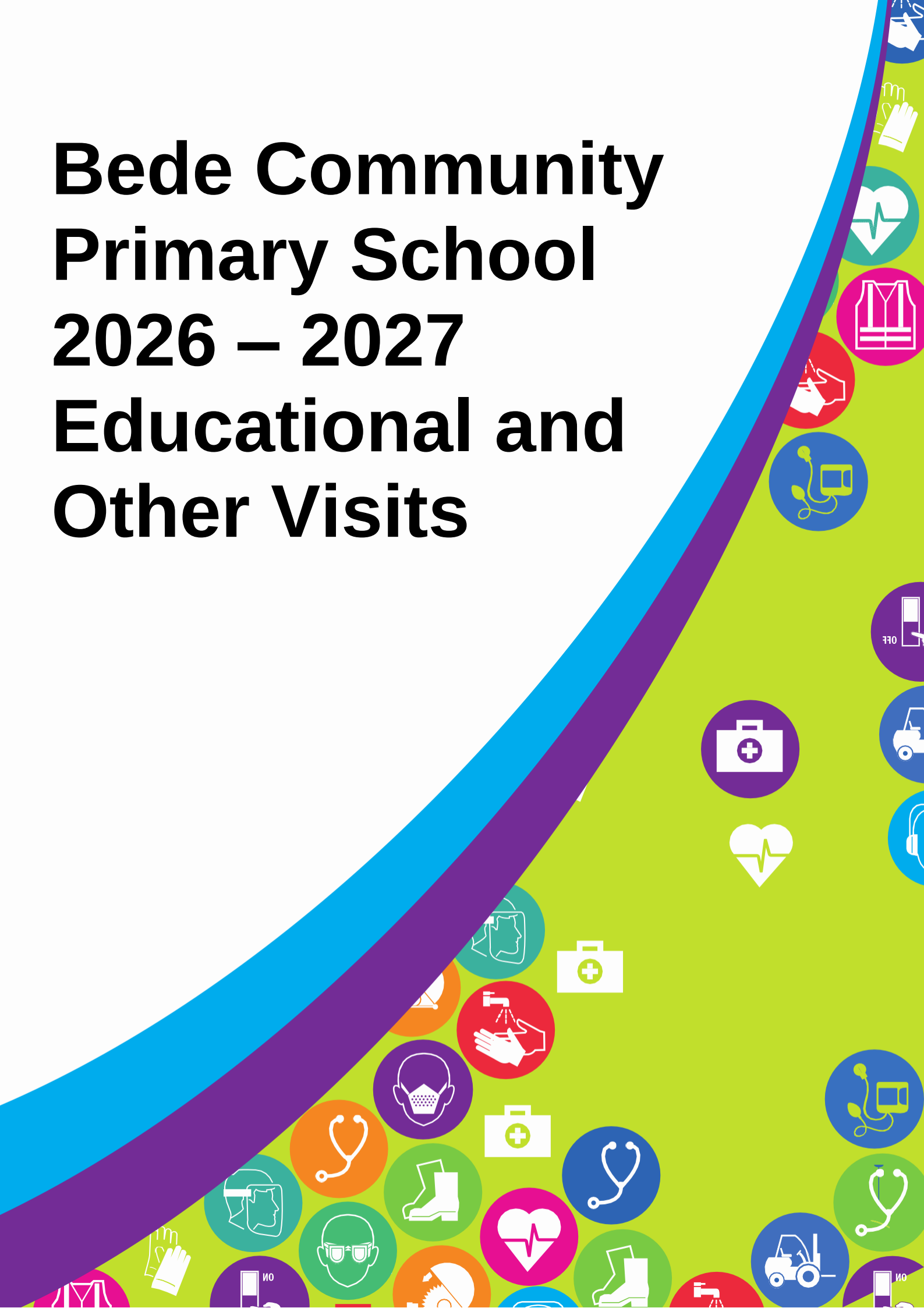
Bede Community Primary School 2026 – 2027 Educational and Other Visits



Educational and Other Visits (EDU-HS-03)			
Issue Date	7th October 2021	**Review Schedule**	Approx. 3 yearly (or sooner if there has been a significant change)
Approvers	Schools Health and Safety Advisory Group and Service Director for Children's Social Care	**Cross Reference Applicable Documentation**	EDU-HS-04 Emergency Management During Educational Visits CSG-HS-22 Occupational Road Risk (Driving at Work)
Group	Corporate Services & Governance	**Service**	Human Resources/ Workforce Development
Target Audience	All staff that are involved with undertaking educational or other visits that are employed by or have an SLA with Gateshead Council	**Compliance**	Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1992 (amended 1999) Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act, 2007 Children Act, 2004 Children and Social Work Act, 2017 Equality Act, 2010

This document forms part of the Corporate Health and Safety procedural arrangements

