

High Quality Outdoor Education

A guide to recognising
and achieving High Quality
Outdoor Education in Schools,
Youth Services, Clubs and Centres



'I am happy to place on record that the government supports the role of adventure as part of active education, especially in helping young people to learn about assessing and managing risk, in offering them new and exciting challenges, and in helping them to gain skills in leadership and team working that will be of huge value in their progression to adulthood.'

**Tony Blair, Prime Minister,
September 2001 in support of
the English Outdoor Council's
'Campaign for Adventure' as quoted
in the 2002 DfES booklet 'Standards
for Adventure'**

'Outdoor activities, both at school and on residential courses, enable pupils to enjoy challenging and unfamiliar experiences that test and develop their physical, social and personal skills. They can be among the most memorable experiences for pupils of their school days.'

**David Bell, Her Majesty's
Chief Inspector, September 2004**

'We are convinced that out-of-classroom education enriches the curriculum and can improve educational attainment.'

**House of Commons Education and
Skills Committee Report 'Education
Outside the Classroom' January 2005**

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Written by members of the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel, which comprises nominated representatives of Chief Education Officers of Local Education Authorities in England and Wales, and provides a forum for sharing and developing good practice in outdoor education.

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About this guide

Britain has a long tradition of involving young people in adventurous outdoor activities, and the positive impact this can have on a young person's education is widely acknowledged.

Recently Ofsted were commissioned by the DfES to undertake an evaluation of aspects of outdoor education in schools and outdoor centres in England.

The evaluation sought to identify good practice and the... *'...unique contribution made by outdoor education to enhancing young people's personal and social development.'*

In their report *'Outdoor Education – Aspects of Good Practice'*, published in September 2004, Ofsted identified amongst their main findings that:

'Outdoor education gives depth to the curriculum and makes an important contribution to students' physical, personal and social education.'

'Students generally make good progress in outdoor education, both at school and at outdoor centres. They develop their physical skills in new and challenging situations, as well as exercising important social skills such as teamwork and leadership.'

'To achieve further improvements in provision for outdoor education, schools and centres should...ensure the benefits of outdoor education can be experienced by all students.'

This new guide focuses on high quality in outdoor education – what it looks like and how to achieve it. It recognises that high-quality outdoor education takes place not only in schools and outdoor education centres but equally in youth services and voluntary youth organisations, as well as outdoor activity clubs that cater for young people.

The guide is presented in sections as follows:

- an introductory section explaining how to use this guide to evaluate and improve quality in outdoor education,
- a statement of ten outcomes of high-quality outdoor education, together with five cross-cutting themes – aspects or models of learning that have general relevance across outdoor education,
- a list of indicators for each outcome that give a picture of what we should expect to see young people achieving when they are involved in high-quality outdoor education,
- an overview of provision – how we inspire and enable young people to achieve through outdoor education,
- an overview of effective links and partnerships – how schools, youth organisations, outdoor centres and clubs can work together to achieve high quality.

The guide is intended for:

- those directly involved in outdoor education with young people, including teachers and support staff, youth workers, instructors and coaches,
- those who are considering becoming involved and wish to understand more about the benefits of outdoor education for young people,
- those involved in managing and monitoring outdoor education, including head teachers, youth service managers, heads and managers of outdoor education centres, leaders of voluntary youth organisations and outdoor activity clubs, and local authority advisers.

What is 'outdoor education'?

In this guide the term 'outdoor education' embraces activities and experiences that:

- normally take place in the outdoors;
- frequently have an adventurous component;
- generally involve physical activity; and
- always respect the natural environment.

The activities include recognised sports with an adventurous component such as orienteering or sailing, outdoor leisure pursuits such as camping or hill walking, and outdoor activities purposely designed for their educational impact such as rope courses, trails and initiative challenges.

Outdoor education is primarily an approach to teaching and learning through these activities and experiences. The common thread is the focus on positive outcomes in personal and social education.

While outdoor education has a distinct identity and a distinctive educational contribution, there are significant overlaps between outdoor education and PE, and outdoor education and environmental education, with each re-enforcing the other. Outdoor education also complements other activities in the broader school curriculum, such as performing arts, which share some of the same outcomes in personal and social education.

