

COGNITA



QUINTON HOUSE SCHOOL

Educational Visits Handbook

September 2021

The Principles of Educational Visits in Cognita Schools

Why

The wide and varied range of learning experiences that students can benefit from during Educational Visits offer very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. They can also provide opportunities for personal and pastoral development, such as relationships, character and emotional resilience, environmental and spiritual learning.

Cognita acknowledges the immense value of learning outside the classroom and related activities to young people, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed.

What

Educational Visits include a nearly endless range of destinations and learning opportunities, and are classified under the following categories, linking to approval requirement on EVOLVE:

'Ad-hoc' Activities

Overseas, Residential and Adventurous Activities

Follow the Educational Visits Policy and the Educational Visits Guidance document.

Refer to www.oepng.info as the main source of guidance for Educational Visits.

How

Planning and Approval of Visits

Risk Management

Liaison with Parents or Carers

Staff Suitability, Vetting and Competence

Emergency Procedures

Outcomes and Reporting

Visit Leaders must uphold the highest safeguarding standards, including Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Who

Headmaster: purposeful and safe provision of educational visits and activities, including ensuring that all adults accompanying a visit are appropriately vetted.

EVC: delegated duties to oversee the school's Educational Visits.

Visit Leader: delegated duties to plan and run specific Educational Visits.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Where

School grounds and local amenities,
Museums, cinemas, towns and cities,
Farms, countryside and wilderness areas,
Activities Centres and Field Studies Centres,
Overseas.....

Choose your visit.....

Educational Visits Handbook

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to link the requirements of Cognita Schools with National Guidance and EVOLVE.
- 1.2 Cognita Schools Ltd (Cognita) acknowledges the immense value of learning outside the classroom and related activities to young people, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed.
- 1.3 Cognita has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance': www.oeapng.info. Reference is made to National Guidance throughout this document.
- 1.4 Cognita uses the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by their school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources, a link to the National Library (www.national-library.info), staff records and visit history, on-line parental consent, etc.

2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety on educational visits with the employer.
- 2.2 For Cognita Schools, the employer is Cognita Schools Ltd. All staff in Cognita schools are required to:
 - take reasonable care for the health & safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work (including students), in accordance with the school's Health & Safety Policy
 - carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
 - follow the Educational Visits Policy and this guidance; and
 - refer to relevant documentation on Teams.
- 2.3 Refer to: 'Planning Basics' and 'Checklists' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.
- 2.4 Key persons include the Headmaster, Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), Visit Leader, Assistant Visit Leader and the School Base Contact.

3 Role of the Headmaster

- 3.1 The Headmaster is responsible for the purposeful and safe provision of educational visits. This includes ensuring that all adults accompanying a visit are appropriately vetted, qualified and competent. The Headmaster ensures that duties are delegated to the EVC to oversee the school's Educational Visits. Headmasters will ensure all overseas, residential and adventurous offsite visits are approved on EVOLVE prior to any bookings or payments being made.

4 Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

- 4.1 The Headmaster will appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), who will support the Headmaster. The EVC Job Description is in [Appendix 1](#) of this Educational Visits Handbook.
- 4.2 Visits are not arranged in isolation and should be part of the curriculum planning for the school. The EVC should liaise with the Headmaster and relevant senior staff to ensure the annual programme of planned trips supports the school's educational and pastoral aims.

- 4.3 The EVC should be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the school. Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the senior leadership team of the school.
- 4.4 The EVC must attend initial EVC training as soon as possible after appointment. Subsequent update training or a repeat full course is required every three years for those who are involved in the role infrequently. Attendance at the annual Cognita EVC conference is required.
- 4.5 The EVC should support the Headmaster to ensure that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits, [see section 16](#), and with approval and other decisions. The EVC must ensure that the Educational Visits Policy and this Handbook is in place (on the school website and on the school's internal network respectively), and that this is updated as necessary.
- 4.6 The EVC should attend the termly Health and Safety Committee Meetings and present an educational visit/trips report.
- 4.7 Schools should adapt the sample 'Educational Visits Checklist' or an alternative (Word version in EVOLVE Resources) to suit their own particular circumstances, and upload this to their school's own EVOLVE Resources section.
- 4.8 Refer to: 'Educational Visits Coordinator' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

5 Role of the Visit Leader

- 5.1 Teachers who plan a trip or visit are classed as the 'Visit Leader' and, as such, have responsibility to make sure the visit is properly organised to ensure the well-being and safety of the group. Visit Leaders will ensure that staff who supervise trips will be effectively deployed to ensure their own safety, as well as the safety and welfare of students. They are responsible for submitting the information about the visit on EVOLVE.
- 5.2 For all educational visits, Visit Leaders must have completed the online visit leaders training course via iHasco or attended a half day certified Cognita training course for Visit Leaders before leading any visit off site. Where for any reason, this has not yet been completed, the Headmaster should indicate this on the Event Specific Notes and specify alternative arrangements to ensure the Visit Leader has sufficient knowledge to lead the visit, on an exceptional basis. Responsibilities include:
 - completing the trip planning and risk management process in conjunction with the EVC: Logging all details and Event Specific Notes on the EVOLVE system in sufficient time for approval
 - ensuring that the visit complies with the requirements of the Educational Visits Policy and this Handbook
 - only proceed with the visit following express authorisation from the Headmaster and/or Educational Visits Adviser
 - ensure that adults assisting with the visit are briefed and provided with other relevant information. All staff on the visit should carry an Emergency Card
 - have responsibility for the effective supervision of students for the duration of the visit and handover of students to parents/carers; and
 - review the visit to advise the Headmaster of shared learning points/issues for future visits and complete an evaluation form via EVOLVE.

6 Role of the School Base Contact

- 6.1 The Visit Leader must have contact details for the designated person(s) (School Base Contact) at the school for the duration of the visit; and the School Base Contact must have copies of student emergency contact details for the duration of the visit.
- 6.2 In the event of an emergency, while still controlling and supervising the rest of the group, the Visit Leader should contact the appropriate emergency/rescue service immediately. Thereafter, the Visit Leader should contact the School Base Contact at the school or the Headmaster as soon as possible. The School Base Contact, the Headmaster and other staff at the school should follow the Critical Incident Management Plan. Any communication with the press/media must be approved in advance with the Communications Team at the School Support Centre.

7 Role of the Educational Visits Adviser

- 7.1 The Educational Visits Adviser (EVA) is responsible for:

- understanding the legal framework within which Outdoor Learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom are delivered
- interpreting, refining and presenting national guidance at a local level
- providing advice, support and monitoring in relation to developing high quality outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom
- informing Cognita of national requirements and initiatives
- providing guidance and support on proportional risk management
- establishing suitable and proportional sample monitoring of visits
- ensuring that establishment Headmasters/HODS and EVCs understand that all leaders involved in visits require access to training to ensure that the employers' guidance is properly understood
- providing approval via EVOLVE for Overseas, Residential (for providers who do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge) and Adventurous visits
- organising, facilitating and delivering effective training for EVCs and leaders; and
- establishing clear guidance defining leader competence for all types of Outdoor Learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom and how such competence may be assessed.

8 Approval of Visit

- 8.1 What does 'Visit Approved by Cognita' mean?

When the Headmaster authorises a visit on EVOLVE, he/she confirms that the visit complies with school and Cognita policy, and that in their opinion the Visit Leader and any accompanying staff are competent to supervise the visit. This task can only be the responsibility of the Headmaster/Senior Management, as Cognita does not have first-hand knowledge of the intended participants or the competence of the staff team to make this decision.

