



Educational Visits Policy

Policy update: February 2025

Next update: February 2026

EVC: Ellen Sanders. Training renewal February 2027

Introduction

Next Steps Education has the responsibility of providing guidance for offsite visits and it is essential that any staff member or contractor of Next Steps Education reads this policy before contemplating or organising any educational trip or visit to be made by students of our organisation.

This policy also complements and should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety, Safeguarding policies and students own Relation Learning Plan.

Additional guidance and regulation should also be read:

- THE OEAP National Guidance – Guidance for the Management of Outdoor learning, Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom. (Essential reading documents specific for your role e.g. Governor / Head / EVC / Visit Leader / etc.) see website link :

www.oeapng.info/

- The DfE guidance : Health & Safety on Educational Visits (Nov 2018), key points of which are addressed in this document

NB: FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE REGULATIONS MAY LEAD TO CONSEQUENCES FOR INSURANCE COVER AND LEGAL LIABILITY.

Reasons for visits

Next Steps Education aims to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.



Activities led by tutors and mentors of Next Steps Education must have a clearly defined educational/ developmental purpose. To enrich our offer for the students at Next Steps Education, we encourage a range of educational visits and other activities.

Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (Ellen Sanders)

The responsibilities of the EVC is to ensure that the management of visits and off-site activities is informed by an appropriate risk assessment

- to work with the Directors and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to establish Standard Operating Procedures to guide the risk assessment process for visits and non-adventurous activities
- to provide staff with support, advice and information that they need to organise off-site visits
- to ensure that leaders and staff have any relevant qualifications and are competent to lead and support particular visits and activities
- to ensure that procedures to inform parents and to obtain their consent where necessary are in place
- to work with each Visit Leader to ensure that appropriate emergency arrangements are in place for visits and off-site activities
- to review accident and incident reports relating to visits and off-site activities to ensure that any lessons are learnt
- to ensure that any third-party provider / contractor / coach has been vetted for competence (obtain appropriate risk assessments)

Responsibilities of the Visit Leader



Visit leaders will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity.

- obtain approval from EVC and, where appropriate, LA endorsement for the visit and the specific arrangements of this policy prior to undertaking the activity
- assess the risks to staff, young people and members of the public presented by the visit or activity in order to identify and implement any safety measures
- brief all supervising staff, volunteers and pupils in roles, responsibilities and expectations. No child should be taken off-site unless there is a trusted relationship between student and staff.
- inform parents about the visit and gain their consent
- establish appropriate emergency and contingency arrangements for the planned visit or activity which will include the identification of sufficient First Aid cover
- continually re-assess risks dynamically during the activity and make adjustments accordingly.
- vet any third-party provider / contractor / coach for competence

This should include:

- Do the values and ethos of the provider match our expectations?
- Is there a clear understanding about the responsibility for supervision at all times during the visit?
- What are the respective roles of provider staff and our staff?
- What provision will be made for our pupils' special needs?
- How flexible is the programme to meet changing circumstances?

When using external providers and facilities Next Steps Education, the tutors and mentors refer to national guidance from OEAP (<https://oeapng.info>).

Responsibilities of Additional Members of Staff

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:



- Assist the Visit Leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of others including young people on the visit
- Take time to understand their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

Responsibilities of Students

Whilst taking part in off-site activities students also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the Visit Leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:

- Avoid unnecessary risks
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct
- Inform a member of staff of safety concerns.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child. Subject to their agreement to the activity parents should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number

Risk Assessment

Next Steps Education Ltd is committed to providing a wide variety of outdoor activities and visits designed to challenge and develop young people. These inevitably feature a degree of risk that demands management. Arrangements will be achieved by a risk assessment led



by the Visit Leader for each activity/visit or series of visits undertaken. This process is guided by Next Steps Education specific documents which have been created to establish minimum standards and expectations for Visit Leaders. There are currently general examples of Risk Assessments for various categories of visit in the Staff Room.

These outline the minimum control measures that will apply to all such visits and off-site activities and have been drawn up by the Directors and EVC. They will be brought to the attention of anyone undertaking the role of Visit Leader.

In assessing the risks presented by a planned visit or activity, the Visit Leader must judge if the controls described in the Risk Assessment are adequate for controlling the risks. For each visit/activity, add any additional control measures needed in the Enhanced Risk Assessment column of the document.

Any activities delivered by staff falling within the definition of 'adventurous' will have a separate stand-alone risk assessment.

This process will be undertaken by the Visit Leader who, whilst being supported by the EVC, will be competent and equipped to complete this task. To meet statutory requirements and to ensure sufficient communication with other staff involved, this risk assessment will be recorded using the risk assessment format in Staff Room.

Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of children is paramount. In the event of a safeguarding issue or concern being identified during the trip or visit, the Visit Leader should follow the Safeguarding policy. All staff and volunteers on the trip should be made aware of these before the trip or activity takes place.

Arrangements should be in place to enable contact with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead outside normal hours if necessary. Contact details should be communicated to all staff/volunteers on the trip (as well as the Visit Leader) in case the safeguarding concern is about the Visit Leader.

Action in the Case of Emergency



The EVC will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place before approving visits. The Visit Leader will identify these arrangements via a process of risk assessment. Where necessary, this assessment must include the identification of contingency plans.

It will also include the identification of sufficient First Aiders, as well as emergency contact details which must include a company contact for outside normal hours if necessary.

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with establishment policy arrangements. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed to identify any learning points.

Insurance

Personal

- Next Steps Education hold employer, professional and public liability indemnities that cover all employed or contracted persons as well as any students in our care.
- In respect of students, Next Steps Education has a legal duty to take care of the wellbeing and safety of young people. Where there is a breach of this responsibility a claim for compensation may be brought.
- There is no requirement for Next Steps Education to make provision for loss through personal injury as the result of an accident where no blame may be attached. Personal accident insurance cover for students is a matter for the parents to arrange.

Submission of Visit Form Timescales

Risk Assessments and parental consent must be submitted by the Visit Leader to the EVC **at least 1 week** before the off-site visit takes place. Failure to meet this timescale may result in the planned visit being postponed or cancelled.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- Every two years



- After any significant changes to The OEAP National Guidance
- After a significant incident

Useful Information:

Organising an off-site visit timeline

- Visit leader to identify provider or venue for visit
- Do competence checks on the provider/venue and obtain risk assessments
- Read through Relation Learning Plan and identify any risk according to individual students.
- Complete Risk assessment
- Send to EVC for approval with any other supporting documents **1 week** before visit (Provider's own risk assessment)
- If visiting a provider/venue on a regular basis, please add appropriate start and end dates and inform EVC of the dates you have visited.