

# The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments



**Craighalbert Centre**

Enabling Children to Achieve

## Outdoor Play and Learning and Off-Site Visits: Policy and Procedures

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## 1. Outdoor Play and Learning and Off-Site Visits: National Context

Scotland's outdoor environment offers motivating, exciting, varied and relevant activities for children and young people with multiple and complex additional support needs from pre-school years through to senior phase and beyond. Through Curriculum for Excellence<sup>1</sup> and Learning for Sustainability<sup>2</sup>, the Scottish Government confirms the value of all children and young people enjoying positive play and learning experiences in a wide variety of settings from galleries and museums to woodlands, parks and wild, natural spaces as well as planned adventure and residential experiences.

"Going out There"<sup>3</sup> was developed in partnership by the Scottish Government, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Scottish Advisory Panel for Outdoor Education (SAPOE), Education Scotland and the Association of Directors of Education (ADES), with input from other partners including voluntary organisations and providers, with the expectation that it would be adopted as a common framework across Scotland by all those managing or organising visits or providing activities and venues.

Going Out There:

- Recognises that giving more children and young people access to outdoor play and learning opportunities provides invaluable life experiences which could not be achieved without "going out there" more regularly and more frequently.
- Recognises that the vast majority of outdoor learning involves routine visits to places in the local area.
- Aims to increase opportunities for all Scotland's children and young people to access their learning through the outdoors and off-site visits, improving learning outcomes for all.
- Provides user-friendly processes compliant with health and safety legislation to enable employers and those leading outdoor learning and off-site visits to have

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<sup>1</sup> <https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/about-curriculum-for-excellence/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/news/learning-for-sustainability/>

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits, version 3 published January 2021; <https://www.goingoutthere.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/GOING-OUT-THERE-INTERACTIVE-V3.pdf>

confidence that the approach they are taking meets legal requirements and fosters positive experiences for children and young people.

- Adopts a low bureaucracy approach to outdoor experiences and off-site visits as recommended by the HSE<sup>4</sup>.

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

This policy is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which affirms every child's right to access enriching, inclusive, and meaningful learning experiences.

- In line with **Article 31 (Leisure, Play and Culture)**, the school recognises the fundamental right of all children to engage in play and recreational activities. Outdoor play and offsite learning are therefore considered essential components of the curriculum, providing opportunities for exploration, enjoyment, and holistic development.
- The policy reflects **Article 23 (Children with Disabilities)** by ensuring that learners with complex communication, health, learning and care needs are supported to participate as fully as possible in outdoor environments and offsite experiences. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs, promoting inclusion, dignity, and active engagement.
- In accordance with **Articles 28 and 29 (Right to Education and Aims of Education)**, outdoor learning is valued as a key approach to delivering a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. These experiences support the development of each learner's abilities, communication, independence, and wellbeing.
- The Centre also upholds **Article 24 (Health and Health Services)** by recognising the positive impact of outdoor learning on physical health, emotional wellbeing, and sensory regulation.
- Through **Article 12 (Respect for the Views of the Child)**, the Centre is committed to recognising and responding to the voices of all learners. For pupils with complex communication needs, this includes interpreting verbal and non-verbal communication, preferences, and behaviours to ensure meaningful participation and choice.
- This policy is further guided by **Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child)** and **Article 19 (Protection from Harm)**, ensuring that all outdoor and offsite learning experiences are carefully planned, risk assessed, and delivered in a way that prioritises safety, wellbeing, and individual needs.
- Finally, in line with **Article 2 (Non-Discrimination)**, the Centre is committed to providing equitable access to outdoor play and offsite learning for all pupils, regardless of ability or need.

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<sup>4</sup> School Trips: Tackling the Health and Safety Myths

## **2. Outdoor Play and Learning and Off-Site Visits: SCCMI Context**

SCCMI endorses, 'Going Out There's' recommendations for a sensible, proportionate and low-bureaucracy approach to outdoor play and learning experiences and off-site visits and therefore endeavours to achieve an appropriate balance between protecting children and young people from risk and enabling them to benefit from outdoor and off-site learning experiences as regularly and frequently as is reasonably practicable.

The Centre's Leadership Team (CLT) has therefore established streamlined planning and authorisation processes that focus on the identification and management of real risks rather than on paperwork.