NOTE: The term 'outdoor education' can also be used in a broader sense to include all learning opportunities outdoors, including those related to geography, biology and environmental education. 'Outdoor learning' is also commonly used in this sense. This booklet does not claim this wider scope, though we do highlight the significant opportunities for appreciating and understanding the natural environment inherent in outdoor adventure activities. Readers seeking a guide to high quality in environmental education are directed to the 2003 publication 'Quality, Safety and Sustainability in the delivery of Learning through the Environment' by the National Association of Field Studies Officers.



How do young people participate?

This guide recognises that young people become involved in outdoor education in a variety of contexts, in schools, youth groups, outdoor education centres and outdoor activity clubs.

Schools have a central role to play in delivering high-quality outdoor education. They may provide regular outdoor and adventurous activities as one of the areas of activity within the PE curriculum. They frequently offer out-of-school-hours learning opportunities through school clubs or The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Many schools organise day and residential visits to outdoor education centres.

Youth services, both in the statutory and voluntary sectors, provide significant outdoor education opportunities as part of their curriculum, which commonly has personal and social development as a prime focus. The voluntary youth organisations, in particular, have a long tradition of work in this field. (The terms 'youth services' and 'youth organisations' are used interchangeably in this booklet.)

Schools and youth services have in common the ability to measure the impact of outdoor education in the context of a young person's whole development over an extended period.

Outdoor education centres include those managed by local authorities, voluntary and charitable organisations, and the commercial sector. All have the potential to make a substantial impact on the personal and social development of the young people they engage with; for many this is their primary purpose. Centres are well placed to bring their specialist expertise to the delivery of high-quality outdoor education, best realised when they work in close partnership with their customer schools and youth groups. Many centres also offer activity courses open to individual recruitment, for example in holiday periods, providing further opportunities for young people to benefit.

Outdoor activity clubs, for example canoe clubs and climbing clubs, offer young people valuable opportunities to access adventure activities, often in a competitive context. Clubs provide an environment that encourages progress towards high levels of performance whilst also contributing significantly to broader learning and personal growth.

Getting started.

If the young people you work with are currently not involved in outdoor education, but you want information on how to get started, some of the website references on page 25 should be helpful. Your local authority should have an outdoor education adviser who will be able to help, or you could talk directly to one of the many outdoor education centres with a view to arranging an introductory course.



Using this guide

This guide has been written to help you evaluate and then set about improving, or further improving, the quality of outdoor education you offer.

Schools, local authority centres and maintained youth services can use it alongside their National Curriculum and Ofsted inspection frameworks to get an overview of the quality they are achieving. They may also already be recording individual achievement using records of achievement or national or local award schemes. Voluntary organisations and outdoor activity clubs are encouraged to use it alongside their own accreditation or proficiency schemes.

As a school, youth service, centre or club, you will probably already have processes that you follow to evaluate the quality of provision and the progress made by young people. Using this guide as part of this process will help ensure that, in relation to outdoor education, your evaluation is as reliable as possible.

The following steps offer one possible approach, but first a word of caution. A great deal of outdoor education relies on the commitment of colleagues who give their time entirely voluntarily or in an unpaid capacity beyond their contracted hours. If this is the context in which you work, you may need to employ less formal approaches, at least until colleagues are convinced of the value to the young people of devoting a small

proportion of their voluntary time to this sort of evaluation process.

Evaluating Quality

Ten outcomes of high-quality outdoor education are listed on pages 6–7. For each outcome, there follows a list of indicators of quality. You should use these to help gain an overall picture of the quality of the outdoor education you provide. There are also five general themes described on pages 6–7, which have relevance to all or many of the outcomes and should be considered alongside them.

1. Look at each of the outcomes and their associated indicators. Not all of them may be relevant to you, though most of them should be. If you wish, you could add other indicators for your particular context. Involve all your colleagues in the process. In secondary schools, for example, staff from different subject areas will have a contribution to make.
2. You may then decide to focus on just some of the indicators, for example, those that you perceive to be areas for development, or you could decide to focus on all of them, possibly dividing them up amongst your team. You will also need to agree on a meaningful period over which to measure young people's progress. In a school or youth service context this might be over a single week's residential, or a term's outdoor activity programme. For a centre it could be a single course or a month's programme. For a club it could be a season's programme.





3. Decide how to evaluate the indicators you have chosen. It might be through observation, or through debrief and review with the young people. It might be through feedback from participants in written or video diaries. Try to think of the indicators collectively, not as individual items to be checked off.

4. To what extent are your young people meeting each outcome? You might find it helpful to record the result on a simple sliding scale like the one shown below. For a result beyond the halfway point, you would want to be satisfied that most of the young people in your group are meeting or progressing towards most of the indicators.