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Change Record			
Date	**Controller**	**Version**	**Changes**
October 2021	Lorraine Dixon	Issue 8	Changes made due to COVID pandemic, inclusion of Children's Services, clarification of roles and responsibilities and additional specific guidance
January 2022	Lorraine Dixon	Issue 8.1	Amendment to 4.7.2 due to change to provider statement for transport companies
September 2023	Dasha Kormilkina	Issue 8.2	Amendments to section 4.7 Clarification added on external provider checks. Additional section 4.7.2 for use of Gateshead Council establishments.
March 2024	Lorraine Dixon	Issue 8.3	Removal of advice relating to COVID 19, review of the whole document and minor changes

Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Guidance in Gateshead Council

Gateshead Council's Occupational Health and Safety policies/procedures consider current legislation, rules, regulations and best practice guidance from a range of professional and public bodies. For this document, advice from the Outdoor Educational Advisors Panel (OEAP) has been followed.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Ensuring the health and safety of young people and staff on visits is a responsibility of the Council under the Health and Safety at Work Act, etc.1974.

Visits contribute to children and young people achieving higher standards in education, leading healthier lifestyles and having access to new activities and places.

1.2 Scope

These arrangements apply to all educational visits, activity centre visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities involving children and young people where the Council is the employer or where the provision is commissioned by the Council. It also applies to visits where the Council takes the role of a 'Corporate parent'.

Governing Bodies in schools where they are the employer of staff (for example, academies or voluntary aided schools) will need to adopt these arrangements if receiving support and advice from the Council under the terms of a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

Educational or other visits are defined as events that involve children and young people being away from their normal school, centre or residential home premises, while in the care of the school or other service. This includes all outings, school trips, community-based activities and out-of-centre activities. For example, visits to local parks, museums, libraries and sports facilities; cultural, educational, recreational and exchange visits; sport and outdoor education activities outside the school/centre grounds; residentials and field trips. These arrangements also apply to activities taking place in other school grounds and to adventure activities taking place on other school premises (such as climbing on school climbing walls).

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2. Ensuring Good Practice

2.1 Adoption of National Guidance

Gateshead Council adopts the National Guidance published by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP) on the website www.oeapng.info. This provides detailed guidance about many aspects of off-site visits and outdoor learning and includes essential reading for all key staff roles.

Community schools, Voluntary Controlled schools, Council services and all Council employees must follow the requirements in this document, which are based on OEAP guidance. These arrangements must also be followed by Voluntary Aided and Academy Schools that use Gateshead Council's services to support their educational and outdoor learning visits by means of a Service Level Agreement. Should there be any conflicts between the OEAP National Guidance and Council policies or arrangements, then the Council's arrangements must be followed, and clarification should be sought from your H&S Officer.

2.2 Managing Risk

Gateshead Council has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed and to reduce them to an acceptable level. Risk cannot be entirely eliminated; it is a natural part of everyday life. As children and young people grow up, it is important that they learn to understand and manage risk and uncertainty for themselves, enabling them to cope with the uncertainties and challenges of adult life. Well-managed visits, including outdoor and adventurous activities, play a vital part in helping children and young people to learn about the real world and to understand and manage risks for themselves.

Schools and other services are therefore encouraged to provide such opportunities for children and young people. Good planning and management of activities should reduce risks to an acceptable level, considering the potential benefits to the young people involved. The starting point for a risk-benefit assessment should be an evaluation of the benefits that will be realised by the desired learning outcomes from the visit.

Risk assessment should be a common-sense process, focusing on significant risks, rather than trivial ones. Any significant findings of the risk assessment must be recorded; the process should not become a restrictive and onerous bureaucratic exercise. Further information about risk assessment can be found in the Corporate H&S Handbook - LCS-HS-40-Risk-assessment-general .

GOOD PRACTICE

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Employees who follow this advice, the OEAP National Guidance and who work within the limits of their own competence and use their common sense and professional judgement will be exercising good practice. As such, they will be fully supported, in terms of responsibility, by the Council if an accident occurs despite careful planning to manage foreseeable risks.

2.2.1 Travelling Overseas

You are strongly advised to check https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice prior to planning any travel and while travelling to monitor any changes on this website. Have alternative options in place with your travel provider.

2.2 Advice, Guidance and Training

The Council recognises that it has a duty to provide advice, guidance and training to all staff involved in the management and provision of educational or other visits, enabling them to follow good practice. The Council will ensure that the following roles and responsibilities are fulfilled:

2.3.1 A Technical Advisor is appointed to fulfil the role described in the OEAP National Guidance as ***Outdoor Education Advisor***,

2.3.2 Promotion and need for an ***Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC),*** as described by the OEAP, to provide support and advice to the staff in their school or service. This person is required to undertake the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) training course every three years.

2.3.3 **Visit Leader Training** will be promoted, (but not be currently mandatory), for all visit leaders, unless they have undertaken EVC training.

2.4 Notification and Approval of Educational Visits

Gateshead Council uses the Evolve online system for notification, approval and monitoring of visits. Evolve helps visit leaders to plan and record the details of their visits.