Cognita therefore relies on the Headmaster to make an appropriate professional judgement prior to authorising visits, by taking all aspects into account, including but not limited to:

- the competence of the Visit Leader
- the competence of the accompanying staff
- the ages, level of maturity of students, including those with special needs
- the intended learning outcomes
- the proposed itinerary; and
- the contingency plans (Plan B) in place.

Cognita works on the basis that the Headmaster should not submit the visit for Cognita approval if he/she is not satisfied with the intended arrangements. 'Approved by Cognita' therefore confirms that the school appears to have followed Cognita's stated procedures.

Although all visits requiring Cognita approval are viewed, it is not feasible for Cognita to scrutinise in detail all information and attachments, so this is undertaken on a 'sample' basis.

The exception to the above is where school staff lead adventurous activities themselves (i.e. not using an external provider). In these instances it is unlikely that the Headmaster will have the necessary technical expertise to assess the competence of the activity leader, and therefore this task is carried out by Cognita.

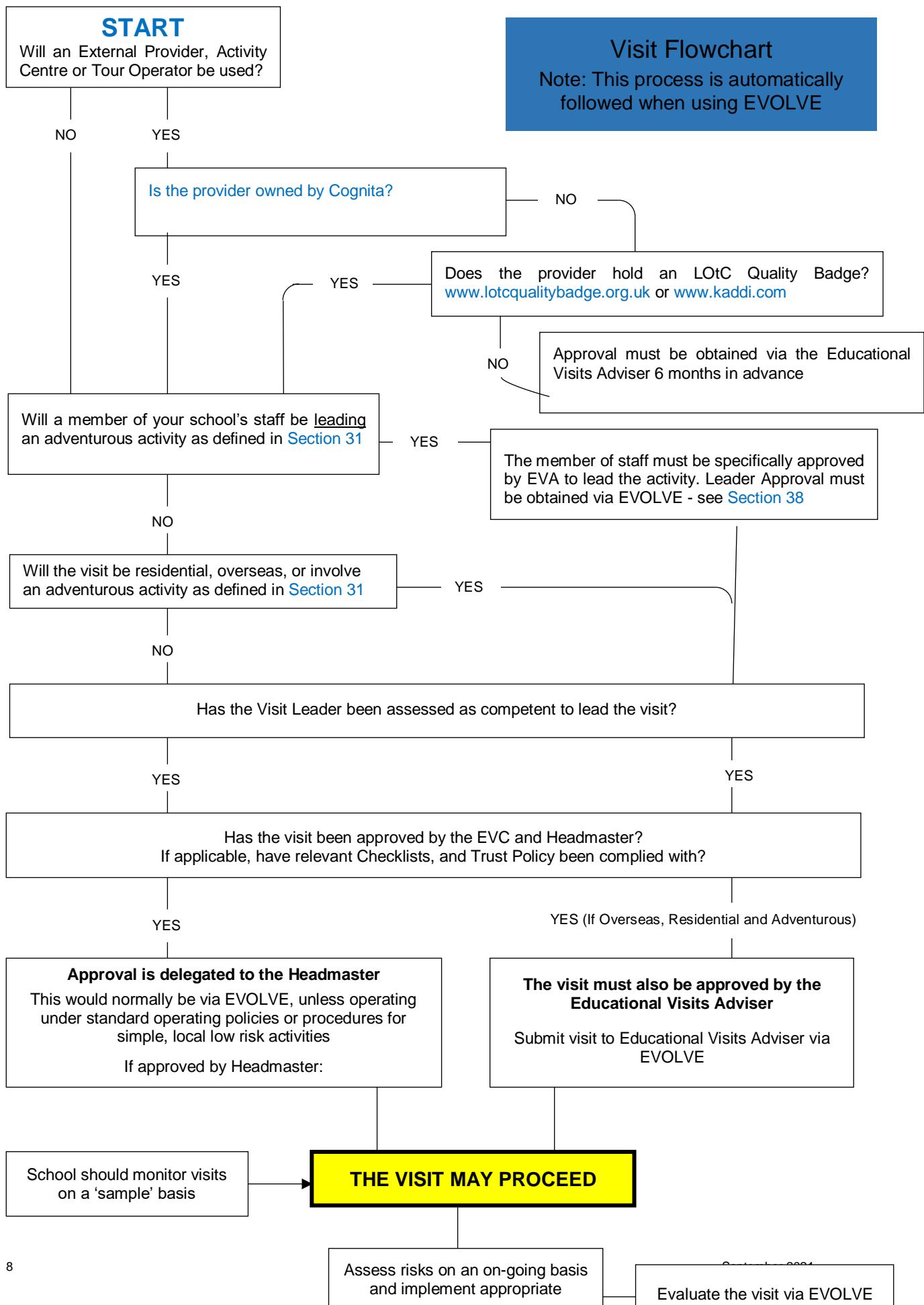
- 8.2 In approving visits, the Headmaster and EVC should ensure that the Visit Leader has been appropriately inducted/trained, and is competent to lead the visit, [see section 16](#).
- 8.3 **'Ad-hoc' activities:** Where there are local activities, (for example EYFS walk to park, local sports fixtures) that are a planned part of the curriculum but are dependent upon the right conditions on the day, the Visit Leader should sign out before departure, leaving relevant information with the School Base Contact, for example using the 'Sign Out' sheet in EVOLVE resources. Such activities must be addressed in the school procedures with a risk management plan in place (See [Appendix 2](#)). Following the activity, Visit Leaders are encouraged to record and evaluate the event on the same day on EVOLVE.
- 8.4 **All other visits:** It is strongly recommended that all other visits are entered onto EVOLVE, in order to aid planning and reduce bureaucracy.

The following visit types are required to be entered onto EVOLVE and 'authorised' within the school, and then 'approved' by the Educational Visits Adviser prior to bookings or payments being made and/or no less than 4 weeks prior to departure via EVOLVE:

- Overseas
- Residential (for providers who do not hold an LOfC Quality Badge); and
- Involving an adventurous activity as defined in [section 31](#).

It is not permissible for any trip to proceed unless:

- the correct procedure has been followed as outlined in this document
- the correct risk management procedures have taken place and have been shared with all adults accompanying the visit
- the details of the visit have been logged (where required) on the EVOLVE system
- the Visit Leader takes the appropriate paperwork and records with them on the visit
- the School Base Contact has a copy of all trip details; and
- the Headmaster and/or Educational Visits Adviser have given documented permission for the visit to take place.



9 Outcomes and Reporting

- 9.1 Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Up to four ‘intended’ outcomes may be recorded on EVOLVE during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.
- 9.2 Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including:
- relationships
 - emotional & spiritual
 - cross curricular
 - individual
 - teamwork; and
 - environmental.
- 9.3 Preparatory work should take place well in advance of the visit, where appropriate. This, in conjunction with the activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow up work.
- 9.4 Refer to: ‘Evaluation’ in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.
- 9.5 All Visit Leaders must complete a post trip evaluation (including accidents, incidents, near misses, medications dispensed, changes to accommodation or sleeping arrangements and unsupervised access to children by adults) and upload to EVOLVE and Medical Tracker – the formal template is stored on EVOLVE, Teams and in this document. Following residential trips, an additional member of staff must complete and upload a trip evaluation, also using the Cognita Master Trip Evaluation Form on EVOLVE. The school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and School Governance Committee, as well as Cognita’s Regional Compliance Committee, may monitor post-visit evaluation reports.
- 9.6 The standard procedures for reporting accidents and incidents must be followed, including completion on Medical Tracker. If it is not possible to access Medical Tracker, an accident form from the first aid pack should be completed. On return to school, the accident form must be given to the First Aid Coordinator to enter onto Medical Tracker. The First Aider on the visit has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate recording and reporting takes place, including to the Head, as soon as is practicably possible. The school’s policy for first aid will be followed at all times, including during all off-site activities and visits.
- 9.7 Any serious injuries to a member of staff or a child must be recorded and reported in accordance with legal requirements (See [RIDDOR](#)).
- 9.8 The [High Quality Outdoor Learning](#) booklet can be used as a tool by Visit Leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place. It can also help the Visit Leader in providing clarity to a provider when designing a programme.

