

# **ADDENDUM**

**(Produced by LEA following Glenridding Beck Report)**

**September 2005**

## Key points from the Glenridding Beck Report not already included in Wirral LEA's documentation

- Schools should keep a record of staff with first aid qualifications and their renewal dates and should ensure that this information is available to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).
- Head teachers need to consider whether the school should provide water/rock activities and, if so, whether it has the resources to provide them safely in-house, or whether they should approach a licensed provider.
- If such activities are to be provided by school staff, the head teacher should seek independent verification by a competent person of the suitability of the venue and the technical competence of the proposed leaders(s) to provide the activity at that venue.
- “Head teachers and other senior managers should consider whether the proposed leader(s) have the appropriate leadership skills, experience and other personal qualities needed for a particular visit, in addition to the technical competence required.”
- Records of staff/governor Health and Safety training should be updated and reviewed annually.
- Leaders need to be careful not to create unrealistic expectations and should not allow participant pressure to cloud their judgement.
- Emergency equipment is of limited use if people have not been trained to use it correctly.
- It is good practice for a governor to be invited to attend parents' meetings for visits.
- Whatever the objectives of the visit, the leader must organise it to the best of their professional ability. **There can be no lower standard for 'fun trips'.**
- Leaders and helpers who bring additional children will have potential conflicts of responsibility. LEAs and schools are strongly advised to have a policy on leaders and helpers bringing additional children on educational visits. If that policy allows additional children to be brought, it should make clear that each case should be subject to a risk assessment which includes possible conflicts of interest.
- Nobody should lead adventure activities unless they have been assessed as competent, understand the full range of hazards and risks and can implement rescue and emergency procedures.
- For adventurous activities, ensuring the **competence** of proposed leaders may be a wider task than a simple check of qualifications and technical skills.

- Schools using Outdoor Education Centres (OECs) should clarify roles with the OEC to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out for all aspects of the visit.
- Leaders should make sure that they have sufficient “local knowledge”.
- There should be prior parental consent for swimming.
- Reluctance of participants to do a planned activity should lead to a reassessment of the risks.
- Risk assessments for outdoor water-based activities should take account of the possibility of a panicking casualty.
- The risk assessment should identify the level of competence/qualification in first aid likely to be required.
- Risk assessments should consider how the party might respond to a serious incident, including identifying any emergency procedures for contacting sources of help.
- Leaders must be competent in dynamic risk assessment for the activity, so that they can continuously evaluate the implications of changing conditions. Dynamic risk assessments will need to take account of any generic and site-specific risk assessments and good practice. (Dynamic Risk Assessment is known as ‘on-going’ risk assessment in LEA Policy).
- It is extremely important to have the best available information to support dynamic risk assessment (for example in this case, pupil and leader capabilities, water temperatures and rescue options).
- Risk assessments should consider how the party might respond to a serious incident including identifying any emergency procedures for contacting sources of help.
- Any warnings should lead to an immediate reassessment of the proposed activity and the likely risks.
- Parties should be properly equipped for the environmental conditions according to the findings of the risk assessments, including dynamic risk assessments.
- The risk assessment should identify the staffing required to run a visit safely. Staffing should never be decided just by a simple numerical calculation of ratios.
- **There should always be a viable “plan B” to provide alternative activities in case the primary activity is undeliverable.** A similar standard of risk assessment should be applied as to the main activities.
- The leader should have the competence and confidence to implement “Plan B”.

- Compliance with procedures should form part of a school's internal monitoring arrangements and should be a feature of LEA monitoring.
- Organisations with otherwise robust Health and Safety management systems are often weak on monitoring.
- LEAs need to make clear to head teachers, Governors and advisers:
  - What effective monitoring “looks like”
  - Who is responsible for monitoring what
  - How the findings should be recorded and reported
  - How reports should be evaluated and actioned
- Monitoring and auditing of schools by the LEA should be wider than just premises issues and include evaluation of the monitoring and auditing done by the school.
- LEAs should have a policy on the provision of combined water/rock activities.
- It is good practice for LEAs to:
  - Provide governing bodies with guidance on the issues they need to be considering. A “core agenda” is one way of doing this
  - Brief clerks to Governing Bodies to remind governors of the visit approval procedures and indicate questions they might ask in connection with proposed visits
  - Make the Governing Body aware of reports of any monitoring or review of Health and Safety performance done by the LEA and of any monitoring documents that the school submitted to the LEA
  - Have clear policies and guidance for governors and head teachers on monitoring, evaluation and accountability
  - Provide training and support for governors in the self-assessment of Health and Safety performance to help them in their role as “critical friend”.