It is expected that visit leaders will be responsible for entering the details of their visits onto the EVOLVE system, as they are best placed to understand the requirements of the visit and the nature of the attendees. **This is not an administrative task.**

Evolve enables EVCs, head teachers and managers to plan, authorise and monitor visits within their establishments and to gain Council support for certain visits as required within this document (see below). Critical information about a visit is available through Evolve to enable the Council and Emergency Services to provide an appropriate response in the event of an emergency.

Educational visits are classified into three categories. The table below sets out the categories and requirements in each case:

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DEFINITIONS

Category	Definition	Notification
Routine local visit	Routine visit to a nearby local venue (such as park, library etc) within normal school / service hours and part of the normal curriculum covered by: • a written policy of the school or service concerned • school/service operating procedures • a generic risk assessment (regularly reviewed) • blanket parental consent	Evolve may be used but is not required.
Level 1	Visits requiring an event-specific risk assessment including: • Visits requiring transport • Visits which are not routine or local • Visits outside normal school hours • Visits which are not routine local visits and not Level 2	**Must be entered on Evolve** and approved by the EVC and school Head Teacher / Registered Manager, normally at least two weeks before the visit.
Level 2	Higher risk visits defined as: • Residential visits • Visits outside the UK • Visits which involve adventure activities or other higher-risk activities or remote or hazardous locations	Requires Council approval. **Must be entered on Evolve** and approved by the EVC and school Head Teacher / Registered Manager **at least four weeks before the visit** and assessed by a Health and Safety Officer before departure.

The requirement for Level 2 visits to be authorised by head teachers / managers **at least four weeks prior to the visit** allows time for any issues arising to be dealt with and for external providers to provide the relevant information / clarifications as required by the local authority.

Headteachers / Managers are responsible for ensuring that all Level 1 and Level 2 visits undertaken by the school or service are recorded on Evolve.

Level 2 visits must be submitted to the local authority at least 4 weeks before the visit and gain approval before departure of a visit. The local authority is under no obligation to approve visit forms that are submitted late or have incomplete information.

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When a head teacher or manager authorises a visit on Evolve, they are confirming that the visit conforms with the school and local authority requirements and that staff and any other people that are supervising are competent to do so and it is appropriate for them to attend the trip.

This task can only be the responsibility of the headteacher/management, as the local authority does not have first-hand knowledge of the competence of the staff team or knowledge of the intended participants or knowledge of whether the activity is appropriate for a particular group.

The local authority therefore relies on the headteacher or manager to make an appropriate professional judgement prior to authorising visits, by taking all aspects into account, including but not limited to:

- The competence of the visit leader
- The competence of the accompanying staff
- The ages, level of maturity of pupils, including those with special needs
- The intended learning outcomes
- The proposed itinerary
- The contingency plans (Plan B) in place
- The level of supervision required
- The management of medical conditions (including additional needs for overnight stays)

The local authority works on the basis that the headteacher or manager would not have submitted the visit for approval if he/she was not satisfied with the intended arrangements. ‘Approval by LA’ therefore confirms that the school or service appears to have followed the local authority’s policies and procedures.

Although all visits requiring employer approval are viewed if submitted, it is not feasible for the LA to scrutinise in detail all information and attachments.

Where school staff lead adventurous activities themselves (i.e. not using an external provider), the headteacher cannot be expected to have the technical expertise required to assess the competence of the activity leader and therefore this task is carried out by the Local Authority or Appointed Technical Advisor.

For more complex visits, more time should be allowed. Schools / services are advised not to sign contracts with providers or to make commitments to participants or parents / carers until they are sure that requirements for approval can be met. It is a good idea

to contact your H&S Officer at an early stage, before the visit is submitted on Evolve, to discuss visits with complex arrangements or significant risks, such as expeditions in remote areas overseas.

2.5 Review & Evaluation

All visits should be reviewed after the event, with regard to any accidents, incidents or other significant occurrences during the visit, followed by any necessary review of procedures and / or risk assessments.

Any concerns relating to the visit should be discussed with the H&S Team and an incident form completed if applicable.

Wherever possible, schools and services are encouraged to evaluate their visits using the weblink for the monitoring form below: Visit Evaluation Form

2.6 Monitoring of Compliance

The Council has a statutory duty to monitor compliance with these arrangements. Monitoring can be undertaken by the Health and Safety Officers through:

- A review of information on the Evolve system, including approval of Level 1 or 2 visits.
- Direct observation of visits in progress.
- Reviews of monitoring feedback forms.
- Monitoring of visit forms.



