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Guidance for Director of Children's Services (DCS) or Equivalent Role

As a local authority DCS, you should have a clear understanding of the legal duties of the local authority in relation to outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC). You can find further guidance in document 3.2 "Underpinning legal framework and duty of care".

In particular you should be aware of:

- Your responsibilities as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. These extend to all establishments, including schools, for which the local authority is the legal employer. You are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of employees and any volunteers, and for those affected by their work, including children and young people.
- Your responsibilities under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007.
- Your responsibilities for all young people under the Children Act 2004.
- The local authority's responsibilities as a Corporate Parent, including (in England) those under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

You should ensure that:

- There is up-to-date employer guidance relating to outdoor learning, off-site visits and LOtC that applies to all local authority provision and employees.
- Information and advice is available to support outdoor learning, off-site visits and LOtC, and understanding of the guidance: e.g. there is a designated adviser (see below) with sufficient resources to support policy implementation and compliance.
- Training is provided to ensure that employees understand the guidance: e.g. Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Training, Visit Leader Training.
- Policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with guidance.
- Where duties are delegated, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

It is good practice for local authorities to have an **Outdoor Education Adviser** (or equivalent post), or for one or more appropriate staff to have the functions of an Outdoor Education Adviser in their job description(s). Whatever way these responsibilities are allocated, it is essential that the those appointed are specifically competent and have sufficient time and resources to fulfil their

functions, taking into account the size of the organisation and the nature of the activities provided by its establishments.

The adviser (or team) should have experience in teaching or youth work and have sufficient knowledge, training and experience, together with sound judgement and the ability to effectively influence practice across the organisation.

"Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services" (DfE 2013) is a key document. It can be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/directors-of-childrens-services-roles-and-responsibilities>

Further Information

- 3.1a "Requirements and Recommendations for Employers"
- 3.1c "Corporate Parenting"
- 3.2a "Underpinning legal framework and duty of care"
- 3.4c "Outdoor Education Adviser Line Manager"
- 3.4d "Outdoor Education Adviser"

