

Snowsports and Learning Outside the Classroom

On return, time will be required for the completion and presentation of the projects, whatever form they take. Completed projects can be used in a variety of ways:

- examination coursework
- a personal record of achievement
- assembly planning
- Duke of Edinburgh's Award presentation
- for display work and promotional material
- development of a useful resource bank
- evidence to support many forms of accreditation.

After a residential snowsports course

For many children, a snowsports course is the experience of a lifetime. Many adults have become good skiers and snowboarders with a great love of the sport after their introduction to the sport through a school.

Once the school Snowsports course is over there are still opportunities to continue the sport – artificial slopes provide a variety of activities for all levels of ability. Clubs provide social opportunities and training to progress new skills

Further information can be obtained from Snowsport England about the following:

- membership and registration
- details of joining a local club
- location of artificial slopes and general information
- racing and competitions
- alpine and freestyle activities
- insurance
- training for instructors, coaches, ski leaders, Snowsports Course Organisers and officials
- personal performance development, including the Snowlife Awards
- local schools' ski associations/the English Schools' Ski Association (ESSkiA)

Membership

Individuals, schools and schools' ski associations can join Snowsport England/ESSkiA. Membership provided access to regular information, insurance, and the opportunity for involvement in a range of activities including competition.

Training and Qualifications for Teachers and Leaders

Staff who organise snowsports courses come from all areas of the academic spectrum and need appropriate formal training before they take a group of children into a potentially dangerous and hazardous mountain environment. Most Local Authorities have generic risk assessments, regulations and notes of guidance for staff to follow.

Some Local Authorities provide specific training courses for their own staff and many insist that staff complete the Snowsports Course Organiser Award.

Snowsport England recommends that all staff should complete this level of Award.

The Snowsports Course Organiser

The Snowsports Course Organiser Award is designed as an awareness course to assist and guide teachers/leaders in the organisation of school snowsport courses. The course draws attention to planning, preparation, travel arrangements and safety. It raises teachers'/leaders' awareness of the dangers and difficulties they may encounter, and of what snowsports courses for young people involve. (It does not qualify staff to supervise skiing and snowboarding).

Supervision of Skiing and Snowboarding

All staff who wish to consider supervision of skiing and snowboarding are strongly advised to attend the Snowsports Course Organiser Award and then proceed towards the Alpine Ski Course Leader Award.

Alpine Ski Course Leader Award

This course is designed to improve teachers'/leaders' own professional judgement concerning the responsible leadership and supervision of children on recognised and pisted areas. The six-day course takes place on snow, with some theoretical elements available as a distance learning package, and with various opportunities for continual assessment of the practical leading ability of candidates which, along with a written paper and an assessment of skiing/snowboarding ability, form the Alpine Ski Course Leader Award.

Participants must:

- be over 21
- hold an appropriate first aid certificate
- have attended a Snowsport Course Organiser Award
- have evidence of a minimum of six weeks' skiing on snow
- be a teacher or qualified youth worker.

The Outdoor Education Advisers Panel

Teachers wishing to organise a snowsports course should contact their Local Authority Outdoor Education Adviser. Contact information can be found on The Outdoor Education Advisers Panel website www.oep.info The website also provides useful information and advice for teachers wishing to take groups away on outdoor visits.

Supervision and instruction

In order to make the organisation of the course easier (and also to avoid financial risk) school groups should always travel with a reputable, recognised, bonded tour operator.

All teachers must be aware that pupils need to be safely and appropriately supervised at all times whilst on the mountain.

Instruction is usually booked through the tour operator.

In order to help teachers judge the suitability of the proposed instruction, Snowsport England has issued the following guidance:

To instruct the activity of skiing in a recognised resort, the minimum qualification requirements that are recognised by Snowsport England are as follows:

"All instructors will be qualified according to local and national regulations and approved by the director of the local snowsports school."

