

**Guidelines  
on  
Outdoor Activities**

**Advisory Inspectorate Division  
Education Department  
1996**

## **Acknowledgements**

The Education Department would like to thank members of the *Working Group on the Guidelines on Outdoor Activities* from the following Government Departments, Sports and Educational Organisations for their valuable contributions :

Agriculture and Fisheries Department

Civil Aid Services

Hong Kong Canoe Union

Hong Kong Cycling Association

Hong Kong Mountaineering Union

Hong Kong Outward Bound School

Hong Kong Subsidized Primary Schools Council

Hong Kong Subsidized Secondary Schools Council

Orienteering Association of Hong Kong

Windsurfing Association of Hong Kong

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## **Introduction**

This set of guidelines describes matters requiring schools' attention for the safe conduct of outdoor activities. While some of the content covered has already been publicized in different contexts, this set of guidelines has adopted a broader view towards the essential precautions. The *Guidelines* aim to provide schools with an overview of the safety measures that are required for outdoor activities and to raise teachers' awareness of how to respond to accidents.

Twelve outdoor activities are included in the *Guidelines*. Each activity is covered in a separate chapter to facilitate ease of reference, and aspects that are common to all the outdoor activities are dealt with in Chapter One 'General Measures'. While there is not a specific chapter on picnics, schools may refer to Chapter One, which covers the more general aspects. When organizing picnics, schools may best apply their own experience and knowledge, as picnicking is a common school activity.

It must be emphasized that the guidelines are by no means exhaustive since they are meant to enhance teachers' general awareness. Readers would best exercise their common sense and should not only be confined to the safety precautions mentioned. When organizing professional sports activities, schools may need to consult the relevant professional associations direct for more detailed guidelines. For ease of reference, a list of the professional organizations concerned with the more popular outdoor specialized activities is attached at *Appendix I*.

As regards enquiries to the Education Department, they may be directed to Principal Inspector (School Activities), Principal Inspector (Physical Education), Principal Inspector (Biological Sciences) or Principal Inspector (Geography, History and Social Studies) of the Advisory Inspectorate Division as appropriate.

Teachers may make further copies of the relevant parts from the *Guidelines* for reference if they so wish. Comments and suggestions on this publication are most welcome and may be addressed to the following :

School Activities Section  
Advisory Inspectorate Division  
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Wanchai  
HONG KONG

## **Chapter One**

### **GENERAL MEASURES**

For every kind of outdoor activity, there are administrative and operational concerns. While each activity has its own distinctive safety requirements, some requirements which are common to all can be summarized below.

#### **I. For Heads of Schools**

- 1) Schools should ensure that the instructor/coach<sup>1</sup> of the activity group possesses the relevant qualifications to conduct the activities. Each activity should at least be supervised by a teacher of the school or an instructor employed by the school.
- 2) Group leaders, who can be teachers, mature students<sup>2</sup> or mature persons assigned by the school, should have experience in and knowledge of the outdoor activities concerned.
- 3) It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that students are generally physically fit to participate in the outdoor activities.
- 4) Schools must make sure that all participants including the instructor(s)/ teachers(s)/ coach(es)/ leader(s) thoroughly understand their roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency.
- 5) First-aid kits should always be readily available. (A suggested list of items is at *Appendix II*.)
- 6) When organizing outdoor activities, schools are strongly advised to inform the parents of the participating students and obtain their written consent before the commencement of the activities. (A sample letter is at *Appendix III*.)

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<sup>1</sup> An instructor/coach is a person who is qualified as a trainer in a particular activity.

<sup>2</sup> A mature student is one who is in senior class/form.

- 7) Before organizing outings, schools should refer to the administrative procedure and in particular to the one involve police reporting in the Schools Miscellaneous Circular “Visits Organised for School Children : Safety Precautions”, which is issued by the Education Department at the beginning of each school year.
- 8) When an accident occurs, schools should deal with it immediately and notify the parents of the injured student(s) as soon as possible. Relevant details of the accident should be recorded. (See *Appendix IV.*)

### **II. For Teachers/Instructors**

- 1) At least one member of the activity group should have knowledge in first aid. Teachers are advised to take courses run by the St. John Ambulance Association, the Hong Kong Red Cross Society or the auxiliary Medical Service.
- 2) A person handling bleeding wounds should wear disposable plastic gloves in order to avoid direct contact with blood.
- 3) It is advisable to listen regularly to weather reports and forecasts.
- 4) Schools are advised to stop susceptible students (e.g. those with heart or respiratory illnesses) from participating in outdoor activities if the Air Pollution Index (API) is within the range of 101 and 200 in the affected zone.
- 5) If the API exceeds 200, suspend all outdoor activities.
- 6) Outdoor activities should be cancelled if a tropical cyclone warning signal is hoisted. If Typhoon Signal No. 1 or higher is hoisted during the journey, return home immediately; otherwise, find the nearest shelter and stay there until the danger is over.
- 7) When a red/black rainstorm warning is issued, teacher/instructors should stop all physical activities and outdoor pursuits immediately. Teacher/Instructors and students should take shelter in a safe place until it is safe for them to return home. When a black rainstorm warning is issued, teachers/instructors and students should remain in a safe place until the rainstorm is past and the travelling conditions have improved.
- 8) Teachers/Instructors should keep watch that students do not engage in activities which are beyond their physical and mental capabilities and should remind them to report any sickness so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

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- 9) It is necessary to inculcate in students a sense of responsibility and to develop among them an understanding of the part which they should play in ensuring their own safety and that of their team-mates.
- 10) It must be emphatically conveyed to students that smoking or tampering with cigarette lighters or matches is strictly forbidden.
- 11) The following steps should be taken in case of accidents :
  - a) Apply first aid immediately;
  - b) Do not move the casualty more than necessary. If applicable, send the casualty for medical treatment immediately. If not, a messenger together with a companion should be sent for help;
  - c) A message for help should be written and include the following information :
    - i. *the location of the casualty.*
    - ii. *the time of the accident.*
    - iii. *a description of the injuries, and*
    - iv. *the number and situation of the other members of the group.*
- 12) Teachers/Instructors should be aware of the potential hazards of the activities and the environment.
- 13) Teachers/Instructors should check the environment and equipment carefully to ensure that they are safe. Students should be encouraged to report any defects they detect.
- 14) Teachers/Instructors should ensure that students taking part in outdoor activities are properly dressed; for example, students should wear suitable clothing and footwear, tie back long hair, cut fingernails short and secure spectacles, etc.
- 15) Teachers/Instructors should remind students to adopt appropriate measures on prevention of mosquito bites.

*When preparing for countryside activities, please*

- a) wear long-sleeved clothes and trousers;*
- b) put on insect repellent to avoid insect bites; and*
- c) avoid staying in shades, bushes, hidden sites or areas beyond management for extended period.*

## **Chapter Two**

### **EXCURSIONS**

An excursion is usually a short journey taken by a group of people together for pleasure.

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Excursion activities must be under the supervision of at least two group leaders, of whom one should be a teacher/instructor.
- 2) When planning the route, one needs to consider the following :
  - a) Ability of the group – make sure that everyone is capable of completing the journey;
  - b) Weather conditions – remain alert in the seasons of unstable weather. Avoid mountain peaks when there is a thunderstorm or rainstorm warning;
  - c) Daylight hours – allow plenty of time to finish the journey before sunset;
  - d) Dangerous areas – avoid quarries, firing ranges, military exercise areas and cliffs; and
  - e) Emergency escape route(s) should be worked out before the journey.
- 3) A route card together with a route map should be worked out before the journey and left with a responsible person not participating.
- 4) The size of a group should be fixed according to the duration of the journey and the conditions of the route. The number in a group should not be more than 30.
- 5) At least one member in each group should have first-aid knowledge.

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- 6) Each group should carry along navigational aids, a first-aid kit, an emergency kit, emergency rations as well as food and water. A suggested list is at *Appendix II*.
- 7) Each member should carry a windbreaker, raincoat and some spare warm clothing.
- 8) Long-sleeved shirts and trousers should be worn. A hat is recommended and is absolutely essential in summer.
- 9) Each member should also wear comfortable, thick socks and sturdy shoes with rugged rubber soles that provide good ankle protection and good grip.
- 10) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 11) A training session should be conducted for the students at least one week prior to the commencement of the journey. The session should include walking techniques such as walking downhill, excursion behaviour, the country code, emergency procedures and drill as well as basic first aid.
- 12) Sources of help should be made known to all participants before the journey. These include the telephone numbers and locations of police stations, country park management centers and first-aid posts in the area.
- 13) Schools should inform the police of the details of the activity before the journey.
- 14) Written parental consent for students taking part in an excursion must be obtained before the activity.

### **II. During the Journey**

- 1) The leaders should make sure that each student is properly dressed. Students who are inadequately equipped should not be allowed to go.
- 2) During a storm, keep away from ridges, summits and other high points. Sit on insulating clothing, if possible, and avoid caves and dirt-filled crevices. Do not sit under trees or in small hollows. Choose an area away from walls and spires.
- 3) Look for footholds to place the feet. Avoid loose stones.

- 4) No one should leave the group without the leader's permission.
- 5) Maintain a pace suitable to the slowest member. A person at the rear should be appointed to ensure that no one is left behind.
- 6) Wait after obstacles and track junctions to ensure that the group never separates.
- 7) The leaders should make periodic head counts to ensure that all members are present.

### **III. Dealing with Emergency Situations**

- 1) In the case of getting lost :
  - a) Keep calm and stay together;
  - b) Locate the present position by making use of the last known positions, such as peaks and rivers;
  - c) Decide whether to go back, or to go for an established landmark, or to stay;
  - d) If you have to stay at the spot, try to make the location known as conspicuously as possible. Send out distress signals by using a torch or a whistle. (Try to use the international distress signal, *i.e.* six blasts on a whistle or six flashes of a torch or six movements to attract attention, with a minute between each sequence, to guide the rescue party.)

- 2) In the case of a hill fire:

Panic causes energy loss and poor judgement. Act calmly and do not run unless absolutely necessary.

#### *Avoidance/escape*

- a) Abandon highly inflammable material and non-essential equipment;
- b) Drink plenty of water and saturate handkerchiefs and clothing;
- c) Avoid dense vegetation and undergrowth;
- d) Head in the opposite direction or to the side and rear of a fire;

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- e) Avoid moving uphill where there is a steep slope, and move downhill as far as possible.
- f) Beware of fallen power lines, falling burnt out trees and observe wind directions.

### *Survival*

If flames have cut off your escape :

- a) Cover yourself with adequate clothing (NOT synthetic);
- b) In dense smoke, restrict your breathing, and keep low as air closest to the ground is cooler and fresher;
- c) Cover yourself with a completely wet sleeping bag (if possible) or damp dirt; cover your mouth and nose with a water-saturated handkerchief or cloth;
- d) Jump into a reservoir or river as far as possible and cover your face with a wet garment to keep out smoke and fumes;
- e) If your clothes catch fire, roll on the ground, or use other clothes (wool) or blankets to smother it;
- f) Find a drain, ditch, tunnel etc., and remove anything that might burn.

### 3) In the case of heavy rain :

Heavy rain causes flooding and makes streams rise rapidly to form dangerous torrents, sometimes washing away bridges and parts of footpaths. Rivers in flood that are knee-deep or above should not be crossed. In fact, they should be avoided at all costs except in life-threatening situations. It is best to use a bridge, even if this means a long detour or a long wait for the rain to ease off.

If it is impossible to avoid crossing a river, adhere strictly to the following rules :

- a) The group leader should check that preparations by individual participants have been carried out correctly and that each participant who is crossing is made secure from the bank;
- b) Avoid jumping from boulder to boulder;
- c) Take small steps to maintain a steady posture;

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- d) Each participant should face upstream while crossing the river and should be attached to a rope linked with the bank to form a safe link;
- e) The safest crossing point is often between bends, as the water in the outside curve of a bend is deep and powerful.

## **Chapter Three**

### **EXPEDITIONS**

An expedition refers to an organized journey or voyage with a particular aim which is usually to encourage a spirit of adventure and discovery.

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Expedition activities must be under the supervision of two trained group leaders, one of whom should be a teacher/instructor, and for participants who have previous experience and training in short excursions.
- 2) When planning the route, one needs to consider the following :
  - a) Ability of the group – make sure that everyone is capable of completing the journey;
  - b) Weather conditions – remain alert in the seasons of unstable weather. Avoid mountain peaks when there is a thunderstorm or rainstorm warning;
  - c) Daylight hour – allow plenty of time of finish the journey before sunset;
  - d) Dangerous areas – avoid quarries, firing ranges, military exercise areas and cliffs; and
  - e) Emergency escape route(s) should be worked out before the journey.
- 3) A route card together with a route map should be worked out before the journey and left with a responsible person not participating.
- 4) The size of a group should be fixed according to the duration of the journey and the conditions of the route. The number in a group should not be more than 10.
- 5) At least one member in each group should have first-aid knowledge.

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- 6) Each group should carry along navigational aids, a first-aid kit, an emergency kit, emergency rations as well as food and water. A suggested list is at *Appendix II*.
- 7) Each member should carry a windbreaker, raincoat and some spare warm clothing.
- 8) Long-sleeved shirts and trousers should be worn. A hat is recommended and is absolutely essential in summer.
- 9) Each member should also wear comfortable, thick socks and sturdy shoes with rugged rubber soles that provide good ankle protection and good grip.
- 10) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 11) A training session should be conducted for the students at least one week prior to the commencement of the journey. The session should include walking techniques such as walking downhill, excursion behaviour, the country code, emergency procedures and drill as well as basic first aid.
- 12) Sources of help should be made known to all participants before the journey. These include the telephone numbers and locations of police stations, forestry posts, country park management centers and first-aid posts in the area.
- 13) Schools should inform the police of the details of the activity before the journey.
- 14) Written parental consent for students taking part in an expedition must be obtained before the activity.

### **II. During the Journey**

- 1) The leader should make sure that each student is properly dressed. Students who are inadequately equipped should not be allowed to go.
- 2) During a storm, keep away from ridges, summits and other high points. Sit on insulating clothing, if possible, and avoid caves and dirt-filled crevices. Do not sit under trees or in small hollows. Choose an area away from walls and spires.

- 3) Look for footholds to place the feet. Avoid loose stones.
- 4) No one should leave the group without the leader's permission.
- 5) Maintain a pace suitable to the slowest member. A person at the rear should be appointed to ensure that no one is left behind.
- 6) Wait after obstacles and track junctions to ensure that the group never separates.
- 7) The leader should make periodic head counts to ensure that all members are present.

### **III. Dealing with Emergency Situations**

- 1) In the case of getting lost :
  - a) Keep calm and stay together;
  - b) Locate the present position by making use of the last known positions, such as peaks and rivers;
  - c) Decide whether to go back, or to go for an established landmark, or to stay;
  - d) If you have to stay at the spot, try to make the location known as conspicuously as possible. Send out distress signals by using a torch or a whistle. (Try to use the international distress signal, *i.e.* six blasts on a whistle, or six flashes of a torch, or six movements to attract attention, with a minute between each sequence, to guide the rescue party.)
- 2) In the case of a hill fire :

Panic causes energy loss and poor judgement. Act calmly and do not run unless absolutely necessary.

#### *Avoidance/escape*

- a) Abandon highly inflammable material and non-essential equipment;
- b) Drink plenty of water and saturate handkerchiefs and clothing;
- c) Avoid dense vegetation and undergrowth;
- d) Head in the opposite direction or to the side and rear of a fire;

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- e) Avoid moving uphill where there is a steep slope, and move downhill as far as possible;
- f) Beware of fallen power lines and falling burnt-out trees and observe wind directions

### *Survival*

If flames have cut off your escape:

- a) Cover yourself with adequate clothing (NOT synthetic);
  - b) In dense smoke, restrict your breathing and keep low, as the air closest to the ground is cooler and fresher;
  - c) Cover yourself with a completely wet sleeping bag (if possible) or damp dirt; cover your mouth and nose with a water-saturated handkerchief or cloth;
  - d) Jump into a reservoir or river as far as possible and cover your face with a wet garment to keep out smoke and fumes;
  - e) if your clothes catch fire, roll on the ground or use other clothes (wool) or blankets to smother it;
  - f) Find a drain, ditch, tunnel etc., and remove anything that might burn.
- 3) In the case of heavy rain :

Heavy rain causes flooding and makes streams rise rapidly to form dangerous torrents, sometimes washing away bridges and parts of footpaths. Rivers in flood which are knee deep or above should not be crossed. In face, they should be avoided at all cost except in life-threatening situations. It is best to use a bridge even if it means a long detour or a long wait for the rain to ease off.

If it is impossible to avoid crossing a river, adhere strictly to the following rules :

- a) The group leader should check that preparations by individual participants have been carried out correctly and that each participant crossing is made secure from the bank;
- b) Avoid jumping from boulder to boulder;
- c) Take small steps to maintain a steady posture;
- d) Each participant should face upstream while crossing the river and should be attached to a rope linked with the bank to form a safe link;

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- e) The safest crossing point is often between bends as the water at the outside curve of a bend is deep and powerful.

## **Chapter Four**

### **CAMPING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Camping activities must be under the supervision of at least two group leaders, of whom one should be a teacher/instructor.
- 2) When one plans the route, care should be taken to avoid dangerous areas such as quarries, firing ranges and military exercise areas.
- 3) An emergency plan should be worked out before the activity.
- 4) Other than designed camp sites, camping in country parks and special areas is an offence and is not permitted.
- 5) Prior permission should be obtained for putting up tents on private land.
- 6) For wild camping, a ratio of one leader to 10 students is recommended, but this depends on the specific conditions, and on the age and ability of the students.
- 7) For residential camping, a ratio of one leader to 30 students is recommended.
- 8) Mixed groups should be accompanied by staff of both sexes.
- 9) There should be a practice drill in pitching and striking tents, and in the use of stoves.
- 10) The leader must ensure that the equipment and clothing are suitable for the type of camp.
- 11) The equipment should be tested and checked before departure.
- 12) At least one member in each group should have first-aid knowledge and a first-aid kit should be available for each group.

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- 13) A briefing session should be held before the activity. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 14) Sources of help should be made known to all participants before the journey. These include the telephone numbers and locations of police stations, forestry posts, country park management centers and first-aid posts in the area.
- 15) Schools should inform the police and other departments such as the Country Park Authority of the details of the activity before the journey.
- 16) Written parental consent for students taking part in camping must be obtained before the activity.
- 17) If there is a thunderstorm warning, a red/black rainstorm warning, a tropical cyclone signal warning or an air pollution index warning exceeding 200 prior to the activity, wild camping should be postponed until the threat is over.

### **II. On Camp Site**

- 1) Choose a sheltered site, especially in winter or bad weather.
- 2) The site must be free from hazards such as flooding, falling rocks, landslides, dead trees, prevailing winds, etc.
- 3) Tents should be pitched sufficiently apart to prevent the spread of fire.
- 4) It is advisable to tie conspicuous object round the guy ropes, so that these are visible.
- 5) Ball games and running should be banned in the vicinity of the tents.
- 6) No cooking should be allowed inside the tents.
- 7) Gas cylinders and fuel for stoves should be stored outside the tents, and containers should be clearly marked.
- 8) No form of lighting that involves a naked light should be permitted inside the tents.
- 9) When Typhoon Signal No. 1 or higher is hoisted, return home immediately; otherwise, find the nearest shelter and stay there until the danger is over.

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- 10) During a thunder and lightning storm, keep away from ridges, summits and other high points. Sit on insulating clothing, if possible, and avoid caves and dirt-filled crevices. Do not sit under trees or in small hollows. Choose an area away from walls and spires.

## **Chapter Five**

### **ORIENTEERING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) All orienteering activities must be under the direct supervision of an experienced teacher/instructor who :
  - a) has obtained an Orienteering Teaching or Coaching Certificate issued by the Orienteering Association of Hong Kong, or otherwise
  - b) has done enough personal practice and/or sort orienteering to feel confident in the type to terrain in which the class or event is to be conducted; and
  - c) has orienteered in the area to be used and is competent with the map to be used; and
  - d) is competent in providing first aid, especially in dealing with injuries commonly resulting from falls (e.g. sprains, fractures, etc.)
- 2) When an orienteering activity is planned, the following factors should be considered :
  - a) The planned duration and technical difficulty of the activity should be well within the capabilities of the participants;
  - b) Avoid physically demanding courses during hot weather;
  - c) Allow sufficient daylight time for the activity to finish;
  - d) Avoid areas with potential hazards, design a course to keep participants away from unnecessary risks and always warn them of their existence.
- 3) After the initial planning, the leader should reconnoiter the area to be used for orienteering activities, including the surrounding areas. Potential hazards should be noted on maps and, if necessary, taped off.

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- 4) An emergency plan should be worked out before the activity and all the participants should be briefed on safety procedures prior to the activity.
- 5) It is not recommended that each instructor should take charge of more than 8 participants.
- 6) Appropriate clothing and footwear should be worn. Participants are advised to have their legs and arms fully covered to minimize the risk of scratches and grazes which could lead to infection. Stout footwear which will grip on sloping and slippery surfaces should be worn.
- 7) Additional clothing to give adequate protection against cold, wind and rain should be carried.
- 8) Every participant must carry a whistle and know how to summon assistance in the case of injury or getting lost. The leader should warn them against the playful use of whistles.
- 9) Each participant should wear a watch and be alert to the fixed finishing time of the activity.
- 10) The leader should carry additional equipment recognized as essential to the safe conduct of the activity such as a group first-aid kit, communication devices, torches, etc.
- 11) Written parental consent for participants under the age of 18 must be obtained before the activity.
- 12) Prior permission from the Country and Marine Parks Authority must be obtained for holding the orienteering activity inside a country park area.
- 13) The police should also be informed of the activity.
- 14) Leaders should take note of the weather forecasts before the activity and the orienteering activity should be cancelled if a tropical cyclone warning signal is hoisted or if a red/black rainstorm, thunderstorm or air pollution index warning (exceeding 200) is issued prior to the activity.

### **II. During the Activity**

- 1) Listen to weather forecasts and be alert to the prevailing weather condition. Be prepared to suspend the activity if the weather condition is deteriorating.

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- 2) The leader must ensure that the participants are well equipped and in good health to take part in the planned activity.
- 3) Owing to the nature of the sport, the participants will be working out of the sight and sound of their leaders or coaches. It is, therefore, absolutely essential to use a small area with clearly defined boundaries, beyond which the participants should not cross. These boundaries, such as streams and roads, etc., should be marked on the maps and noted during briefings.
- 4) Absolute beginners should only be allowed to go in pairs.
- 5) Leaders should stress to the participants the importance of reporting to the “Finish” and handing in the control cards which indicate whether they have completed the course or not. Failure to do so may mean to the organizer that a participant is lost or injured. The participants should also be notified of the closing time of the activity.
- 6) A checking system should be maintained so as to identify at the first instance the case of a participant missing or overdue.
- 7) The leader or organizer of the activity must ensure that everyone is back by matching the control cards received at the “Finish” with the stubs handed in at the “Start”.
- 8) Sufficient leaders or coaches should be assigned to patrol around the activity area to observe the progress of the participants. They should be equipped with first-aid kits and communication devices.
- 9) The participants should be given clear instructions about what to do if they are lost or injured.
- 10) A simple signaling system must be understood and recognized by all participants.
- 11) First-aid stations should be set up at the event center, “Start”, “Finish” and specific locations in the activity area.
- 12) Drink station(s) should be provided on longer courses in hot weather.
- 13) Participants should be taught to be alert to a sudden change of weather condition and be ready to abandon the course and retreat to a safe place in the event of severe weather, such as a thunderstorm and torrential rainfall.

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- 14) Participants should be warned of the environmental hazards which they may encounter during the course of the activity, such as hill fires and landslides, and in the event of which they should abandon their activity and retreat to a safe place.
- 15) The participants should be taught the orienteering etiquette which requires them to assist others who are injured or in distress and, if necessary, to abandon their course to get help.
- 16) Leaders should be well versed in the basic search procedures, demarcation of search areas and when and how to summon assistance from the Police and the Mountain Rescue Team.

## **Chapter Six**

### **SWIMMING**

#### **I. Swimming Lessons/Training in the Swimming Pool**

- 1) All PE teachers teaching swimming should have obtained an award in life saving. A minimum requirement is a Bronze Medallion of the Life Saving Society or the Hong Kong Life Guard Club, or equivalent.
- 2) Swimming training and extra-curricular activities should be carried out under the direct supervision of :
  - a) a qualified teacher who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and who has passed a test I the teaching/coaching of swimming conducted by the Education Department or by an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - b) a person who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and who holds a teacher/coach certificate in swimming issued by an association recognised by the Education Department; or
  - c) a teacher or person authorized by the Education Department.
- 3) There must be at least one teacher for every 45 students.
- 4) The number of students should be checked from time to time, especially at the beginning and at the end of the lesson.
- 5) A school operating its own swimming pool must ensure that the pool is licensed and safety measures are met. The pool should always be locked when not in use.
- 6) A school operating its own swimming pool should organize regularly emergency drills on clearing the pool. An agreed signal system such as using a whistle or other audible warnings should also be established.
- 7) Students must wear coloured swimming caps for easy identification.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 8) When goggles and masks are used, they should not be made of glass or breakable plastic. Students should be taught to remove them by slipping them off the head rather than by stretching the retaining band.
- 9) Floats and other aids are useful in learning swimming. Teachers should direct the use of aids, especially for beginners.
- 10) When beginners are taught swimming in a class situation, the depth of water should be shallow enough to enable students to stand on the bottom of the pool with their shoulders out of the water.
- 11) Teachers should always be in a position where they can see the whole class.
- 12) Teachers should not enter the water except in an emergency or for demonstration. It is advisable that all students should leave the water when the teacher is demonstrating in the pool.
- 13) The 'buddy' system<sup>3</sup> should be adopted. Students should be taught to report any accidents to the teacher immediately.
- 14) Students should not stay too long in the water, especially in cold weather.
- 15) Students should stay out of water when there is a thunderstorm.
- 16) Teachers should stop students who are not suited to swimming from entering the water.
- 17) Discipline must be strictly enforced. Teachers must ensure that no student enters the pool without their permission. Teachers must also ensure that all students have left the pool after a lesson. They should not dismiss the class inside the pool complex.
- 18) Running along the pool side and any form of rough play in or out of the water should be forbidden.
- 19) For a surface dive, the water must be at least 1.1 m deep, and at least 3 m deep for other dives. Divers should ensure that the entry area is clear. Other students should not be permitted to swim near the entry area.
- 20) Teachers should be aware of thunderstorm, rainstorm and tropical cyclone warnings before the lesson/training.