The monitoring process is intended to be positive, supportive and developmental. Constructive feedback and recommendations will be given. **Areas of significant risk will be referred to the Head Teacher / Service Manager and high-risk issues which cannot be resolved at the school / service level will be referred to the relevant Director. In exceptional circumstances, where there is serious or imminent risk, the activity or visit may need to be stopped.**

3. Definitions

3.1 Definition of Adventure Activities

Adventure activities include any higher-risk activities, in addition to traditional Outdoor Education activities including:

- Abseiling
- Camping
- Caving and mine exploration
- Climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Coasteering, coastal scrambling, sea-level traversing
- Cycling
- Fishing
- Forest School activities
- High level ropes activities
- Horse riding
- Go-karting
- Mountain biking
- River / gorge / ghyll walking or scrambling
- Shooting, archery, paintballing
- Skiing and snowboarding (including indoor or dry slope)
- Snorkel activities
- Swimming, (when not using UK public pools with lifeguards)
- Walking (hills, mountains, open country)
- Watersports – including canoeing / kayaking, rafting, rowing, sailing, surfing windsurfing, powered-craft (excluding commercial transport), water-skiing
- Activities in remote or hazardous locations (e.g. which includes areas more than 30 minutes walk from a road or refuge', coastal areas with significant tidal hazards, hazardous quarries, steep terrain)

This list is not exhaustive. If in doubt, advice should be obtained from your Health and Safety Officer.

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4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Head Teacher / Managers Roles

4.1.1 Establishment Educational Visits

Schools and Council Services must consider how arrangements are implemented in practice.

4.1.2 Employers other than Gateshead Council

Where another employer (such as the Governing Body of a Voluntary Aided or Academy school) has adopted the provisions of these arrangements and Code of Practice, they should clearly state this in their own establishment's Health and Safety Policy.

4.1.3 Commissioned Services

If an organisation outside the Council is commissioned to provide a service which may include Educational Visits or other, it must have either adopted the provisions of these arrangements, including the OEAP National Guidance, or have its own procedures in place which meet at least the same level of standards.

4.2 Establishment Roles and Responsibilities

4.2.1 Governing Body, Directors and Service Manager Responsibilities

Governing bodies, directors and service managers should have a clear understanding of their legal duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act, etc. 1974; the Children Act, 2004; the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act, 2007; the Children and Social Work Act, 2017 and their role as a Corporate Parent.

Governors, Directors and Service Managers are responsible for:

- Supporting outdoor learning, off-sites visits and providing sufficient resources to support implementation and compliance of the policy
- Ensuring that training is provided to those that implement the guidance, (e.g. EVCs and visit leaders)
- Ensuring compliance with guidance, policies and procedures

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4.2.2 Head Teacher / Manager Responsibilities

The Head Teacher / Service Manager must ensure that they have appointed an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who meets the role specification in the OEAP National Guidance or that they carry out this role themselves. They must also ensure that the person carrying out the EVC role undertakes the initial training provided by the Council and refresher training every three years subsequently.

Head teachers and managers must ensure that they follow their employer's guidance and are responsible for ensuring that establishment staff are competent to undertake any roles that are allocated to them.

Head teachers and managers should ensure that:

- You are familiar with policy requirements for outdoor learning and off-site visits
- All activities and visits are notified or submitted for formal approval as required
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as required by this policy
- You have clearly designated either yourself or a suitable member of staff as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and the designated person meets your employer's requirements, including undertaking training as required
- You have access to expert advice
- You have ascertained that all leaders are appropriately competent, confident and accountable to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated
- You support your EVC in ensuring that all activities and visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of leadership
- You support your EVC in ensuring that information has been shared with parents and consent has been given as required
- When you take part in a visit or activity, you and other members of the Visit Leadership Team are clear about your role (if you are not leading the visit, you should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader, who should have sole charge of the visit)
- Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place, including appropriate vetting of all adults including volunteers and helpers
- You have assigned sufficient time and resources for leaders to organise activities and visits properly
- You support an apprenticeship/succession-planning culture to ensure sustainable activities and visits and the development of competent leaders and EVCs

- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of all participants and staff
- Inclusion issues are addressed
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place
- Appropriate insurance arrangements are in place
- Visits have contingency plans (a Plan B) to deal with changing circumstances
- You obtain best value – consideration must be given to financial management, choice of external providers and facilities and contractual relationships
- Where charges are made to parents, these are within legal and employer requirements
- Appropriate procedures are in place to account for the visit finances
- Risk Management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient
- Where the activity or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate checks have been made and assurances obtained, a clear contract is in place setting out what the contractor is to provide, and the provider holds sufficient indemnity insurance
- There are suitable emergency procedures in place for each visit and your establishment has an Emergency Plan for off-site visits
- Details related to off-site activities and visits (including personal details of both participants and leaders) are accessible at all times to designated 24/7 Emergency Contacts in case of a serious incident
- Incidents and near misses are reported to the H&S Team
- All visits are reviewed, addressing issues raised by any incident and informing future visits
- Visits are evaluated against their aims and objectives



Headteachers / Managers are responsible for ensuring that all Level 1 and Level 2 visits undertaken by the school or service are recorded on Evolve and that **Level 2 visits are submitted to the local authority at least 4 weeks before the visit and gain Council approval before departure of a visit**.

