

5. SCHOOL EXCURSION POLICY

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Schools with Education Support providing details of the draft School Excursion Policy which was revised in light of recommendations by the Council's Corporate Health and Safety service and revised guidance from the Scottish Government.

The Head of Schools with Education Support advised that following an audit of compliance with the policy by the Council's Corporate Health and Safety service a number of areas of good practice were identified which could be included within a revised policy. The Scottish Government also published Going Out There – Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits, which sought to balance the requirement to ensure the health and safety of all participants in educational excursions, with the need to ensure that excursions remained an important part of all children's education.

The Excursions Policy was then rewritten with more explicit procedures in place to be followed before, during and after an excursion in order to improve compliance with the requirements of the policy. The draft Excursions Policy was developed in line with the revised Going Out There – Scottish Framework for Safe Practice in Off-site Visits.

The report advised that initial consultation took place with a small group of practitioners with further consultation carried out with Parent Council representatives, the teaching unions and all Headteachers. It was noted that the contents of the policy were similar to the existing policy with each section updated to ensure that clear and explicit guidance was given to those organising excursions on the procedures that were required to be followed. New sections on insurance and transport were inserted along with a new "debrief" form.

During the question and answer session Lynne McEwen asked at what point during the preparation of an excursion would a meeting be held with parents/carers, pupils and staff members involved? The Head of Schools with Education Support confirmed that a meeting would be recommended when initial information was provided, which would be clarified within the Excursion Policy.

The Panel was asked to recommend to the Education Executive that the draft School Excursion Policy be approved.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To agree to submit the report to the Education Executive for approval subject to including details of when a meeting would be arranged within the information relating to the preparation of an excursion.