



# Base Contact & Head of Establishment Training

*Part of  
Aberdeenshire Council*

# Base Contact Role

The Base Contact's role is to liaise between the group on Expedition and the outside world. All communications with or from the group should go through this focal point.

This person has a crucial role in the safety management system and is appointed by the Head of Establishment.

The Base Contact will remain 'back at base' and be contactable 24hrs a day throughout the duration of the excursion.

The Base Contact will stand down once the excursion has returned to base.

# Base Contact Requirements

Should not be a parent/carer/relative of a participant on the excursion

Must have copies of all the relevant excursion paperwork (also held by Leaders and Head of Establishment) such as:

Parental Consent Forms

Route cards and maps

Travel itinerary

Activity provider & accommodation contact details

Aberdeenshire Council Emergency Response prompt card

Participant's mobile phone numbers if available

The Base Contact will remain 'back at base' and be contactable 24hrs a day throughout the duration of the excursion.

The Base Contact will stand down once the excursion has returned to base.

# Base Contact Role

In the event of an emergency the leaders or participants will contact the Base Contact who will either contact the Emergency Services on their behalf or act as liaison between the Emergency Services (Police), and the group.

In the event of an emergency the Leaders or participants must not contact parents at any time unless instructed by the Police or Head of Establishment.

The Leaders may contact the Base Contact if there are any delays, or if someone has to drop out early. The Base Contact may then contact the parents.

A parent may have an urgent message for a participant, which will be communicated through the Base Contact via the leaders.

# Important Notes

## Important Notes

Parental Consent Forms should be fully completed:

- Medical details
- Insurance statement
- Leader's name & contact details
- Drop off pick up times & locations
- Parent/ guardian contact details

Participants to individually carry a small laminated card with key information such as:

- Leader contact details
- Accommodation details
- Base Contact details

# Procedure- Normal

Receive paperwork in advance of departure

Keep phone to hand

If away from the landline, remain in areas of good mobile reception

Maintain Base Contact role until the message from Leaders confirming the group has been returned to the care of parents

Destroy/return paperwork to Head of Establishment

# Procedure- Non-Emergency

## From group to parents

For example: unwell participant needs collected, or group running late

Leaders will phone Base Contact and pass on message/request

Base Contact to call each parent and pass on the message with relevant location details, etc.

# Procedure- Non-Emergency

## From parents to group

Example: family emergency

Parents call Base Contact with urgent request

Base Contact informs parent that contact may not be immediate due to poor phone coverage, nature of activity etc.

Base Contact attempts to call Leaders, or send text message

Parents should only attempt to call participants direct as a last resort



# Procedure- Emergency

Should Leaders or participants contact the Base Contact to report an emergency, the Base Contact should do the following:

## 1. Capture information

Caller's name

Caller's number

Time of call

Location of the participants (grid reference and description)

Location of the Leaders if separate from participants

Nature of emergency

Names of any casualties & nature of injuries

Action taken

The group's plan

# Procedure- Emergency

## 2. Tell group:

Make themselves safe

Stay together

Keep phones on

Provide all their mobile phone numbers (via text)

Not to contact parents, share on social media, speak to media or anyone else.

Becoming lost does not immediately justify an Emergency Services callout

# Procedure- Emergency

## 3. Contact the Emergency Services, if required

Act as liaison and provide all information requested by the Emergency Services.