Appendix

Useful contacts and websites:

Snowsport England
www.snowsportengland.org.uk
info@snowsportengland.org.uk

English School Skiing Association (ESSKIA)
www.esskia.co.uk

British Association of Snowsport Instructors (BASi)
www.basi.org.uk

Ski Club of GB
www.skiclub.co.uk

LOTc Quality Badge
www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

School Travel Forum
www.schooltravelforum.com

Sport England Clubmark Accreditation
www.clubmark.org.uk

Other useful websites:

Snowlife – www.snowlife.org.uk

Active Places – www.activeplaces.com

Duke of Edinburgh's Award – www.theaward.org

Institute for Outdoor Learning – www.outdoor-learning.org

Teacher Net – www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits

Outdoors Education Advisers Panel – www.oep.info

Youth Sport Trust – www.youthsporttrust.org



Snowsport England
SportPark, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough,
Leicestershire LE11 3QF
Email: info@snowsportengland.org.uk



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Snowsports and Learning Outside the Classroom

**A guide for School Governors, Heads of Establishment, Teachers, Youth Workers and Snowsports Course Organisers**

The Contribution of Snowsports to:

- the acquisition of physical skill and knowledge
- environmental awareness
- personal and social development.

All young people are entitled to a broad and balanced education.

This can be achieved both by a subject-specific approach and through cross-curricular themes – skiing and snowboarding offers an excellent opportunity to assist in fulfilling these objectives.

This booklet is intended to raise awareness, provide information and encourage all educationalists to consider the value of snowsports as a relevant and worthwhile activity complementary to your Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Curriculum.

Outdoor education, residential experiences and adventurous activities should all be part of a pupil's educational experience from primary level onwards. Snowsports is an example of a pursuit that encompasses these experiences.

Activities such as skiing and snowboarding have an invaluable part to play in broadening the curriculum and helping pupils cope in a rapidly changing world.

A physical challenge

Snowsports are active sports that enable individuals to learn new forms of movement and balance. It creates a new and different appreciation of physical activity in a non-competitive atmosphere, and can help to develop the enthusiasm and confidence to pursue an active lifestyle, both on artificial ski slopes and on snow. Classroom enquiries, which to some young people may seem abstract, can take on substance and significance through personal involvement and physical challenge.

Environmental awareness

For many young people a snowsports course is their first – and perhaps only – encounter with an environment which is significantly different from home. First-hand experience of this beautiful and manifestly fragile environment gives young people the opportunity to develop a more responsible and caring attitude towards the world in which we live. However, in many alpine areas, the destructive effects of human activity are all too clear: erosion, congestion, lack of sensitive planning, and unforeseen effects like flooding can be observed.

Personal and social development of pupils

Through focused planning, pupils on a snowsports course will develop:

- an enjoyment of the outdoors
- an ability to recognise and manage risk for themselves
- concern and respect for the environment

- an experience of challenge and the acquisition of new skill
- a sense of responsibility for their own safety, and that of others
- a sense of achievement and an opportunity to succeed
- self-awareness and self-confidence
- a healthy physical activity which can become a lifelong pursuit
- closer relationships within peer groups and with teachers, and a better understanding of other people.

Participation in learning outside the classroom often provides motivation within the classroom and a better understanding of a subject, as well as contributing to a sound rapport between pupils, teachers and other members of staff. Achievement on the slopes can be used to improve individuals' understanding of ways that they have learned, and that knowledge can then be transferred to improve learning within the classroom.

Integration of studies

Most teachers and leaders organise snowsports because they love the activity. In many cases, Snowsports Course Organisers are specialists in areas of the curriculum that have nothing to do with outdoor activities or physical education. This is an added strength as they are able to relate their specialist subject to snowsports and encourage pupils to see the relevance of one activity to another.

Skiing/Snowboarding has an invaluable role in broadening the curriculum

Within the National Curriculum PE framework, schemes and units of work can be devised and implemented by using the Snowlife Awards (for information about these, contact Snowsport England).

Through this structure it is possible for an individual to become sufficiently competent to plan, perform and evaluate snowsports activities.

Whether residential snowsports courses take place during term time or during the school holidays, it is a tremendous opportunity to select appropriate learning outcomes. The aims of the course must be clearly understood by everyone concerned. The school governors, head of establishment, staff, pupils and parents must be aware of the nature and purpose of the activities. All participants must understand their commitment and the conduct that is expected from them at all times.



Skiing/Snowboarding at a local centre

Whilst most people would aspire to ski and snowboard in a mountain resort, it is also possible to ski at centres here in England. There are many centres throughout the country with artificial slopes that can be used all year round in any weather, and that offer the opportunity to learn to ski or snowboard for the first time, improve an existing skill, or enable an individual to practise. There are also many opportunities for competition at these centres, both for individuals and for school teams. Many people who have no intention of visiting a mountain resort currently practise snowsports only at their local centre.