- . To ensure staff both leading and taking part in outdoor and off-site learning experiences are competent to do so and understand their roles.
- . To enable children and young people throughout the school to experience the learning opportunities afforded by outdoor play, Forest School, learning experiences and off-site visits to the full through participation in:
  - a) Routine and expected outdoor play and learning experiences and local off-site visits, i.e. regular activities as part of normal, everyday practice in supporting play and learning including on-site activities and local off-site visits on foot. Routine and expected visits will generally be to local venues, involve easily managed activities, happen on a regular basis and be completed within the normal school day.
  - b) One-off, off-site day visits, i.e. one-off experiences that are therefore not routine and expected, e.g. annual trip to visitor attraction, and may extend beyond the normal school day.
  - c) Residential visits, i.e. any form of overnight stay.

## **3. Staff Training Related to Outdoor Play and Learning and Off-Site Visits**

The ability and competence of front-line staff to plan and manage a dynamic situation in a safe and appropriate way is the key contributor to safe and successful practice in the different levels of outdoor experience and off-site visits.

As the employer, SCCMI's CLT has a clear duty to provide appropriate information,

instruction and training to all staff and has therefore identified the minimum competencies and experiences individual staff must evidence to participate in outdoor and off-site experiences:

- a) For routine and expected outdoor play and learning experiences and local off-site visits - no competencies in addition to those maintained by all learning and therapy staff through the mandatory training cycle are required.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits - experience of leading routine and expected outdoor experiences and local off-site visits and assisting with one-off, off-site day visits and additional competencies required.
- c) For residential visits - experience of leading one-off, off-site day visits and assisting with residential activities required; the HOL will agree with the CLT who is competent to lead and what additional competencies are required.

### 3.1 Mandatory training requirements

All staff who work directly with the children and may lead or assist during outdoor play and learning and off-site visits are required to maintain their knowledge and skills, at a level appropriate to their role, in:

- Baby and child first aid.
- Child protection.
- Eating and drinking.
- Enteral feeding.
- General health and safety.
- Intimate care.
- Moving and handling.
- Safe administration and storage of medicines.
- Seizure care.
- Respiratory care including administration of oxygen and suction.

### 3.2 Additional training requirements for staff leading outdoor experiences and off-site visits

A key area for the development of professional skills and competence for working outdoors and off-site is the ability of activity leaders to make dynamic risk assessments that take account of changing circumstances and events and enable them to respond appropriately:

- Developmental experience of planning, preparing for and supervising outdoor play and learning experiences and off-site visits.
- Risk management.
- Roles and responsibilities associated with outdoor experiences and off-site visits.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities Related to Outdoor Play and Learning and Off-Site Visits**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1972 employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities, including during outdoor play and learning experiences and off-site visits.

### **4.1 Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors are responsible for ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place for outdoor play and learning and off-site visits.

### **4.2 Chief Executive**

The CEO is responsible for the provision of health and safety information and guidance to the HOL, HOH and nominated visit leaders through:

- Provision of access to technical advice where necessary.
- Assessment of proposals for residential visits.
- Approval of residential visits.
- Ensuring emergency procedures are in place for dealing with major incidents/emergencies during outdoor and off-site activities.
- Ensuring training needs have been addressed.

### **4.3 Head of Corporate Services**

The HCS is responsible for ensuring that there is adequate and relevant insurance cover in place for all outdoor activities/off-site visits including residential activities.

### **4.4 Head of Quality, Partnerships and Innovation**

The HQPI is responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to monitor and review all outdoor activity/off-site visit including residential activities.

#### 4.5 Head of Health

The HOH is responsible for ensuring:

- Appropriate arrangements are in place to enable compliance with policies and procedures relating to the storage and administration of medicines throughout outdoor activities and visits.
- Appropriate arrangements are in place to enable compliance with policies and procedures relating to infection prevention and health care interventions.
- Adequate first aid provision will be available.

