to record and manage activities falling within the scope of this policy using the OEAP ‘RADAR’ assessment system. Schools and other settings will be provided with forms EVA1 and EVA2 which enable them to record risk assessments and appropriate control measures, seek approval and apply for insurance cover where needed.

- Provide competent advice through the support and guidance website of OEAP in addition to the LBB&D advisory manual ‘VENTURING SAFELY’ to enable staff with responsibilities for any aspect of this policy to meet any requirements placed on them;

10 ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS:

As set out above, all plans for the types of activity specified should be submitted to the person nominated by the Commissioning director. The director’s nominated officer will liaise with the borough’s Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing team in order to maintain effective oversight of day to day health and safety compliance.

The nominated officer will:

- Maintain competence and keep abreast of legal requirements as well as sector and industry best practice with regards to activities covered by this policy;
- Report significant changes to legislation, sector and industry best practice to the Commissioning Director
- Monitor the applications made by schools and settings to ensure that they are complying with all relevant legislation and the conditions set out within this policy
- Report the significant findings of monitoring, including any recommended corrective actions, to duty holders so that they can discharge their duties in accordance with this policy.
- Liaise with the borough Civil Protection Officer to maintain effective emergency planning contacts when activities operate out of hours

TRAINING

While there is no legal requirement for schools to appoint an Education Visit Subject leader (EVC), it is considered good practice, given the nature of the risks to young people. The nominated officer will coordinate the provision of training to be made available for schools periodically, based on demand and at schools own expense. This training will be provided by the OUTDOOR EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL at current cost.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

Governing bodies play a key role in providing oversight of all activities undertaken by the school. They should satisfy themselves that the school has suitable policies and procedures in place to adequately manage and monitor all activities falling within the scope of this policy.

The results of monitoring should be discussed at governing body meetings.

Governing bodies are asked to formally adopt this policy and guidance, or to make their own arrangements to ensure that their responsibilities in terms of outdoor education are met.

Governing bodies may also wish to consult the National Governance Association to obtain further guidance about their responsibilities.

<http://www.nga.org.uk/Guidance/Pupils-and-parents/Pupil-wellbeing/Guidance-on-school-trips-and-supporting-pupils-fol.aspx>

HEADTEACHERS

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that any activities falling within the scope of this policy and over which they have, to any extent, control are:

- adequately resourced (in terms of planning, time, staff and budget) to secure compliance with the requirements of this policy and any associated procedures;
- notified to Children's Services where required under the terms of this policy (maintained schools)
- only led by competent people.
- controlled by risk management procedures which are robust and verifiable. This is usually recorded as part of forms EVA1 and EVA2.
- subject to reasonable checks when provided by third parties. The Headteacher is not responsible for such provider's risk assessments, but should be satisfied that they are fit for purpose
- monitored and any significant findings communicated to Children's Services and also to the school's Governing Body so that they can maintain effective oversight of these activities.

Headteachers may appoint a member (or members) of their staff to carry out these duties on their behalf. Where such appointments are made, the Headteacher remains responsible for the standard to be achieved and, as such, they must monitor the performance of these appointed persons (Educational Visits Coordinators or EVC) to ensure that the required tasks are being carried out correctly and competently. Appointment of EVC's should be in writing and should set out clearly what tasks have been delegated to them. EVC's should have sufficient authority (i.e. they should normally be a senior member of staff) to enable them to undertake their role and should be provided with the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to discharge their duties effectively.

EDUCATION VISIT COORDINATORS (EVC)

There is no legal requirement for schools to appoint an EVC. However, it is the most certain means by which schools can gain the necessary knowledge, judge arrangements and make certain that arrangements

for visits are appropriate. EVC's are responsible for undertaking any tasks devolved to them by their Headteacher. Once appointed, EVC's have an additional responsibility to ensure that they bring any significant failings relating to compliance with this policy and its associated procedures to the attention of their Headteacher.

STAFF

Staff are responsible for taking care of themselves and for others affected by their actions or their omissions. In the context of this policy this means:

- Cooperating with line managers and supervisors by implementing the agreed actions of any risk management process and planning,
- Bringing to the attention of management any failings in the risk management process relating to activities falling within the scope of this policy.

It is an expectation of this Policy that all LBB&D staff will be competent to undertake such responsibilities as they have been assigned.

11 EMERGENCY PLANNING, CRITICAL INCIDENT SUPPORT AND REPORTING

Planning for all school visits must include a robust emergency contact system. This should provide direct contact between visit leaders and named school leaders who remain in school. Such chains of contact will ensure that there is always a responsible adult available in the school community who can then contact parents and where necessary, verify that the emergency services have been contacted. Visit leaders and school leaders must ensure a robust process which can be tested, ensuring a guaranteed system is available 24 hrs a day for the duration of the journey.

CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING

A critical incident may include an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has

- suffered a life threatening injury or fatality
- is at serious risk
- gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period
- the whole group is involved in a major incident

As an employer, LBB&D is committed to providing emergency planning procedures to support schools and other establishments in the event of a critical incident.

All health and safety related incidents, including any "near-misses", arising from activities covered by this policy must be reported to the Council. Unless such incidents invoke Civil Protection processes during a visit, such near misses may be reported once the visit is over.

CIVIL PROTECTION SERVICE AND PROCEDURES

The Civil Protection Service is responsible for ensuring that the Council is able to respond effectively to emergencies. As a result, it maintains a

'Duty Emergency Planning Officer' (aka 'Duty EPO') rota so that the Council can be notified of an emergency at any time, 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. Notification of the Civil Protection team is not as routinely important as the robust procedure set in place by the school and should not be confused with calling the emergency services at the time of an incident.

