



## **Penpol School Policy for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities (2022)**

### **1. Scope**

This policy covers all educational visits and outdoor learning activities organised through the school and for which the governors and headteacher are responsible.

#### **Benefits**

The governors aim for the school is to foster an educational environment in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, gender, religion or individual need. This aspiration applies equally to the planning and management of all educational visits and outdoor learning.

Outdoor learning and visits enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas and may include the following outcomes:

- Curriculum Enhancement
- Adopting a positive attitude to challenge, learning and adventure
- Developing personal confidence and character
- Developing self-awareness and social skills
- Appreciating the natural environment and the importance of sustainable development
- Acquiring a range of psychomotor skills
- Demonstrating initiative, resilience, self-reliance and responsibility
- Developing skills in communication, teamwork, problem solving and leadership
- Appreciating the benefits of physical fitness and lifelong activity
- Increasing their motivation and appetite for learning
- Broadening horizons and becoming open to a wider range of life choices and employment opportunities

For a full and comprehensive statement of the benefits of outdoor learning see the OEAP National Guidance <https://oeapng.info/> Making the Case

Residential opportunities and adventurous activities can play a significant role in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people as well as raising aspiration and achievement. Outdoor activities can contribute to a healthy lifestyle and encourage an interest in lifelong activity. They can also help young people to understand how to be safe by assessing and managing risk.

For comprehensive information on the benefits of residential experience see 'Learning Away – Brilliant Residentials' <http://learningaway.org.uk/>

## **2. Employer's policies and OEAP National Guidance**

The management of educational visits and outdoor learning places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the governors, headteacher, the visit leader, members of staff and volunteers, students and parents/carers. The school also has responsibilities to members of the public and to third parties. This policy on educational visits and outdoor learning therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.

It is a priority of this school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and have clearly articulated learning outcomes.

***The governors endorse Cornwall Council's adoption of the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance <http://oeapng.info/> and the accompanying policy document "Policy for the Management of Off-Site Visits and Outdoor Learning, 2020" as the basis for the school's health and safety policy for the management of educational visits and off-site activities.***

The governing board seeks to ensure that every learner has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the governing board acknowledges and supports the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place outside the classroom or away from the school environment.

## **3. Responsibilities and Roles**

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all visits and outdoor learning activities have appropriate and clearly articulated learning outcomes
- approve all visits and activities, based on compliance with relevant Cornwall Council guidance, recognised best practice and the school's policy
- ensure off-site activities and visits are led by competent staff who are suitably experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the particular group of young people
- check that the staffing ratio is appropriate for each visit
- ensure visit leaders have access to a planning checklist, based on the National Guidance, and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the school (See Appendix A)
- check that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and suitable control measures are in place
- monitor educational visits and outdoor learning and provide a regular report to the Governing Body/Management Board about the activities which have taken place

### Educational Visits Coordinator

In order to carry out the above responsibilities effectively the headteacher may delegate specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The headteacher will be considered to be the EVC where tasks are not delegated to a named member of staff. The EVC will be responsible for carrying out agreed tasks and must attend the relevant training accredited by The Outdoor Education Adviser Panel.

**Name of EVC:** *Mr Nicholas Stanlake*

### The Visit Leader

The visit leader will:

- follow policy and procedures of the Council and the school
- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity
- articulate clearly the learning outcomes of the visit/activity
- where appropriate, appoint a deputy leader who can take over at any time
- clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all adult helpers
- obtain the headteacher's approval (or the EVC on his /her behalf) before any visit or outdoor learning activity takes place
- assess the risks involved and amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk assessment
- use the school planning checklist to ensure all procedures have been followed (See Appendix A)
- ensure an EV form is completed if the visit falls into any of the required categories
- inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate
- establish emergency procedures for all elements of the visit
- ensure adequate first aid provision is available
- re-assess risks while the visit or activity takes place
- ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather or other factors.