#### 4.6 Head of Learning

The CEO will normally delegate responsibility for approving routine and expected outdoor play and learning experiences and off-site visits and one-off, off-site day visits to the HOL. The HOL is therefore responsible for ensuring:

- The outdoor activity/visit has suitable aims and effective ways of achieving them.
- Appropriate child protection procedures are in place.
- An appropriate risk assessment has been completed, and proportionate safety measures are in place.
- The needs of the staff and participants, including training needs, have been considered.
- Parents/carers have been appropriately informed.
- The outdoor activity/visit leader and accompanying adults have suitable experience, competencies and, where required, qualifications.
- Outdoor activity/visit leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise the outdoor activity/ visit properly.
- Assisting staff and other accompanying adults in a supervisory role are appropriately recruited and briefed.
- The adult-to-child ratio is appropriate.
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and additional support needs of all the participants.
- The mode of travel and travel arrangements are appropriate.
- Suitable contact arrangements are in place.
- The emergency arrangements are in place and have been communicated to those who need to know.

- There is a contingency plan, with clear lines of responsibility, to cover e.g. adverse weather, travel delays including a late return home.

#### 4.7 Visit leaders

The member of staff nominated to be in charge of participants in outdoor activities and off-site visits has a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would and to do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group. The outdoor activity/visit leader is therefore responsible for:

- Overall management responsibility during the visit, even if they are not physically supervising a part of the visit.
  - Preparing an outdoor activity/visit plan.
  - Obtaining approval of the outdoor activity/visit from the HOL.
  - Following SCCMI policies and guidelines.
  - Ensuring good communication with parents, participants and accompanying staff.
  - Matching the outdoor visit to the needs and abilities of all participants being mindful of equality and inclusion.
  - Ensuring that any outside provider has relevant information about participants.
  - Appointing and briefing visit assistants and other adult supervisors where appropriate.
  - Being able to control, lead and instruct participants.
  - Being trained in child protection issues.
- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits – the HOL will normally nominate a teacher to be the visit leader, however a member of staff from the learning, care and therapy practitioners (LCTPs) or allied health professionals (AHPs) teams may also be nominated.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – as above.
- c) For residential visits – the CEO will normally nominate the HOL or HOH to be the visit leader.

#### 4.8 Visit assistants

Visit assistants, including parents/carers supporting visits and volunteers working for service providers, have an important role in supporting and enabling off-site visits, helping with the running of a visit and being part of the supervision ratio where

competent to do so.

Visit assistants will be carefully selected and be briefed and prepared for their role:

- Made aware of the visit plan and any relevant risk assessments.
- Understand how they can ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Only be left in sole charge of participants where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment.
- Follow the instructions of the visit leader.
- Inform the visit leader if concerned about the health or safety of participants at any time during the visit.

#### **4.9 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should participate in any visit and will need to:

- Ensure SCCMI has current routine and emergency contact details.
- Ensure SCCMI has up to date information related to their child's health status and health care needs.
- Provide written consent or inform the HOL that they do not wish their child to participate in a specific visit.

### **5. Planning Off-site Visits**

Whatever type of visit is being undertaken, time given for preparation will ensure good planning, maximise the potential benefits of the experience and help minimise the risk from any incidents. The planning and approval of visits will be proportional to the activity. More complex activities will require more planning, involve more people and take more time.

- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits – the HOL is responsible for ensuring that the member of staff planning the visit is competent and has the necessary relevant experience or access to appropriate technical advice.

- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – as above.
- c) For residential visits - the CEO is responsible for ensuring that the member of staff planning the visit is competent and has the necessary relevant experience or access to appropriate technical advice.

### 5.1 Preparing a visit plan

A visit plan will, as well as keeping everyone safe, help to ensure a successful and meaningful visit by focussing on the benefits of the activities and clearly setting out the aims and objectives.

- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits – a visit plan is required for a visit to be approved by the HOL.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – as above.
- c) For residential visits – a visit plan is required for a residential visit to be approved by the CEO.

The amount of content and detail in the visit plan will be determined by the nature of the trip; it is sufficient for routine and expected learning and play experiences and local off-site visits to be covered by a visit plan which is reviewed on an annual basis.

### 5.2 Establishing adult-to-child ratios

A visit plan will identify a suitable ratio of adult supervisors to participants for any visit with reference to:

- Abilities and needs of each child/young person participating.
  - Total number of participants including visit leader, assistants and parents/carers.
  - Previous experiences and competencies of the visit leaders and assistants.
  - Venue.
  - Activity(ies).
  - Getting there.
  - Time of year.
- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits – the HOL is responsible for ensuring and approving an appropriate adult-to-child ratio.
  - b) For one-off, off-site day visits – as above.