4.2.3 Outdoor Education Adviser

Gateshead Council appoints an Outdoor Education Adviser that has sufficient knowledge, training, experience, judgement and ability to influence practice. The Outdoor Education Adviser attends the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP) on behalf of Gateshead Council and advises the H&S Team to assist them with visit support of schools and Children's Services.

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The Outdoor Education Adviser should:

- Have knowledge of the employer's legal responsibilities, powers and how they are to be applied and provide support in line with the employer's visit arrangements and guidance
- Experience of leading and managing outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Understand how outdoor learning and off-site visits can contribute to learning and development
- Understand the practicalities of supervising and managing young people in a range of situations
- Practice proportionate risk assessment
- Be able to interpret national guidance
- Be able to organise, facilitate and deliver training to EVCs and visit leaders
- Provide advice and support in relation to outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Engage with the OEAP
- Provide clear guidance on leader competence for a range of types of outdoor learning and off-site visits
- Advise on national quality assurance schemes (e.g. LoTC and AALA licensing)

4.2.4 H&S Team Responsibilities

The H&S Officers should ensure that they:

- Understand how outdoor learning and off-site visits contribute to positive outcomes for young people
- Understand and use the structures in place to provide guidance, support, advice and monitoring
- Have a policy that covers outdoor learning and off-site visits
- H&S Team to be notified about level 2 visits and to assess in line with the Educational Visits Policy
- Ensure that training is provided for EVCs and visit leaders so that they are competent to undertake their duties
- Check during the level 2 approval process that parents / carers are provided with appropriate information regarding their child's visit
- Check that level 2 visits have appropriate supervision for submitted visit forms
- Check level 2 arrangements for medical conditions and for SEND pupils / young people for submitted visit forms
- Ensure that level 2 transport arrangements are suitable and meet regulatory requirements for submitted forms
- Ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place for level 2 visits that are submitted

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- Determine appropriateness of emergency arrangements, including nomination of a 24/7 Emergency Base Contact for level 2 submitted visits
- Consider level 2 contingency plans
- Advise on any concerns with selection of visit or transport providers
- Share learning points with schools or Children's Services
- Support schools or Children's Services following a serious, emergency or critical incident and be involved with investigation as appropriate
- Fulfil RIDDOR requirements as necessary

4.2.5 Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) Responsibilities

The EVC is responsible for providing guidance and support to staff within their establishment, taking advice from the Health and Safety Officers if necessary. EVCs will normally be responsible for creating, maintaining, and updating user accounts on Evolve for the staff in their establishment. They are the first line of contact and approval.

Although the EVC provides the first line in the establishment's system of quality control and approval of visits, Head Teachers / Managers have ultimate responsibility in their establishment for the authorisation of visits.

EVCs should ensure that they:

- Be a champion for all aspects of visits and outdoor learning
- Challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively to provide a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness
- Support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable visits/outdoor learning;
- Ensure that planning complies with policy requirements and that the arrangements are ready for approval within agreed timescales
- Support your head/manager and governors/trustees in approval decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competence to fulfil their roles
- Ensure that all activity is reviewed, that good practice is shared, and that any issues are followed up
- Ensure that activity is evaluated
- Keep your Senior Leadership Team and governors/trustees / Service Manager informed about the visits and outdoor learning taking place and their contribution to establishment effectiveness.

4.2.6 Visit Leaders Responsibilities

Visit Leaders have overall responsibility for and during a visit.



An Assistant Visit Leader should be appointed in case the Visit Leader is incapacitated due to illness, injury, taking care of a sick child or other reason. When considering staffing for a visit, consideration should be given to the need for the Assistant Visit Leader to be **fully competent to deputise**.

Visit (and Assistant Visit) Leaders should:

- Liaise with your establishment's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to ensure that the visit has clear aims and is planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks and that all leaders and helpers accompanying the visit meet establishment requirements
- Ensure that there is effective supervision
- Take a lead on risk management. (It is good practice to involve all the visit leadership team to ensure wide understanding and to give clarity about what they need to do and to involve young people wherever appropriate)
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other leaders and helpers (and participants) to ensure effective supervision throughout the visit, appointing a deputy wherever possible
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed (e.g. good safeguarding practice is followed and adults are appropriately vetted and checked)
- Ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary (ref. section 5)
- Provide relevant information to parents and participants and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- Ensure that if the visit leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, this is managed to avoid any possible compromise of effective supervision
- Ensure that all leaders and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details, but without breaching data protection / GDPR legislation
- Dynamically risk assess throughout the visit
- Review all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- Liaise with your EVC about evaluation of the visit
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses to the H&S Team

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4.3 Assessing competence of Visit Leaders

In giving their authorisation for visits, Head Teachers / Managers must ensure that Visit Leaders and Group Leaders are competent to carry out their responsibilities.

For new Visit Leaders, it is essential that they are **initially supervised by more experienced visit leaders**, prior to leading or managing a trip without direct support. New Visit Leaders should be deemed competent at managing lower risk visits before undertaking higher risk visits and have knowledge of the group attendees.

