

Children & Young People's Services

CONTACT:

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12th December 2007

To: All Secondary Schools and Colleges (Devon and Torbay)
Devon and Torbay Primary schools involved in ski courses

FAO: Headteacher / Principal

Cc: Educational Visit Co-ordinator

Safety Note:

Use of skiing helmets for snow boarding and skiing

Dear Colleague,

Devon County Council and Torbay Council are currently revising their combined policy and guidance for schools, the youth service and other CYPS establishments contained within "Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities". It is intended that the revised guidance is issued early in 2008 and all establishments will be notified at that time.

As part of that process, guidance on snow sport activities is being reviewed.

The Federation International de Ski (FIS) now strongly recommends that all skiers and snowboarders, regardless of ability and age, use helmets. The FIS help to determine what is nationally, and internationally, accepted as good practice. As a result of the FIS recommendation, and taking into account the views of colleagues and organisations with expertise in this area, this is also now the policy of Devon County Council and Torbay Council for supervised group skiing.

Schools and other establishments should seek to implement this policy as soon as reasonably practicable, recognising that helmets may not be readily available for all programmes in the 2007/2008 season. Nonetheless, all establishments will want to be aware of this information to assist their planning and, for that reason, this information has been provided ahead of the revised document as a whole.

Textphone 0845 1551020 SMS Text 0777 3333 231

www.devon.gov.uk

Children & Young People's Services Director: Anne Whiteley

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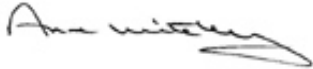
Please also note that:

- Helmets should comply with BS/EN 1077/1996, be correctly fitted and fastened.
- Party leaders must ensure that all skiers in their group are aware that the primary control measure for reducing the likelihood of a head injury remains skiing under control and complying with the International Code of Conduct. Skiing recklessly, or at high speed, can lead to serious injury regardless of the use or otherwise of a helmet.
- This recommendation does not apply to dry slope skiing, unless the individual dry slope recommends helmets are worn.
- The policy also applies to teachers and group leaders on ski and snowboard courses since staff have an important role in setting an example.

Please note this recommendation supersedes guidance previously provided in November 2005. I would be grateful if you can bring this information to the attention of any member of staff who may act as a party leader for snow sport activities from your establishment.

For further guidance on outdoor education, visits and off-site activities see www.deseducation.org/outdooreducation

Yours sincerely



Anne Whiteley
Director of Children and Young People's Services