



EVC newsletter

Summer
2011

update from Kent's Outdoor Education Unit

Welcome to the **Summer Term** edition of the **EVC newsletter**. As we come to the end of this Academic Year it is time to say farewell to Niall Leyden who has been part of our small team for the past two and a half years. Niall's expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm for learning outside the classroom will be greatly missed. For those of you who have attended any of the many training courses that he developed and led you will have known that you were in the company of a high quality trainer.

Thankfully his new role with the Wide Horizons Trust will allow me to continue to work with Niall and plans are already well underway to retain him as a tutor for a number of the courses that we will be offering and will be advertised in our 2011-2012 Outdoor Learning Services brochure.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say farewell and thank you to those of you who are moving to pastures new and leaving the role of Educational Visit Co ordinator. Ensuring that educational visits are well planned and that they meet your clear educational aims is one of those essential tasks, but so often takes place in the background with only a few colleagues really knowing what is involved and what you do to help make it happen.

If you are handing over the reins to someone new please let us know as soon as possible. The Outdoor Education Unit will be staffed throughout July and August but like you we are also looking forward to some time off to recharge the batteries.

- Richard, Niall, Nikki and Hilary at the Outdoor Education Unit.

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New advice from HSE. School trips and outdoor learning activities

The Health and safety Executive have recently published a 3 page document that gives clear messages to tackle the myths about bureaucracy. HSE "fully supports schools arranging a wide range of out-of-school activities" but they also want "to make sure that mistaken and unfounded health and safety concerns do not create obstacles that prevent these from happening".

Other key messages include "Well managed school trips and outdoor activities are great for children. Children won't learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool", Those running school trips need to focus on the risks and benefits to people – not paperwork" and "Teachers should expect their schools to have procedures that encourage participation, are proportionate to the level of risk and avoid bureaucracy"

It also states that "those running trips understand their roles, are supported and are competent to lead or take part in them", that "risk assessment focuses on real risk – not risks that are trivial and fanciful" and that those running trips act responsibly by "putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure these work in practice" To read/download the whole document click here

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



Providers - BEFORE making any bookings or payments, please remember to check that the chosen adventurous activity or residential accommodation provider is currently 'vetted' by the Outdoor Education Unit.

Remember to use LOfC Quality Badge providers where possible. Search the e-Go database or the Quality Badge website to find a badged provider – www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/badgesearch

Remember new providers require 12 weeks notice to vet!!!!

Department for Education – New Advice

Not to be confused with the recent HSE publication as referred to above, but the Department for Education has also issued new advice on “Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies”. This is part of the Government's drive to “reduce burdens on schools”

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/d/departamental%20advice%20on%20health%20and%20safety%20for%20schools.pdf>

Although a new publication, and one designed to replace Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) and Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Powers, many of the messages it contains are in fact not new and some of the content lacks clarity leaving us to interpret terms such as “exceptional circumstances”, “higher level” (of risk management) and words such as ‘significant’ and ‘serious’.

The document also includes an example of a new Consent Form that DfE say could be issued at the beginning of Year 1 or Year 7 (when enrolling) and would be ‘valid’ for the whole time that the pupil was at that school. This approach does not take into consideration the fact that pupils' medical conditions (part of the consent form) may change from month to month/year to year, facts that may affect how a teacher manages an educational visit. I advise that this approach is used with caution.

The information in the paragraph Adventure Activities using licenced providers could also be confusing as it states “When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or watersports a school must currently check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure activities Licensing Regulation 2004. Providers of skiing do not require a licence unless you are undertaking off piste or ski touring.

The statement that “there is no requirement to have an EVC” is correct. However, such a statement might also suggest to some that it is no longer seen as good practice to have a nominated person who takes responsibility for all offsite activities that a school undertakes, and advises and supports staff who organise those invaluable opportunities for learning outside the classroom. Kent L.A, and to my knowledge no other L.A has ever stated otherwise. It is also correct that the “EVC typically liaises with the local authority's Outdoor Education Adviser. Without an EVC I believe that it would be extremely difficult for our important working relationship to be maintained.

When you have read the publication it would be useful if you could feedback any comments/views to Richard

Olympic White Water Course - Lee Valley

Instead of another visit to a Theme Park why not go to Lee Valley White Water Centre, the newly built Olympic white water course just off the M25. Other education programmes include White Water investigation for Geography and Leisure and Recreation students.

Further details for rafting are available at www.gowhitewater.co.uk or call 08456 770 606 and www.leevalleypark.org.uk/education or call the Youth and Schools Service on 08456 770 607.



The Outdoor Education Unit Training Service



The CPD courses that we arranged last year were a great success and so we will once again be offering a similar range of courses in the new academic year.

A copy of our new brochure will be e mailed to you as soon as it becomes available in early September. We would be grateful if you could circulate a copy to all your staff.

ANY STAFF LEAVING YOUR SCHOOL THIS TERM?

