



ASPIRE ACADEMY

OUTDOOR LEARNING, LEARNING OUTSIDE the CLASSROOM and OFFSITE VISITS

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY FIRST ADOPTED AND RATIFIED BY THE TRUST	July 2014
POLICY REVIEWED / REVISED	November 2015
POLICY TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY OR AS REQUIRED	

Signature: *Val Jones*

Date: 2nd November 2015

Name: Val Jones

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

1. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 Aspire Academy Trust's Governing Body has formally adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel's (OEAPs) National Guidance (NG) as its own Employer Guidance and principle source of guidance and information regarding good practice for LOtC and offsite visits and the basis of this policy and procedures.
- 1.2 In the formulation of this policy and procedures, the Governing Body has taken into account relevant sections of 'Health & Safety, Department for Education Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies' (2011).
- 1.3 The Governing Body subscribes to Essex County Council's Educational Visits Support Service and has adopted the OEAPNG compliant Essex County School Visits Management Guidance Manual.
- 1.4 It is a contracted expectation that all Aspire Academy Trust employees must work within the requirements and guidance set out in 1.1 to 1.3 above.
- 1.5 The Governing Body will ensure that its employees are provided with:
 - all appropriate guidance relating to visits and LOtC activity
 - employer-led training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood
 - suitable systems and processes to ensure those trained are kept updated
 - access to advice, support and further training from appointed Advisers who have proven expertise and professional understanding of the guidance, the training and expectations set by current good practice

2. SCOPE and REMIT

- 2.1 Well planned and organised Outdoor Learning, LOtC and offsite visits provide pupils with invaluable experiences which enhance their learning at the Academy.
- 2.2 The Governing Body encourages Outdoor Learning, LOtC and Offsite visits and certain activities, such as Swimming, Outdoor Pursuits and Forest Schools will form a regular part of the curriculum.
- 2.3 This policy and procedures apply to all employees whose work involves any one of the following:
 - direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base
 - direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of LOtC
 - facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base
 - deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base
- 2.4 This applies regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

3. RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1** The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for the operation of this policy and procedures.
- 3.2** The Governing Body will itself approve all activities listed under Category C on Appendix A.
- 3.3** The Governing Body will, from the Principal, receive a formal annual report on all Outdoor Learning, LOtC and educational visits.
- 3.4** The Governing Body has delegated the daily operation of this policy and procedures to the Principal and the named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).
- 3.5** Both the Principal and the EVC will be trained and accredited in their roles through Essex County Council's Educational Visits Support Service training and undertake formal revalidation every 3 years.
- 3.6** The EVC will be responsible on a daily basis for the operation of the policy and procedures, including the appointment of Group Leaders (GLs), the training (where appropriate) of GLs, ensuring that GLs are fully conversant with the 'School Visits Management Guidance Manual', plan thoroughly the activity, complete risk assessments and complete all relevant paperwork and approved forms.
- 3.7** The EVC will ensure:
- a suitable group leader is appointed (this must not be an NQT)
 - all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
 - training needs have been met
 - the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
 - all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance
 - the Governing Body has approved the visit, if necessary, eg a residential visit
 - the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit
 - parents have signed consent forms
 - arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children
 - the mode of travel is appropriate and travel times there and back are known
 - there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
 - they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name
 - that they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff and volunteers' next of kin
- 3.8** The GL will:
- appoint a deputy
 - appoint an adult responsible for first aid and holding medicines, such as asthma pumps
 - be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range
 - be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not

- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents, and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below)

3.9 Teachers and teaching assistants on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with the Principal and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

3.10 Teaching staff and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable

3.11 The GL should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous

3.12 Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 No LOtC or visits will take place without a risk assessment (Appendix 1) having been carried out and approved by the EVC.

4.2 Risk assessments may be carried out by the GL and approved by the EVC or carried out by the EVC and approved by the Principal.

4.3 A formal assessment of the risks should have the aim of preventing the risks to reducing them to an acceptable level. Pupils will not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety will always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained to an acceptable level then the visit will not be approved.

4.4 The risk assessment will be based on the following considerations:

- what are the hazards?
- who might be affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?

- can the GL put the safety measures in place?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?

4.5 In addition to the initial risk assessment, the GL will continually monitor hazards throughout the activity and adapt the plans and reassess risks as necessary.

4.6 The GL should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- the location, routes and modes of transport
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- details of staffing: supervision including ratios and vetting checks (for example DBS checks for volunteers on overnight stays) the ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity
- the special educational or medical needs of pupils
- the effect (such as tiredness, loss of concentration, hunger and dehydration) previous activities and current activities may combine to have on those involved in them
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing
- how to cope when a pupil become unable or unwilling to continue
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

4.7 Regular or frequent visits of offsite activities will only require an initial risk assessment and not need repeating every time. However, it is important not to become complacent about the risks involved in such regular activities and careful monitoring and renewal of the generic risk assessment should take place at regular intervals.

4.8 Separate risk assessments are not required when using an approved provider, such as Essex Outdoor Education Service, who have their own OEAPNG compliant risk assessments and who hold the LOtC Quality Badge.

5. EXPLORATORY VISIT

5.1 Wherever possible the GL should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- assess potential areas and levels of risk during the journey to and from the venue
- ensure the venue has a risk assessment in place for educational visits
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- ensure that the GL is familiar with the area before taking a party of young pupils

5.2 If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group and to check there is a risk assessment in place for the venue. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools/academies who have recently visited the venue.

6. FIRST AID

- 6.1** First Aid provision will be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, and residential visits, there will be at least one trained first-aider in the group. All adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.
- 6.2** The minimum first-aid provision is:
- a suitably stocked first-aid bag
 - a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements
- 6.3** First-aid will be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The EVC should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on the activities planned.

7. SUPERVISION

- 7.1** It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:
- sex, age and ability of group
 - pupils with special educational or medical needs
 - nature of activities
 - experience of adults in off-site supervision
 - duration and nature of the journey
 - type of any accommodation
 - competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- 7.2** Ratios for each visit will be assessed individually through the risk assessment procedure. Where a high adult : pupil ratio is required, it may not always be feasible to use Academy staff alone. Parents or volunteers with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They will be carefully selected and ideally they will be well known to the Academy and the pupil group.
- 7.3** All adult supervisors, including Academy staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special educational needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Supervisors will retain responsibility for the group at all times. For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors will ensure that they are not alone in a one-to-one situation with a pupil.
- 7.4** Whatever the length and nature of the activity, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The GL should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

8. PUPILS

- 8.1** Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for an Academy off-site activity. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the activity will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack

of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils will also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and others' safety.

- 8.2** Pupils will be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.
- 8.3** Pupils will be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.
- 8.4** Pupils whose behaviour is such that the GL is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the GL should consider whether such pupils will return home early.
- 8.5** It is for the GL to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:
- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity
 - background information about the place to be visited
 - how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
 - what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
 - who is responsible for the group
 - what to do if approached by a stranger
 - what to do if separated from the group
 - emergency procedures
 - rendezvous procedures
- 8.6** All pupils, regardless of Special Educational Need, cultural background or language are given the opportunity to undertake LOtC and educational visits. The Principle and EVC will make every effort to accommodate all pupils whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

9. COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

- 9.1** Parents/Carers need to be aware that the supervising adults on the visit will be acting in their place, 'in loco parentis', and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent/carer would. The following information matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents and carers, and will be included in a letter prior to visit:
- dates of the visit, times of departure and return
 - mode(s) of travel
 - names of GL
 - visit's objectives
 - details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
 - clothing and equipment to be taken
 - money, if any, to be taken
 - the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to

ASPIRE ACADEMY

APPENDIX A

GUIDANCE TO STAFF ORGANISING OUTDOOR LEARNING / LOtC / OFF-SITE VISITS

In order to help staff involved in planning and managing such activities, the range of Outdoor Learning/LOtC/Offsite Visit environments has been divided into three categories A, B and C. The categories relate to the different levels of potential risk presented by the activity.

The following is an outline of each category and an explanation of who should approve the activities that fall within the category.

Category A – Approval by EVC/Principal only

These are activities that are part of the regular curriculum and life of the Academy. They take place locally; involve walking or a short vehicle journey and where the activities present no significant risks.

Such activities will be supervised by the GL who has been assessed by the EVC as being suitably and appropriately experienced and competent to lead this category of visit.

The GL will not normally need to hold National Governing Body (NGB) Awards or other accreditation. Some activities, such as cycling in school grounds as part of the Cycle Proficiency Scheme will require staff with specialist qualifications.

Examples include:

- walking in the park or on non-remote country paths under close supervision
- visits to public swimming pools, museums, art galleries
- Academy PE/sports fixtures
- cycling in the grounds of the Academy
- orienteering in an enclosed area near the Academy
- Field Studies in environments presenting no significant hazards (these might include visits to LA managed Environmental Centres, Farm Visits, Geological, Geographic or Scientific fieldwork environments presenting no significant hazards)

Category B – Approval by EVC/Principal based on outcome of submission through EVOLVE

These are activities not regularly or routinely undertaken by the Academy and includes some higher risk or higher profile activities.

Safe supervision requires the GL to have:

- recent relevant experience
- undergone additional activity and/or site specific training
- to hold either a relevant qualification, or be judged as appropriately competent by the EVC and Principal

The activities include:

- walking in non-remote country where a remote supervision style is used
- camping in lowland non-remote areas
- orienteering in a public or non-enclosed area
- cycling on roads or non-remote off-road terrain
- geological fieldwork in a coastal location or in, or by water
- low level initiative challenges
- beach barbeques/beach activities (not swimming)
- theme parks
- water parks
- adventure playgrounds
- student exchange visits
- field studies in a coastal location or in, or by water

Category C – Approval by EVC/Principal and Governing Body based on outcome of submission through EVOLVE

This category includes all the activities that are within scope of the Adventurous Activity Licensing Regulations 1996. It also includes a range of adventurous activities that fall outside the scope of the above licensing regulations, but are commonly pursued by the academy.

Category C requires that the GL should have undergone a recognised course of training, have gained relevant experience, and have been assessed as competent, usually by being in possession of a current National Governing Body qualification.

Activities in Category C include:

Watersports	Rock Climbing	Hill and Moorland Walking
Mountaineering	Skiing	Horse Riding
Caving and Potholing	Swimming in the sea or inland waters	
Adventure activities including river, stream and gorge walks		

ASPIRE ACADEMY

APPENDIX B

OUTDOOR LEARNING/ LOtC / VISITS RISK ASSESSMENT
--

Nature of Location and Activity / Visit:	
Group Leader:	
Proposed date(s) of Activity / Visit:	

Potential Hazard	Risks (who might be affected by the hazards identified?)	Risk Rating			What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level? What steps will be taken in an emergency?	Tick if in place
		H	M	L		
e.g. pupil gets lost	All pupils			X	Regular roll calls or head-counts. Pupils not permitted to go out alone at any time. Staff to have a list of pupils' mobile telephone numbers. All pupils to have the Group Leader's mobile telephone number. Well defined meeting points and clear instructions given to pupils of what to do if they do get lost. Appropriate supervision ratios and vetting checks have been carried out.	

Emergency plan in case of incident or accident:

Risk assessment prepared by:	Date:
------------------------------	-------

<p style="text-align: center;">OUTDOOR LEARNING / LOtC / VISITS PLANNING APPLICATION and APPROVAL FORM</p>

The Group Leader should complete this form as soon as possible once the preparations are complete. The GL should have already received approval from the EVC/Principal for the proposed activity in principle and should have regularly updated the EVC on the progress of the preparations. The GL should obtain parental consent.

Not all sections will be relevant to every proposed visit. Please attach any extra information not covered by these sections.

1. Location and Nature of activity/visit:

2. Proposed Date(s):

3. Purpose of activity/visit and specific educational objectives:

4. Places to be visited:

5. Dates and times of Departure/Return from/to Academy

6. Transport arrangements: include the name of the transport company

7. Organising company/agency (if any): include licence reference number if the body is registered with the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Licence No if registered: _____

8. Proposed cost and financial arrangements:

9. Details of the programme of activities:

10. Details of any hazardous activity and the associated planning, organisation and staffing: (please attach a copy of the full Risk Assessment)

11. Names, relevant experience, qualifications and specific responsibilities of staff accompanying the party:

12. Names, relevant qualifications and specific responsibilities of other adults accompanying the party:

13. Confirmation that appropriate vetting checks have been carried out:

14. Existing knowledge of places to be visited and whether an exploratory visit is intended:

15. Size and composition of the group:

Age range: _____

Number of boys / Number of girls: _____ / _____

Adult to Pupil ratio / Leader/Participant ratio: _____ / _____

16. Information on parental consent:

Information on whether the GL has received all consent forms duly completed and signed (parental consent may precede or follow approval):

Please attach copy of information sheet sent to parents, the parental consent form and any risk assessment forms.

17. Names of pupils with particular learning needs and/or medical needs:

18. Attach a full list of pupils and staff attending:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Group Leader's full name: _____