- c) For residential visits –the CEO is responsible for ensuring and approving an appropriate adult-to-child ratio.

### **5.3 Communicating with parents**

Information provided to parents will differ depending on the category of visit:

- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits – parents/carers will not necessarily be informed every time their child goes off-site.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – parents/carers must be appropriately informed; information shared will include:
- Aims and benefits.
  - Activity and learning objectives.
  - Venue.
  - Travel arrangements.
  - Insurance cover.
  - Supervision arrangements.
- c) For residential visits –as above.

### **5.4 Parental consent**

- a) For routine and expected local off-site visits - parents/carers will be required to consent at the start of each academic year.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – parents/carers will be required to consent before each visit.
- c) For residential visits – as above.

### **5.6 Supervision**

The risk assessment for a visit will identify suitable levels of and methods of supervision.

The visit leader will be responsible for supervision throughout a visit. Any break from this responsibility during a visit must be clearly identified with clear handover arrangements and coordinated by the visit leader. Visit leaders will remain responsible for participants even when not in direct contact with them.

There are numerous methods of supervising groups, e.g.:

- Establishing rendezvous points.
- Carrying out regular head counts.
- Wearing easily identifiable clothing.
- Having a buddy system.
- Splitting a larger group into smaller groups each with an identified leader.

### 5.7 Exploratory visit

A visit leader needs to be confident that the location and facilities are suitable for their plans. This will involve a prior visit.

### 5.8 Using an external provider

An external provider may be e.g. a museum, farm, activity provider or residential centre.

Before any visit, the visit leader should:

- Liaise with the external provider to find out what is expected of them or their group, e.g. where to go, what to bring, etc.
- Provide any relevant information to the provider e.g. the group's age range, relevant medical conditions, additional support needs.
- Confirm that there is a suitable changing places space in situ and last service date for hoist. Visit leader should also confirm that hoist is in working order and within twelve months of the last service date.
- Confirm whether risk assessments are in place.
- Confirm compliance with the SCCMI's child protection policy.

The visit leader retains ultimate responsibility for participants throughout off-site visits, even when the group is under instruction by staff from an external provider. A visit leader should remember that they are still expected to act as a normal caring parent and must raise any concerns about an activity with any third-party provider.

### 5.9 First aid

Access to first aid will be included in all visit plans.

A suitably stocked first aid kit will be taken on all visits. The visit leader will ensure that accompanying staff are trained in baby and child first aid, their training is up to date, they know how to contact the emergency services and have the means to do so, considering the potential limitations of mobile phones in some locations.

## **6. Risk Assessment**

Risk assessment will focus on real risks, rather than on those that are trivial or the result of over-protectiveness. All risk assessments will be adequate and proportionate, dealing with significant and foreseeable risks.

### **6.1 Preparing a risk assessment**

The SCCMI's CLT has a legal responsibility to ensure risk assessments are in place for all off-site visits and to have a system that ensures these are being implemented.

A generic risk assessment provides an overview of the foreseeable risks that might be met on an off-site visit with the aim of managing risks so that they are acceptable.

The visit leader will use a generic risk assessment as a starting point and add any significant and foreseeable risks specific to their visit with reference to:

- Aims and benefits of the visit.
  - Participants including leaders and helpers.
  - Venue.
  - Activity(ies).
  - Getting there.
  - Time of year.
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- a) Routine and expected local off-site visits - are by their nature low risk activities and should be quick and easy to risk assess. The HOL will support staff to develop risk assessments for the range of venues likely to be used on a regular basis.
  - b) One-off, off-site day visits - are higher risk activities requiring more detailed risk assessments which record how the risks will be reduced to an acceptable level.
  - c) Residential visits - as above.

### **6.2 Dynamic risk assessment**

Despite the best planning, the unexpected may happen during a visit and the visit leader must be prepared to change and adapt as required. Experience and training will enable sound judgements to be made.

The visit leader and visit assistants will monitor the risks throughout a visit and take appropriate action as necessary. This is called dynamic risk assessment and includes knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are needed. It also includes heeding advice and warnings from those with specialist expertise or local knowledge especially in relation to higher-risk activities.

The actions taken because of dynamic risks assessment will be recorded after the visit so that they can inform future planning.