10 Inclusion

- 10.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. You are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage; however, the Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

10.2 Refer to: ‘[Inclusion](#)’ in National Guidance: [www.oeapng.info](#).

11 Planning

- 11.1 EVOLVE provides a means of recording planning during the planning phase, and enables the EVC and Headmaster to contribute to, support, and monitor the activity.
- 11.2 The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, see:
- [Planning with EVOLVE](#) diagram; and
 - STAGED: Staffing, Transport, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.
- 11.3 Risks are expected to be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. See [Managing Risk in Play Provision](#).
- 11.4 Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, a conventional ‘risk assessment’ as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can, on occasion, be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall ‘risk management’ of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the EVOLVE Visit Form itself, and completing any Event Specific Notes (See [Appendix 3](#)).
- 11.5 Visit planning includes consideration of the question: ‘What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?’ It should focus on those issues that are individual to the specific event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event. Significant issues should be recorded on EVOLVE, either in ‘Notes’ or as an attachment, and shared with all relevant parties. Vulnerable students, or students with medical or dietary needs should be highlighted and, if not documented elsewhere, details of management of the students’ needs must be considered and documented on the risk assessment.
- 11.6 This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is relevant to the needs of the group.
- 11.7 Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider ([see section 23](#)) and the provider will have responsibility for managing the activity. As such, the provider’s risk assessment is not the concern of the Headmaster, does not need to be requested from the provider and does not need to be uploaded to EVOLVE.
- 11.8 Alternative arrangements (Plan B) and emergency plans should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.
- 11.9 It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, and will become more ‘risk aware’ and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event. This is endorsed by HSE in [Principles of Sensible Risk Management](#).

Refer to: ‘Responsibilities of the Visit Leader’ in National Guidance: [www.oeapng.info](#) and DfE document: [A Handbook for Group Leaders](#).

12 Risk Management

- 12.1 Visit Leaders must have undertaken an assessment of the risk involved in their trip and documented this through the Event Specific Notes on EVOLVE.

12.2 Externally provided generic risk assessments by external providers are not sufficient alone; Visit Leaders must have undertaken due diligence (e.g. LOtC Quality Badge).

13 Preliminary Visits

13.1 A preliminary visit is recommended if:

- the Visit Leader or another Cognita School has not been to the venue in the last three years (previous visits to the venue by another Cognita School can be searched via EVOLVE); or
- there have been significant changes to the venue since the last visit.

13.2 A preliminary visit is not required if the school is using a travel provider (e.g. Ardmore Education).

14 Safety during the Visit

14.1 Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that all participants understand what is expected of them. This includes any 'rules' that will be in place. These should be re-emphasised as appropriate during the visit.

14.2 Monitoring of the visit must be ongoing; this contributes towards enjoyment, safety and learning.

14.3 It is primarily the responsibility of the Visit Leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

14.4 Following the visit, the Visit Leader should record any significant issues as a 'Note' on EVOLVE, for both reference and to inform future visits.

Refer to: 'Responsibilities of the Visit Leader' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info and DfE document: [A Handbook for Group Leaders](#).

15 Liaison with Parents or Guardian/Parent or Guardian Consent

15.1 **Liaison with parents:** Parents, students and accompanying adults should be given full written details as appropriate regarding the organisation and administration of a visit, to include:

- itinerary; activities and venues, including any special risk inherent in the activities undertaken
- specialist equipment and/or clothing necessary for activities
- code of conduct expected of the children
- packed meal requirements
- provider staff and leaders, their experience and expertise
- total costs and methods for payment
- insurance cover, including medical cover and exemptions; and
- any passport and visa requirements.

For all residential visits and visits involving adventurous activities, near the date of the visit, a meeting should be held for all parents, their children, the staff, and any voluntary helpers concerned with the visit. The information above is reiterated and the emergency procedures explained. There is an opportunity for questions and discussion at the meeting. The school will make clear to parents the arrangements made for all vetting of adults accompanying the visit.

15.2 Parent or guardian consent: Written consent from parents is not required for students to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school (with the exception of nursery age children), as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school; however, it is good practice to inform parents of where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. Parents must be informed of these activities in advance, and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity covered by the form. The school must have a robust means of ensuring that changes to parent/carer contact details and child medical details are up-to-date.

The Department for Education has prepared a '[one-off](#)' consent form which schools can ask parents to sign when a child enrolls at the school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school. These include adventure activities, off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day, residential visits and all off-site activities for nursery schools which take place at any time (including during school holidays or at the weekend). Alternatively, schools may devise their own consent form.

E-consent, via services such as EVOLVE, ParentPay, etc. is an acceptable alternative to paper-based consent forms.

Refer to: 'Parental Consent' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

16 Competence to Lead

16.1 The competence of the Visit Leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants. The EVC and/or Headmaster must therefore consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (check Staff History on EVOLVE)
- Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- Is the leader an employee of Cognita?
- Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- Does the leader exhibit sound decision making abilities?
- What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- If leading adventurous activities, has this been 'approved' by the Educational Visits Adviser?
- Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

Refer to: 'Assessment of Competence' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info and [Planning with EVOLVE](#) diagram.

17 Staffing and Supervision (See also the school's Student Supervision Policy)

17.1 On all visits there must be an 'effective level of supervision' that has been approved by the EVC and Headmaster.

- 17.2 For all visits, the Visit Leader, EVC and Headmaster must make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis, after consideration of the following factors:
- the type, level, and duration of activity
 - the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs
 - the experience and competence of staff and other adults
 - the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions, if applicable; and
 - the contingency, or 'Plan B' options
- 17.3 A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headmaster is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.
- 17.4 Visit Leaders, EVCs and Headmasters often find it helpful to have 'a starting point for consideration'. Where departure from the starting point results in fewer staff, the justification should be recorded as a 'Note' on EVOLVE. See Underpinning Framework on National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.
- 17.5 Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.
- 17.6 Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.
- 17.7 Staff must not consume drugs/alcohol on school trips.

18 Vetting and Disclosure and Barring (DBS) Checks

- 18.1 Staff and volunteers who work frequently or intensively with, or have regular access to, young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check with barred list check as part of their recruitment process. For the purpose of this guidance:
- 'frequently' is defined as 'once a week or more'
 - 'intensively' is defined as 'four or more days in a month, or overnight'
- 18.2 All school staff are subject to appropriate vetting checks (including for criminal records and entries on the barred list) when they are recruited. The Headmaster must arrange for the school's Single Central Register to be checked to ensure that appropriate vetting is in place before a staff member accompanies a visit.
- 18.3 Where overseas students stay in the UK with host families by arrangement of a Cognita school, a criminal record check with a barred list check on the host family members may be needed. Where Cognita schools' students stay with host families in other countries, the school must follow the Cognita Safeguarding: Use of Host Families Policy.
- 18.4 We may, on occasions, make use of arrangements to use host families where, for short periods, children may be provided with overnight care and accommodation by a host family to which they are not related. This is most likely to take place as part of a foreign exchange visit or sports tour, for example. We are fully aware that such arrangements could be deemed private fostering under the Children Act 1989 or the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act. For our children, if payment is made for such an arrangement, or if it is not made privately between families, the private fostering could amount to regulated activity in school or via a third-party agency which would mean that a DBS enhanced check and barred list check would be required - *regardless of the duration of the arrangement*.