### Responsibilities of additional members of staff assisting with visits and outdoor learning

Members of staff, volunteers and other helpers should:

- assist the visit leader to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are being addressed
- assist the visit leader in ensuring the health, safety and welfare of young people and adults on the visit
- be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

### Responsibilities of pupils

Pupils 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 visit leader and other members of staff
- behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct
- inform a member of staff of significant hazards.

### Responsibilities of parents/carers

Parents have an important role in deciding whether a visit or outdoor learning 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 visit leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number;
- sign the consent form.

## **4. Procedural requirements**

The following arrangements apply to the management of specific provision for educational visits and outdoor learning:

### Approval of educational visits and outdoor learning

**The headteacher/ deputy or EVC on behalf of the headteacher** is responsible for approving all educational visits and outdoor learning activities. This includes ensuring the Visit Leader is competent to lead the activity in question. Where the responsibility is delegated, the Headteacher still retains the legal responsibility.

### Arrangements for standard visits, that are local, not adventure, typically:

- Visits to local amenities (park, church, library or similar)
- Weekly swimming lessons in a pool
- Use of school minibus
- Sports fixtures
- Forest school-type activities (excluding fire lighting and knife skills)
  - Approved by headteacher or EVC where responsibility delegated
  - Recorded via school-specific arrangements OR on electronic EV form
  - Covered by 'blanket' consent form
  - Generic risk assessment
  - Checking out/in procedure in place including group list, leader(s), location
  - Coronavirus protocol
  - Emergency procedures in place

### Arrangements for more enhanced visits, typically

- Adventure activities
- Foreign visits
- Residential visits
- Visits more than 50 miles from base
  - Recorded on electronic EV form
  - Approved by headteacher or EVC where responsibility delegated
  - Endorsed by Cornwall Outdoors
  - Covered by specific consent form
  - Specific risk assessment
  - Coronavirus protocols in place
  - Emergency procedures in place

### Consent

When an activity is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time and no parental contributions are requested, it can be covered by a blanket consent form completed at the beginning of the school year. However, in the interests of good relations between the school and the home, it is good practice to ensure that parents/carers are fully informed via text message. This is a useful opportunity to remind parents that they have given consent, and to give them an opportunity to withdraw it, should they so wish, or to inform them of any particular items required.

Visits/activities operating under the blanket consent form must follow the school's operational guidance that makes it clear how the activity should be planned and delivered, meeting all necessary recommendations and requirements, as well as assuring educational quality.

**Residential visits, foreign visits, adventurous activities or activities for which a charge is made will need specific informed consent, including agreement to any payment or cancellation terms.**

### **5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school monitors the planning and organisation of visits and outdoor learning through the approval process identified above.

In addition, senior staff monitor the management of visits 'in the field' on a sampling basis typically by taking the role of assistant visit leader supporting colleagues during activities and visits.

### Evaluation

Visit leaders are asked to complete an evaluation of their activities using the pro-forma in *Appendix C*.

The governing boards will review this policy:

- Every two years  
Or at such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of educational visits and Off-Site Activities  
Or should significant issues be brought to the attention of the governing board through the report of the headteacher.

### **6. Provision of training and information**

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures will be made available to all staff within the school who may be responsible for leading educational visits and outdoor learning, and to any parent requesting a copy.

The Headteacher will make additional information available to staff to help ensure the safe management of educational visits, including access to the OEAP National Guidance website <http://oeapng.info/> and the accompanying Cornwall policy document "*Policy for the Management of Off-Site Visits and Outdoor Learning, 2020*"

Appropriate induction and training will be made available to leaders and other adults taking part in educational visits in order to ensure high quality outdoor learning for pupils and to meet health and safety requirements. First aid provision and training of staff will be in accordance with good practice.

The headteacher (or EVC on his /her behalf) will maintain a record of the qualifications held by staff and volunteers involved in outdoor activities including first aid, lifesaving, minibus driving and specific adventure activities.

