

Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities Policy

No changes needed

Approved on	29th November 2023
Signature of Chair of Trustees	<i>Julie Winyard</i>

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
10.7.25	JPT	No change

General

The purpose of this document is to link the requirements of the SCITT with National Guidance. The SCITT acknowledges the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to Trainees and Apprentices and the children in their care, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed.

Trainees and Apprentices must ensure that all visits and trips are efficiently planned, managed, approved, and evaluated. The SCITT provides guidance and pro-formas (Annex A) which may be used by the Trainees and Apprentices when planning trips. It is likely that most schools will have their own systems, which the Trainees and Apprentices will be required to use, but it is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure that they have considered all elements listed in Annex A, the SCITT proforma for visits.

This policy will set out the key procedures that need to be followed when planning and undertaking outdoor learning and educational visits, in order to ensure they are not only worthwhile learning experiences, but also undertaken in a safe and responsible manner.

Definition

This Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities Policy refers to all activities that take place outdoors, on-site and offsite, including residential at home and abroad. Educational visits, including residential visits, provide a context for learning, requiring children to use their skills, knowledge and understanding

in real, and often complex, situations; this helps them understand and remember what they are learning about in a meaningful way and brings the curriculum to life. We believe that there are several key outcomes from high quality outdoor education (in line with OEAP guidance):

- Enjoyment and fulfilment: Children enjoy participating and adopt a positive attitude to challenge and adventure.
- Confidence: Children gain personal confidence and self-esteem.
- Social awareness: Children develop their self-awareness and social skills; they appreciate the contributions and achievements of themselves and others.
- Environmental awareness: Children become alive to the environment, natural and man-made, in which they live, and understand important concepts including sustainable development and conservation.
- Activity skills: Young people have the opportunity of developing a range of skills.
- Personal qualities: Children demonstrate increased initiative, self-reliance, responsibility, independence, perseverance and commitment.
- Key skills: Children develop and extend their skills of communication, problem solving, leadership and teamwork.
- Health, fitness and well-being: Children learn to appreciate the benefits of physical exercise and activity and the lifelong value of participation in leisure activities.
- Motivation for learning: Children display an increased motivation and appetite for learning that contributes to raised levels of attainment and achievement in other aspects of their education.
- Broadening horizons: Children broaden their experiences and become open to a wider range of opportunities and life chances.

Trainees and Apprentices should follow all these policies when planning outdoor learning or educational visits, alongside the guidance in this document. Any clarification needs to be sought from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Roles and Responsibilities

The EVCs and Class Mentors will:

- Have appropriate training to fulfil the role, and have experience of leading educational visits
- Support Trainees and Apprentices and be involved in:
 - The planning and management of visits.
 - Monitoring the planning and delivery of visits.
 - Evaluating visits with Trainees and Apprentices.
 - Oversee the necessary paperwork and risk assessments, ensuring they meet guidance requirements.

- Maintain records of visits.
- Ensure the DFE guidance is adhered to.
- Keep abreast of advice from OEAP.
- Ensure medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure emergency procedures are in place, clear to Trainees and Apprentices, and adhered to.

Trainees and Apprentices responsible for trips and visits alongside the Class Teacher must:

- Seek approval to carry out the visit.
- Only be responsible for planning, organisation and management of visits in line with school and DCC policy, in liaison with the EV coordinator and/or Class Mentor, including defining the roles of the other adults.
- Provide necessary information to supporting adults.
- Plan transport if appropriate, in liaison with the class teacher and school business manager.
- Plan letters to parents and ensure suitable consent has been sought from parents, including emergency contact and medical requirements etc.
- Where possible, undertake a pre-visit to the venue.
- Check with the class teacher that necessary insurance and health and safety requirements are adhered to.
- Check with the class teacher that child protection and first aid requirements are in place.
- Work with the class teacher to develop the risk assessment;
 - this may include generic risk assessments and should always include points specific to the activity being planned
 - ensure risk assessments are understood by all adults on the visit
 - where possible, involve the pupils in risk assessments, e.g. when discussing how they are expected to behave on the bus/coach, crossing roads, etc.
- Keep a register of all adults and pupils who attended, in order to follow checking in and out procedures (this must be done with due regard to the schools GDPR policy.)
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses.
- Evaluate visits.
- When working with third-party activity providers, it is imperative that Trainees and Apprentices avoid 'grey areas' so there should be a clear handover before and after any activity led by a provider.
- Should a provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, the trainee should support the class teacher to stop/consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention should be done with sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.