Some of the indicators are more easily measurable than others. They are phrased in fairly general terms to be relevant in the wide variety of contexts in which outdoor education is delivered. You may be able to set more specific targets and objectives.

5. As a team, discuss the individual evaluations and try to establish a picture across the whole school, youth service, centre or club. If most of the individual evaluations are

above the halfway point, this would suggest that you are providing high-quality outdoor education for young people. Where you judge that you are below the halfway point, but none the less are seeing progress, this would suggest you are moving towards high quality.

Obviously, this is, to a greater or lesser degree, a subjective process. It should, however, enable you to identify areas of comparative strength or weakness, think about what you need to do to improve or sustain quality, and provide a benchmark to estimate how far you have progressed between one evaluation and the next.

Improving and sustaining quality

The quality you achieve in Outdoor education will depend on:

- how well your head teachers, managers or leaders are creating a vision that recognises the benefits of outdoor education and assists in making it a reality,
- how well your teachers and support staff, youth workers, instructors or coaches are inspiring and helping young people to learn and achieve,
- the extent to which young people are involved in organising and planning their own activities,

- the extent to which young people, whatever their circumstances, are able to participate in your programme,
- the effectiveness of links between schools, youth services, centres and clubs in maximising and reinforcing the learning outcomes for young people.

The latter sections of this guide highlight some of the characteristics of high-quality provision focusing on the points above.

This is not intended as a definitive guide – use it to help you identify what you are already doing well and what you could perhaps do better.

Give yourselves a realistic time scale for any improvements you identify and during this time concentrate on improving the impact of your provision in these areas. At the end of the period carry out the evaluation again and see whether more of your young people have progressed towards meeting more of the indicators.

Don't forget that this guide is about improving quality, whatever your starting point. A great deal of high-quality outdoor education currently takes place in schools, youth services, centres and clubs up and down the country. This document is intended to benchmark, celebrate and build upon this good work.

High quality outdoor education Outcomes and themes

What are the outcomes of high-quality outdoor education?

Participation

Outdoor education lends itself to the plan-do-review model of learning. In high-quality outdoor education young people are encouraged to engage in the planning of their outdoor activities and take maximum ownership whilst participating. Time spent debriefing or reviewing the activity ensures that learning outcomes are emphasised, reinforced and applied in the future.



Competition and achievement

Competition features in outdoor education as one means of challenging young people to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence. Competition should be used as a spur to encourage all to strive to do their best, and, having done so, to take pride in their achievements.

Outdoor education also offers alternative avenues for physical achievement where the only 'competition' is inanimate (eg, a rock face or the weather). This sort of challenge frequently motivates young people who find difficulty expressing themselves physically in a competitive 'head-to-head' situation.



When schools, youth organisations, clubs or centres are providing high-quality outdoor education, they see young people who:

1. Enjoy participating in outdoor activities and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.
2. Are gaining personal confidence and self-esteem through taking on challenges and achieving success.
3. Are developing their self-awareness and social skills, and their appreciation of the contributions and achievements of themselves and of others.
4. Are becoming alive to the natural environment and understand the importance of conservation and sustainable development.

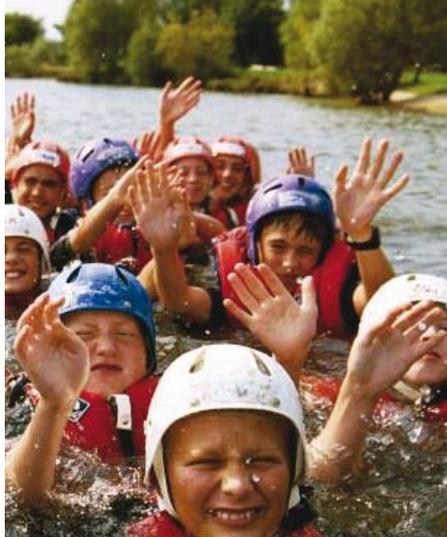


Residential experience

Residential experiences, opportunities for young people to live away from home undertaking activities in the company of their peers, feature prominently in high-quality outdoor education.