## **7. Risk Management**

The school has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed, requiring them to be reduced to an “acceptable” or “tolerable” level. Risk management should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating whereby the starting point for any risk assessment should be a consideration of the intended benefits and learning outcomes. This provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is “acceptable.” visit leaders should be clear that ongoing (dynamic) evaluation of the risks is still required in the event of changing conditions or unexpected situations.

**The visit leader is responsible for completing the risk assessments for their activity/visit ideally supported by others in their team. The EVC can assist with this process.**

The school has a bank of generic risk assessments relating to visits/activities. Visit leaders may use these as the starting point for their risk management and will need to make them specific to their proposed activity the variables typically being:

- Staff
- Activity
- Group
- Environment
- Distance from base

## **8. Choosing Providers and Venues**

In order to establish a framework of safety and quality visit leaders must ensure that the chosen activity and location matches the age and ability of the pupils in question. Providers engaged to deliver activities to students must therefore meet the minimum requirements of Cornwall Council safety policy. In the first instance the providers listed on the dropdown menu on the electronic EV form either hold the Learning outside the Classroom (LoC) Quality Badge (see below) or have completed a provider questionnaire subsequently checked by Cornwall Outdoors.

The LoC Quality Badge is an assurance of quality and safety across all provider sectors from museums and galleries to sports tours, ski companies and foreign expeditions. However, it is neither a mandatory nor statutory requirement.

Holders of this accreditation may be found at <http://lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>

Adventure Activities Licensing is a statutory scheme requiring providers of certain adventure activities to hold an AALA licence. The activities in-scope are caving, climbing, water sports and trekking however there are anomalies as the scheme does not cover, for example, surfing, sub-aqua, water skiing, climbing walls. AALA licence holders can be found at [http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider\\_search.php](http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php)

If the provider does not have LotC accreditation and is not on the dropdown menu on the EV form, they must be sent a Provider Questionnaire (Appendix D) which should then be returned to Cornwall Outdoors for checking.

### **9. Volunteers**

Where visit leaders intend to utilise volunteer helpers the following arrangements must be in place:

- Enhanced DBS checks must be in place for any volunteers helping on a residential, or car drivers who are used regularly to transport young people.
- All volunteers must be clear about their responsibilities when helping on an activity. Equally they must be competent to fulfil those responsibilities.
- Careful consideration must be given to using volunteers who are related to any of the party members on the activity/visit.

*In circumstances where the visit leader is not a member of the school staff they must be deemed as competent to lead that activity/visit and must be fully conversant with all the school's policies, procedures and expectations including emergency procedures.*

### **10. Action in the case of emergency**

The headteacher must ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Council policy, to cover the range of activities undertaken from the school and the times at which they take place. This will include a minimum of two emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the governor for out of hours contact.

Any accidents and incidents that occur during educational visits and activities must be reported and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy. Cornwall Council must be informed of notifiable accidents and incidents which occur in its maintained schools. Accidents and incidents must be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

## **11. Behaviour**

This Visits Policy encourages the use of the school's behaviour policy as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young persons' behaviour. Such expectations in conduct need to be explained to both the young people and those in a position of parental authority before a visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where the code is breached.

Things to bear in mind when planning a visit:

- Do young people sign up to a "behaviour contract" for all residential visits?
- Do parents also sign and accept responsibility for removing young people in prescribed circumstances?
- What are the expectations regarding discipline and sanctions on visits?
- Any specific establishment/trip rules relevant to visits (e.g. whether children are allowed to bring mobile phones or other electronic devices).

## **12. Inclusion**

This school seeks to ensure that outdoor learning and visits are accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, religion or ability to pay. If the proposed pupil group includes young people with special needs, every reasonable effort should be made to find venues and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

**An individual risk assessment must be completed for any pupil with SEND taking part in a visit or outdoor learning activity.**

## **13. Insurance**

Visit leaders must ensure that suitable insurance arrangements are in place to cover the activity they are leading. However, as a starting point:

The schools insurance policy covers any and all activities within the UK, foreign travel is not covered with additional external insurance is required. The level of cover covers all employees and volunteers with personal accident cover included.