Please, please could you advise us if you and/or any other of your staff who are registered on e-Go are leaving your school at the end of this term, and, if possible tell us where they may be going (if it is to another school in Kent)

This allows us to 'transfer' their details e-Go during the summer holidays.

We would also be grateful if you would let us know if a new Headteacher is starting in September.



Discounted Council for Learning Outside the Classroom membership for Kent Local Authority schools

Letter from Beth Gardner. CLOtC Chief Executive

Kent Local Authority has joined the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom as a member, and in doing so has ensured that **all schools under the local authority are able to access membership of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom for the reduced rate of £20** (rather than the usual £50 annual fee). If your school is committed to providing good quality educational experiences beyond the classroom walls, and wishes to access news, networks and ideas to help you integrate LOtC into the curriculum, I would encourage you to consider joining.

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom is the national charity that campaigns to get children out and about more often. Great learning outside the classroom (LOtC) can happen in the school grounds or local as well as further afield during an educational visit or residential. Wherever it happens, LOtC is proven to raise attainment, improve behaviour and re motivate children who are disengaged in the classroom environment. The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom provides free support to help teachers plan and deliver educational visit .

Please find below some information about the benefits of membership.

If your school or nursery is committed to integrating frequent, continuous and progressive LOtC into the curriculum then we would like to invite you to join us today.



cont.....

Members gain access to news, networks and ideas to help you get pupils out and about more often, with benefits including:

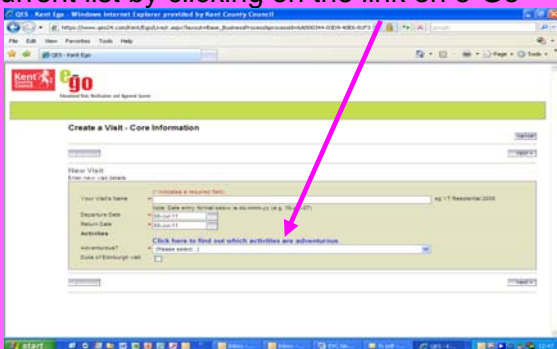
- Regular member email bulletin to keep you up to date with news and developments from CLOtC, give you great ideas on integrating LOtC into the curriculum and enable you to share solutions with likeminded professionals.
- Enhanced access to www.lotc.org.uk . This will enable you to access member only resources, research and CPD modules when you register on the site as a member.
- Online networking opportunities through early years, primary and secondary forums on members' area of www.lotc.org.uk .
- 20% discount on all Pearson education titles. Delivery is also free.
- 10% discount on resources from educational publishers lcp, including **Learning Outside The Classroom**, a complete, authoritative set of resources to support LOtC.

Join online today **or** download the membership pack for more information and an application form.

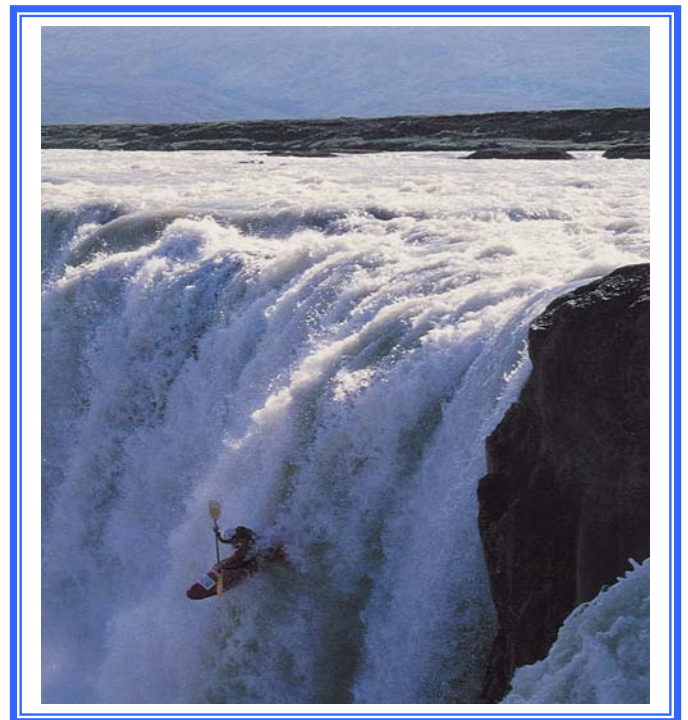
Visit www.lotc.org.uk

e-GO TOP TIP - ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES

If you are not sure what is considered to be an Adventurous Activity you can always check the current list by clicking on the link on e-Go



Don't forget – the list include fishing, angling, river studies and beach visits that take students below the high water line. If water is involved it will most likely be an adventurous activity.



Don't get caught out!! Time may be running out

If any of your visits take place during the first six weeks of the new academic year, please note that they need to be submitted before you go on holiday (unless you are also working during this period!.)

The 6 week deadline still applies

..... and finally as the summer holiday period races towards us we would just like to wish you all a happy holiday and possibly a time for your own 'learning outside the classroom experience', and that you are also able to take some time to simply relax.