A residential outdoor education course, or extended expedition, offers young people the chance to engage in

5. Are acquiring and developing a range of skills in outdoor activities, expeditions and exploration.
6. Are demonstrating increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, perseverance and commitment.
7. Are developing and extending their key skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.
8. Are learning to appreciate the benefits of physical fitness and the lifelong value of participation in healthy leisure activities.
9. Are displaying an increased motivation and appetite for learning that is contributing to raised levels of attainment in other aspects of their education.
10. Are broadening their horizons and becoming open to a wider range of employment opportunities and life chances.



adventurous activities in new and challenging environments away from their local area, with unique opportunities for personal and social development. They are often among the most memorable experiences of a young person's school career.

Differentiation and progression

In high-quality outdoor education young people are engaged as far as possible at a level that matches their own abilities and development. Activities are planned that can be adapted to present challenges at different levels appropriate to different group members, or permit group members to take on different roles. Young people's progress is monitored to ensure they can be continually motivated by new challenges.



Safety and risk management

Outdoor education should always be conducted within a sound framework of safety. Responsibility for safety management rests primarily with the leaders and instructors or coaches in charge. However, in high-quality outdoor education the young people themselves are actively engaged in the process of risk assessment, at the planning stage, whilst undertaking their activities, and in debriefing and review.

Risk management is a 'life skill' in its own right. Learning this skill will be of value to young people both in the work place and in other aspects of their adult life.

Enjoyment

Outcome 1: Enjoyment

Young people enjoy participating in outdoor activities and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- enjoy being outdoors – smile often!
- opt into activities and participate fully,
- are keen to seek out new challenges,
- participate voluntarily in their free time,
- are keen to sign up to activities that are optional,
- talk about their experiences with enthusiasm;

additionally, in schools and youth organisations, they:

- encourage their friends to take part,
- are keen to find out how to progress further (eg, by joining a club);

in outdoor education centres, they:

- take a full part in all aspects of centre life,
- want to return to the centre and progress further in the activities offered;

and in outdoor activity clubs, they:

- attend club activities regularly,
- talk about their club with enthusiasm,
- encourage their friends to join.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Confidence

Outcome 2: Confidence

Young people are gaining personal confidence and self-esteem through taking on challenges and achieving success.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- overcome their apprehensions to take part in challenging activities,
- want a second go at things they find challenging first time,
- succeed where before they felt they could not succeed,
- feel proud of what they have achieved,
- want to move forward to the next challenge,
- talk openly about their successes, and their failures,
- feel positive about themselves – have a 'can-do' attitude,
- display more social confidence – 'come out of their shell',
- feel they can make a positive contribution to the success of their group, school or club,
- are able to recognise and modify aspects of behaviour that may restrict their own achievements.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Awareness

Outcome 3: Social awareness

Young people are developing their self-awareness and social skills, and their appreciation of the contributions and achievements of themselves and of others.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- are learning to appreciate their own strengths and current limitations,
- recognise where others can make a stronger contribution than themselves,
- willingly trust others and accept their support,
- recognise where others need support and willingly offer this,
- treat others with tolerance and respect,
- challenge intolerance or lack of respect in others,
- understand how their own actions impact on others,
- recognise and modify any aspects of behaviour that adversely effect their group,
- encourage others to achieve,
- recognise and applaud the achievements of others, regardless of how these compare with their own,
- make new friends;

additionally, in clubs, schools and youth organisations, they:

- take on roles as 'junior leaders', assisting younger or novice participants,
- take on roles of responsibility for planning and organising activities;

and in centres or in a residential setting they:

- contribute to the life of the centre beyond the activities,
- respect others' private space,
- accept their share of domestic duties.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Awareness

Outcome 4: Environmental awareness

Young people are becoming alive to the natural environment and understand the importance of conservation and sustainable development.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- have regular access to the outdoors as a learning resource,
- experience a range of different environments in different conditions,
- respond positively in challenging or uncomfortable environments (eg, darkness, inclement weather),
- understand the impact of their activities on the environment,
- demonstrate care for the environment in their own actions (eg, leaving no litter),
- are keen to participate in conservation activities,
- develop an interest in wider issues of sustainable development,
- appreciate and draw inspiration from the natural environment (eg, in oral or written reflection, artwork or photography),
- experience and gain respect for the power of natural forces (eg, wind and waves);

additionally, at outdoor education centres and on other visits to remote or wild country, they:

- understand the impact of the centre's activities on the local environment and economy,
- experience 'awe and wonder' in response to the natural beauty of wild environments.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Activity