If a school is considering a snowsports course in a mountain resort, it would be advisable to arrange a course of instruction at a local ski centre beforehand. This will allow the maximum benefit to be achieved from the time in the alpine resort, thereby achieving maximum value for money. It will also allow for team building prior to travel and encourage a group rapport both during travel and in the resort.

Most schools have such a centre within easy reach, and suitable to use for a one-hour session either in school time or afterwards. The majority of these centres have attractive packages tailor-made for their local schools. Snowsport England has a full list of all such centres in England. There is a map available on the website www.snowsportengland.org.uk showing the location of all slopes.

The Contribution of Snowsports to:

English

- daily diary
- scrapbook
- creative writing
- poems and songs
- discussions and prepared talks

Languages

- practice in spoken language
- reading local papers, advertisements, menus
- learning ski and snowboard words in local language
- collection of materials from the tourist office
- shopping

Mathematics

- costs and budgeting
- conversion of money
- altitude and temperature comparisons

Humanities

- weather studies – climatic effects of the mountains
- geology of the region – mountain building, erosion, glaciation
- map reading – area and piste maps
- economic studies – effects of tourism
- environmental issues – ecology and conservations
- comparative studies

Sciences

- effects of solar radiation
- structure of ice and snow
- ecosystems in a mountain environment
- effects of altitude on the body
- uphill transport systems
- downhill skiing – flow and resistance
- exercise and heart rate monitoring
- energy conversion

Physical Education

- fitness for skiing and snowboarding
- regular exercise programme
- muscles used in snowsports
- first aid
- safety awareness
- skills – practising on artificial slopes
- listening skills at ski school
- leadership skills

Art, Design and Technology

- project work equipment and design
- diets for athletes
- safety projects with all types of equipment



Every Child Matters – Snowsports courses can contribute towards a more sustainable future for all young people

Be Healthy	Stay Safe	Enjoy and Achieve	Make a Positive Contribution	Achieve Economic Well-Being
Encourage physical activity Improve coordination Build confidence Encourage healthy eating Encourage healthy lifestyle Look after self and others Foster independence Support emotional well-being Develop self-esteem	Learn to assess risk Opportunity to make judgements and manage risk Develop new skills Learn skills for safe travel through an unfamiliar environment Understanding of and tolerance for others Residential provide respite and space to change Challenge negative behaviour	Develop a lifelong physical activity Offering multi-sensory experiences Develop understanding of how individuals learn Experiences complement and reinforce other learning Accreditation of achievement Develops positive attitudes Opportunities for review and reflection Stimulates awe and wonder Develops key skills Develops personal qualities Increase self-esteem	Enjoy and value a natural environment Responsibility for the environment Awareness and understanding of different cultures Awareness of social interaction Teamwork development Opportunities for leadership Encourage decision making Push personal boundaries Develop a culture of sharing and volunteering	Provides a broad and balanced curriculum Helps make sustainable life choices Develops skills for life Provision of work experience Widens horizons Provides inspiration for working abroad as adults Supports curriculum based learning Can assist re-integration of young people “at risk”

N.B. It should not be forgotten that the prime focus and purpose of the course is the snowsports experience.

Art and Design

- local art and architecture – looking at religious, domestic and folk art
- sketching and photography

Topics particularly suited to younger children

- creative writing, diary
- the journey, at the airport, road signs
- signs and symbols on the mountain
- types of trees, wildlife, alpine meadows, animals, habitat
- opening and closing times of shops, banks, etc.
- language
- drawing and sketching
- money
- comparison between home and skiing environment
- local events, ceremonies, customs
- weather conditions.

“Opportunities for activities relating to flexible learning and The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award can be achieved as part of a snowsports course.”

Topics undertaken prior to a course may be developed and reinforced, with additional aspects being considered in the light of experience. Through experiential learning, young people can complete work directly related to the curriculum. If topic work is to be undertaken as part of a residential course, time must be given for planning and preparation beforehand and time must also be allocated during the course. If skiing or snowboarding is not possible on a particular day, young people can use some time to work on their topic – this is particularly valuable if the weather conditions are poor. In many cases, standards of conduct are raised by purposeful learning rather than by an excessive amount of free time.

This is an indication of the wide spectrum of topics which can be related to snowsports, but it is only a starting point and is by no means exhaustive. For ease of reference the list is given under subject headings, but many are cross-curricular. With your knowledge of your own establishment and its curriculum, you will be able to add to these suggestions.