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<sup>3</sup> The 'buddy' system is one in which two persons team up and look after each other in turn during practice.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 21) Eating, especially sweets and chewing gum, should not be allowed in the pool. It is dangerous to enter the water with these substances in the mouth.
- 22) In the case of drowning, in addition to administering first aid, the ambulance service should be called immediately. The school authority, the duty-staff of the pool and the parent(s) should be informed as soon as possible.

### **II. Precautions to Be Taken by Students**

- 1) Do not swim alone.
- 2) Do not swim in dirty water.
- 3) Do not swim in unguarded beaches or pools.
- 4) Do not swim too soon after a meal, or when hungry or tired.
- 5) Do not stay too long in water, especially if it is cold.
- 6) Do not rely entirely on swimming aids.
- 7) Do not run, jump or chase about in the surrounding area of the pool.
- 8) Unless you have been properly trained, do not use apparatus such as masks, snorkels, etc.
- 9) Stay out of water when there is a thunderstorm.
- 10) Follow the instructions and be alert to warning flags or warning on notice boards.
- 11) Do not swim in the area below diving boards.
- 12) If you are a learner, stay in shallow water.
- 13) Check areas where the depth of the pool changes suddenly.
- 14) Do not chew gum while swimming, as it can choke you.
- 15) Do not run near the edge of the pool; you may slip and hurt someone or yourself.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 16) Learn to swim well in a swimming pool before tackling waves and tides in the sea.
- 17) Always tell someone where you will be swimming, so that they can watch out for your safety.
- 18) NEVER pretend to be in difficulty.
- 19) In the case of encountering difficulty in water.
  - a) Keep calm, do not panic, conserve energy and breathe normally;
  - b) Try to tread water or float on your back;
  - c) Raise one hand; and
  - d) Shout for help.

### **III. Swimming at Beaches**

- 1) Swim in safe swimming areas clearly marked with buoy lines and with life guards nearby.
- 2) Do not enter the water when you see a yellow, red, or shark-warning flag.
- 3) Do not swim or play in a non-gazetted beach.
- 4) Beware of waves – they can flip you over and possibly injure you. Watch out for and avoid strong currents – patches of water with a different colour to the surrounding ocean water can mean fast-moving water that will drag you away from the shore or onto rocks.
- 5) If a current takes hold of you, do not try swim against it – you will exhaust yourself. Swim across a current into calmer water, and above all, keep clam. Panic is your worst enemy.

### **IV. Hints on Swimming in Winter**

- 1) Remind students that the human body loses heat rapidly in a cold environment.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 2) It would not be safe for a swimmer to swim for more than 30 minutes in water below 14°C.
- 3) Remind students that they must leave the water immediately if they feel cold, as continued exposure is dangerous and detrimental to health.
- 4) Remind students to perform adequate warming-up exercises before getting into cold water.
- 5) In winter, most beaches commonly used for swimming will not be patrolled by life-guards as in summer. Swimmers in winter should pay particular attention to safety – for example, never swim alone, swim preferably with friends or in company, and stay close together at all times.
- 6) Swimmers swimming in the sea in winter should exercise extreme caution and be conversant with the hazards of a cold environment.
- 7) The water temperature of a heated pool is between 27°C - 28°C and swimmers are advised not to swim for more than 45 minutes to an hour without taking a rest.
- 8) In heated pools, remind students that warm water might cause dilation of the blood vessels of the skin and muscles, thus draining blood temporarily from internal organs like the heart and brain. Students who have a history of heart-attacks or high blood pressure should thus take care to lower themselves slowly into a heated pool instead of diving headlong into it.
- 9) Swimming should commence slowly, beginning with slow strokes after soaking in the water 5-10 minutes, in order to give the heart time to increase the heart beat and accelerate the blood circulation through the internal organs, especially the brain.
- 10) Avoid jumping into the pool and do not swim for too long, as this will cause more blood to accumulate in the muscles and skin at the expense of the heart and brain.
- 11) On getting out of the pool, move into an erect position slowly, first keeping the head low at heart level so as to allow the brain circulation to build up; otherwise, lack of sufficient blood in the brain may lead to brown-out, or even black-out and fainting.

- 12) In cold months, the water temperature can fall below 12°C and the cold will cause the blood vessels of the skin and muscles to contract. This reduces the blood supply to the muscles and causes the muscles to contract. If severe enough, prolonged continuous muscular contraction will lead to what is popularly known as “cramps”.

### **V. Dealing with Emergency Situations**

- 1) In the case of accidents :
  - a) Be prepared and take appropriate action.
  - b) If you see someone in trouble, call for help and assist once if you can. Throw a line, a buoy, or a spare type to keep the victim afloat. Wade out and reach for him with a long stick. Go out in a boat – pull the victim in over the stern (not the side, in case you overturn the boat) or let the victim hold on to the stern while you tow him ashore.
  - c) Should you suffer a leg cramp while in water, do not panic; keep yourself afloat with your arms and yell for help. Grab hold of anything that floats and stay afloat till your “moment of panic” has passed. Then turn onto your back, use your arms and the other leg to float back to shallow water. It is advisable not to attempt to swim (crawl or breast stroke) as this may bring on a second cramp.
  - d) Swimmers with a history of previous heart attacks or high blood pressure should limit their swimming to pools and not indulge in long distance swimming, especially in the winter months in a cold environment.
  - e) Should you feel dizzy while swimming, this is due to a lack of oxygen supply to the brain. Keep calm, stay afloat and take deep breaths until the dizziness eases off. Then swim or preferably float slowly back to shallow water. Do not attempt to swim fast. On reaching land, get out of the water, lie down, keep warm and rest.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **CANOEING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Canoeing should be carried out under the direct supervision of :
  - a) a qualified teacher who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and has passed a proficiency test in canoeing conducted by the Education Department or by an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - b) a person who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and holds a canoeing instructor certificate issued by an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - c) a teacher or person authorized by the Education Department.
- 2) A teacher/instructor should not supervise more than 8 boats.
- 3) Before taking part in canoeing, a student should pass the following water tests :
  - a) Swim 50 metres wearing canvas shoes and light clothing;
  - b) Tread water for one minute;
  - c) Remove all clothing except swim-wear in deep water;
  - d) Swim 100 metres with any stroke; and
  - e) Surface dive and swim underwater for 5 metres.
- 4) Approved life jackets should be worn at all times. (Approved life jackets are those conforming to British Standard 3595.)
- 5) Each boat should be inherently buoyant or carry separate buoyancy which should be capable of supporting the craft and the crew on water even in the event of capsizing.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 6) Boats, life jackets, paddles and other required equipment should be checked before being used.
- 7) Appropriate clothing and canvas shoes should be worn. Slippers or heavy footwear of any kind are not recommended.
- 8) Spray covers for the cockpit may be used if waves are likely to be encountered. Covers should be easily removable. They may not be appropriate for beginners.
- 9) When canoeing in the open sea, it is advisable to have an assistant with the ability to perform deep water rescue.
- 10) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 11) Safety rules, drills for coping with capsizing and rescue procedures should be taught.
- 12) Remind students not to canoe alone.
- 13) Teachers should take note of weather forecasts before the activities. Canoeing should not take place when a strong monsoon signal (Black Ball), rainstorm warning, thunderstorm warning or tropical cyclone warning signal no. 1 or higher is announced. If the activity has already started, return to the base immediately. However, if signal no. 3 or higher is hoisted and the party is in the middle of a long journey, the party should head for the nearest place of safety.
- 14) Teachers should take note of the Air Pollution Index of the activity area(s) concerned.
- 15) The activity should be cancelled if a red flag or a shark warning flag is hoisted at the nearby beaches.
- 16) Teachers should be familiar with the conditions of the current, tide and weather as well as dangerous features of the activity area.
- 17) The planned route should be within the capabilities of the participants. Teachers should satisfy themselves that all participants have sufficient experience in going out in the prevailing weather and water conditions.
- 18) A first-aid kit, a repair kit, a whistle, spare paddles, an exposure bag and a tow line should be carried by the teacher during expeditions.