## **6.2 Using an external provider**

All external providers must have risk assessments in place. Depending on the nature of the visit and activities to be undertaken the visit leader must consider whether they need sight of these.

There is no need for visit leaders to request copies of risk assessments from external providers where there is normal public access, e.g. museum, or external providers of adventure activities that have an AALA<sup>5</sup> licence, however they should discuss safety arrangements and precautions with the provider for activities or venues of a less routine nature.

It is not necessary to ask for risk assessments from transport providers.

## **7. Transport**

The visit leader must give careful thought to planning transport to ensure that the travel plan is suitable for all participants. Consideration should be given to:

- Length, nature and complexity of the journey and implications for supervision etc.
- Selecting the right mode(s) of transport including use of public transport.
- Using a reputable transport provider.
- Contingency plans.
- Time of year and weather.
- Abilities and needs of all participants.

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<sup>5</sup> Adventure Activities Licensing Authority

The level of supervision required throughout a journey will be identified as part of the risk assessment.

## **8. Insurance**

The HOL will confirm with the HCS, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place covering all planned activities.

### **8.1 Information for parents**

Parents must be given details of insurance cover.

- a) Routine and expected local off-site visits – this will be done on an annual basis.
- b) One-off, off-site day visits - details of the level of insurance cover will be included in the visit specific information provided to parents.
- c) Residential visits – as above.

## **9. Routine and Expected Local Off-Site Visits**

Routine and expected off-site visits will generally be to local venues, involve easily managed activities, happen on a regular basis and be completed within the normal school day.

### **9.1 Approval**

The CEO will normally delegate responsibility for approving routine and expected outdoor play and learning experiences to the HOL.

### **9.2 Visit plans**

There must be a collaborative approach to developing visit plans for the variety of venues likely to be used on a regular basis. The HOL will work with staff to develop an agreed approach to e.g. travelling on foot and to crossing roads in their locality. Models of effective practice will be developed and agreed for responding to local conditions and events.

Plans for routine and expected local off-site visits will be reviewed regularly and adapted

if required. They should be considered as working documents that are influenced by any incidents or lessons that have been learned.

### **9.3 Risk assessment**

The HOL will work with staff to develop risk assessments for the variety of venues likely to be used on a regular basis.

Routine and expected local off-site visits are by their nature low risk activities and should be quick and easy to risk assess adopting a common-sense approach. The risk assessments should be reviewed on a regular basis.

### **9.4 Information for parents/parental consent**

When a child or young person is admitted to the Centre's nursery or school provision their parent(s) will be informed about the range of activities that are part of the curriculum including the general plans for routine and expected local off-site visits, i.e. they will not necessarily be told every time their child goes off-site.

Parents will be asked to ensure their child has appropriate outdoor clothing available throughout the year to enable routine and expected local off-site visits to become an integral part of the everyday learning opportunities. If a visit requires any specific arrangements, parents should be informed.

Consent for routine and expected local off-site visits will be gained at admission and on an annual basis thereafter.

### **9.5 First aid**

The HOH will work with staff to agree the level of first aid provision required for a routine and expected local off-site visit considering:

- The known medical needs of the children.
- How quickly medical care can be accessed.

## **10. One-Off, Off-Site Day Visits**

Visits which are a one-off experience or not routine and expected will require additional planning.

### **10.1 Approval**

The CEO will normally delegate responsibility for approving one-off, off-site day visits to the HOL.

### **10.2 Visit plans**

Visit leaders will be responsible for completing a visit plan for each one off, off-site day visit.

The detail in each visit plan will be determined by the nature of the trip. All visit plan will, as well as keeping everyone safe, help to ensure a successful and meaningful visit by clearly setting out the aims, learning intentions and benefits of the activities.

### **10.3 Risk assessment**

Visit leaders will carry out a risk assessment for each one off, off-site day visit.

The visit leader will record the significant and foreseeable risks specific to their visit, considering:

- Aims and benefits of the visit.
- Participants including leaders and helpers.
- Venue.
- Activity(ies).
- Getting there.
- Time of year.

The visit leader will ensure that the precautions and controls relevant to the identified risks will be understood by and agreed to by all visit assistants.

### **10.4 Information for parents/parental consent**

Specific information will be provided to parents for each one-off, off-site day visit,

including:

- Aims and benefits.
- Activity(ies) and learning objectives.
- Venue.
- Travel arrangements.
- Insurance cover.
- Supervision arrangements.