School / Service staff who wish to lead Adventure Activities must have approval to do so from the Health and Safety Officers on behalf of the Council. Approval will be based upon evidence of competence, which may include evidence of relevant qualifications, training and experience or assessment by a Technical Adviser nominated by the Health and Safety Team. Evidence of qualifications should be uploaded to the staff member's Evolve user account.

Leader approval for adventure activities is managed through Evolve.

- For a specific visit, evidence of the leader's competence is required on the Activity Leader Form (ALF) which is part of the normal Evolve visit planning process.

4.4 Monitoring standards on Educational Visits

Head Teachers / Managers are responsible for ensuring the monitoring of visits organised by their school / service. In case of doubt or concern, advice may be obtained from the Health and Safety Team.

As head teachers and managers have overall responsibility for the safety of pupils and young people while in and out of school or service, the Council takes the stance that it is **not acceptable** for staff to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when professionally active and responsible for either pupils, parents, other colleagues or property. This includes during downtime.

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4.5 Emergency Planning and Critical Incidents

All establishments must have a plan to enable its staff to respond appropriately to a critical incident where any participant:

- Has suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality.
- Is at serious risk.
- Has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

There is Corporate guidance available on managing emergencies – EDU-HS-04 Emergency Management During Educational Visits.

Visit Leaders and Emergency Base Contacts are **strongly advised to have a copy of the appropriate emergency card** with them for reference during educational visits.

4.6 Accident/Incident Reporting

The Council's Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure must be followed. Serious incidents must be notified immediately to the Health & Safety Team on 0191 433 2237 / 3973 / 2270. If support is required from the Council, the Care Call Control Room should be contacted on 0191 478 7665, which is available 24 hours a day and includes emergency Health & Safety cover. These numbers should be carried by leaders during visits, **but should not be given to young people or to their parents.**

After any incident, schools / services must undertake an investigation and amend their risk assessments and emergency procedures accordingly. It is also good practice to record and learn from 'near misses'. All incidents should be reported to the Health & Safety Team, who will investigate where appropriate to enable preventative strategies to be developed.

4.7 Assessing Venues and Providers

4.7.1 Activity Providers and Learning Outside the Classroom Badge

Individual schools / services have a responsibility to ensure any activity provider they use for visits meets suitable standards.

The Council uses an External Provider (statement self-declaration) Form to check external providers. Schools / services are required to obtain from the provider:

- External Provider Form

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- Transport Provider Form (see section 4.7.3)
- Risk assessments for the activities, venues and / or accommodation that are organised by the external parties.
- Public Liability Insurance*

  *Adventurous activities, particularly those of a high-risk nature, require a **minimum of £10 million PLI cover.**

An **External Provider** is any person or organisation external to your establishment, contracted to organise and / or lead all or part of a visit or activity.

The Council has agreed that the **Learning Outside the Classroom (LoTC) Quality Badge** provides sufficient reassurance that a provider meets nationally required minimum standards of safety and quality. Details of a provider's status can be checked on the Quality Badge website www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk .

- Those providers who have LOTC status are required to complete only section A&G of the provider form. Under the agreement, it is not necessary to do a risk assessment check, however this is still a good practice.
- If a provider of activities does not hold the Quality Badge, then detailed checks should be made to ensure that the provider meets the required standards. For providers that do not hold a LoTC badge, risk assessment(s) will also need to be requested by the school / service and other relevant documentation.

Examples of external providers:

- a museum or other venue where their staff lead educational activities
- an activity instructor or guide
- a tour operator,
- an activity, field studies or outdoor education centre
- ski school
- Duke of Edinburgh Award centre or activity provider
- an expedition company

It is not necessary to do external provider checks on the visits that are routine or Level 1 trips where the provider does not provide any service to the school and only acts as a venue (i.e. similar to how members of the public can use these venues).

Within the pink resources section of Evolve (Gateshead Forms), transport provider and external provider forms can be found. These are designed to give re-assurance to schools or services that those providing their services for transportation, accommodation or for activities are meeting their legal H&S requirements.

Adventurous activities, particularly those of a high-risk nature, and transportation require a **minimum of £10 million PLI cover.**

4.7.2 Use of Gateshead Council Venues and Services as an External Provider

This section only applies to maintained Gateshead Council schools.

Gateshead Council maintained schools who use other Council establishments such as the Gateshead Schools Sports Partnership (SSP) / Council libraries / Council swimming pools and other services that belong to Gateshead Council are not required to do an external provider check due to these services being governed by the same H&S policies.

Schools are still required to obtain and check risk assessments from Gateshead Council venues and services.