Outcome 5: Activity skills

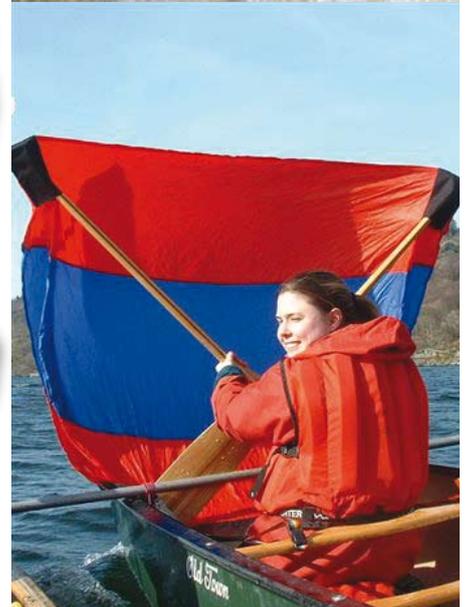
Young people are acquiring and developing a range of skills in outdoor activities, expeditions and exploration.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- develop physical skills that they adapt and apply effectively in outdoor activities,
- develop relevant mental skills (eg, route planning and navigation),
- acquire technical knowledge and skills in the use and care of outdoor activity equipment,
- know how to dress appropriately for outdoor activities,
- know what personal kit to bring and how to pack for outdoor activities and expeditions,
- understand how to keep themselves comfortable when living outdoors,
- recognise the value of training and practice in developing skills and improving performance,
- recognise the value of competition as a spur to high performance,
- undertake training in first aid and survival skills at an appropriate level,
- understand something of the history and ethics underpinning outdoor sports and leisure pursuits.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Personal

Outcome 6: Personal qualities

Young people are demonstrating increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, perseverance and commitment.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- are actively involved in the planning of their outdoor education activities,
- arrive on time, properly equipped and prepared for activities,
- take responsibility for the care of their personal clothing and equipment,
- undertake appropriate tasks with minimum levels of supervision,
- demonstrate initiative in overcoming obstacles to their progress,
- work towards self-reliance in outdoor adventure (eg, unaccompanied expeditions),
- try hard to succeed at activities they find physically or emotionally challenging,
- set realistic targets for themselves over an extended period, and keep focused until they succeed,
- persevere with good humour in the face of discomfort (eg, fatigue or inclement weather),
- take responsibility for not letting others down (eg, expedition groups, club teams);

additionally, in clubs, they:

- seldom miss training sessions,
- make an effort to support other club activities (eg, fund raising),
- take on positions of responsibility (eg, as junior committee members);

and in centres or in a residential setting they:

- take care of their personal possessions, their dormitory areas and their personal hygiene.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Skills

Outcome 7: Key skills

Young people are developing and extending their key skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- listen to instructions (eg, safety briefings) and respond accordingly,
- come up with ideas and are able to express them,
- understand the importance of listening to the ideas and opinions of others,
- are able to describe their experiences orally or in writing (or using video and IT skills),
- work co-operatively in planning activities and solving problems,
- are willing to try out a variety of ideas in order to find out what will work,
- vary and adapt what they do in response to changing circumstances,
- understand how team members take on different roles to achieve success,
- are able to take on a leadership role where appropriate,
- are willing to step back and allow others to take a leadership role,
- are able to help their group arrive at a team decision and implement it.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Fitness

Outcome 8: Health and fitness

Young people are learning to appreciate the benefits of physical fitness and the lifelong value of participation in healthy leisure activities.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- keep themselves fit through regular physical activity,
- have a positive self-image,
- talk about the benefits to their health of participation in physical outdoor activities,
- eat healthily, taking account of the energy requirements of outdoor activities,
- understand the risks to fitness and health posed by smoking, alcohol and drugs, and set an example in their own lifestyle;

additionally, in schools, they:

- walk or cycle to school (where this is a realistic and safe option) or take other regular exercise in addition to timetabled PE,
- want to continue their interest in outdoor activities beyond school and into adult life (eg, by joining local activity clubs);

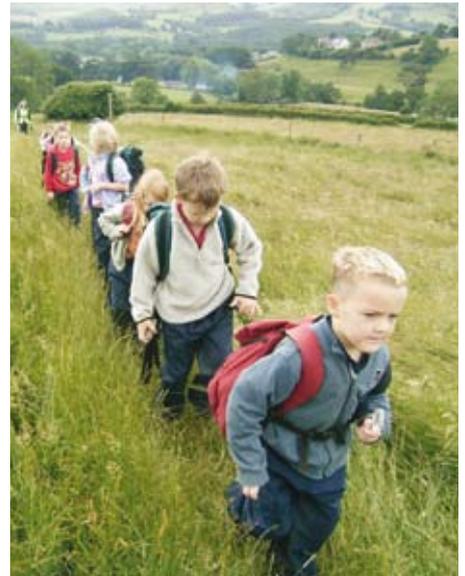
at centres or in a residential setting they:

- adopt a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating appropriate to the demands of their activities,
- sign up for opportunities to return to the centre independently to participate in follow up courses where these are available;

and in activity clubs they:

- understand how hard and how much they should train in order to balance the needs of their chosen activity with a healthy lifestyle.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Motivation

Outcome 9: Increased motivation and appetite for learning

Young people are displaying an increased motivation and appetite for learning that is contributing to raised levels of attainment in other aspects of their education.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- always aim to achieve their best,
- are, or are becoming, self-motivated learners,
- show a desire for new challenges and learning experiences,
- have good or improving relationships with teachers, youth workers or adult leaders,
- display good or improving behaviour;

additionally, in schools, they:

- talk positively about school,
- have a good or improving record of attendance,
- demonstrate raised levels of attainment in other areas of the curriculum,
- participate in a variety of aspects of school life,
- draw inspiration from their outdoor activities in other subjects (eg, creative writing or art).

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.



Horizons

Outcome 10: Broadened horizons

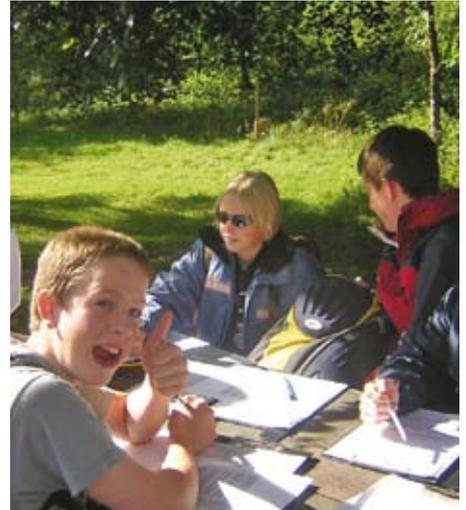
Young people are broadening their horizons and becoming open to a wider range of employment opportunities and life chances.

Indicators

The young people you work with:

- are exposed to and becoming more aware of different environments and cultures,
- are becoming more open-minded and less likely to express bigoted views,
- are happy to leave behind the comfort of familiar environments and routines,
- perceive a wider range of career options open to them and talk positively about these,
- appreciate the work place relevance of key skills such as communication and teamwork,
- appreciate the attractiveness to employers of self-reliance and commitment,
- are aware, if appropriate, of employment opportunities in outdoor recreation, and the pathways to these,
- are aware of opportunities to gain and use coaching qualifications in their chosen activity,
- respond to opportunities to volunteer their time to help others,
- continue to participate in outdoor activities, independent expeditions or travel, after they leave your school or club,
- always aim higher, and aspire to achieve in life to their fullest potential.

If you are providing high-quality outdoor education most young people should be meeting or progressing towards most of the above indicators.





What do schools, youth organisations, outdoor centres and clubs need to do to provide high-quality outdoor education for young people?

High-quality leadership and management:

- *creating the vision,*
- *making the vision a reality.*

High-quality teaching, youth work and coaching:

- *inspiring young people to learn and achieve,*
- *helping young people learn and achieve.*

Creating the vision

In schools and youth services that provide high-quality outdoor education, head teachers and managers:

- recognise what outdoor education can achieve for young people,
- set high expectations of what individual young people, and the whole school or service, can achieve through outdoor education,
- explain the impact of outdoor education on learning and achievement across the curriculum in a way that everyone involved can understand,
- review the outcomes and celebrate young people's achievements.

In activity clubs that provide high-quality outdoor education, club leaders:

- recognise what the activity can achieve for each young member and the whole club,
- set high expectations of what each member can achieve through the club's activities,
- explain the wider benefits of participation for young people in a way that everyone involved in the club and wider community can understand,
- review the outcomes and celebrate young people's achievements.

In centres that provide high-quality outdoor education, heads of centre and managers:

- recognise what outdoor education can achieve for each young person,
- set high expectations of what each group attending the centre can achieve through their outdoor education experience,
- explain the value and outcomes of outdoor education in a way that centre staff, visiting teachers and youth workers, and the wider community can understand,
- review the outcomes and celebrate young people's achievements.