Specific consent will be obtained for each one-off, off-site day visit.

### **10.5 Emergency details**

Visit leaders will ensure that they carry the up-to-date information for all participants including accompanying adults:

- Relevant medical information.
- Emergency contact details.
- Any other information relevant to the specific visit.

For some one-off, off-site day visits it may be appropriate to ask parents for up-to-date information which may have an impact, e.g. motion sickness or allergy to animals.

### **10.5 First aid and medical facilities**

The HOH will agree with the visit leader the level of first aid provision needed for each one-off, off-site day visit, considering:

- The known medical needs of the children.
- The type of medical facilities available.
- How quickly medical care can be accessed.
- How quickly medical care can be accessed.
- The aims and objectives of the visit.

## **11. Residential Visits**

A residential experience can be an extremely valuable learning opportunity and should be part of the outdoor learning experiences provided for all young people. Residential visits include any form of overnight stay regardless of the type of accommodation.

### **11.1 Approval**

The CEO is responsible for approving residential visits.

### **11.2 Visit plans**

The visit leader is responsible for completing a visit plan for each residential visit. The Visit Plan should outline who is to do what, and when. The amount of content and detail in the Visit Plan will be determined by the nature of the trip. The Visit Plan will, as well as keeping everyone safe, help to ensure a successful and meaningful visit by clearly setting out the aims, objectives and benefits of the activities.

### **11.3 Risk assessment**

Visit leaders will prepare a specific risk assessment for each residential visit.

The visit leader will record the significant and foreseeable risks specific to their visit, considering:

- Aims and benefits of the visit.
- Participants including leaders and helpers.
- Venue.
- Accommodation.
- Activity(ies).
- Getting there.
- Time of year.

The visit leader will ensure that the precautions and controls relevant to the identified risks, including supervision arrangements, will be understood by and agreed to by all visit assistants and any accompanying parents.

### **11.4 Supervision**

Residential visits will entail additional requirements for supervision; therefore, supervision arrangements will be an integral part of the risk assessment process.

The visit leader will identify:

- Adult-child ratios, considering the need to provide 24-hour supervision.

- Supervision rota and hand-over arrangements, to ensure that it is always clear who has supervisory responsibility.

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This visit leader will coordinate supervision arrangements.

### **11.5 Information for parents**

Specific information will be provided in writing to parents for each residential visit including:

- Activity(ies) and learning intentions.
- Venue.
- Domestic and sleeping arrangements.
- Medical provision.
- Supervision arrangements.
- Travel arrangements.
- Insurance cover.

In addition to written information, the HOL and visit leader will meet with parents to provide supplementary information and allow them to ask questions.

### **11.6 Parental consent**

Parental consent must be obtained for each residential visit. The visit leader will ensure detailed information is shared with parents to enable them to give informed consent.

## 11.7 Accommodation

When planning a residential visit, the visit leader will consider whether the accommodation:

- Fits with the aims and objectives of the visit.
- Suits the needs and requirements of all participants.
- Is suitable for the gender mix of the group considering any protected characteristics.
- Provides adequate security and privacy for all participants.
- Complies with appropriate safety standards.

Prior to the visit, the visit leader will:

- Make a prior visit.
- Obtain a floor plan showing the location of the group's rooms. Ideally the rooms should be close together with the leaders' quarters located to enable adequate supervision.
- Allocate rooms to participants.

On arrival the visit leader will:

- Carry out a fire drill as soon as possible to ensure all participants are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation and its fire precautions/exits.
- Check the accommodation to ensure it is safe and fit for purpose.
- Ensure all participants are aware of the system to ensure their overnight security.
- Ensure participants are aware how to obtain assistance if required during the night.

## 11.8 Emergency details

The visit leader will ensure that they carry up-to-date information for all participants including accompanying adults:

- Relevant medical information.
- Emergency contact details.
- Any other information relevant to the specific visit.

For some residential visits it may be appropriate to ask parents for up-to-date information which may have an impact, e.g. motion sickness or allergy to animals

This information will be shared with visit assistants and external providers as appropriate.

