

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Policy of Safety and Guidance -

Offsite Events and Adventurous Activities

Adopted by Parley First School February 2010

Headteacher – Maryanne Pike

Educational Visits Coordinator – Jenni French

Health and Safety Governor – Piers Dampney

January 2010

1. Scope of the Policy

- 1.1 Adherence to the content of this policy is a requirement for all who are working with children and young people where the LA is the employer.
- 1.2 Others, e.g. foundation and voluntary aided schools are strongly advised to adhere to the content of this policy but the LA can accept no liability for its use outside its statutory areas of responsibility. Responsibility for use rests with the employer.

2. Guidance

- 2.1 This policy, supplementary guidance and planning forms issued by DCC can be accessed at www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

A full list of supplementary guidance can be found in appendix 1

Comprehensive generic advice on organising offsite events and adventurous activities is provided by the DCSF and accessed at www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits or via a link from www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

Other valuable guidance can be accessed at www.hse.gov.uk/education and www.lotc.org.uk

Although most content and wording is specific to schools the organisational principles are relevant to all who work with children and young people and must be adopted.

DCSF Guidance documents;

- Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV)
- Standards for Adventure
- A handbook for Group Leaders
- Group Safety at Water Margins

- 2.2 Organisers will also need to make reference to:

- Any organisational unit policies that may apply
- Any local site instructions and advice relevant to sites being used
- National Governing Body guidelines
- Other sources of good practice

3. Organisational Unit

- 3.1 Children's Services is made up of a range of organisational units. These will vary in size but must include a trained visit coordinator (see paragraph 7) who may be the unit head or a member of staff acting on behalf of the head.
- 3.2 A school would typically operate as an organisational unit.

4. Organisational Unit Policies

- 4.1 Every organisational unit must have a policy for the effective planning and execution of offsite events and adventurous activities. This policy must clearly state the responsibilities of all who play a role within the system, the preparations that must be undertaken before an event and expectations during and after any event. Operating procedures must ensure that organisation will be in compliance with the employer's guidance.

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4.2 An example policy can be accessed at www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

5. Approval

5.1 All offsite events and adventurous activities must receive approval from the unit head before commencement. This task may be delegated to a suitably competent person, the visit coordinator, but responsibility for approval remains with the head.

An organisational unit has responsibility for approval of events and activities.

6. The role of the Local Authority (LA)

6.1 It is the role of the LA to provide guidance, assess proposals, advise and to monitor practice.

6.2 Monitoring will be undertaken as follows;

- Through the 3 yearly formal audit of procedures (currently for all secondary, middle and special schools)
- Through the general programme of health and safety audits
- Requests for evidence of planning following LA notification
- Field monitoring of DCC employee led adventurous activity

7. Visit Coordinator

7.1 All units must have a member of staff who acts as the knowledgeable person with regards to the organisation of offsite events and adventurous activities - the visit coordinator.

More detail on the role of the visit coordinator can be accessed at www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

This person may be the unit head or a person acting on behalf of the unit head.

The person appointed should be specifically competent. The level of competence required will relate to the size of the unit and the type and number of events undertaken.

7.2 The appointed person must attend the DCC visit coordinator training, details of which can be obtained from the Outdoor Education Adviser.

7.3 All correspondence from the LA will be sent to the unit head and visit coordinator.

8. Using an External Provider

8.1 An external provider is any individual or organisation that contracts to provide services to an organisational unit.

Organisers have a responsibility to make suitable and sufficient checks on a provider to establish that required standards of safety and quality are met.

Checks should be made through use of;

Form 4 – External Provider Check.

However Form 4 does not need to be used if the provider has other verifications of safety and quality that provide the same assurances. These are:-

- Holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge

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- Visit www.lotc.org.uk for further information
- Dorset CC Outdoor Education Service
- Visit www.dorsetforyou.com/outdoored for further information

8.2 If doubt exists as to whether the checks made are sufficient or the responses received through use of Form 4 are adequate advice must be sought from the LA.

9. The Planning Process

9.1 The process detailed on the following page is recommended. Forms 1-6 and guidance notes on their use are provided at www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

- **Form 1.** Preliminary Questionnaire
- **Form 2.** Checklist and approval form for offsite events and adventurous activities
- **Form 3.** Parental Consent pro forma
- **Form 4.** External Provider Check
- **Form 5.** LA Notification
- **Form 6.** Risk Assessment pro forma