### **II. During the Journey**

- 1) Remind students not to overstate their skill or experience.
- 2) A simple system of signaling should be understood and recognised by all participants.
- 3) Canoeing activities should not be conducted in busy waters. Regulations for the prevention of collisions at sea should be strictly observed.
- 4) Do not enter any firing range.
- 5) Keep away from fishing boats and diving boats flying code flag A.
- 6) Be careful of swimmers and scuba divers.
- 7) Do not stay out after dark.
- 8) In hot weather, protect against sunstroke.
- 9) On an expedition, the slowest boat should be at the front of the group. A responsible and experienced student should be in the last boat. The teacher should position himself/herself according to wind, current and the group formation. The group should always keep together in a pre-determined formation. There should be at least three boats in a group.
- 10) The Marine Police should be informed in writing at least 10 days before the expedition. On the day of the expedition, the Police should be contacted again by phone or by fax before the journey to confirm the route and number of participants, and after the journey to report the completion.
- 11) Make sure you have safety vessels to escort you, and carry a spare paddle.
- 12) In case a boat capsizes, the students should **STAY WITH THE BOAT** and carry out appropriate procedures for dealing with capsizing, unless they are drifting towards a dangerous obstacle.
- 13) When getting into difficulties with the wind or tide, row down the wind or with the tide to reach a safe haven.

## **Chapter Eight**

### **ROWING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Rowing should be carried out under the direct supervision of :
  - a) a qualified teacher who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and who has passed a proficiency test in rowing conducted by the Education Department or by an association recognised by the Education Department; or
  - b) a person who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and who holds a rowing coach/instructor certificate issued by an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - c) a teacher or person authorized by the Education Department.
- 2) A teacher/instructor should not supervise more than 8 boats.
- 3) Before taking part in rowing, a student should pass the following water tests :
  - a) Swim 50 metres wearing canvas shoes and light clothing;
  - b) Tread water for one minute;
  - c) Remove all clothing except swim-wear in deep water;
  - d) Swim 100 metres with any stroke; and
  - e) Surface dive and swim underwater for 5 metres.
- 4) Approved life jackets should be worn at all times. (Approval life jackets are those conforming to British Standard 3595.)
- 5) Each boat should be inherently buoyant or carry separate buoyancy which should be capable of supporting the craft and the crew on water even in the event of capsizing.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 6) Boats, life jackets, paddles and other required equipment should be checked before being used.
- 7) Appropriate clothing and canvas shoes should be worn. Slippers or heavy footwear of any kind are not recommended.
- 8) When boating in the open sea, it is advisable to have an assistant with the ability to perform deep water rescue.
- 9) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 10) Safety rules, drills for coping with capsizing and rescue procedures should be taught.
- 11) Remind students not to row alone.
- 12) Teachers should take note of weather forecasts before the activities. Rowing should not take place when the strong monsoon signal (Black Ball), rainstorm warning, thunderstorm warning or tropical cyclone warning signal no. 1 or higher is announced. If the activity has already started, return to the base immediately. However, if signal no. 3 or higher is hoisted and the party is in the middle of a long journey, the party should head for the nearest place of safety.
- 13) Teachers should take note of the Air Pollution Index of the activity area(s) concerned.
- 14) The activity should be cancelled if a red flag or a shark warning flag is hoisted at the nearby beaches.
- 15) Teachers should be familiar with the conditions of the current, tide and weather as well as dangerous features of the activity area.
- 16) The planned route should be within the capabilities of the participants. Teachers should satisfy themselves that all participants have sufficient experience in going out in the prevailing weather and water conditions.
- 17) A first-aid kit, a repair kit, a whistle, spare paddles, an exposure bag and a tow line should be carried by the teacher during expeditions.

## **II. During the Journey**

- 1) Remind students not to overstate their skill or experience.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 2) A simple system of signalling should be understood and recognized by all participants.
- 3) Rowing activities should not be conducted in busy waters. Regulations for the prevention of collisions at sea should be strictly observed.
- 4) Do not enter any firing range.
- 5) Keep away from fishing boats and diving boats flying code flag A.
- 6) Be careful of swimmers and scuba divers.
- 7) Do not stay out after dark.
- 8) In hot weather, protect against sunstroke.
- 9) On an expedition, the slowest boat should be at the front of the group. A responsible and experienced student should be in the last boat. The teacher should position himself/herself according to wind, current, and the group formation. The group should always keep together in a pre-determined formation. There should be at least three boats in a group.
- 10) The Marine Police should be informed in writing at least 10 days prior to the expedition. On the day of the expedition, the Police should be contacted again by phone or by fax before the journey to confirm the route and number of participants, and after the journey to report the completion.
- 11) Make sure you have safety vessels to escort you, and carry a spare paddle.
- 12) In case a boat capsizes, the students should **STAY WITH THE BOAT** and carry out appropriate procedures for dealing with capsizing, unless drifting towards a dangerous obstacle.
- 13) When getting into difficulties with the wind or tide, row down the wind or with the tide to reach a safe haven.

## **Chapter Nine**

### **SAILING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Sailing should be carried out under the direct supervision of
  - a) a qualified teacher who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and has passed a proficiency test as helmsman conducted by the Education Department or an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - b) a person who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and an instructor certificate issued by an association recognised by the Education Department; or
  - c) a teacher or person authorized by the Education Department.
- 2) A teacher/instructor should not supervise more than 6 sailing boats.
- 3) Before taking part in sailing, a student should pass the following water tests :
  - a) Swim 50 metres wearing canvas shoes and light clothing;
  - b) Tread water for one minute;
  - c) Remove all clothing except swim-water in deep water;
  - d) Swim 100 metres with any stroke; and
  - e) Surface dive and swim underwater for 5 metres.
- 4) Approved life jackets must be worn at all times. (Approved life jackets are those conforming to British Standard 3595.)
- 5) Each sailing boat should be inherently buoyant or carry separate buoyancy which must be capable of supporting the craft and the crew on water even in the event of capsizing.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 6) Sailing boats, life jackets and other required equipment must be checked before being used.
- 7) Appropriate clothing and canvas shoes should be worn. Slippers or heavy footwear of any kind are not recommended.
- 8) When practicing in the open sea, it is advisable to have an assistant with the ability to perform deep water rescue.
- 9) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 10) Safety rules, drills for coping with capsizing and rescue procedures must be taught.
- 11) Remind students not to sail alone.
- 12) Teachers should take note of weather forecasts before the activities. Sailing should not take place when the strong monsoon signal (Black Ball), rainstorm warning, thunderstorm warning or tropical cyclone warning signal no. 1 or higher is announced. If the activity has already started, return to the base immediately. However, if signal no. 3 or higher is hoisted and the party is in the middle of a long journey, the party should head for the nearest place of safety.
- 13) Teachers should take note of the Air Pollution Index of the activity area(s) concerned.
- 14) The activity should be cancelled if a red flag or a shark warning flag is hoisted at the nearby beaches.
- 15) Teachers should be familiar with the conditions of the current, tide and weather as well as dangerous features of the activity area.
- 16) The planned route must be within the capabilities of the participants. Teachers should satisfy themselves that all participants have sufficient experience in going out in the prevailing weather and water conditions.
- 17) A first-aid kit, a repair kit, a whistle, spare paddles, an exposure bag and a tow line should be carried by the teacher during expeditions.