- 18.5 Where parents make such arrangements themselves or take the responsibility for the selection of the host parents themselves, this will be a private matter between the child's parents and the host parents and in these circumstances the school will not be a regulated activity provider (i.e. requiring enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information).

Refer to: '[Vetting and DBS Checks](#)' in National Guidance: www.oepng.info. And **Refer to Safeguarding: Use of Host Families Policy and Procedure**

19 Direct, Indirect and Remote Supervision

- 19.1 Young people must be supervised throughout all visits, even though they may be unaccompanied at times.

- 19.2 **Direct supervision** is where a member of staff is with a young person/group.

Should the visiting school staff supervise students alongside the specialist instructors, there should always be clarity about who has responsibility for which aspects of the session and for which students.

- 19.3 **Indirect supervision** is where young people are unaccompanied by a member of staff, but where there is a member of staff in the vicinity, for example as might occur in a museum or shopping centre, or 'down-time' at an activity centre.

- 19.4 **Remote supervision** is where young people are unaccompanied by a member of staff, and the supervising member of staff is not necessarily in the immediate vicinity, for example as might occur during D of E expeditions, or a 6th Form unaccompanied visit to a University open day.

- 19.5 Indirect and Remotely supervised activities can bring valuable educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged. Such activities develop essential lifelong skills, including managing risk, self-sufficiency, interaction with the public and social skills, decision making, etc.

- 19.6 The decision to allow indirect or remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:
- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
 - venue and conditions
 - the activity taking place
 - preparatory training
 - the competence of the supervising staff; and
 - the emergency systems in place.

- 19.7 When recording a remotely supervised visit on EVOLVE, there must still be a named Visit Leader. This will be the member of staff that has made a professional judgement regarding the level of responsibility and maturity of the participants, and decided that in their opinion it is reasonable for them to be undertaking the specific activity unaccompanied by an adult. A 'Note' should be added to EVOLVE specifying that remote supervision applies.

- 19.8 Individual students are never to be on their own during a trip but always remain in a group of students if not directly supervised, for example by host families. Group leaders must put systems in place to enable them regularly to check students' whereabouts.

- 19.9 Refer to the following documents in National Guidance:

- www.oepng.info
- '[Ratios and Effective Supervision](#)'

- ‘Group Management and Supervision’
- ‘Vetting and DBS Checks’

20 First Aid and Management of Medical Conditions

- 20.1 A qualified first aider must accompany all school trips.
- 20.2 Visit Leaders must take full details of students with medical conditions with them on the trip.
- 20.3 Persons administering medication on school trips must have completed an Administration of Medicines course.
- 20.4 Visit Leaders must read Cognita’s First Aid Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy, found on Teams.

Refer to: ‘First Aid’ in National Guidance: www.oepng.info and [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

21 Insurance

- 21.1 Cognita Schools (UK) are insured for Personal Accident and Travel insurance through Chubb Insurance Company. Further information regarding insurance can be obtained from: Head of Facilities UK, Cognita School Support Centre.
- 21.2 For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See www.dh.gov.uk.

Refer to: ‘Insurance’ in National Guidance: www.oepng.info.

22 Transport

- 22.1 Private cars cannot be used to transport young people on school visits.
- 22.2 Trips, sports fixtures, visits etc. which are outside of normal school hours and/or greater than 30 minutes drive from the school must be logged onto EVOLVE in advance.
- 22.3 Visit Leaders must read Cognita’s Transport Policy and Appendices, found on Teams.

Refer to: ‘Transport in private cars’ in National Guidance: www.oepng.info.

23 Using an External Provider

- 23.1 Residential and overseas trips booked for 20/21 must be booked with Cognita Active Learning Group providers. In extenuating circumstances, approval can be sought for non CALG providers from the DE **and** Educational Visits Adviser.
- 23.2 An ‘External Provider’ is defined as where there is an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding, e.g.:
 - activity centre
 - ski company
 - educational tour operator
 - overseas expedition provider
 - climbing wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff
 - freelance instructor of adventurous activities
 - youth hostel (where instruction is provided); or

- voluntary organisation (e.g. Scout Association), where instruction is provided.

23.3 For the purposes of Educational Visits Adviser approval, an External Provider is NOT:

- youth hostel (where accommodation only is used)
- hotel, B&B, etc.
- campsite
- museums, galleries, etc.
- tourist attractions
- theme parks
- farms
- coach, train or airline company
- swimming pool
- climbing wall where instruction is provided by a member of the school's staff with an approved Activity Leader Form (ALF) ([Section 38](#) applies); or
- 'volunteer' instructor of adventurous activities (see below).

The decision about the use of an external provider is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, EVC and Headmaster.

23.4 Schools will find it useful to 'Search by External Provider' on EVOLVE, and liaise with other schools that have used a particular provider.

23.5 Schools should consider the requirements under 'best value' when selecting an external provider.

23.6 To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, the school must ensure that either:

- The Provider holds an LOtC Quality Badge (www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk or www.kaddi.com); or
- A 'Provider Form' has been satisfactorily completed by the provider and approved by the Educational Visits Adviser 6 months before travel.

23.7 Note: If a Provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, a Provider Form and approval is still required.

23.8 Note: from 2014, EVOLVE automatically identifies providers that hold an LOtC Quality Badge via the search tool [Kaddi](#).

23.9 For Providers that hold an LOtC Quality Badge (www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk or www.kaddi.com), no further action is necessary, other than to check the suitability of the Provider/venue in relation to the intended aims or learning outcomes for the particular group.

23.10 For Providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge the following procedure should be followed:

- download a Provider Form from EVOLVE (or see [Appendix 4](#))
- complete the top section
- send the Provider Form to the Provider (email, fax or post)
- on its return, check that it has been satisfactorily completed
- keep the Provider Form on file, together with all other relevant documentation.
- send to the Educational Visits Adviser for approval

23.11 Important: If the Provider has made any alterations to the wording of the Provider Form or is unable to comply, then you must discuss this with the Provider, and if necessary seek advice from the Educational Visits Adviser prior to making a commitment with the Provider.

23.12 The Provider Form should be sent to the Provider at the time of making a provisional booking and no deposits should be committed prior to its satisfactory completion and return. The satisfactory completion of a Provider Form does not necessarily signify that the service on offer will be appropriate for the young people from your school. A pre-visit and recommendation from previous users will help you decide on its suitability.

23.13 In some instances, for example where the school intends to use an 'external', voluntary individual for services, then this person may be regarded as a temporary member of staff and the procedure outlined in [Section 38](#) may be appropriate.

23.14 The above procedure is not sufficient for Overseas Expeditions (i.e. those which typically take place in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries), for which separate arrangements are applicable and must be complied with, see [Section 28](#).

24 Emergency procedures (See also the school's Critical Incident Management Plan)

- 24.1 The Cognita Health and Safety Policy includes off-site visits. Staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to their school's policy on emergency procedures.
- 24.2 For visits that take place outside normal school hours:
 - a completed Emergency Card – Visit Leader (or equivalent) must be with the Visit Leader at all times; and
 - a completed Emergency Card – Home Contacts (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times, where access to EVOLVE is not possible.
- 24.3 There should be a clear audit trail of responsibilities, with agreed processes to put in place for an appointed Lead Manager (LM) to take charge of any given incident on a 24/7 basis. They will need to have effective access to a support group that is a Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) that has been delegated with the responsibility to coordinate the employer's central response.