The checking if valid insurance for any activity and trip must be completed by the trip organiser before the trip can be signed off, this is present on the pre-trip checklist.

## **14. Financial Arrangements**

It is important to make every learning opportunity affordable to ensure maximum participation. Regular checks are carried out to ensure the providers are giving value for money and the school is receiving the best deal.

Parents are informed of the cost of each trip, or visit, well in advance to ensure they have the opportunity to make the necessary savings. The school is committed to helping any family that might find the costs difficult to meet and offer to pay children on the pupil Premium list 50% of the costs. Those outside this remit are also offered support at the discretion of the Headteacher or a chance to pay smaller amounts over a longer period of time.

Staff who attend over-night camps are recompensed with time in-lieu at the rate of one over-night stay = 3 hours time in-lieu.

**This policy has been agreed by the governing board**



on: .....

The review date for this policy is: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....

**Chair of Governors**

Signed: .....

Date: .....

**Headteacher**

**Educational visits co-ordinator**

Signed: .....

Date: .....

## Visit Leader Check List

This checklist is designed as a final check on planning, or as a review tool for regular visits. The relevance of some of the points and the complexity of the responses are dependent on the nature of a particular visit.

The benefits and risks of all aspects of the visit have been considered and the visit plan has an appropriate balance with an acceptable level of residual risk.	
<b>Content and Aims:</b>	
	There are clear and well considered learning aims that are particular to the development of the group as a whole and individuals within it, which contribute to the wider curricular or programme aims of the establishment.
	Monitoring and post activity/visit review and evaluation arrangements are in place.
The process has led to a visit plan addressing the following variables:	
<b>Staffing:</b>	
	I am clearly identified as the Visit Leader and approved by the establishment.
	All members of the Visit Leadership Team are sufficiently confident and competent to fulfil their designated role.
	There are sufficient leaders to ensure effective supervision and deal with incidents and emergencies.
	All members of the Visit Leadership Team have received all relevant information on both the visit and the group.
	If accompanying leaders are taking a family member on the visit, there are arrangements to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
	I have kept my EVC informed during the planning process.
<b>Activities:</b>	
	Activities are appropriate to the aims of the visit and the nature of the participants.
	Appropriately competent Activity Leaders are in the Visit Leadership Team or a suitable Provider has been contracted to lead activities.
	There is a sufficient amount of suitable equipment for activities.
<b>Group:</b>	
	Parental consent is in place (where needed) and up to date medical information and contact details are available and shared with the Visit Leadership Team and any relevant Provider staff.
	Information has been provided to parents and young people to enable informed consent (where consent is required).
	Young people have been involved in the planning and risk benefit assessment process. Where this was not appropriate young people have been provided with all required information to know what to do and what is expected of them.
	Child protection issues are addressed.
	Inclusion issues are addressed.

<b>Environment:</b>	
	Environmental factors (weather, daylight hours, temperature, water levels etc) have been considered.
	Accessibility issues are addressed.
	Safety and security have been checked and considered
	I have undertaken a preliminary visit if appropriate or required by establishment policy. In the absence of a pre-visit I have sufficient information from other sources.
	There is access to first aid at an appropriate level.
	Where remote supervision will be used the environment is suitable for it.
	Accommodation, where used, is safe, suitable and appropriate.
<b>Distance:</b>	
	Travel or transport arrangements are appropriate.
	There is a Plan B in place, where necessary.
	There is an emergency plan in place and Leaders, Helpers, Participants, Providers and Emergency Contacts have been given relevant information about it.
	Suitable insurance is in place.
<b>Finally:</b>	
	The visit meets all relevant requirements of my employer and establishment policy/procedure.
	My decision is that this visit is appropriately prepared and should take place.

Signed:

Date:

Signed by Head/Deputy/EVC:

Dates: