



# EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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## POLICY REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary if/when any changes are made to legislation that affect our Trust's practice. Otherwise, or from then on, this policy will be reviewed every 3 years and shared with the full Trust board.

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The **Northampton Primary Academy Trust** (NPAT) believe that outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom are an integral part of the entitlement of every child to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment and so form a key part of what makes NPAT a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of pupils taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change and novelty.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participant's not passive consumers and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills

- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Northampton Primary Academy Trust fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life as 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 NPAT adopts the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP) National Guidance for all educational visits available at [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)

### **Aims and Purposes**

Every year a person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development; whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

These memorable learning experiences help us to make sense of the world around us. They allow us to transfer learning experienced in the classroom to the wider world and vice versa.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement where learning through direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn, but how and when we learn.

All such visits off the school premises, no matter what their length or how close to or far from the school they are, require careful planning to ensure both that pupils take the maximum benefit from them and that all issues relating to Health and Safety, and the safeguarding of children, are borne in mind. Each year, NPAT schools arrange a number of educational activities and visits that take place off the school sites and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school.

These include:

- Out of hours clubs
- Inter school team sports, such as football or netball
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship)
- Day visits for particular year groups (theatres, museums, art galleries, environmental activities)
- Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous

## 2. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

As an employer Northampton Primary Academy Trust meets its obligations to provide staff with guidance, training and support in the following ways:

- a. Appropriate guidance.  
The appropriate guidance for the management of outdoor learning, off site visits and LOtC is the OEAP National Guidance web site – [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)
- b. Training to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood.

For those involved in managing and leading visits the relevant training courses are:

1. Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Training – Northampton Primary Academy Trust requires the academy EVC to be appropriately trained in the OEAP Educational Visit Coordinator Training.
2. Visit Leader Training – Northampton Primary Academy Trust requires all those who lead trips or visits of a residential nature (excluding residential facilities who meet the requirements of section 5) or whereby they lead an adventurous activity to undertake this training.

Note: Local trips within the Academy Learning Area (see appendix 1) or regularly undertaken day trips to environments regularly visited by schools may be led by competent staff who have not attended Visit Leader training on authorisation of the Headteacher.

- c. Suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated.

For the purposes of day-to-day updating of information, EVCs and Visit/Activity Leaders are directed to the periodic news items and updates of OEAP National Guidance.

- d. Access to advice, support and further training.

Where an employee experiences problems with finding the material they are looking for, or require clarification or further help, guidance or bespoke training, they should contact their appointed Outdoor Education Advisor Service.

### 3. APPLICATION

This policy covers any visit that leaves the school grounds, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time or outside the normal school day.

Northampton Primary Academy Trust adopts the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP) National Guidance available at [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this policy and National Guidance. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within National Guidance.

### 4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. **Visit Leaders** are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying colleagues and the pupils in this process. Staff must make appropriate checks on venues and third-party providers. Staff are advised to obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher before beginning to plan/making any commitments.

See Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel National Guidance for the role of the Visit Leader - <http://oeapng.info/visit-leader/>

4.2. **The Education Visit Coordinator (EVC)** at our school is (name) who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom. They are the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans before submitting them to the Head Teacher.

See Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel National Guidance for the role of the EVC <http://oeapng.info/evc/>

4.3. **The Head Teacher /Governing Body** has responsibility for the monitoring and final approval of all visits.

See Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel National Guidance for the role of the Head Teacher <http://oeapng.info/head-manager/>

See Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel National Guidance for the role of the governing body <http://oeapng.info/governors/>

4.4. **Northampton Primary Academy Trust** – the employer

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety with the employer.

As the employer the Northamptonshire Primary Academy Trust must be informed of all residential visits, trips abroad and any adventurous activities for example climbing, caving and water sports. The Trust should be informed at the planning stage.

#### 4.5. Outdoor Education Advisor Service

##### **What is the process here? Who do we use to do this?**

It is advisable that the visits and activities, listed below, are checked by your Outdoor Education Advisor Service (who should be an Accredited Member of the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel) before the activity takes place – see also page 6 and 7 of this policy detailing the process to be followed.

- overnight stays
- foreign travel
- adventurous activities

## 5. PRELIMINARY VISITS AND PROVIDER ASSURANCES

### 5.1 Preliminary Visits

Northampton Primary Academy Trust requires that all visits are thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people, it is a vital dimension of risk management.

It is good management practice to carry out a preliminary visit. The following identifies the circumstances where a preliminary visit is a requirement.

- Pre-visit required for visits where there is a high complexity factor and the visit has not happened previously.
- Additionally, required when the visit is solely led by the school.
- Residential visits, visits abroad, exchange visits, adventure led by the school, staff all have aspects of complexity.

5.2 If the visit is led and managed by the provider, then a variety of approaches can reduce the need to pre-visit.

Visit Leaders can take full advantage of the nationally accredited provider assurance schemes that are now available which assists to reduce bureaucracy – examples include: -

- The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge
- AALS licensing
- Adventuremark

Northampton Primary Academy Trust takes the view that where providers hold one of the above accreditations, there should be no need to seek further assurances.

The OEAP National Guidance 4.4f – Assessing an adventure activity provider check list, 4.4h – using external providers and facilities and 8.8p – Provider Questionnaire - <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/> should be followed when undertaking pre-visits and assessing providers.

## 6. TYPES OF VISIT AND APPROVAL

There are four types of visit, for each of which the approval process is slightly different:

- Visits or activities within the School Learning Area (see appendix 1) and which involve no more than an everyday level of risk. Visits that are part of the curriculum and take place during the school day do not require consent. Those that are not part of the curriculum or extend beyond the school day are covered by blanket consent, but information will be provided to parents in advance and they will have the opportunity to withdraw their child. These follow the learning area operating procedure (appendix 1). **Xxxxxx School will/will not log these visits on the eVisit system.**
- Other day visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities. Visit Leaders to gain outline permission for visit from Headteacher. Visit leader to collate and input information onto the eVisit system, all information must be uploaded prior to submitting to the EVC for approval at least 3 weeks in advance, once reviewed by the EVC, final approval for the visit will be given by the Head Teacher.
- For all residential visits and adventurous activities. Visit Leaders to gain outline permission for visit from Head Teacher. Visit leader to collate and input information onto the eVisit system, all information must be uploaded prior to submitting to the EVC for approval at least 3 weeks in advance, once reviewed by the EVC, the visit will be given outline approval by the Head Teacher. Once outline approval has been given, the visit will then be scrutinised by the Outdoor Education Advisor to ensure the visit complies with the OEAPNG after which final approval will be given, the OEA must receive the visit notification at least 4 weeks in advance of the visit

occurring. For visits involving adventurous activities: Visit Leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence ([http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider\\_search.php](http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php)) or a LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>). If not, the Visit Leader must send the OEAP National Guidance document 8p provider questionnaire) (<http://oeapng.info/downloads/model-forms-mind-maps-and-checklists/>). Returned questionnaires must be scrutinised by visit leaders.

- d. For visits involving travel abroad Visit Leaders should initially gain authority from the CEO. Visit Leaders are then required to complete detailed planning well in advance and the EVC must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third-party providers and permission from the Head Teacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a provider form (NG document 8p provider questionnaire) (<http://oeapng.info/downloads/model-forms-mind-maps-and-checklists/>). Returned questionnaires must be scrutinised by Visit Leaders. The Trust will also need to be notified at the planning stage of the visit.

## 7. STAFF COMPETENCE

Northampton Primary Academy Trust recognises that staff competency is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and supports staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- A mentoring system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced trip leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to the role of visit leader

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a Visit Leader the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience.
- Any relevant training undertaken.
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue and the activities to be undertaken.

## 8. REQUIRMENT TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

Health and Safety laws do not prescribe activity specific staffing ratios, but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is 'effective'.

**Xxxxxx Primary School** will assess/determine effective supervision by proper consideration of:

- Staff competence.
- Activity – nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved).
- Group – age (including the development age) of the group, ability of the group (including special learning needs, behaviour, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc.).
- Environment – nature and location of the activity including the type of the activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions.
- Distance away from base.

However, as an exception to the above, Ofsted and DfE guidance prescribe ratios for Early Years.

The Visit Leader should follow OEAP National Guidance 4.3b Ratio and effective supervision <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-3b-ratios-and-effective-supervision/> and 4.3c Risk Management <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-3c-risk-management/>

## 9. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

**A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

**Xxxxxx Primary School** has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 3). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes. See also <http://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/>

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; where it involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Northampton Primary Academy Trust.

**Xxxxxxx Primary School** will practice their response to emergency situations on educational visits at regular intervals i.e. academy inset training.

## 10. VISIT PLANNING

The Visit Leader checklist – National Guidance document 3.3e

<http://oeapng.info/visit-leader/> is an important check on the planning of a visit.

When a Visit Leader cannot answer yes to a question on this checklist there should be a discussion with the EVC and or Head Teacher. In addition, the following steps must be completed for any visit:

- Gain outline approval from the Head Teacher to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism / charging policy.
- Ensure the visit:
  - has clear learning outcomes
  - has activities appropriate to the group
  - is planned to maximise benefits to the pupils while managing significant risks
  - is appropriately staffed
  - complies with the academy’s safeguarding policy
- Involve pupils in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensures emergency procedures include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the visit leader.
- Ensure the base contact back at academy is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.
- Ensure that the visit is correctly approved and recorded.

## 11. RISK MANAGEMENT

11.1 The risk management of an activity/visit should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. It is recommended a “Risk-Benefit Assessment” approach, whereby the starting point for planning should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained, through participation, provides some objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risks remaining after control measures have been put in place) is “acceptable”. The Health and Safety Executive endorse this approach through their “**Principles of Sensible Risk Management**” and advocate that it is important

that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

11.2 There is a legal requirement for the risk assessment process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks. There is no legal requirement to produce this risk assessment record in a particular format but academies and visit leaders should use the format that has been identified in the academy risk assessment procedure and follows the Health and Safety Executive's guidance on risk assessment <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.htm> When undertaking a risk assessment, a number of variables should be taken into account:

- The number of pupils involved
- The age of the pupils
- The previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits
- The time of the day and the time of year
- The travel arrangements
- The hazards of the environment being visited
- The numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers
- The nature of the activity

See National Guidance on good practice for risk management

<http://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/>

11.3 Individual risk assessments may be required. This should be used when individual students may be at risk due to behavioural/medical conditions and extraordinary provision may have to be made to accommodate them safely on a visit.

11.4 All parent helpers must be List 99 checked.

11.5 The publication 'Group Safety at Water Margins' must be consulted when assessing risks where the visit involves walking along the seashore, collecting samples in ponds or rivers, or paddling in shallow water. A risk assessment must be completed and authorisation gained.

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130323074033/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/water%20margins.pdf>

## 12. PARENTAL CONSENT

See the National Guidance document 4.3d on consent <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>. It is advisable that all parents/guardians are advised of educational trips and permission obtained for visits which take place off the school site.

### 13. MONITORING

The Visit Leader should undertake an evaluation of each educational visit and submit this to the Head Teacher and EVC.

### 14. INCLUSION

All academies must follow the National Guidance on inclusion see 3.2e <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>

### 15. CHARGING / FUNDING FOR TRIPS

All schools must follow the National Guidance on charging for school trips 3.2c <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>

### 16. TRANSPORT

All academies must follow the National Guidance on Transport for academy trips see 4.5a transport, 4.5b minibuses, 4.5c Transport in private cars and 4.5d seat belts <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>

### 17. INSURANCE

Insurance cover for approved educational visits is usually provided by the academy insurance provider (public liability) insurance policy. However, as academies may have moved to different insurance providers when they moved away from local authority control confirmation/checks should be made with the insurance provider before the visit takes place. See National Guidance 4.4c Insurance <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents/>

## Appendix 1 **Academy learning area**

### Academy Learning Area

#### General

This operating procedure applies to visits within the Academy Learning Area. It covers:

- a. Visits / activities that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal academy day. These do not require parental consent.
  
- b. All other visits / activities within the Learning Area (those that take place beyond the academy day or are not part of the curriculum) are covered by blanket consent but parents will be informed in advance and given the opportunity to withdraw their child.

These visits/activities:

- Do not normally need additional risk assessments / controls beyond following the operating procedure below. However, where a specific risk is identified because, for example, a particular pupil's needs then a review of the individual pupil's risk assessment should be made and a record kept.

#### Boundaries

The boundaries of the territory are shown on the attached map (**optional**). This area includes, but is not limited to the following frequently used venues see examples below:

- Park (identify name of park & location)
- Museum (identify name of museum and location)
- Shopping Centre (identify name of Shopping Centre and location)
- Theatre (identify name of theatre and location)
- Library (identify name of library and location)
- etc

#### Operating Procedure for Academy Learning Area

The following are potentially significant hazards within **XXXX Primary School** Learning area:

- Road traffic

- Other people / members of the public / animals
- Losing a pupil
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, falls
- Weather conditions
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles rubbish etc)

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head Teacher must give approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A list of approved staff should be maintained by the EVC and Head Teacher.
- The concept and operating procedure of the extended learning area is explained to all new parents when their child joins the academy.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults. (This depends on the area and the age / maturity of the pupils).
- Staff are familiar with the area and visited previously, including any 'no go areas' and have practiced appropriate management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group. (This needs a decision and will depend on the area you are in – return to academy, wait where they are, go to x and ask for help, etc.).
- All remotely supervised work in the Academy Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum. (this depends on age/maturity and location).
- Pupil's clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness before leaving academy.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available and staff are appropriately trained.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route and an estimated time of return.
- An academy mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. Hi-Viz waist coat for infants).
- A member of the staff accompanying the group is first aid trained.

## Appendix 2 Emergency procedure

The academy's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during academy hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the visit participants, including staff.
4. The visit leader(s) and the base contact know to request support from the Trust central team in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention.
5. The Academy Head Teacher has an emergency out of hours contact for the Trust central team to obtain additional support and resources as required.
6. The academy has personalised National Guidance emergency action cards and the appropriate cards are held by:
  - a. The visit leader(s) <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-1d-8-1d-visit-leader-emergency-action-card> The visit leader should also have a copy of the visit leader emergency checklist <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-1k-visit-leader-emergency-checklist/>
  - b. The first point of contact (e.g. independent person, the office or Headteacher) <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-1e-8-1e-first-contact-emergency-action-card/>
  - c. The designated emergency contact senior manager <http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-1f-8-1f-establishment-management-emergency-action-card/>
7. This emergency procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from Visit Leaders.

### Appendix 3 **Hospitalisation or need to see a medical professional**

- If a student needs professional medical attention whilst away, they will be accompanied by a member of staff (who will all have been DBS checked). Preferably, this adult will be of the same gender as the student but if this is not possible, then an adult of the opposite gender will remain with them.
- The visit leader will need to pay for their treatment and claim these expenses back from the insurance company.