4.7.3 Transport Provision

Where transport provision is being used, a visit form must be submitted with the following documentation attached:

- Risk assessment of a suitable and sufficient nature that adequately demonstrates how risks are controlled by the transport provider. (Where a transport provider has 5 or less employees, they can complete the self-declaration in appendix 1 instead of providing a risk assessment).
- Certificate of motor insurance that is in date for all dates covering transportation.
- Evidence of Public Liability Cover of £10 million. (If the motor insurance certificate has unlimited personal injury cover, then public liability can be reduced to a minimum of £5 million)

Schools and services are required to ensure that their transport and venue providers have suitable documentation in place. This must be checked by the school or service **in sufficient time; at least a few weeks before a visit is to take place.**

When driving for work purposes, Council staff and those that buy into the H&S SLA are expected to follow requirements within CSG-HS-22 Occupational Road Risk (Driving at Work). In addition, the following should also be taken into consideration:

Vehicles (such as a minibus) that is owned, hired or self-driven by staff at an establishment must be safe, maintained, the driver competent to drive it and both driver and vehicle must meet legal requirements.

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Young people must not distract drivers while they are driving.

If more than one vehicle is being used, consider how to split supervision by staff and how to communicate in an emergency. If a vehicle breaks down, the group should continue to be directly supervised and the visit leader should dynamically assess whether police assistance is required and whether it is safe to stay on board the vehicle and await help or disembark and wait in a safer place.

When planning road journeys, consider:

- Number of hours of driving and total length of the driver's day / journey time
- Driver fatigue and capacity to maintain concentration
- Whether the drive is local, long distance or overnight
- Traffic conditions
- Arrangements in case of breakdown or another emergency
- Insurance cover
- Driving conditions and weather
- Access to comfort stops / toilets and refreshments
- Supervision of the group
- Availability of seatbelts and child restraints
- Difference in traffic regulations if driving overseas

Drivers cannot be expected to drive and supervise at the same time, so while driving **should not be considered as part of the supervision ratio if close supervision is required.**

If schools request that parents make their own travel arrangements to a venue, ensure that appropriate handover arrangements are in place at the end of the visit, if some parents are collecting children other than just their own. Consider arrangements for those that are unable to transport their child to a venue.

4.8 Insurance

The following is a summary of Gateshead Council's arrangements.

- **Indemnity**
  The Council provides an indemnity to its employees against claims that arise as a result of carrying out their official duties. There are a small number of exceptions to this such as fraud, criminal offence, etc.

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- **Employers Liability**
  The Council maintains these arrangements to cover its legal liability for claims arising from accidental injury to employees because of defective premises or equipment belonging to the Council. **It does not cover pupils.**

- **Public Liability**
  The Council maintains these arrangements to cover its legal liability for claims arising from accidental injury to anyone who is not an employee and for loss or damage to property because of defective premises or equipment belonging to the Council.

- **Personal Injury**
  The Council provides cover for employees who sustain bodily injury by assault whilst on official duties and for education employees who sustain bodily injury while carrying out extra-curricular teaching activities. Employees may also have additional cover through their Conditions of Service and should check this for their own circumstances. Staff may wish to consider taking out less limited Personal Accident cover privately or through a professional association.

- **No Cover for Children's Personal Property**

- **Personal Property for Employees**
  Under the Council's PAT Policy, there is some cover for the personal property of employees and for financial loss.

There is no cover in place for personal injury/property damage because of pupils/school staff participating in 'adventure' type activities whilst on a school trip to a location owned by a third party. The third party should have its own public liability insurance in place for this and proof of this should be obtained prior to the school visiting the venue.



For transportation, adventurous or other high risk activities, the Council requires the **third party to have Public Liability cover of £10 million as a minimum**.

If a school or service does not feel that the arrangements referred to above are sufficient for their requirements, they will need to discuss further with the Council's or their own Insurance Team. Schools and services should ensure that adequate insurance is in place for pupils/students.

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Schools and other services should consider whether to arrange cancellation and personal accident cover for educational visits within the UK. Insurance should be arranged for journeys outside the UK.

There is no insurance cover for pupils and students on school trips. Schools **must** arrange this for any children or young people on a trip organised by the school.

When buying insurance cover from any source, the terms of the policy should be studied carefully, paying attention to the exclusions. Schools and services should ensure that they understand how the terms and conditions apply, particularly if there is a need to cancel or postpone a visit, for example, due to illness or adverse weather.

Please note any implications, particularly financial ones, that might occur, for example, if anyone in the party needs to self-isolate or quarantine or if anyone requires hospitalisation. (These are just a few examples to consider and there might be other implications to take into consideration). Financial and insurance implications must be made clear to parents / carers.

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Specific Areas of Guidance

5.1 Challenging Behaviour

A head teacher or manager can decide whether to allow a pupil with challenging behaviour on an educational trip, but they must avoid discrimination. If in any doubt, legal advice must be sought. Any decision to not allow a pupil to partake in the whole or part of a trip should be reasonable and based on protection or the safety of that child or others attending the trip. Consideration should be given as to whether additional support or reasonable adjustments can be provided to allow the child to attend the visit safely. Consultation with parents / carers, social care and health professionals should occur before any decision is reached.