Trainees and Apprentices supporting trips and visits must:

- Ensure that they are used appropriately and not used to replace a visit leader.
- Ensure that they feel suitably competent and confident to be able to carry out the duties they are assigned.
- Ensure they understand the role and responsibilities that they have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff.
- Contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit.
- Ensure they have been appropriately briefed on;
 - relevant establishment and visit procedures
 - group characteristics, including age, health, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other relevant matters in the - context of the visit
 - nature and location of the activity.

Annex A

Date of activity or visit		Class/Group	
Class teacher		Trainee	
Date EVC approved Name of EVC		Date plan written	
Visit or activity location			
Responsible adult Staff In attendance			
Activities due to take place			
Costs			
Transport arrangements			
Date risk assessment completed		Adult responsible for first aid	
Notes from pre-visit (if applicable)			

Equipment needed		First aid/ medical equipment needed	
Parental consent given for all participants			
Adaptations to plans made for SEND			
Emergency procedures considered (including preparation of an emergency card)**			
Responsibility briefings given to all adults accompanying the children. Including:			
What to do in case of an emergency		What the risk assessments are that are being undertaken	
Register/list of their group members - regularly undertake headcounts		A means to contact the visit leader	
Catering considered		Supervision ratios* agreed	
Points at which to monitor the progress of the visit throughout, ensuring all			

activities and procedures are taking place as planned, identified.

Evaluation (including any near misses or accidents)

***Ratios:**

Low risk activities (where the risk is similar to everyday life)

- EYFS – one adult to every 4-6 pupils
- Key Stage 1 – one adult to every 4-6 pupils
- Key Stage 2 – one adult to every 10-15 pupils

High Risk (adventurous, residential)

- Key Stage 1 – one adult to every 2 pupils
- Key Stage 2 – one adult to every 6-10 pupils

** We recommend that Trainees and Apprentices carry all the emergency contacts they might need.

This should be done using the school's procedures. These might include:

- The telephone numbers of the adults on the trip or visit
- School EVC
- School agreed emergency contact number
- SCITT Executive Director

Risk Management And Risk Assessment

Risk management, in the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, is a two stage process:

- The identification of the potential benefits to be gained from an activity, along with any risks to the health and safety of those involved.
- The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgement to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.

The fact that most human activity involves risk, and that this cannot be eliminated unless activities are not undertaken is recognised by both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Department for Education (DfE):

“HSE fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life – it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives. Striking the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from school trips has been a challenge for many schools, but getting this balance right is essential for realising all these benefits in practice”. (School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths, HSE).

“School employers should always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools risk assessment and risk management are tools to enable children to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether but it should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork”. (The Department for Education’s advice on health and safety for Schools updated February 2014)

There are two broad categories that require risk management and planning:

1. Routine visits that involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by establishment procedures and policy. Such visits should require minimal planning or preparation beyond what is needed to make best use of the learning opportunity. In a school context, they are simply lessons in a ‘different’ classroom.

2. Visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment. A visit moves into this category because one or more aspects cannot be managed adequately by existing procedures and policy. This may be due to distance from the establishment, the nature of the activities, the environment or venue(s), the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. The additional steps needed to manage these aspects should be identified and recorded.

Risk management involves answering two basic questions:

1. What could go wrong?
2. What are we going to do about it?

Trainees and Apprentices must use the school's risk assessment forms and ensure that they keep an anonymised copy in their Google Docs Folder on the drive.