Making the vision a reality

In schools and youth services that provide high-quality outdoor education, head teachers and managers:

- are creative in providing the time, staff, equipment and resources to enable young people to learn and achieve,
- encourage and support the staff involved and provide professional development opportunities,
- listen to young people and take account of what they say,
- involve parents/carers and listen to and take account of what they say,
- monitor the impact of outdoor education to ensure the school's or youth service's vision is met.

In activity clubs that provide high-quality outdoor education, club leaders:

- manage the club in a way that secures its long-term sustainability,
- create an environment that is safe and welcoming to young people,
- are creative in providing enough time, coaches, resources and equipment to enable young members to achieve,
- encourage and develop their coaches and volunteers who work with young people,
- listen to young members and take account of what they say,
- inform and involve parents/carers and listen to and take account of what they say,
- monitor the impact of their programmes for young people to ensure that the club's vision is met.

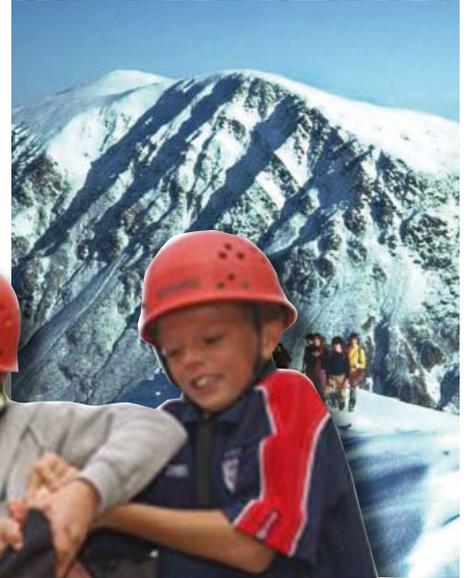
In centres that provide high-quality outdoor education, heads of centre and managers:

- are creative in providing enough time, staff, resources and equipment to enable young people to learn and achieve,
- create an environment that is welcoming to young people,
- encourage and support their staff and provide professional development opportunities,
- listen to young people and take account of what they say,
- involve visiting staff, and parents/carers and take account of what they say,
- monitor the impact of their programmes to ensure the centre's vision, and the aims of their client groups, are met.

Inspiring young people to learn and achieve

In schools, youth services, centres and clubs that provide high-quality outdoor education, staff working with young people:

- show commitment and enthusiasm,
- provide positive role models,
- show confidence in young people's ability to make progress and achieve,
- listen to young people and value what they say and do,
- raise young people's aspirations,
- take pride in and celebrate young people's successes,
- develop their own expertise as activity leaders and outdoor educators.



Helping young people learn and achieve

In schools, youth services, centres and clubs that provide high-quality outdoor education, staff working with young people:

- share and discuss with young people what they expect them to achieve, and involve them in setting targets,
- take into account what young people have already learnt and identify the next steps in their progression,
- provide young people with relevant activities in environments that interest, challenge and motivate them,
- provide opportunities for young people to review and evaluate their own and others' progress,
- give young people advice and support to guide their learning, but also allow them time to think, reflect and make decisions for themselves,
- make effective use of the time, staff, equipment and resources available,
- ensure a safe environment whilst also enabling young people understand and assess the risks involved and transfer this skill to other areas of their life,
- have a clear plan of action that sets out what they individually need to do to realise the organisation's vision for outdoor education.



Why is it important to have effective partnerships?

Effective links between schools, youth organisations and activity clubs enable young people to:

- make the most of their experiences and learning in the different settings,
- feel comfortable in a club setting and, as a result, be more likely to continue the activity when they leave school,
- try new activities, in a range of new and challenging outdoor environments.

Young people benefit most where there are clear links between the learning opportunities on offer in school, youth service or activity club settings. Schools and clubs that work closely together provide the best opportunities for progression and achievement.

Effective links between schools and centres enable young people to:

- make the most of their experiences and learning in both settings,
- feel comfortable away from their school site, and arrive ready to learn in a new setting,
- build on activities started at school and try new activities, in new and challenging outdoor environments,
- Relate their experiences at the centre back to their work at school.

Young people progress and achieve most from courses at outdoor education centres if schools and centres work closely together and there is a clear link between the teaching and learning at the centre and at the school. The same is true for visits to outdoor education centres organised by youth groups.