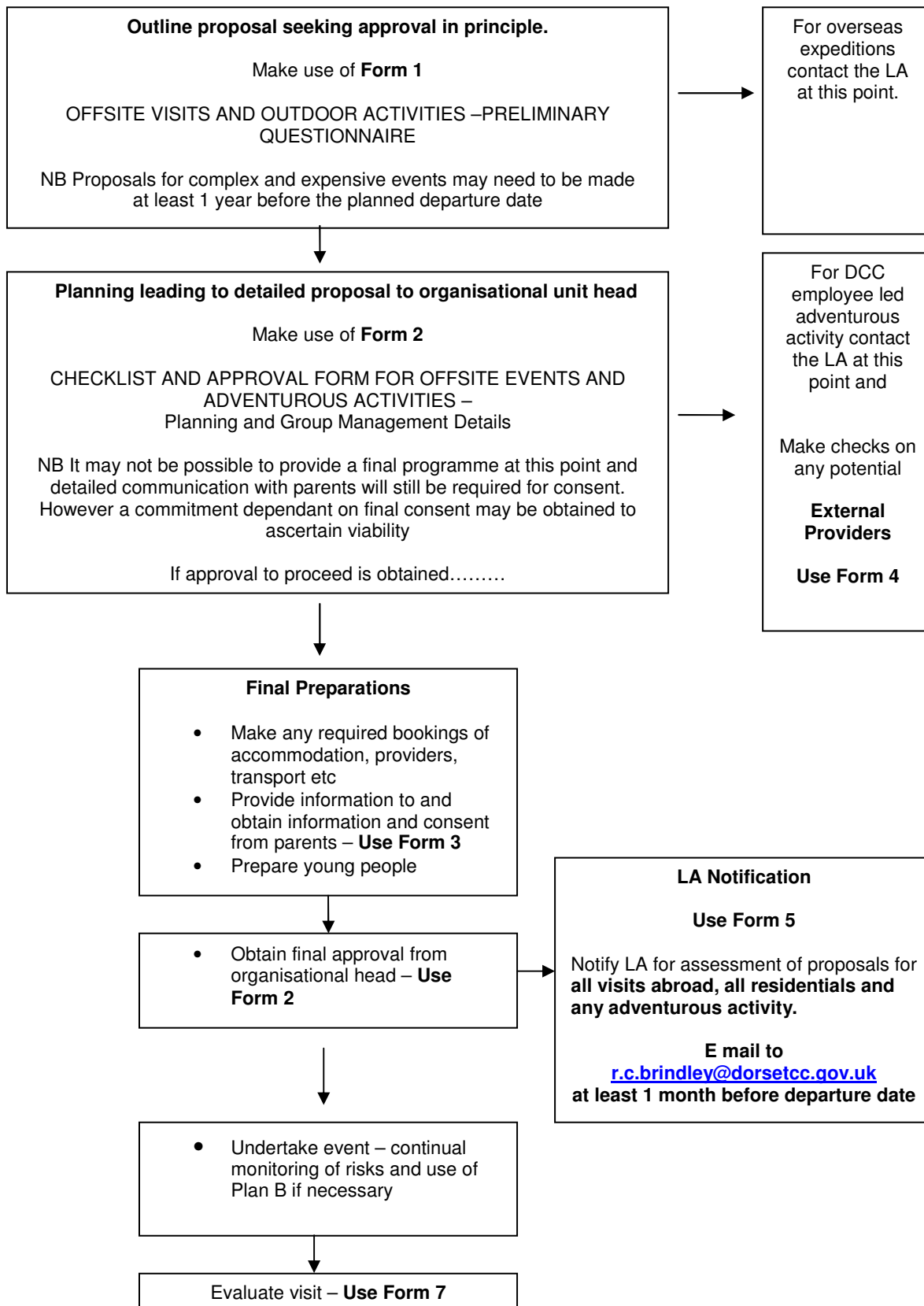
Organisational units may adapt forms 1,2,3 and 6 or make use of their own if they provide the same level of information.

9.2 However the following **must** be used, when applicable, in the provided format;

- **FORM 4** – External Provider Check
- **FORM 5** – L.A Notification Form. (This must be e mailed to r.c.brindley@dorsetcc.gov.uk as required)

9.3 Planning must be sufficient and evidence of planning and any agreed operational procedures is essential for all events and activities. New events and activities will require the full process to be followed whilst repeat events or routine visits may only require a reduced planning process.

Planning the Event



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Appendix 1

The following information is accessible at www.dorsetforyou.com/schoolsafety

- DCC Policy of Safety and Guidance – Offsite Events and Adventurous Activities 2010
- Planning forms 1-6 with guidance notes
- Model offsite visits policy for use by organisational units
- The role of the Visit Coordinator
- Exchange (home stay) visit advice
- 10 Tors challenge guidance
- Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions guidance
- South west mountain and moorland leader training scheme
- Overseas expeditions guidance
- Offsite event and adventurous activity organisational unit audit form
- Offsite event and adventurous activity organisational unit audit form guidance
- DCC Notes and Guidance on the Use of Minibuses 2007
- Generic Risk Assessments
- DCC Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure

If visit coordinators cannot find advice specific to their plans contact should be made with the Outdoor Education Adviser

Appendix 2

Useful Dorset County Council Contacts

- Outdoor Education Adviser.
Tel: 01035 224517
e mail: r.c.brindley@dorsetcc.gov.uk
- Health and Safety – Senior Adviser
Tel: 01305 224092
e mail: lee.payne@dorsetcc.gov.uk
- Safeguarding Team Manager
Tel: 01305 224021
e mail: t.foley@dorsetcc.gov.uk
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Officer
Tel: 01305 851065
e mail: m.harper@dorsetcc.gov.uk
- Insurance and Risk Management – Technical Officer
Tel: 01305 224075
e mail: d.l.samways@dorsetccc.gov.uk
- Minibus guidance / Driver training
Tel: 01305 221591
E mail: m.lock@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Questions regarding the content or implementation of this policy should be addressed to:-

Rob Brindley, Outdoor Education Adviser

E mail: r.c.brindley@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Tel: 01305 224517