## **II. During the Journey**

- 1) A simple system of signalling must be understood and recognized by all participants.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 2) Sailing activities should not be conducted in busy waters. Regulations for the prevention of collisions at sea should be strictly observed.
- 3) Do not enter any firing range.
- 4) Keep away from fishing boats and diving boats flying code flag A.
- 5) Do not overload your boat.
- 6) Be careful of swimmers and scuba divers.
- 7) Do not sail in the dark.
- 8) Do not go a long way from shore in windy conditions.
- 9) For beginners, never sail in an off-shore wind.
- 10) Do not go on sailing to the point of being tired out.
- 11) In hot weather, protect against sunstroke.
- 12) On an expedition, the slowest sailing boat should be at the front of the group. a responsible and experienced student should be in the last boat. The teacher should position himself/herself according to wind, current, and the group formation. The group must always keep together in a pre-determined formation. There should be at least three boats in a group.
- 13) The Marine Police should be informed in writing at least 10 days prior to any expedition. On the day of the expedition, the Police should be contacted again by phone or by fax before the journey to confirm the route and number of participants, and after the journey to report the completion.
- 14) Make sure you have safety vessels to escort you.
- 15) In case a boat capsizes, the students should **STAY WITH THE BOAT** and carry out appropriate procedures for dealing with capsizing, unless drifting towards a dangerous obstacle.
- 16) When getting into difficulties with the wind or tide, lower the sail and row down the wind or with the tide to reach a safe haven.

## **Chapter Ten**

### **WINDSURFING**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Windsurfing should be carried out under the direct supervision of :
  - a) a qualified teacher who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and has passed a proficiency test conducted by the Education Department or an association recognized by the Education Department; or
  - b) a person who has obtained a Bronze Medallion Award in Life Saving and an instructor certificate issued by an association recognised by the Education Department; or
  - c) a teacher or person authorized by the Education Department.
- 2) A teacher/instructor should not supervise more than 6 windsurfing boards.
- 3) Before taking part in windsurfing, a student should pass the following water tests :
  - a) Swim 50 metres wearing canvas shoes and light clothing;
  - b) Tread water for one minute;
  - c) Remove all clothing except swim-wear in deep water;
  - d) Swim 100 metres with any stroke; and
  - e) Surface dive and swim underwater for 5 metres.
- 4) Approved floating aids must be worn at all times.
- 5) Each windsurfing board should be inherently buoyant or carry separate buoyancy which must be capable of supporting the craft and the crew on water even in the event of capsizing.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 6) Windsurfing board, floating aids and other required equipment must be checked before being used.
- 7) Appropriate clothing and canvas shoes should be worn. Slippers or heavy footwear of any kind are not recommended.
- 8) When practicing in the open sea, it is advisable to have an assistant with the ability to perform deep water rescue.
- 9) A briefing session should be held before the journey. All participants including staff must thoroughly understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 10) Safety rules, drills for coping with capsizing and rescue procedures must be taught.
- 11) Remind students not to sail alone.
- 12) Teachers should take note of weather forecasts before the activities. Windsurfing should not take place when the strong monsoon signal (Black Ball), rainstorm warning, thunderstorm warning or tropical cyclone warning signal no. 1 or higher is announced. If the activity has already started, return to the base immediately. However, if signal no. 3 or higher is hoisted and the party is in the middle of a long journey, the party should head for the nearest place of safety.
- 13) Teachers should take note of the Air Pollution Index of the activity area(s) concerned.
- 14) The activity should be cancelled if a red flag or a shark warning flag is hoisted at the nearby beaches.
- 15) Teachers should be familiar with the conditions of the current, tide and weather as well as dangerous features of the activity area.
- 16) The planned route must be within the capabilities of the participants. Teachers should satisfy themselves that all participants have sufficient experience in going out in the prevailing weather and water conditions.
- 17) A first-aid kit, a repair kit, a whistle, spare paddles, an exposure bag and a tow line should be carried by the teacher during expeditions.

## **II. During the Journey**

- 1) Remind students not to overstate their skill or experience.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 2) A simple system of signalling must be understood and recognized by all participants.
- 3) Windsurfing activities should not be conducted in busy waters. Regulations for the prevention of collisions at sea should be strictly observed.
- 4) Do not enter any firing range.
- 5) Keep away from fishing boats and diving boats flying code flag A.
- 6) Do not overload your board.
- 7) Be careful of swimmers and scuba divers.
- 8) Do not sail in the dark.
- 9) Do not go a long way from shore in windy conditions.
- 10) For beginners, never sail in an off-shore wind.
- 11) Do not go on sailing to the point of being tired out.
- 12) Fit a safety leash between rig and board.
- 13) In cold weather, wear a wet suit. In hot weather, protect against sunstroke.
- 14) On an expedition, the slowest windsurfing board should be at the front of the group. A responsible and experienced student should be on the last board. The teacher should position himself/herself according to wind, current and the group formation. The group must always keep together in a pre-determined formation. There should be at least three boards in a group.
- 15) The Marine Police should be informed in writing 10 days prior to the expedition. On the day of the expedition, the Police should be contacted again by phone or by fax before the journey to confirm the route and number of participants, and to report completion after the journey.
- 16) In case a board capsizes, the students should **STAY WITH THE BOARD** and carry out appropriate procedures for dealing with capsizing, unless drifting towards a dangerous obstacle.
- 17) When getting into difficulties with the wind or tide, lower the sail and row down the wind or with the tide to reach a safe haven.

## **Chapter Eleven**

### **FIELDWORK**

#### **I. Planning and Preparation**

- 1) Fieldwork activities must be under the supervision of responsible school staff. Under normal circumstances, a ratio of one staff member to a group of 30 students is recommended.
- 2) The students should be adequately trained, prepared and properly equipped for the fieldwork activities. These activities need to be matched with the ages, ability and experience of the students. They must also be finished in good time before sunset.
- 3) Teachers should visit the site of the fieldwork before taking any students there. The potential hazards of the field site and the possible risks involved in the fieldwork activities should be recognized. The location of the nearest telephone to call for assistance should also be identified.
- 4) During briefings on the fieldwork and on arrival at the site, all students should be made aware of the potential hazards at the field site and the necessary safety precautions. They should be warned to keep away from dangerous areas such as cliffs and disused mines. The need for regard for the safety of oneself and others, as well as the need for calmness and common sense in countering dangers, should be emphasized.
- 5) Students who are not physically fit enough or who are exempted from Physical Education lessons must not participate in a field trip. Students with heart or respiratory illnesses should be advised to refrain from participating in a field trip if the Air Pollution Index or forecast is within the range of 101 and 200.
- 6) Prior written parental consent for students taking part in fieldwork activities must be obtained.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 7) The school should inform the police and each participant's family of the route of the trip and the due time of return. Please refer to the Schools Miscellaneous Circular captioned "Organised Visits for School Children : Safety Precautions", which is issued by the Education Department at the beginning of each school year.
- 8) Plan the time required to walk to the field site and return according to the speed of the slowest member, including stopping for rest. Do not make the walk too long. (Over very gentle terrain with good footpaths, an experienced adult walker can sustain a pace of about 4-6 km/hr covering 15-25 km a day. Inexperienced walkers and children may walk half. Shorten the walk by 3 km per 300 m climb or descent.)
- 9) Give consideration to the gradient of the route. A sudden change of gradient is a sign of danger. Slopes or footpaths steeper than 30 degrees are difficult to walk or work on.
- 10) Check for the time and height of tides when it is necessary to work at or walk along the coast. Avoid working on exposed shores with strong waves.
- 11) Avoid working in gorges. If the route involves walking along the valley, make sure no part is impassable.
- 12) Details of the filed trip with a route map should be worked out before the field trip and left with a responsible person not participating in the fieldwork activity.
- 13) The teacher should pay attention to weather forecasts before and during the field trip. Weather forecasts are readily available through television, radio, news media and over the telephone. A pocket radio should be carried by the group for the same purpose. In interpreting weather forecasts, the teacher should err on the side of caution.
- 14) A field trip must be canceled if :
  - a) a tropical cyclone warning signal is hoisted;
  - b) there is a red or black rainstorm warning;
  - c) a thunderstorm forecast/warning is issued; or
  - d) the Air Pollution Index or its forecast is within the range of 201 and 500.
- 15) Clothing and footwear should be suitable for the fieldwork and the time of year. Students should also carry windbreakers, raincoats and some spare warm clothing.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- 16) The group should carry an updated map of suitable scale, e.g. HM 20C Topographical Series or Countryside Series. The map should cover and show clearly the area of work and the route leading to the field site. The group should also carry a compass, a whistle, a torch, a pocket radio, a first-aid kit and enough food, water and emergency rations. A suggested list of items in the first-aid kit is at *Appendix II*. The first-aid kit should be checked before the field trip, and all staff and students should be made aware of where it is kept during the field trip. It is highly desirable for someone with first-aid training to accompany the group.
- 17) Emergency measures and procedures should be worked out. All participants including staff must understand their responsibilities and what action to take in the event of an emergency.
- 18) In some cases, e.g. urban fieldwork, students may be spread over a wide area and hence direct supervision by staff might not be possible. In these cases, students have to be assigned to work in groups and the group size should be at least 3. A leader should also be appointed to each group and each participant should be made aware of appropriate actions to take in times of emergency.
- 19) Plastic-ware should be used as far as possible. If items of glassware (test-tubes, beakers, bottles and petri dishes) are to be carried, they should be protected from accidental breakage. Care should be taken not to leave them on the ground, where they could become a potential hazard.

### **II. During Field work**

- 1) Vigilant and effective supervision is required at all times. Teachers should be aware of the whereabouts of all their students at all times. Regular head counts should be carried out before, during and after a field trip, and if necessary, before moving from one site to another.
- 2) Irresponsible behaviour can be a threat to safety and a vigilant approach is required to ensure that responsible and appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained at all times.
- 3) Remind all staff and students where the first-aid kit is kept.
- 4) Alert students to potential hazards along the route and at the field site.
- 5) If students have to be divided into groups, the group size should be at least 3. Before students proceed to work in groups, remind them not to work and climb alone.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- 6) Flash floods may occur suddenly during and after heavy rainfall. Leave the stream channel quickly when it rains and never work in streams after heavy rainfall. A sudden rise of water level or an increase in the turbulence and turbidity of the streamflow may be a sign of an approaching flood. Leave the river channel immediately.
- 7) If a storm is imminent, take shelter and wait for conditions to improve. Lightning usually strikes high projections. Bear this in mind when seeking shelter.
- 8) Guard against all risks of fire.
- 9) When fieldwork activities in polluted areas have to be undertaken, the following practical precautions should be taken to prevent infection :
  - a) Rubber gloves should be worn when sampling or measuring.
  - b) Cuts and abrasions should be covered with waterproof dressings.
  - c) It is advisable for individuals with recent cuts and abrasions to be assigned as recorders.
  - d) Wellingtons should be worn in polluted water.
  - e) Food and drinks should be consumed before the activities take place.
  - f) Hands should be washed upon leaving the field.
- 10) Keep to the established footpaths and avoid making new short-cuts. Snakes and venomous insects may hide among bushes and grass. Moreover, the uncontrolled formation of new paths often starts soil erosion which is difficult to control.
- 11) Safety Precautions in Biological Fieldwork :

### *Terrestrial Habitats*

- a) To avoid cuts and wounds arising from the spines and thorns of plants, participants should put on long-sleeved shirts and jeans/trousers.
- b) Quite a number of plants in the wild are poisonous. Teachers should warn students not to ingest the fruit, seeds or leaves of wild plants. Students should be warned not to touch those plants which are known to contain substances that induce allergic reaction or dermatitis on skin contact. Examples are *Rhus chinensis* (sumac), *Rhus hypoleuca* (sumac), *Rhus succedanea* (wax tree) and *Euphorbia antiquorum* (fleshy spurge).

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- c) Students should be warned not to irritate wild animals, since quite a number of them are venomous themselves or are carriers of fatal diseases.
- d) Keep to cleared footpaths where possible.
- e) Examine the surrounding area carefully before crawling under bushes to observe and collect specimens.
- f) Examine rocks or logs before sitting on them. Do not lift stones or other objects by hands, but always use a stick to turn them over. Do not reach into holes.
- g) Dead specimens of vertebrates in the field should not be collected or closely examined, because of the risk of infectious diseases.
- h) Plants and seeds collected from the field should be free from pests or diseases, to minimize the chance of infection to other plants.
- i) When collecting animals and plants that bear spines or thorns, one should exercise extreme care, to prevent injuring oneself.
- j) When collecting plants known to contain poisonous or irritating sap, avoid handling them with bare hands. Gloves should be worn.
- k) When carrying out soil analysis experiments, one should exercise extreme care to prevent bites from organisms which may be hidden in the soil.

### *Shore Habitats*

- a) Teachers should always bear in mind the times of the tide, and make sure to retreat before high tide.
- b) Each participant should be properly dressed in canvas shoes with adequate tread.
- c) Never attempt rock climbing, caving, swimming or diving.
- d) On rocky shores, the surface is uneven and often covered with slippery algae. It is sensible to test the footing before putting one's weight down. Jumping from rock to rock may be dangerous.
- e) On mangrove and sandy beaches, the surface may be slippery and the substratum unstable. It is safe to test the footing before putting one's weight down.
- f) A throw line must be carried at all times.
- g) Avoid working on exposed shores with strong wave action.

# Guidelines on Outdoor Activities

## *Freshwater Habitats*

- a) Except for very shallow ponds and ditches, work in freshwater habitats should be regarded as potentially dangerous, since currents, submerged objects and slippery or muddy bottoms all pose hazards.
  - b) Each participant should be properly dressed in canvas shoes with adequate tread.
  - c) Students should work in stream areas where the nature of the substratum is known with certainty and the water is no more than knee-deep.
  - d) Extreme care should be taken when placing the feet into streams. Always expect potholes and underwater obstacles.
  - e) A throw line must be carried at all times.
- 12) Safety precautions in Geography Fieldwork
- a) Keep to footpaths as far as possible. Cross a river where there is a bridge. If there are no bridges, cross rivers where they divide into two more channels or where the course is shallow and the flow is slow.
  - b) Do not go into a river or lake unless one can see the bed and the water is no more than knee-deep.
  - c) A sudden rise of water level or an increase in the turbulence and turbidity of the streamflow maybe a sign of an approaching flood. Leave the river channel immediately.
  - d) To avoid cuts and wounds arising from the spines and thorns of plants, participants should put on long-sleeved shirts and jeans/trousers.
  - e) Quite a number of plants in the wild are poisonous. Teachers should warn students not to ingest the fruit, seeds or leaves of wild plants. Students should be warned not to touch those plants which are known to contain substances that induce allergic reaction or dermatitis on skin contact. Examples are *Rhus chinensis* (sumac), *Rhus hypoleuca* (sumac), *Rhus succedanea* (wax tree) and *Euphorbia antiquorum* (fleshy spurge).
  - f) Students should be warned not to irritate wild animals, since quite a number of them are venomous themselves or are carriers of fatal diseases.
  - g) Examine the surrounding area carefully before crawling under bushes to observe and collect specimens.
  - h) When carrying out soil analysis experiments, one should exercise extreme care to prevent bites from organisms which may be hidden in the soil.

- i) When working in shore areas, each participant should be properly dressed in canvas shoes with adequate tread.
- j) On rocky shores, the surface is uneven and often covered with slippery algae. It is sensible to test the footing before putting one's weight down. Jumping from rock to rock may be dangerous.
- k) A throw line must be carried at all times when working in water is required.
- l) Extreme care should be taken when placing the feet into streams. Always expect potholes and underwater obstacles.

### **III. Dealing with Emergency Situations**

- 1) In the case of getting lost :
  - a) Keep calm and stay together;
  - b) Locate the present position by making use of the last known positions, such as peaks and rivers;
  - c) Decide whether to go back, or to go for an established landmark, or to stay;
  - d) If you have to stay at the spot, try to make the location known as conspicuously as possible. Send out distress signals by using a torch or a whistle. (Try to use the international distress signal, *i.e.* six blasts on a whistle or six flashes of a torch or six movements to attract attention, with a minute between each sequence, to guide the rescue party.)

- 2) In the case of a hill fire :

Panic causes energy loss and poor judgement. Act calmly and do not run unless absolutely necessary.

#### *Avoidance/escape*

- a) Abandon highly inflammable material and non-essential equipment;
- b) Drink plenty of water and saturate handkerchiefs and clothing;
- c) Avoid dense vegetation and undergrowth;
- d) Head in the opposite direction or to the side and rear of a fire;

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

- e) Avoid moving uphill with a steep slope, and move downhill as far as possible;
- f) Beware of fallen power lines, falling burnt-out trees, and observe the wind direction.

### *Survival*

If flames have cut off your escape :

- a) Cover yourself with adequate clothing (NOT synthetic);
  - b) In dense smoke, restrict your breathing and keep low, as the air closest to the ground is cooler and fresher;
  - c) Cover yourself with a completely wet sleeping bag (if possible) or damp dirt; cover your mouth and nose with a water-saturated handkerchief or cloth;
  - d) Jump into a reservoir or river as far as possible and cover your face with a wet garment to keep out smoke and fumes;
  - e) If your clothes catch fire, roll on the ground or use other clothes (wool) or blankets to smother it;
  - f) Find a drain, ditch, tunnel etc. and remove anything that might burn.
- 3) In the case of heavy rain :

Heavy rain causes flooding and makes streams rise rapidly into dangerous torrents, sometimes washing away bridges and parts of footpaths. Rivers in flood that are knee-deep or above should not be crossed. In fact, they should be avoided at all costs except in life-threatening situations. It is best to use a bridge, even if this means a long detour or a long wait for the rain to ease off.

If it is impossible to avoid crossing river, adhere strictly to the following rules :

- a) The group leader should check that preparations by individual participants have been carried out correctly and that each participant who is crossing is made secure from the bank.
- b) Avoid jumping from boulder to boulder.
- c) Take small steps to maintain a steady posture.

## *Guidelines on Outdoor Activities*

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- d) Each participant should face upstream while crossing the river and should be attached to a rope linked with the bank to form a safe link.
- e) The safest crossing point is often between bends as the water in the outside curve of a bend is deep and powerful.

## **Chapter Twelve**

### **CYCLING**

Cycling is a form of transportation which should take place on cycling paths or in cycle parks, wherever there is one. On the road, those involved in cycling activities should obey the traffic regulations in the same way as other traffic users.

It is against the Laws of Hong Kong (Chapter 374, Road Traffic Ordinance s.54) to permit a child under 11 years of age to ride a bicycle on a road unaccompanied by an adult. Exception is however given if the road or the portion of road has been set aside for bicycles, with traffic signs permitting this.

#### **I. Planning and Preparation for Recreational Cycling**

- 1) The Hong Kong Cycling Association (HKCA) provides professional assistance in cycling safety for all categories of cycling standards, from beginners to skilful racers.
- 2) Schools intending to conduct cycling activities may approach the HKCA well in advance for professional assistance.
- 3) School teachers who wish to conduct cycling activities such as cycling journeys should preferably attain a Cycling Proficiency Coaching Certificate from the HKCA.
- 4) Those who participate in cycling activities are strongly advised to put on safety helmets. Failure to do so poses a danger to one's life.
- 5) Cycling activities should not be held in country parks unless permission has been obtained from the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries, since bicycles are banned from all country parks.

## **II. During the Activity**

- 1) Cycling activities must be supervised by trained leaders for trained participants. Each cycling journey must be supervised by at least two leaders. The required ratio of leaders to participants is 1 to 5.
- 2) When planning the journey, the leader should take into consideration the following :
  - a) the experience of the group.
  - b) The ability of the group.
  - c) Weather conditions.
  - d) Take heed of dangerous bends, bridges and cross-roads on the journey.
  - e) A route card together with a route map stipulating the details of the journey, the “starting” point, the “finishing” point and any related activities should be worked out beforehand and kept by a responsible person not participating in the activity.
  - f) If possible, all leaders should have wireless transmitters or mobile phones for the purpose of communication.
  - g) All participants should be briefed before the journey on the different gathering points on the route, even if the whole journey is on a cycling path.
  - h) At least one of the leaders should have first-aid knowledge.
  - i) All participants should be advised to wear suitable cycling gear for the journey.
  - j) Schools should inform the police of the details of the activity before the journey commences. (Reference can be made to the Schools Miscellaneous Circular “Visits Organised for School Children : Safety Precautions”, which is issued by the Education Department at the beginning of each school year.)
  - k) Written parental consent for student taking part in the activity must be obtained in advance.

*Appendix I*

<b>National Sports Association</b>	<b>Tel</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Address</b>
Hong Kong Amateur Athletic Association	2504 8215	2577 5392	Room 1017 Sport House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Amateur Handball Association Limited	2504 8119	2577 5570	Room 1013 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Amateur Swimming Association	2572 8594	2591 0792	Room 1003 QE Stadium 18 Oi Kwan Road Wanchai Hong Kong
Hong Kong Archery Association	2504 8148	2577 7349	Room 1010 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Baseball Association	2527 3679 2921 1833	2866 1509 2875 1745	Room 805 Kam Chung Bldg. 54 Jaffe Road Wanchai Hong Kong
Hong Kong Canoe Union	2572 7008	2838 9037	Room 1010 QE Stadium 18 Oi Kwan Road Wanchai Hong Kong
Hong Kong Cricket Association	2504 8108	2577 8486	Room 1019 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Cycling Association	2573 3861	2834 3715	Room 1005 QE Stadium 18 Oi Kwan Road Wanchai Hong Kong
Hong Kong Hockey Association	2782 4932	2384 0535	1/F Administration Block King's Park Hockey Ground 2-6 Wylie Road Kowloon

<b>National Sports Association</b>	<b>Tel</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Address</b>
Hong Kong Kart Club	2504 8293	2577 8885	Room 1019 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Lawn Bowls Association	2504 8249	2577 5621	Room 1022 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Softball Association	2711 1167	2715 8879	GPO Box 5345 Hong Kong
Hong Kong Tennis Association	2504 8266	2894 8704	Room 1021 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Triathlon Association Limited	2504 8282	2576 8253	Room 1020 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Underwater Association	2504 8154	2577 5601	Room 1009 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Water Ski Association	2504 8168	2881 0443	Room 1008 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Yachting Association	2504 8158	2504 0681	Room 1009 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Orienteering Association of Hong Kong	2504 8111	2577 5595	Room 1014 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong

<b>National Sports Association</b>	<b>Tel</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Address</b>
Windsurfing Association of Hong Kong	2504 8255	2577 7529	Room 1001 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Ko Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Mountaineering Union	2504 8124	2576 6532	Room 1013 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Ko Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Amateur Roller Skating Association	2504 8203	2577 5671	Room 1016 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Amateur Rowing Association	2699 7271	2601 4477	Shatin Rowing Centre 27 Yuen Wo Road Shatin New Territories
Hong Kong & Kowloon Volleyball Association	2771 0293	2834 6510	Room 903 QE Stadium 18 Oi Kwan Road Wanchai Hong Kong
Hong Kong Basketball Association	2504 8181	2504 2112	Room 1006 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong
Hong Kong Football Association	2712 9122	2760 4303	55 Fat Kwong Street Homantin Kowloon
Hong Kong Rugby Football Union	2504 8311	2576 7237	Room 2003-4 Sports House 1 Stadium Path So Kon Po Causeway Bay Hong Kong

## **List of Suggested Items**

### **I. Navigaitonal Aids**

Updated map(s) (preferably Countryside Series Map) protected by plastic bags, compass, map markers (oil-based)

### **II. First-aid Kit**

Bandages of various sizes, triangular bandages (900 mm side, 1300 mm base), cotton sticks, cold pack, disposable plastic gloves, elastic tensor bandage, forceps, liniment turpentine, safety pins, scissors, sterile adhesive dressings (of different sizes), sterile eye pads, sterile gauze, thermometer, alcohol, cotton wool, adhesive tapes, antiseptics.

### **III. Emergency Kit**

Torch, whistle, mirror, radio, pocket knife, exposure bag, emergency blanket, emergency rations (not outdated), lighter or matches, spare shoe laces, pen, emergency message form (to be provided)

### **IV. Emergency Rations**

Chocolate, cereal bars, glucose candies, dried fruit

### **V. Food and Water**

Water per person : one litre in winter and two litres in summer

**SAMPLE LETTER SEEKING PARENTAL CONSENT  
FOR STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITES**

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent/Guardian,

**Participation in** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of Activity)*

This school is organizing the above-named activity at \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Location)*  
on/from \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(Date) (Time)*

Your child \_\_\_\_\_ has (been selected to participate/voluntarily applied for participation) in the said activity.

Please return the following reply slip before \_\_\_\_\_ for record and action.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
( )  
*Principal/Headmaster/Headmistress*

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**Reply Slip**

**Participation in** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of Activity)*

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Principal/Headmaster/Headmistress,

I \*agree/do not agree to allow my child \_\_\_\_\_ of class \_\_\_\_\_ to take part in the school activity as detailed in your letter dated \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Signature of Parent/Guardian\*)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of Parent/Guardian\*)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Contact Telephone Number)*

\* Delete where appropriate

**SAMPLE REPORT FORM ON ACCIDENT DURING  
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

1. Occurrence of accident

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

2. Particulars of injured pupil(s)

(i) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

3. Activity engaged in at the time of the accident

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Location and engagement of the person-in-charge at the time of the accident

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Description of the accident

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Description of injuries

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Action taken (including application of first aid)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Agencies called for help

	Please tick	Time notified and by whom	Time of Arrival
Ambulance	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Police	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
Other (please specify)		_____	_____
_____			

Action taken by the above after arrival

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Parents/Guardians notified  Yes  No

Time notified \_\_\_\_\_ Time of arrival \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Action taken by parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_


10. Other remarks \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Reporting person(s)

(i) \_\_\_\_\_ (Name in Block Letters) \_\_\_\_\_ (Post) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_ (Name in Block Letters) \_\_\_\_\_ (Post) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

 Please tick in the appropriate box.