However, all staff leading off site activities must be aware of the critical incident reporting procedures for activities out of hours.

BEFORE YOUR TRIP

It is not normally necessary to involve the Civil Protection Service in the planning of Educational Visits. The school's own planning, risk assessment and emergency contact system will set out the actions to be taken and communications to be made in the event of problems. Administrators SHOULD NOT routinely contact the Civil Protection Team and there is no need to send lists or visit information. The school's own procedures take precedence as a planned part of safeguarding responsibilities.

IN THE EVENT OF AN OUT OF HOURS CRITICAL INCIDENT

If a school group becomes involved in a critical incident and requires additional resources and support beyond the school's established emergency process, notifying the Civil Protection Service will ensure that appropriate Council officers and services can be called to ensure that the group is supported effectively. The Council Contact Centre is available to receive emergency notifications 24 hours a day, 365 days per year.

TO NOTIFY THE COUNCIL VIA THE DUTY 'EPO'

If the Civil Protection team is to be involved, the nominated school leadership contact, or the group leader, can call the number below to ask to be put through to the DUTY EPO (EMERGENCY PLANNING OFFICER)

020 8227 3792

12 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and reviewed periodically, by the officer responsible for the policy

Appendix

COACH/MINIBUS BREAKDOWN/ACCIDENT GUIDANCE

To be issued to all visit leaders

Procedures in the event of Breakdown or accident

Motorways

These are the safest roads in the country but cause the most problems when it comes to knowing what to do in the event of a breakdown or an accident.

- 1 Breakdown – the coach is on the hard shoulder, it is daylight, the coach hazard lights are working, immediately contact the police either by roadside SOS telephone or mobile phone, give location from the nearest marker post, or sign. Keep the party on the coach unless professional judgement indicates that it is unsafe to do so. However, evacuation should be considered as a last resort.
- 2 As above, but it is dark and the lights on coach have failed. In this situation staff should consider evacuating the coach. One adult should be deployed to find a suitable place behind the crash barrier, where the party can be kept together and closely watched. Pupils should be evacuated in small groups under the supervision of an adult.
- 3
 - (a) An accident occurs involving the coach. Immediately contact the police. Keep the children calm and check for injuries.
 - (b) Where has the coach stopped? Is it on the hard shoulder or on the carriageway?
 - (c) If it is on the hard shoulder then as point 1 above.
 - (d) If the vehicle is still on the carriageway ensure that all traffic has come to a stop on the motorway before even attempting to get the children off the coach, especially if it is necessary to use the emergency exit on the offside of the coach. Ensure that an adult is the first off the coach so that the children can be taken onto the hard shoulder in small groups and away from the carriageway.
 - (e) In the event of an accident on the motorway try to be aware of what other vehicles are involved – especially goods vehicles. If a vehicle is carrying hazardous materials, they will be displaying a HAZCHEM marker board. If there is a possibility that one of these is involved, then when the adult gets off the coach to find the safest place for the pupils, be aware of which way the wind is blowing, and try to keep up wind of the lorry. If it is necessary to evacuate the coach staff should be aware of the wind direction and assemble the party up-wind of the

lorry. However, it may be wiser to keep pupils on the coach.

- (f) In the unlikely event that the accident involves the coach actually leaving the carriageway onto the grass verge or even down a banking it is important to try and make a rapid assessment of the situation. If the coach driver is unconscious it may be necessary to stop the engine. There should be an emergency stop button both in the coach, and outside, they should be clearly marked, and will only need pressing.
- (g) Call the police. It is not necessary to call all three emergency services. If you are not sure of the location, ask the driver, or find the nearest marker post at the side of the motorway.
- (h) Assess what injuries there are. If it is safe to do so evacuate the party. This should only be done when someone has identified the safest exit from the vehicle, and to assess where the pupils are going to be assembled. If it is not safe to get the pupils off the coach then leave them in position until the emergency services arrive. There may be diesel fuel leaking from the coach. This will not be a fire hazard but will make the grass or road surface very slippery. If this is the case a further call to the police should be made to inform them of the leaking diesel.
- (i) In the highly unlikely event that a fire starts on a coach it will almost certainly start at the rear of the coach or underneath in the centre. If the fire is at the rear get the pupils off the coach by the front exit starting with pupils at the back. If the fire is in the centre then both front and rear exists will have to be used. Remember when using the rear offside exit to check that it is safe to exit and be aware of other traffic. There will be a fire extinguisher on the coach easily visible.
- (j) In all the above situations the driver should be trained and be aware of what action is necessary in an emergency.

“A” Class Roads/Non Motorway Roads

- (a) In the event of any of the above happening off the motorway all of the above applies. When trying to find a safe place for the pupils care should be taken in selecting a site. It may be necessary to enlist the help of the occupiers of premises at the roadside so the pupils are completely clear of the carriageway.
- (b) If it is only a breakdown and the coach is in a built up area and vehicle speeds are relatively slow, it will always be safer for the children to remain on a coach and for them to remain seated with their seatbelts still fastened.

- (c) Obviously if the accident or breakdown is on a country road or dual carriageway then the same care must be taken as on the motorway, the children will need extra attention particularly after an accident, so everyone needs to be extra vigilant.

This information was provided with the co-operation of South Yorkshire Police, Traffic Division.