

Vetting of Providers of residential accommodation and adventurous activities for Educational Visits

As part of the **Local Authority Educational Visit Approval process**, the Outdoor Education Unit acts on behalf of the schools and establishments it supports to **check and 'vet' Educational Visit Providers** that KCC Schools and youth centres wish to use for their visits when it includes a residential element and/or adventurous activities.*

We carry out this task in order to support schools and youth centres with their planning and preparation. However, for good and thorough planning to take place, staff who are responsible for organising and leading a visit need to be aware of what the vetting includes and what we have checked to ensure that a Provider meets the L.A.'s requirements for safe provision of its services.

Please note that 'vetting' is not an 'approval' process. The L.A does not have an approval system for providers of residential and/or adventurous activities and therefore we do not have a list of 'approved' providers.

Knowing that a Provider has been vetted by the L.A is a major contribution to the risk management of a visit, but of course it does not replace the Visit Leader's responsibility of carrying out Risk Assessments that relate to the visit and activities.

The following is the list of the areas that are currently included in the vetting procedures. We request a hard copy of the Providers Public Liability Insurance and in most cases we will hold relevant copies the provider's current documentation.

Name of Centre / Provider and contact details

Head of Centre/Manager/MD/Owner
Contact name and Role in organisation

Insurance: Confirmation that they hold PL £5million.

Insurance Co: Name of Company and the date of expiry of PL policy

Risk Assessment: Confirmation that they have a **Safety Management System** that includes risk assessments for the activities that they provide. We request samples of a Providers risk assessments.

Adventure Activity Licence: Confirmation that it is current and that it covers all the activities being proposed - AALA Licence Number and expiry date

Activities not covered by licence:

Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge:

Code of Conduct/Practice: Confirmation that written guidance is made available to visit leaders re roles and responsibilities of customers and their staff, emergency procedures and contacts and any limitations.

Health and Safety Policy: Confirmation that the Provider has a current H & S policy. These are often large documents and so we do not request hard copy.

Accommodation: Confirmation of type of accommodation offered to school/youth groups. How is accommodation allocated to groups. Location of staff accommodation in relation to pupils/young people. Use of double beds (common in USA).

Fire Risk Assessments: Confirmation that current Fire Risk assessments are in place and are available if requested.

Security: Security of site as a whole. Security to buildings and security to bedrooms. We check what systems are in place to prevent unauthorised persons entering the accommodation. This includes downstairs windows and balconies.

CRB checks: Confirmation that any of the Providers staff who might have unsupervised access to pupils/young people have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau. This system does not extend beyond the UK and so we will need to know what similar/equivalent checks are undertaken.

Qualified Staff: This relates to adventurous activities only i.e. not cooks, cleaners, admin staff. Confirmation of the minimum qualifications held by staff and if these are not National Governing Body certificates, the qualifications of those who have trained/assessed the staff delivering these activities.

Staffing ratios: Information requested when a Provider is leading/instructing an activity i.e. the maximum numbers per instructor, checked against KCC guidance/good practice.

Roles and Responsibilities: Confirmation that the Provider has documentation that defines the responsibilities of providers staff and visiting staff in relation to supervision and welfare of participants.

First Aid: Confirmation of the First Aid qualifications held by a providers staff and what First Aid kit is available to customers

Equipment and Resources: Confirmation that the provider has systems for checking and recording maintenance of equipment – particularly equipment and resources relating to adventurous activities e.g. pulleys on zip lines (not covered by AALA license).

Vehicles and Trailers: If a Provider uses their own vehicle to transport a group, confirmation that the vehicles are roadworthy and meet all requirements under road transport law – MOT, taxed and insured for this purpose.(or equivalent).

Driver qualifications: Confirmation of minimum qualifications held by drivers and that the Provider has a system for checking these details. Confirmation that drivers are experienced in driving in conditions that they may experience (e.g. Ski trips – driving in snow).

NGB recognition: Is the Provider recognised by any of the National Governing Bodies for the activities they offer. Several of the larger NGB have their own inspection systems so a Provider who is recognised by a NGB will in many cases have been inspected by the body and this provides additional evidence of quality and safety.

Other accreditation: Confirmation of the provider belonging to any other nationally recognised bodies e.g. ATOL, AITO, School Travel Forum, BAHA.

Other comments:

*see Appendix C of Approval System for details of adventurous/hazardous activities