Refer to: 'Critical incident management' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

Refer to: 'Emergency planning establishment' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

25 Farm Visits

- 25.1 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.

Refer to EVOLVE National Library: '[Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions - Advice to Teachers](#)' and associated documents.

Refer to: Farming & Countryside Education: www.face-online.org.uk.

Refer to: '[Farm Visits](#)' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

26 Water-Margin Activities

- 26.1 This section applies to:
Activities that take place near or in water – such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water*. It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water-going craft.
* ‘gentle’ means hardly moving at all. ‘shallow’ typically means up to the knees of the participants.
- 26.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 26.3 At the outset, the leader must decide whether the activity:
- falls **within** the definition in bold above - in which case the below guidance applies, or
 - **exceeds** the definition in bold above - in which case this is a water-based adventurous activity and **Section 33** applies.
- 26.4 All staff involved in water-margin activities should be conversant with the guidance contained within **Group Safety at Water Margins**. This document must be made available to all supervising adults in advance of the visit.
- 26.5 As with all visits, where appropriate, there should be an approved alternative ‘Plan B’ that could be used where conditions dictate, and for which parental consent has been obtained if necessary.
- 26.6 Education Visits Adviser approval is not required for water-margin activities, but the leader must have previous relevant experience, and must have been assessed as competent to lead the activity by the EVC and/or Headmaster.

Refer to: ‘**Natural Water Bathing**’ in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

27 Residential Visits

- 27.1 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.

Refer to ‘Residential Visits’ in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

28 Overseas Visits

- 28.1 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 28.2 For all visits, it is essential that consideration is given to the following:
- Culture: food and drink, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs.
 - Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation; and
 - Transport systems have been assessed as safe for use.

- 28.3 The Visit Leader should consider the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk (from the home page, select 'Travel Advice'). All relevant FCO information should be circulated amongst the staff team.
- 28.4 For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See www.dh.gov.uk.
- 28.5 On trips overseas, each child should carry a *help me please* identity card in the language of the visiting country, or suitable equivalent alternative, with details of their name, address, any medical needs, the school address and contact numbers, the group's temporary residence address, and staff mobile telephone number(s). Consideration should be given to whether students should carry mobile phones.
- 28.6 For Exchange Visits:
- Cognita has a policy to refer to: **Safeguarding: Use of Host Families Policy and Procedure**
 - Refer to the British Council (Learning): www.britishcouncil.org.

For Overseas Expeditions, see [Section 37](#).

Refer to: 'Overseas Visits' in National Guidance: www.oepng.info.

29 Weather, Clothing & Survival

- 29.1 Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice. Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:
- the time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements
 - likely changes in weather
 - the experience and strength of the party; and
 - the nature of the visit and environment.
- 29.2 When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:
- comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty
 - comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group
 - provision of emergency food and drink
 - a torch; and
 - possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas).
- 29.3 It is primarily the responsibility of the Visit Leader, in consultation with other staff, where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. 'Plan B') to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

30 Swimming

- 30.1 Cognita acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.
- 30.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.

30.3 All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and lifeguarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

30.4 Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities. The following criteria apply:

30.5 **Swimming pools (lifeguarded):** Educational Visits Adviser approval is not required.

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly lifeguarded pools abroad, the school's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.
- Unless suitably qualified, the school's staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.
- For swimming lessons, the school should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

Refer to: 'Swimming in a Swimming Pool' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

30.6 **Hotel (and other) swimming pools:** Cognita Schools should check the lifeguarding position in advance.

Educational Visits Adviser approval is not required for this activity if qualified lifeguarding is provided at the pool. If lifeguarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the Visit Leader must not allow students or staff to swim.

The following awards/qualifications apply:

For free swimming activity:

- A valid RLSS UK National Pool Lifeguard Qualification (NPLQ), or equivalent in the country visited.

For structured or programmed activity:

- A valid RLSS UK National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTAC) or equivalent.
- A valid RLSS UK Water Safety Management Award (WSMA), with appropriate endorsement, see www.lifesavers.org.uk.

The role of the lifeguard is:

- to directly supervise the pool and the pool users, exercising appropriate levels of control. (Note: the lifeguard should remain on the poolside at all times except in the case of an emergency)
- if necessary, brief pool users in advance regarding rules (e.g. no diving, running, etc.)
- to communicate effectively with pool users
- to anticipate problems and prevent accidents
- to intervene to prevent behaviour which is unsafe
- to carry out a rescue from the water; and
- to give immediate first aid to any casualty.

The above must be accomplished in the context of the normal operating procedures and the emergency plan for the pool, which should be considered before swimming takes place. Full familiarisation of the systems described should be walked through at the pool.

Staff must be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the venue will provide back up. Staff should also know if they have exclusive use of the pool, as other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

If a young person holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency lifeguard action, and supervision should remain the responsibility of the school's staff.

Refer to: 'Swimming in a Swimming Pool' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

30.7 Open water swimming (i.e. not in a swimming pool and not a 'water-margin' activity): Education Visits Adviser Approval is required via EVOLVE.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas
- changing environmental conditions
- supervisor complacency
- adherence to local advice; and
- preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.

For free swimming activity:

- A valid National Beach Lifeguard Qualification (NBLQ) or equivalent in the country visited, see www.lifesavers.org.uk. Note: this is for beach/sea only, not inland water.

For structured or programmed activity:

- A valid RLSS UK National Rescue Award for Swimming Teachers and Coaches (NRASTAC) or equivalent.
- A valid RLSS UK Water Safety Management Award (WSMA), with appropriate endorsement (available from 2013), see www.lifesavers.org.uk.

Refer to 'Natural Water Bathing' in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

31 Definition of an 'Adventurous Activity'

31.1 The following activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and require Education Visits Adviser approval:

- all activities in 'open country' (see below)
- swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- camping
- canoeing/kayaking
- sailing/windsurfing/kite surfing
- rafting or improvised rafting
- use of powered safety/rescue craft
- all other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- water skiing
- snorkel and aqualung activities
- hill walking and mountaineering
- rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- abseiling
- river/gorge walking or scrambling
- coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- underground exploration

- shooting/archery/paintballing
 - snowsports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including dry slope
 - air activities (excluding commercial flights)
 - horse riding
 - motor sport – all forms
 - high level ropes courses
 - off road cycling
 - ‘extreme’ sports
 - other activities (e.g. initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above.
- 31.2 ‘Open country’ is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access; however, this is an arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the local authority if you think this might apply. For level of competence required to lead in open country see [Section 35](#).
- 31.3 For the purposes of Educational Visits Adviser approval, the following activities are not regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require approval by the Education Visits Adviser; however, these activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the EVC and Headmaster is competent to supervise the activity:
- walking in parks or on non-remote country paths
 - field studies - unless in the environments stated in ‘open country’
 - swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
 - theme parks
 - tourist attractions
 - pedal go-karts
 - ice skating (rink)
 - farm visits
 - Local traffic survey.
 - museum, library, etc.
 - Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
 - water-margin activities as defined in [Section 26](#)
- 31.4 Please contact the Educational Visits Adviser if there is uncertainty over whether a particular activity requires EVA approval.

32 Adventurous Activities

- 32.1 This section is applicable to all adventurous activities except the following, for which separate guidance applies:
- water-based activities - [Section 33](#)
 - open country activities - [Section 35](#)
 - snowsports - [Section 36](#)
 - overseas expeditions - [Section 37](#).
- 32.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 32.3 The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:
- a) An external provider - see [Section 23](#).
 - The provider must hold an LOtC Quality Badge or receive approval from the Educational Visits Adviser 6 months ahead of the event.
 - Note: If a Provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then approval is still required.

- Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care; or
 - b) A member of your school's staff - see [Section 38](#). This person must be specifically approved by the Educational Visits Adviser to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.
- ### **33 Water-Based Activities**
- 33.1 For clarification between water-margin and water-based activities, see [Section 26](#).
- 33.2 Cognita acknowledges the immense educational benefits that water-based activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages water-based activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.
- 33.3 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 33.4 The following are not regarded as adventurous activities for the purposes of Educational Visits Adviser approval:
- swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools - see [Section 30](#)
 - water-margin activities as defined in [Section 26](#); and
 - commercial craft, tourist boat trips, and similar activities for which young people would not normally wear personal buoyancy.
- 33.5 With the exception of the above, all other forms of water-based activities are regarded as adventurous activities, and as such require Educational Visits Adviser approval.
- 33.6 The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:
- c) An external provider - see [Section 23](#).
 - The provider must hold an LOfC Quality Badge or receive approval from the Educational Visits Adviser 6 months ahead of the event.
 - Note: If a Provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOfC Quality Badge, approval is still required.
 - Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care; or
 - d) A member of your school's staff - see [Section 38](#). This person must be specifically approved by the Educational Visits Adviser to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.
- 33.7 In order to participate in water-based activities, participants should normally be water confident. Participants who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to consideration of all factors, including the activity itself and supervision arrangements. The level of water confidence of all participants must be known by the Activity Leader prior to the commencement of water-based activities.
- 33.8 Leaders should have knowledge of the water conditions/hazards (and potential changes) that might be encountered and prepare accordingly. Local advice must be sought where appropriate, e.g. coastguard, harbour master, other site users, etc.
- 33.9 Personal buoyancy conforming to the appropriate National Governing Body must be worn at all times by all participants in water based activities, except, at the discretion of the Activity Leader, where the activity:
- takes place in a swimming pool; or
 - is 'swimming'; or
 - is an activity for which personal buoyancy would not normally be worn by young people.

34 Trampoline Parks

- 34.1 The Association for Physical Education (AfPE)'s view is that trampolining is suitable for teaching in secondary schools only. It is seen as one of the higher risk activities, and as such, those teaching it must have undertaken specific trampolining qualifications. AfPE currently recommends that schools do not arrange visits for students to Trampoline Parks.
- 34.2 Until a suitable accreditation system is in place for Trampoline Parks (anticipated autumn 2018), Cognita adopts the view of AfPE, i.e. that schools should not use these centres.
- 34.3 Please note that the above does not apply to trampoline clubs or centres that are registered with [British Gymnastics](#). These activities are not classified as 'adventurous', and schools intending to visit these facilities should comply with current AfPE guidance.

See National Guidance document on [Visiting trampoline parks](#).

35 Open-Country Activities

- 35.1 Cognita acknowledges the immense educational benefits that open-country activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages open-country activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.
- 35.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 35.3 For the purposes of Educational Visits Adviser approval, 'open-country' is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access. However, this is an arbitrary boundary and there may be occasions where this definition is inappropriate. Please contact the Educational Visits Adviser if you think this might apply.
- 35.4 Open-country activities are regarded as 'adventurous' and therefore these visits require Educational Visits Adviser approval.
- 35.5 The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:
An external provider - see [Section 23](#).
- The provider must hold an LOtC Quality Badge or receive approval from the Educational Visits Adviser 6 months ahead of the event.
 - Note: If a Provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then approval is still required.
 - Note: Whilst the responsibility for the safety of participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care; or

A member of your school's staff - see [Section 38](#). This person must be specifically approved by the Educational Visits Adviser to lead the activity, via EVOLVE.

The following minimum levels of technical competence apply where a member of the school's own staff intends to lead an open-country activity:

- a) For leaders of walking groups outside the UK or Ireland
- International Mountain Leader Award (IML) www.mltuk.org
- b) For leaders of walking groups in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland
- Mountain Leader Award (ML) Summer or Winter as appropriate www.mltuk.org or
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser - see [Section 38](#)
- c) For leaders of walking groups in summer conditions in non-mountainous hilly terrain

(Known variously as upland, moor, bog, hill, fell or down), with well defined obvious boundaries, such as roads and coastlines, and where any hazards within it are identifiable and avoidable, and where wild camping or movement on steep ground is not involved.

- Hill & Moorland Leader Award (HMLA) www.mltuk.org or
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser - see [Section 38](#)

- d) For leaders of walking groups in terrain 'easier' than that defined in c)

The leader must demonstrate an appropriate level of competence. This may include one or more of the following:

- Countryside Leader Award (CLA) www.countrysideleaderaward.org
- Lowland Leader Award (LLA) www.mltuk.org
- Sports Leaders UK Level 3 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL) www bst.org.uk
- Completion of a suitable 'Leader Training' Course.
- A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical adviser - see [Section 38](#)
- Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated.
- Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated.
- An assessment of competence (written or implied) by the Headmaster.

36 Snowsports

- 36.1 Cognita acknowledges the benefits that snowsport activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages snowsport activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.
- 36.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 36.3 Snowsports (e.g. skiing and snowboarding) are regarded as adventurous activities, and the visit therefore requires Educational Visits Adviser approval.
- 36.4 There are advantages to snowsports taking place during term time as opposed to during the school holiday period. These include: greater choice generally, less queueing for lifts, less crowded slopes and therefore less chance of collisions occurring, less crowded resort, higher possibility of 'sole use' of accommodation, lessons more likely to be conducted by permanent snowsport establishment instructors (as opposed to 'casual' instructors), greater likelihood of English speaking instructors, considerable cost savings through avoiding high season (possibly allowing more young people to participate), etc.
- 36.5 A member of staff intending to organise a snowsport visit (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) should hold the Snowsport Course Organiser Award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England (www.snowsportengland.org.uk) and should have previously accompanied at least one educational snowsports visit.
- 36.6 Young people may only participate in snowsports when under the direction of an appropriately qualified and competent person. This would normally be an instructor employed by the local snowsports school. Schools should therefore consider the merits of fully instructed lessons of 4/5 hours' duration per day.
- 36.7 A member of staff intending to lead skiing or snowboarding (i.e. not using a ski school instructor) must be qualified as below and have been approved by the Educational Visits Adviser via EVOLVE - see [Section 38](#).
- 36.8 **Skiing:** The minimum qualification to lead skiing on snow is:
- the Alpine Ski Course Leader Award (ASCL): www.snowsportengland.org.uk; or

- the Alpine Ski Leader Award (ASL): www.snowsportscotland.org; or
- a statement of competence by an appropriate ‘Technical Adviser’ - see [Section 38](#).

36.9 **Snowboarding:** The minimum qualification to lead snowboarding on snow is:

- the Snowboard Leader Award (SBL): www.snowsportscotland.org; or
- a statement of competence by an appropriate ‘Technical Adviser’ - see [Section 38](#).

See EVOLVE Resources for the current good practice guidance on helmets for snowsport activities.

36.10 Students may only take part in off-piste activities if:

- under the direction of a suitably qualified local instructor; and
- they will remain within the designated controlled areas; and
- off-piste activities are specifically included within the visit insurance policy; and
- a ‘Note’ is added to EVOLVE in advance of the visit, confirming that the above criteria are/will be complied with.

36.11 **Important:** Owing to unacceptable liability waiver requirements, currently Cognita Schools must not use the following resorts: Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone and Heavenly Lake Tahoe, until further notice. For other resorts in the USA or Canada, the school must check the liability position prior to making a commitment.