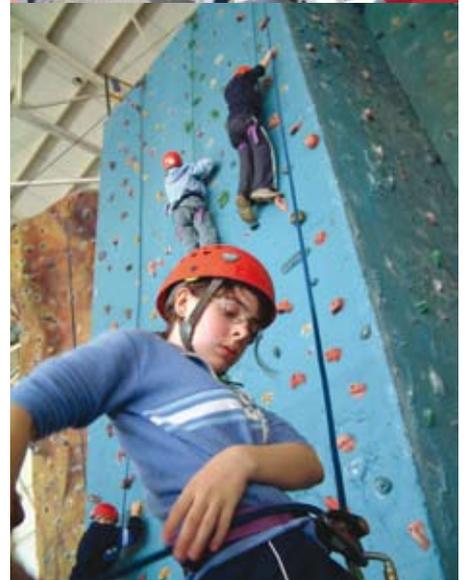
What makes an effective link?

When schools, youth organisations and activity clubs work well together they:

- talk to each other and respect each other's contribution,
- promote each other's activities,
- provide opportunities for all young people, regardless of their background,
- share a common approach to working with young people, and have similar expectations of them,
- share a common approach to involving parents and carers and communicate well with them,
- build on what young people learn in both settings,
- collaborate in the development of teaching and coaching expertise,
- share facilities, equipment and resources,
- understand the framework within which the other partner operates (for example the roles and responsibilities of local authority outdoor education advisers and national governing bodies).

When schools or youth services and outdoor education centres work well together they:

- liaise closely with each other well before, during and after the course at the centre,
- respect each other's educational aims and ethos, and are prepared to adapt to establish a common set of aims and objectives for the course,
- strive to provide opportunities for all young people to participate, regardless of their background,
- establish a common approach to working with young people and agreed expectations,
- share a common approach to involving and informing parents and carers,
- enable young people to build on what they learn in both settings (for example, by using a residential centre experience as part of a coherent scheme of work in outdoor education over a longer period),
- agree procedures for recording and assessing young people's work and celebrating their achievements,
- encourage visiting teachers or youth workers to contribute effectively to all aspects of the centre course,
- encourage and enable visiting and centre staff to learn from each other's teaching, coaching or youth work styles, and share expertise,
- agree and clearly understand the division of roles and responsibilities between centre and visiting staff, and ensure these are communicated to the young people.





The outcomes of effective partnerships

When schools, centres, youth organisations and activity clubs work well together, young people:

- understand how their experiences within and away from school complement each other, and are able to work confidently in different settings,
- feel comfortable working with a range of people from different backgrounds and of different ages and abilities,
- are able to develop their skills in new and challenging situations,
- are able to balance their commitment to, and involvement with, their school, youth group or activity club,
- are able to transfer their learning between different settings, and into their everyday lives.

Finding out more

The following websites provide information that can help you to sustain or improve the quality of outdoor education in your school, club, or outdoor centre.

For information on outdoor and adventurous activities within PE and school sport (including Step into Sport, school-club links and the professional development programme), visit:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/pe

For information on pupil health and safety on off-site educational visits, visit:
www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

For information on the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority, visit:
www.aala.org.uk

For information about the work of the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel and to find your local outdoor education adviser, visit: **www.oeap.info**

For information on the National Curriculum, visit the National Curriculum online: **www.qca.org.uk/nc**

For information on the inspection of schools and LEA outdoor education centres, visit the Ofsted site:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

For information on the Institute for Outdoor Learning's work to encourage participation in outdoor education and training, visit The Institute for Outdoor Learning website:
www.outdoor-learning.org

For information on outdoor education centres, visit:

- The Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres website:
www.ahoec.org
- The British Activity Holiday Association website:
www.baha.org.uk

For information on activity clubs affiliated to the national governing/representative bodies for outdoor adventure activities, visit:

- The British Canoe Union:
www.bcu.org.uk
- The British Orienteering Federation:
www.britishorienteering.org.uk
- The British Mountaineering Council:
www.thebmc.co.uk
- The British Caving Association:
www.british-caving.org.uk
- The Royal Yachting Association:
www.rya.org.uk
- SnowSport GB:
www.snowsportgb.com/

For information on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, visit:
www.theaward.org/

For information on the Youth Sports Trust's 'Top Outdoors' programme, visit:
www.youthsporttrust.org/

For further information on Ordnance Survey, visit:
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

For information about the work of the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel and to find your local outdoor education adviser, visit: www.oeap.info from whom further copies can be obtained.

In addition you can contact The Institute of Outdoor Learning Bookshop at www.outdoor-learning.org

