

240. Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

241. Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. County and controlled schools should follow LEA guidance on emergency planning procedures.

242. If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- ▼ assess the situation;
- ▼ safeguard the uninjured members of the group;
- ▼ attend to the casualty;
- ▼ inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

Who will take charge in an emergency?

243. The group leader would usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged. The group leader should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used.

244. Pre-arranged school home contact. The school contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school, the parents and the LEA (where appropriate), and to provide assistance as necessary. The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit. See Form 9 in

Chapter 11 for a suggested checklist for the named person.

Emergency procedures framework

245. All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

246. If an emergency occurs on a school visit the main factors to consider include:

- ▼ establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- ▼ ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- ▼ establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them;
- ▼ ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures;
- ▼ ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- ▼ notify the police if necessary;
- ▼ notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad;
- ▼ inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit;
- ▼ details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom);
- ▼ notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact);
- ▼ notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the school contact);
- ▼ ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures;
- ▼ write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence;
- ▼ keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident;
- ▼ complete an accident report form as soon as possible. Contact HSE or local authority inspector, if appropriate;
- ▼ no-one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Media enquiries should be referred to a designated media contact in the home area;

- ▼ no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

Emergency procedures framework for school base

247. Prior to the visit, the name and school and home telephone numbers of a school contact should be identified. It is advisable to arrange a second school contact as a reserve. County and controlled schools will normally have an LEA named person as well. Head teachers and group leader should bear in mind that the contact lines may become busy in the event of an incident and that alternative numbers to ring would be useful.

248. The main factors for the school contact to consider include:

- ▼ ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base;
- ▼ contacting parents. Details of parents contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit. The school contact should act as a link between the group and parents. Parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency;
- ▼ liaison with LEA and/or governing body. The school contact should act as a link between the group and LEA and/or chair of governors and arrange for the group to receive assistance, if necessary;
- ▼ liaison with media contact. If a serious incident occurs, the school contact should liaise with the designated media contact as soon as possible;
- ▼ the reporting of the incident using appropriate forms, if necessary. Some incidents are reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). For further

information see Annex A.

Media contact

249. LEAs usually have a designated person to deal with media enquiries for county and controlled schools. GM schools normally make their own media arrangements - this is often through a school governor. The media contact should liaise with the school contact, the group leader and, where appropriate, the emergency services. In the event of an emergency all media enquiries should be referred to the media contact. The name of any casualty should not be given to the media.

After a serious incident

250. It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other pupils or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases reactions do not surface immediately. Schools in this situation have sometimes found it helpful to contact local community support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.