36.12 Refer to [Snowsport visits](#) in National Guidance: www.oeapng.info.

37 Overseas Expeditions

- 37.1 Cognita acknowledges the immense educational benefits that overseas expeditions can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages overseas expeditions that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.
- 37.2 Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- 37.3 ‘Overseas Expeditions’ (for the purposes of this document) are defined as those which typically involve journeying in remote areas of the world and/or in developing countries.
- 37.4 There are stringent requirements on Overseas Expedition providers, and schools may therefore need to allow up to 18 months for Educational Visits Adviser approval to be granted. A ‘Note’ (for the attention of Cognita) should be added to the EVOLVE Visit Form as soon as possible during the planning stages.
- 37.5 Overseas Expeditions will only be approved by the local authority if the provider either:
- Holds an LOtC Quality Badge (www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk); or
 - Provides a statement of compliance with [Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3](#).
- 37.6 For providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge, ‘[Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3](#)’ should be referred to when the proposal is initiated. This document contains information for both schools and providers, and includes a checklist of vital aspects that must be considered prior to the school making a commitment with an external provider. Overseas Expedition providers are required to comply with the minimum standards specified in this document.

37.7 When planning an expedition and selecting a provider, schools should particularly consider the educational aims of the venture, that appropriate progression takes place, and that the requirements relating to ‘Best Value’ are met.

37.8 Visit Leaders may find it beneficial to attend the one-day course entitled ‘Overseas Expeditions and Fieldwork: a Course for Teachers and Youth Leaders’ organised by the Royal Geographical Society (www.rgs.org/eac).

Refer to: ‘Overseas Expeditions’ in National Guidance: www.oepng.info.

Refer to: ‘Emergency procedures for visit leaders’ in National Guidance: www.oepng.info.

38 Approval of Staff to Lead an Adventurous Activity

38.1 Procedure for obtaining approval

Staff who wish to lead (i.e. supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity, as defined in section 31, must first upload details and scanned copies of all relevant qualifications (e.g. instructor certificates, first aid, etc.) to the ‘My Details’ section of their EVOLVE account.

The Visit Leader should complete the Visit Form on EVOLVE as usual. During this process EVOLVE will ask for an Activity Leader Form (ALF) to be completed, which will request further details regarding the proposed venture (e.g. dates, venues, numbers, etc.). The ALF will then be embedded within the Visit Form for that particular visit.

On receipt of a Visit Form (and embedded ALF), the Educational Visits Adviser will view the proposed activity in the context of the leader’s competencies and qualifications.

Where approval is not granted to lead the activity, the Visit Form will be returned to the EVC via EVOLVE, with an attached ‘Note’. Where this is the case, the activity must not take place.

38.2 Criteria for approval

Approval will normally be given where the leader of the activity has recent relevant experience, and:

- is appropriately qualified through the relevant National Governing Body; or
- has a ‘Statement of Competence’ from an appropriate ‘Technical Adviser’ – see below.

For most activities, the competence required of a Technical Adviser is stipulated by the activity’s National Governing Body. For further clarification regarding a Technical Adviser ‘Statement of Competence’, please contact the Educational Visits Adviser.

In some cases, approval may be granted where no qualification is held, but the person concerned is deemed by the Educational Visits Adviser to have a sufficient level of competence in addition to recent relevant experience.

In cases where no National Governing Body exists, the Educational Visits Adviser will make a decision based on factors which may include: technical advice, the leader’s stated competence, observed competence, past experience, and attendance at training courses.

Approval will always be subject to a requirement that the leader must act at all times within the remit of his/her qualifications, and in accordance with National Governing Body Guidelines where these exist. Approval may also be subject to other conditions which will be specified by the Educational Visits Adviser on the Visit Form.

Where there is insufficient information for the Educational Visits Adviser to make a decision regarding approval, then the applicant may be asked to provide further information (e.g. evidence of awards, experience, and log book details, etc.). In some cases, a meeting with the applicant may be requested by the Educational Visits Adviser.

Approval to lead an adventurous activity is specific to the technical aspects of the adventurous activity detailed. It is not an indication in respect of other aspects of the visit such as general management and supervision skills, the assessment of which may be the responsibility of the Headmaster and/or EVC.

Appendix 1: Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Job Description

Job Title: Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

Post Holder Name:

Role Outline

- Ensuring that you have an understanding of how Educational Visits can support a wide range of outcomes for students and raise achievement.
- Ensuring that you have attended EVC training as recommended or required by Cognita.
- Ensuring that all activities and visits meet policy and guidance requirements.
- Ensuring that Cognita's policy and guidance are properly understood and followed.
- Ensuring that the Educational Visits Policy is implemented in your school.
- Supporting your Head with approval of visits and other decisions.
- Supporting your Head in ensuring that all Group Leaders are competent.
- Informing the Headmaster or Educational Visits Adviser of all non compliance of this handbook.
- Monitoring of Group Leader planning, and sample monitoring of visits.
- Organising the training for Group Leaders and staff on educational visits.
- Ensuring that where Group Leader is someone with a close relationship to a group member, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
- Ensuring the DBS checks are in place as required.
- Ensuring that the Group Leader provides appropriate information to parents and carers prior to a visit and that appropriate consent is obtained prior to the visit.
- Checking that there are 24/7 Establishment Emergency Contacts for each and every visit and that Emergency Procedures are in place.
- Ensuring that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensuring that emergency arrangements include Emergency Contact access to all relevant records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party, including staff.
- Ensuring that individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with Cognita requirements and Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure. Risk management documentation must be updated if necessary.
- Ensuring that all visits are planned and logged in compliance with the timescales outlined in the Handbook.
- Ensuring that post-visit evaluation are completed and logged.
- Ensuring that "near accidents/near misses", including any resulting learning points and action are reported.
- Ensuring that you keep your knowledge up to date via EVC update processes and EVC revalidation courses as recommended or required.
- Ensuring a termly report is created and submitted to the Health & Safety Committee.

Appendix 2: Local Learning Area (*Blue text COVID related*)

General

Visits/activities within the ‘Local Learning Area’ that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- must be recorded on EVOLVE via the ‘Local Area Visit’ module. (Or if not activated: *must be recorded on a ‘Signing-out’ sheet to be left with the office*)
- do not require parental consent. (*State if there are any situations where you would like parents to be informed in advance, eg. via EVOLVE or a slip sent home*).
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).

Boundaries

The boundaries of the Local Learning Area are shown on the attached map (*optional*). This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- Stoneydown Park
- Stoneydown Library
- Hampden Pool and Leisure Centre
- the Concorde Shopping Mall
- Hampden Forest, up to the boundary with Forest Road
- etc.

‘No-go’ areas within the Boundaries e.g.

- Stanley Street on market days
- the public conveniences in Stoneydown Park
- the road crossing at north end of High Street (use footbridge opposite library)

Operating Procedure for Local Learning Area

(*The below is simply a generic risk assessment for these routine activities*)

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our Local Learning Area:

- road traffic.
- other people
 - social distancing
 - members of the public
 - animals.
 - etc.
- losing a student
- uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls
- weather conditions
- activity specific issues when doing fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc)
- etc. - add anything else specifically relating to your Local Learning Area.