### 11.9 First aid and medical facilities

The HOH will agree with the visit leader the level of first aid provision needed for each residential visit, considering:

- The known medical needs of the children.
- The type of medical facilities available.
- How quickly medical care can be accessed.
- How quickly medical care can be accessed.
- The aims and objectives of the visit.

## **12. Adventure Activities**

Adventure activities should form part of the natural progression of outdoor learning opportunities offered to young people. Adventure activities can be part of any category of visit and reference should be made to the relevant procedures within each specific type of visit.

### 12.1 Approval

The CEO is responsible for approving adventure activities.

### 12.2 Licensing

Adventure activity licensing came into existence in 1996 and is managed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority. The scheme aims to ensure that adventure activity providers follow good safety management practices to minimise the likelihood of young people being exposed to avoidable risks of serious injury or death.

The visit leader of an adventure activity must be aware that some activities fall “within scope of the licence” and that anyone who provides these activities must hold a current licence.

### 12.3 Adventure activity qualifications

Many adventure activities are overseen by national governing bodies. These

organisations control the training and assessment of leaders and have a system of progressive qualifications.

The visit leader of a visit that includes any adventure activity will confirm that an appropriate qualification is held for delivery of the activity.

#### **12.4 Information for parents/parental consent**

For a visit that includes any adventure activity specific information will to be provided in writing to parents including:

- The activities and the learning objectives.
- The venue.
- Medical provision.
- Supervision arrangements.
- Travel arrangements.
- Insurance cover.

Parental consent must be obtained for each visit involving any adventure activity. The visit leader will ensure detailed information is shared with parents to enable them to give informed consent.

### **13. Farm, Agricultural and Animal Visits**

Visits to farms can present particular issues in relation to health. Animals naturally carry a range of micro-organisms some of which can be transmitted to humans causing ill health with the potential to be severe or life-threatening; i.e. zoonotic diseases including e.g. E.coli O157 and cryptosporidium.

Visit leaders will seek additional information regarding precautions via:

- HSE website.
- Farmwise - Health and Safety Executive MISC16548
- Visitmyfarm website.
- Guidelines for Farm Visits - the Royal Highland Education Trust.

If any child or member of the group shows signs of illness, i.e. sickness or diarrhoea, their

parent(s) or they must be advised to consult a GP or other medical practitioner, notifying them of recent contact with animals.

## **14. Emergency Procedures**

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit.

### **14.1 Preparation**

Prior to departure for any visit, the visit leader will leave a copy of pertinent information with the Centre-based contact:

- a) For routine and expected local, off-site visits – administration team.
- b) For one-off, off-site day visits – as above.
- c) For residential and/or adventure visits – HQPI and/or HCS.

This information will include:

- Names of all participants, including adults.
- Visit location and itinerary.
- Expected timings.
- Transport arrangements.
- Emergency contact details for all participants.
- Medical information for all participants.

### **14.2 Establishment-based contact**

The Centre-based contact will have a key role in any emergency:

- Ensuring pertinent information is kept in a secure but accessible location.
- If a visit is returning outside normal hours or involves an overnight, ensuring that pertinent information is secure but readily accessible.
- Knowing who to contact if an accident or incident is of a serious nature.
- Being available 24/7 for the duration of a residential visit.

### **14.3 Immediate action in an emergency**

In the event of an emergency the immediate priorities for the visit leader or staff member deputising for them are:

- Assess the situation.
- Safeguard the uninvolved and/or uninjured members of the party including

adults.

- Attend to the casualties.
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform the Centre-based contact.
- Control the use of electronic devices as far as reasonably practicable.
- Continue to manage the situation to the best of their ability.

#### **14.4 External contact**

Good practice guidance indicates that the Centre-based contact will coordinate communication with parents and/or the media:

- Sending information to all emergency contacts as quickly as possible (to prevent information reaching them via another source).
- Referring media enquiries to the CEO and/or business development officer (BDO).

#### **14.5 After a serious incident**

Following any serious incident the CLT will conduct a review of the incident and how it happened, and of how the procedures were implemented.

Any lessons to be learned will be incorporated into future risk assessments, operating procedures and emergency planning arrangements.

#### **14.6 Reporting accidents and incidents**

The SCCMI's established procedures for reporting incidents and accidents will be used to record any incidents and accidents that occur during off-site visits.

Any lessons learned through investigation will be incorporated into future risk assessments, operating procedures and emergency planning arrangements.

## 15. **Appendix**

### 15.1 Routine and expected local off-site visits

- Planning flow chart
- Template for visit plan
- Template for risk assessment
- Template for information for parents and parental consent

### 15.2 One-off, offsite day visits

- Planning flow chart
- Template for visit plan
- Template for risk assessment
- Template for information for parents
- Template for parental consent

### 15.3 Residential visits

- Planning flow chart
- Template for visit plan
- Template for risk assessment
- Template for information for parents
- Template for information for parents including adventure activities
- Template for parental consent
- Template for parental consent including adventure activities

# Children's Rights and Wellbeing Assessment stage 1 -



## Screening

<b>Name of Policy/Measure</b>	Outdoor Play and Learning and Offsite Visits: Policy and Procedures		
<b>Description of overall aims</b>	<p>To ensure staff both leading and taking part in outdoor and off-site learning experiences are competent to do so and understand their roles.</p> <p>To enable children and young people throughout the school to experience the learning opportunities afforded by outdoor play, Forest School, learning experiences and off-site visits and fully participate in them safely.</p>		
<b>What aspects of the policy/ measure will affect children and/ or young people?</b>	This policy will allow children and young people to access and explore their immediate and wider environment safely.		
<b>What is the likely impact, direct/ indirect, of the policy/ measure on children and/ or young people?</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Positive</b></p> <p>It complies with UNCRC requirements; it has the potential to advance the realisation of children's rights.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>It will have no discernible lessening of/ progress in children's rights/ wellbeing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Negative</b></p> <p>It may impede/ reverse the enjoyment of existing rights, requiring mitigating measures; it fails to comply with UNCRC obligations, requiring modification; it may have detrimental impact on children so should be withdrawn/ amended significantly</p>
<b>Which groups of children/ young people will be affected?</b>	Children and young people aged 3-19 who attend Craighalbert for education.		

<p><b>Is a CRWIA required?</b></p> <p><b>Explain rationale for this decision.</b></p>	<p>CRWIA NOT required.</p> <p>This policy is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which affirms every child’s right to access enriching, inclusive, and meaningful learning experiences.</p> <p>In line with <b>Article 31 (Leisure, Play and Culture)</b>, the school recognises the fundamental right of all children to engage in play and recreational activities. Outdoor play and offsite learning are therefore considered essential components of the curriculum, providing opportunities for exploration, enjoyment, and holistic development.</p> <p>The policy reflects <b>Article 23 (Children with Disabilities)</b> by ensuring that learners with complex communication, health, learning and care needs are supported to participate as fully as possible in outdoor environments and offsite experiences. Provision is adapted to meet individual needs, promoting inclusion, dignity, and active engagement.</p> <p>In accordance with <b>Articles 28 and 29 (Right to Education and Aims of Education)</b>, outdoor learning is valued as a key approach to delivering a broad, balanced, and relevant curriculum. These experiences support the development of each learner’s abilities, communication, independence, and wellbeing.</p> <p>The Centre also upholds <b>Article 24 (Health and Health Services)</b> by recognising the positive impact of outdoor learning on physical health, emotional wellbeing, and sensory regulation.</p> <p>Through <b>Article 12 (Respect for the Views of the Child)</b>, the Centre is committed to recognising and responding to the voices of all learners. For pupils with complex communication needs, this includes interpreting verbal and non-verbal communication, preferences, and behaviours to ensure meaningful participation and choice.</p> <p>This policy is further guided by <b>Article 3 (Best Interests of the Child)</b> and <b>Article 19 (Protection from Harm)</b>, ensuring that all outdoor and offsite learning experiences are carefully planned, risk assessed, and delivered in a way that prioritises safety, wellbeing, and individual needs.</p> <p>Finally, in line with <b>Article 2 (Non-Discrimination)</b>, the Centre is committed to providing equitable access to outdoor play and offsite learning for all pupils, regardless of ability or need.</p>
<p><b>Signed</b></p>	<p><i>S. McMonagle</i></p>
<p><b>Date</b></p>	<p>14/04/2026</p>



## **Craighalbert Centre**

Enabling Children to Achieve



KIND



AMBITIOUS



CHILD-CENTERED



INSPIRATIONAL



COLLABORATIVE

### **The Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments**

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