Schools may want to consider a Code of Conduct for children that are old enough to understand this, which can be signed by both the pupil and their parent or carer. This might be linked to a school's behaviour policy or clearly sets out any behavioural expectations and sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.

5.2 SEND Pupils or Those with Medical Conditions

Every effort must be made for visits to be inclusive for pupils with special needs or medical conditions. A risk assessment should be completed that considers reasonable adjustments and support. The risk assessment should involve input from family, the pupil (if appropriate) and health care professionals. Planning should be done well in advance and include alternative plans and how to deal with an emergency situation. Consideration should also be given to any affects to others on the trip. Exclusion should only occur as a last resort, if the safety of the pupil or others would be affected by the pupil attending the visit.

5.3 Supervision

Supervision is not about ratios, but should be based on risk assessment. Supervision should consider:

- The nature of activities to be undertaken
- Duration of the trip

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- Nature of the group, including number of children, age level of maturity, gender, needs (SEND or otherwise)
- Staff competence
- Consequences of a member of staff being incapacitated

Supervision by volunteers should consider if a parent / carer is related to one of the children, whether they should be in the same group as their child or not. If the child has particular medical needs or needs other support and this is the reason for the parent attending the school visit, then having them in the same group is preferable, otherwise maybe not.

5.4 Informed Consent

Generally, consent for educational visits should be obtained from the parent who has named parental responsibility for a child. This is usually the parent with whom the child resides with. The following weblink contains information to assist with understanding of parental responsibility: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility/understanding-and-dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility

Parental responsibility can also be acquired through a full court order.

In cases where a foster carer does not have authority to give consent for a visit and there might be a delay in obtaining consent from the legal guardian, schools should make suitable allowances so that a Looked After Child (LAC) / Child in Care does not miss any visit opportunities. Liaison between the Virtual School and the H&S Officer should occur and reasonable allowances made.

Those with parental responsibility must be given the opportunity to provide formal informed consent. It must be made clear to those with parental responsibility for a child, what the child is going to participate in. All relevant facts must be provided and time and opportunity for the parent to consider the information and ask for more information or clarifications. The inherent risk associated with an activity must be made known to the parent. This will help to avoid misunderstanding and confusion, particularly if an incident should occur.

When requesting informed consent, include:

- Description or further information about activities to be undertaken and purpose of the visit
- Risks associated with the activity

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- Benefits of the activity
- Who to contact for further information
- Practical details such as dates, times, kit list and any equipment that is required
- Costs (and any cancellation terms). (Consider costs also if a child may need to be sent home early, for example, due to illness, injury or inappropriate behaviour)
- Expected behaviour and any consequences
- Nature of supervision
- What the children are responsible for (e.g. their own spending money)
- Request for SEND or medical information relating to the visit
- Pre-visit preparations
- Contact details in case of an emergency (by school or parents)
- Date informed consent must be provided by

Consent is required for activities outside of school hours or for activities within school hours that involve a journey where travel is not on foot or the perceived risk is high.

For routine, local visits, a one-off or blanket consent can be used, so long as it is clear as to what is being consented for.

Schools or managers should also consider requesting consent for emergency medical treatment, sharing of personal data and use of photographs.

Consideration should be given as to whether a parent is able to understand the information they are being provided with, for example, if English is not a first language.

Either electronic or written consent can be obtained, but both must have appropriate security measures in place that comply with data protection / GDPR requirements. (Please contact your Data Protection Officer if you need further advice).

5.5 Transgender Young People and Visits

Transgender people feel their gender is different from the one they were assigned with at birth. In some cases, transgender people may not identify as male or female, but as non-binary. Gender identity and sexual orientation are different and should not be confused.

Under the Equality Act, 2010, gender re-assignment, gender and sexual orientation are legally protected characteristics. Therefore, schools and other services must ensure that they do not discriminate against transgender young people during visits and consider the needs and how to make reasonable adjustments for these young people. It is important to engage with the transgender person to determine how they

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want to be addressed and whether they feel that acceptable solutions may involve the whole group. Practical considerations include:

- Access to accessible or neutral gender toilets
- Use of showers at agreed or alternative times to others
- Sleeping arrangements
- Changing areas

For overseas travel, consider if the country you are going to legally protects transgender young people or are culturally open. Some issues that might be encountered include, but are not limited to:

- Problems with gender indicated on the passport not matching the gender that the young person identifies as
- Problems if a passport indicates non-binary as the gender and the country does not recognise this
- Countries or states where it is illegal to be openly lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, transgender or other. (In some cases this can lead to hostility, discrimination or violence)
- Border crossings and police searches

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association website www.ilga.org can provide more information.

Information on changing the gender on a passport can be found at Applying_for_a_passport_additional_information

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6 Support

Please contact the following if additional information or support is required:

Email: CSGhealthandsafety@Gateshead.Gov.UK

Telephone: 0191 433 (ext)

Extensions: 2237 / 2270 / 3973 / 2272

Email: InsuranceClaims@Gateshead.Gov.UK

SUPPORT