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Headmaster or EVC (*delete as necessary according to your circumstances*) must give verbal approval before a group leaves. *Not strictly necessary if you have clearly identified competent staff, and are confident in your operating procedure, and the fact that staff will follow it.*

- only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office
- the concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the school prospectus
- regular handwashing or regular hand sanitising is in place
- students are briefed on keeping their distance from members of the public
- the selected route takes the least busy option
- use antibacterial wipes to clean any equipment before use
- there will normally be a minimum of two adults. *This statement is probably appropriate for all primary schools, although in benign locations it may be OK to relax it for year 6s. Decisions should be based on the area and the age / maturity of the students - the key determinant will always be 'what would the students do if the only adult collapsed?'*
- staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no-go' areas, and have practiced appropriate group management techniques
- students have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group. *For primary schools, this is easy to do with some simple road markings in the playground – with a little practise this can become drilled and slick, as everyone knows what is going to happen.*
- where appropriate, students are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group. *This needs a decision and will depend on the area you are in – return to school, wait where they are, go to x and ask for help, etc)*
- all remotely supervised work in the Local Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs, as a minimum
- students' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school
- staff are aware of any relevant student medical information and will ensure that any required medication is available
- staff will either record the activity on EVOLVE (Local Area Visit module), or leave a completed 'Signing out' sheet with the office. *Amend as necessary*
- a mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number
- appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, face masks, bag for waste, tissues etc.) *If you have a local issue, e.g. with drug needles, etc, in any area, then you can mark that bit as no-go, or add here how you will educate the students to deal with it – it is their home after all, so they need to be able to cope with it!*

IMPORTANT

PLUS, you must add any specifics relating to your local area, e.g:

- When crossing Bimble Street, only the crossing by Baguette the Bakers must be used.
- Where indirect supervision takes place at Vestry Museum, the meeting point will be the seating area in the main concourse. There must always be a member of staff there.
- Students must be informed that they are not allowed to use the vending machines at Hamden Leisure Centre.
- etc.

Appendix 3: Event Specific Notes

EVENT SPECIFIC NOTES

What are the really important things we need to do to keep ourselves safe?

Visit details..... Carried out by Date

ISSUE/RISK Consider STAGED: S taff, T imings, A ctivity, G roup, E nvironment	HOW TO MANAGE IT	Who to be informed		
		PARENTS	STAFF	PARTICIPANT

You must also ensure that appropriate persons are aware of any Generic procedures, but these do not need to be repeated here

ESN

Appendix 4: Provider Form**For completion by 'external providers' used by Cognita Schools**

Providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge and that are to be used by Cognita Schools, are required to complete and return this form in advance of the school making a commitment.

School Staff member in charge

Date(s) of visit..... Name of provider.....

The provider or tour operator providing services to the school named above is asked to give careful consideration to the statements below and sign in the space at the end of the form to indicate that the standard of service will meet the conditions listed. Please tick all specifications you can meet, indicate by a cross any you cannot meet, and write N/A against any specifications which do not apply to your provision.

Section A should be completed for all visits. Sections B (adventure activities), C (tour operators) and D (expeditions) should also be completed if applicable.

SECTION A - ALL VISITS**Health, Safety, and Emergency Policy**

1. The provider complies with relevant health and safety regulations, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations for visits taking place in the UK, and where required has a health and safety policy and recorded risk assessments which are available for inspection.

2. Accident and emergency procedures are maintained and records are available for inspection.

Vehicles

3. All vehicles are roadworthy and meet the requirements of relevant regulations in the country in which they are being used.

Staffing

4. All reasonable steps are taken to check staff who have access to young people for relevant criminal history and suitability to work with young people.

5. There are adequate and regular opportunities for liaison between school staff and the provider's staff and there is sufficient flexibility to make changes to the programme if necessary and the reasons for such changes will be made known to school staff.

6. The provider has never been dismissed from any employment or had a contract ended

Insurance

7. The provider has public liability insurance for at least £5 million with a clause giving 'indemnity to Headmaster'.

Accommodation (if provided)

8. UK accommodation has a current Fire Risk Assessment and is safe from the hazards of fire.

9. If abroad, the accommodation complies with fire, health and safety regulations which apply in the country concerned.

10. There are appropriate security arrangements to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation.

11. Separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities are provided and staff accommodation is close to participants' accommodation.

SECTION B - ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES AND FIELD STUDIES IN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS

13. If YES, AALA Licence number R

For AALA licensable activities in the UK, the specifications in this section are checked as part of the AALA inspection. However, providers licensed with AALA are asked to consider these specifications with respect to any activities or aspects of provision not covered by the licence.

Activity management

14. The provider operates a policy for staff recruitment, training and assessment which ensures that all staff with a responsibility for participants are competent to undertake their duties.

15. The provider maintains a written code of practice for activities which is consistent with relevant National Governing Body guidelines and/or, if abroad, the relevant regulations of the country concerned.

16. Staff competencies are confirmed by appropriate National Governing Body qualifications for the activities to be undertaken, or staff have had their competencies confirmed in writing by an appropriately experienced and qualified Technical Adviser.

17. Where there is no National Governing Body for an activity, the provider has a Code of Conduct for that activity which is in line with current good practice within the UK, and this includes appropriate instructor competencies.

18. Participants will at all times have access to a person with an appropriate First Aid qualification. Staff are practiced and competent in accident and emergency procedures.

19. There is a clear definition of responsibilities between providers and visiting staff regarding supervision and welfare of participants.

20. All equipment used in activities is suited to task, adequately maintained in accordance with statutory requirements and current good practice, with records kept of maintenance checks where necessary.

SECTION C - TOUR OPERATORS

Where a tour operator delivers services to Schools using other providers eg. ski establishments, transport operators or accommodation, the tour operator must ensure that each provider meets the relevant specifications outlined in Sections A and B of this form and that these providers operate to standards which meet the relevant regulations which apply to the country of operation.

22. Sections A and B of this form, as appropriate, have been completed to show that checks have been made. Records are available for inspection.

23. The Tour Operator complies with the package travel regulations, including bonding to safeguard customers' monies.

24. ATOL, ABTA or other bonding body name and numbers

SECTION D - OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONS

25. The provider complies with 'Guidance for Overseas Expeditions, Edition 3' (GOE3).

If any of the above specifications cannot be met or are not applicable, please give details:

Details of any other accreditation, eg with National Governing Bodies, tourist boards, etc.

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that I am an authorised signatory to enter into this Agreement and to bind the said company, firm, person or corporation to the terms and conditions herein.

Signed..... Date

Name (print)..... Position in organisation.....

Full name and address of company, firm, person or corporation.....
.....

Tel Fax Email

Appendix 5:

Use of a private car to transport young people

1	To: The Headmaster of _____
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I confirm that I am willing to use my own vehicle for transporting young people on educational visits. I accept responsibility for maintaining appropriate insurance cover (see below). I have a current valid driving licence and will ensure that my vehicle is legal and roadworthy in all respects.

2	Signed: _____ Print name: _____
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3	Address: _____ _____ _____
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4	Date: _____
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Cognita and the School reserve the right at any time to request copies of any relevant documentation i.e. Registration Document, MOT, Insurance, Driving Licence

		Insurance cover required
For teachers, support staff, or other Trust employees	‘Use by the Policyholder in connection with the business of the Policyholder’	
For parents and other volunteers	‘Use for social, domestic and pleasure purposes’	

Appendix 6: Contacts

EVOLVE	evolve.online
Educational Visits Adviser	Headmasters or EVCs only Jake Wiid via: EVOLVE Messenger or Notes or jake.wiid@cognita.com
Health and Safety Manager	Melissa Jones melissa.jones@cognita.com
Safeguarding Adviser	Alison Barnett Alison.barnett@cognita.com
Insurance Contact at Cognita	Deryck Slik deryck.silk@cognita.com
Websites	National Guidance www.oeapng.info National Library www.national-library.info LOtC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel www.oeap.info