



EVC NEWSLETTER

UPDATE FROM KENT'S OUTDOOR EDUCATION UNIT

www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/policy/offsite.cfm



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Welcome to the Winter 2008 edition of the EVC Newsletter.

As one of our principal methods of communication with you keeping you up to speed with new developments and changes I do hope that you will be able to find the time to read it, and of course to forward copies to some/all staff within your establishments who have a role that involves them with learning outside the classroom and offsite visits.

With the end of term racing towards us and for most of us a well earned break and time to recharge batteries we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Richard, Nikki and Hilary



Booking accommodation through an Agent.

In the past 6 months we have seen an increase in the number of schools wishing to book accommodation for their residential visit through 'high street' travel agents. When vetting a number of these Providers we have been made aware that agents do not normally vet accommodation, do not have any safety management systems and may not hold Public Liability Insurance. Our understanding is that Agents are just that i.e. they have lists of accommodation in a country or an area or may know another agent in a particular area and they book the facility on your behalf.

If a Provider that books accommodation on behalf of a school can not evidence how and what they check or does not hold any PL Insurance, they will not meet KCC requirements and therefore we will not be able to provide L.A Approval.

New member of staff

When you phone the Outdoor Education Unit in 2009 your call may be answered by our new member of staff, Niall Leyden. Niall's role is as an Adviser, but as well as dealing with some visit approvals and the many questions that we receive daily, he will be concentrating on developing and leading a range of training courses. These will include EVC training and some EVC Updates, Visit Leader Training, Learning to learn Outdoors, and introducing the new Outdoor Learning cards – a fantastic new resource for staff who wish to deliver exciting and inspirational outdoor learning activities.



Don't get caught out..

1) If you request L.A approval for a regular series of visits and you use the 'Batch' facility do not forget that each approval has an expiry date. If further regular visits are to be booked with the same Provider a new 'Batch request for approval must be submitted at least 6 weeks before the date of the first visit. Most Batch visits expire at the end of a term so if you are re-starting e.g. horse riding in September the new form will have to be submitted for approval before the end of the previous term.

2) At long last (too late I know for many!) we have a **new e-Go help sheet** that takes you through **amending and removing information** already entered on to an e-Go on-line form. It can be found on the home page of our website on Kent Trust web

Going on holiday, moving from your current school, unexpected absence

Although some of the above may be planned, there could be times when absence will not be planned. If this is for any length of time it can create problems for staff involved in planning and leading educational visits. In order to avoid any problems please ensure that somebody else within your establishment knows about e-Go and also the contact details for the Outdoor Education Unit. This can help your colleagues from becoming frustrated as they struggle to find the necessary help and advice!



Travelling in France - High-visibility

FROM July 1 all cars and minibuses travelling in France will be required to carry a warning triangle and high visibility jackets for all occupants which must be used in the event of breakdown when any passenger exits the vehicle...

Both the jacket and triangle have to conform to EU standards

Failure to have a triangle or jacket in your car will mean a fine of €90 for each offence

Also from September 1 2008 French law requires cyclists to wear high visibility jackets when outside towns in the dark or when visibility is poor. It is however considered best practice to wear one on a bike at all times.

A one page document can be downloaded covering the [high-vis jackets, triangle and cycling regulations \(.pdf\)](#)

Visibility Vests are also compulsory in Austria, Belgium, Italy, Norway, Portugal and Spain. The rules vary from country to country concerning number of vests required and whether they should be carried in the car or boot, so please check before you travel.



Travelling Abroad

“LOCATE”: a new service provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to help find citizens in an emergency



The Foreign & Commonwealth Office have launched a new service called LOCATE which will help it to track down Britons in the event of a crisis abroad. LOCATE is a two-way service and in the event of an emergency worried family members can register details of a loved one who may be caught up in the incident. If the traveller also confirms with the FCO that they are OK, LOCATE will match the two bits of information and the good news can be quickly passed to relatives.

To register details of your foreign trips you simply go to their LOCATE website and log the required details.

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/Locate/>

Learning outside the Classroom

DCSF New website

This is a link to a new website launched by DCSF in October <http://www.lotc.org.uk/>



The site includes some new general guidance on planning educational visits, CPD materials, case studies and links to some other resources. It is worth spending a few minutes looking at the site but please note it has been described as ‘work in progress’.

Ofsted Report

On the same day as DCSF launched their website Ofsted published an excellent report **‘Learning Outside the Classroom: How far should you go’**. Yes more reading, but I think that you will find it interesting, even if you only skim through it and look at the recommendations for DCSF, the L.A and for schools. A copy can be downloaded from the Ofsted website

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Learning-outside-the-classroom>

School Exchanges/Homestays - Independent Safeguarding Authority

From October 2009 anyone who provides care and accommodation (host families) for children under 18 years will be engaging in what is defined as regulated activity and will need to be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

Registering of people with no known police or criminal background information will take as little as 7 days. There is normally a registration fee of £64.00, but where **host families for school exchanges** are not paid they are classed as volunteers and will therefore be able to register with the ISA scheme **free of charge**.

Friends, relations and members of the host families who are under 16 years do not need to be registered or CRB checked.

It will be the responsibility of the exchanges organising body (School) to check that host families in the UK are ISA registered, and it will be a criminal offence for any host families to engage in this regulated activity.



New initiative launched to encourage innovation in school led residential

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation has launched a new initiative to help schools make the most of residential learning experiences.

Learning Away is a six-year, £2.25 million programme which ultimately aims to achieve significant shifts nationwide in schools' commitment to providing these opportunities for their pupils.

The Foundation is **inviting groups of schools** to submit proposals setting out how they would like to **develop and pilot high quality residential** and embed them within the wider curriculum. These activities should act as key interventions to maximise pupils' achievements or support a strategic change process within the school or group of schools.

Applications are invited from primary, secondary and special schools across the UK. Early Years settings, independent schools and contributions from other partners may be included within the proposals. The Foundation expects to select five to eight groups of schools (around 30 schools in total) to work with, and will be providing some funding as well as ongoing support and guidance to selected schools from September 2009.

Education and Learning Programme Manager at the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Denise Barrows said "We hope that this initiative will encourage schools both those with strong existing residential programmes and those who have not yet committed significantly to residential learning to make a step change in their residential provision and show just what can be achieved."

The deadline for first stage applications to the initiative is Friday 13th February 2009

Full details and application guidance is available through the Learning Away links in the Education and Learning section of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation website, www.phf.org.uk/

Another myth:

'Children need to be wrapped in cotton wool to keep them safe'

Health and safety law is often used as an excuse to stop children taking part in exciting activities, but well-managed risk is good for them. It engages their imagination, helps them learn and even teaches them to manage risks for themselves in the future. They won't understand about risk if they're wrapped in cotton wool.

Risk itself won't damage children, but ill-managed and overprotective actions could!

You can download a printable poster version of this image from the HSE website. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/myth/nov08.pdf>



Please share the information in this Newsletter with your colleagues but hopefully this can be done electronically

'Think before you print'



..... and finally, do not forget that the six week deadline for submitting requests on e-Go for L.A approval does not stop because of holidays - the clock ticks on!

*From the three of us at the Outdoor Education Unit –
"Seasons Greetings!"*

*Richard Hayden
Nikki Hill
Hilary Manning-Donaldson*

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