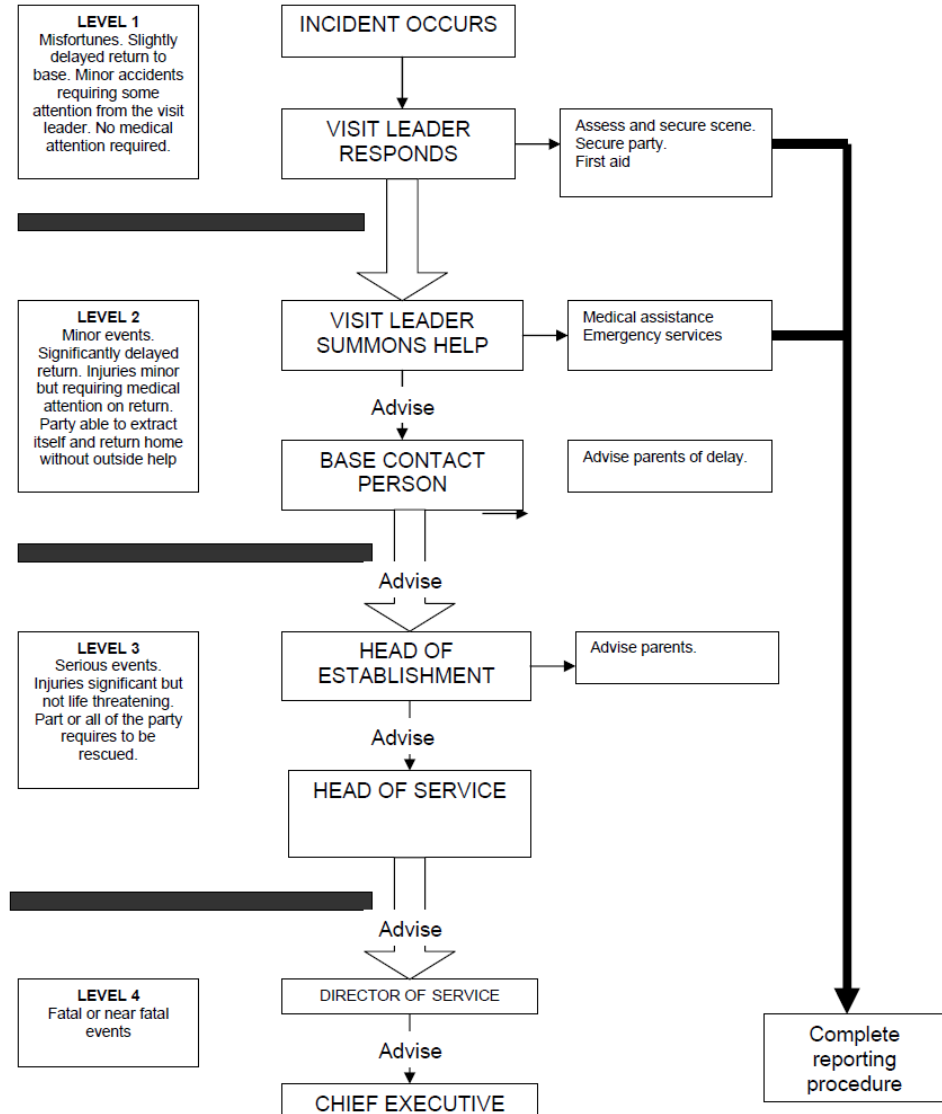
Contact the Head of Establishment

Maintain a log of events including timings.

# Excursion Overdue Actions & Response

Overdue	Status	Response
More than 1 hour	Heightened awareness	Look out for safe return Reassure any concerned relatives Call visit leader to identify last known contact point
2 hours	Low key search <b>Level 2 incident</b>	Search general area where group are expected to be. Include expected rendezvous vehicle location & escape notes Use local knowledge / speak to people on trails
4+ hours	<b>Full Scale incident</b> <b>LEVEL 3</b>	Notify Police and initiate full-scale search Leader to call BASE CONTACT asap on return to vehicle Safe return of excursion group <b>MUST</b> always be reported in asap

# Emergency Response Flow Chart



# General Advice

Keep calm, common sense prevails

Keep timeline of events

Be realistic

Trust, and show compassion to all involved

Have phone lines free for communication in an emergency

Keep notes of what the participants and supervisors tell you.

# General Advice

for remotely supervised groups

If the group are safe but report themselves as lost then ask the following questions to work out their location:

Can they orientate the map? (Point the top of the map north)

Where was their last known position and when?

How long have they been walking since last known position & pace?

Were they walking up or down hill?

If on a slope now, what is the aspect - does the slope descend north, east, south or west?

Are they on a path, in a wood or on open ground?

If in a wood, are the trees deciduous or coniferous?

Are they near a summit or water, or other geographical feature? What features can they see in the distance?

# Do not!

Do not ever contact or speak to the media

Do not ever contact parents during an incident unless specifically instructed to by the Emergency Services or Head of Establishment.





# Basic Guide to Head of Establishment Duties

*Part of  
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# Establishment Roles

## The Head of Establishment

Has responsibility for ensuring safe practice and for the implementation of the Council's safety policy relating to off-site excursions.

Within larger establishments many of the functions relating to the management and co-ordination of external visits may be delegated to a senior member of staff.

# Establishment Roles

## Delegated Members of staff

Where some or all of the above responsibilities are delegated to a senior member of staff, the responsibilities must be clearly stated and understood by all concerned.

In all cases the ultimate responsibility for the approval, conduct and management of excursions remains with the Head of Establishment.

# Establishment Roles

## The **Visit Leader**

Is the person in whom the Head of Establishment has placed responsibility for the leadership and safe conduct of the excursion.

Some appropriate share of these responsibilities is assumed by others who may be colleagues from the establishment or staff from other agencies.

# Head of Establishment Responsibilities

1. To follow and implement the guidance contained in Aberdeenshire Council's Procedures for Offsite Excursions document to ensure their responsibilities are fulfilled and that outdoor learning experiences & off-site visits are managed safely.
2. The visit has suitable aims and effective ways of achieving them
3. The visit leader is competent & experienced to manage and monitor the risks throughout the visit.
4. Child protection procedures are in place
5. Appropriate risk assessments have been completed and proportionate safety measures are in place
6. Training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and participants have been considered

# Head of Establishment Responsibilities

7. Communication with parents has been carried out and parents have been appropriately informed of all aspects of the excursion and the risks involved and the necessary permissions obtained.
8. Visit leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
9. Visit assistants and other accompanying adults in a supervisory role are appropriately recruited and briefed
10. The ratio of other accompanying adults to participants is appropriate
11. The Outdoor and Adventurous Education Team has recommended approval of the trip
12. Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and additional support needs of all participants

# Head of Establishment Responsibilities

13. Appropriate first aid provision will be available to meet the needs of the participants.

14. The mode of travel and travel arrangements are appropriate

15. There is adequate and relevant insurance cover in place.

16. Effective contact & emergency arrangements are in place and have been communicated to those who need to know.

17. There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

18. Ensure that accident / incident reporting is completed on the H&S reporting system as appropriate.

# Head of Establishment Cover Plan

