



Dame Alice Owen's School
The Dame Alice Owen Foundation - 1613

**POLICY FOR OFFSITE VISITS AND
LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM (LOTC) ACTIVITIES**

Agreed by the Governing Body Facilities Management Committee

March 2016

To be reviewed

Spring 2018

[first approved in November 2015; reviewed every 2 years]

To be monitored by the Headteacher

Policy for Offsite Visits and LOTC Activities

The Staff and Governors of Dame Alice Owen's School acknowledge the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people, and fully support and encourage those that are well planned and managed.

This document provides guidance for the planning and management of off-site visits and related activities. It is available electronically on the school's Shared Drive and on the VLE, along with a number of other supporting documents.

All visits and LOTC activities will be planned in such a way as to ensure that the benefits and intended learning outcomes are clearly identified and understood by the supervising adults beforehand and can form the basis for objective evaluation afterwards.

This establishment uses a spreadsheet-based system for recording and monitoring visits. This is managed by the Visits Administrator, based in the finance office. Arrangements for all visits and LOTC activities will be recorded by means of standard operating procedures using appropriate risk assessments. Originals of all completed documentation relating to Educational Visits are held by the Head's PA.

Scope and Remit

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements of their employer's guidance. This policy relates to Hertfordshire's "Guidance for the Management of LOTC and Offsite Visits" (HG) and the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAPNG) 'National Guidance' (NG). This guidance can be found on the following web sites:

<http://oeapng.info>

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/schlfe/outside/offsitevisits/>

This policy applies to all members of establishment staff, and other adults associated with Dame Alice Owen's School who take responsibility for children and young people participating in learning and recreational activities in environments that are different from where the young people are usually

based. It therefore applies when organising and supervising children and young people taking part in off-site activities and visits, as well as when taking part in on-site activities outdoors.

This policy provides the key reference for sound planning for learning and recreational activities that involve taking groups of children and young people away from their usual operational base. It should be implemented when using places such as:

- local facilities and open spaces
- places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres and museums etc.
- residential venues
- learning ventures abroad

and 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 Learning Outside the Classroom (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.

Staff must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

Roles and Responsibilities

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), health and safety responsibilities lie with the employer (the Governing Body). The employer has the legal responsibility to carry out the duties imposed by the Act. However, employers can delegate the tasks necessary to discharge these duties, even though the overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the employer.

Headteacher (see NG docs 3.4g, 3.3b)

The Head teacher (or their nominated delegate) will ensure that: -

- All off-site visits and LOtC activities comply with employer guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required;
- All staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they may be allocated;
- There is a clearly designated person, either him/her self or another suitable member of staff, as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and that the designated person meets employer requirements, including undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required by the employer;
- If taking part in the visit or activity as either an Assistant Leader or as a group member, s/he is clear about their role and that they should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader (who will have sole charge of the visit);
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. Where access to the young people is regular or significant, DBS checks must be in place as required;
- S/he is assured that the EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated;

- Sufficient time is assigned for staff to organise visits properly;
- A culture of apprenticeship /succession planning, to ensure sustainable visits and the development of competent visit leaders and EVCs, is supported within the establishment;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visit information has been shared with parents and that consent has been sought where necessary;
- Arrangements are made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff;
- Inclusion issues are addressed;
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- Details related to the visit (including person details of both participants staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident;
- That there are contingency plans in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled (Plan B);
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as are required by the establishment visit policy;
- Staff are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- Risk assessments are proportional, suitable and sufficient and based on the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management'. The adoption of materials made available by employers to reduce bureaucracy is good practice;
- Where the activities or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been sought; national schemes e.g. LOtC Quality Badge, AALS licence, Adventuremark, or a clear management Statement of Competence, are recognised in keeping with Hertfordshire's recommendations and make further seeking of provider assurances unnecessary
- All visits are evaluated with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any serious incident and to inform the operation of future visits;
- Appropriate emergency procedures are in place in case of a major incident
- Procedures are in place to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident;
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – see NG docs 3.4j, 3.3a

In this establishment the EVC is currently the Headteacher.

The EVC will: -

- Be specifically competent, with practical experience or training in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment. The EVC will receive structured support, at least annually, from an LA or DfE specialist adviser
- Participate in training, and update training, as required by national and local regulations
- Support the head of establishment (where the EVC is not the Headteacher) in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions.

- Ensure that a policy is in place for offsite visits and LOtC activities, that it is updated as necessary, and is readily available to staff via the shared area and the VLE and that procedures should aim to minimise bureaucracy, taking full advantage of any national schemes that provide assurances regarding safety and quality of provision.(e.g. there should be no need to seek assurances from adventure activity providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge, or a current AALS Licence, or Adventuremark).
- Ensure Offsite and LOtC activities meet employer guidance requirements.
- Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that employers' guidance and establishment procedures are properly understood.
- Ensure Offsite activities are led by competent leaders and that assistant supervisors are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders, including voluntary helpers.
- Support the Headteacher (where the EVC is not the Headteacher) with approval and other decisions.
- Monitor visit planning and arrange for sample monitoring in the field as appropriate.
- Ensure DBS checks are in place where required.
- Provide sufficient guidance to visit and activity leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include emergency contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated; this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

Visit Leaders (see NG docs 3.4k, 3.3e)

The Visit/Activity Leader will: -

- Have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. S/he must be an employee and not a volunteer.
- Be competent to take on such responsibilities and tasks as may be allocated or required for the duration of the visit/activity and be formally approved to do so.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management. This establishment sees it as good practice to involve all participating staff in the planning and risk management process for any given offsite visit or LOtC activity to ensure wider understanding. It is also seen as good practice to involve young people in these processes wherever appropriate;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and appoint a deputy wherever possible;
- Ensure that where any accompanying staff includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management;
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed. e.g. DBS checks
- Collate, make available and disseminate relevant information to supporting staff, parents and young people as appropriate
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- Arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
 1. the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities.
 2. the nature, location and duration of the activity.
- Ensure the visit is effectively supervised; the overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying establishment staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- Have attended specific training such as HCC's 'Visit Leader Awareness' or the OEAP's 'Visit Leader' training

See also NG docs 3.4l, 3.4m, 3.4n, 3.3f

Member of Governing Body/Management Board (see NG docs 3.4f, 3.3c)

There will be a member of the School's Governing Body who is designated as specifically responsible for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities. This is the Chair of the Facilities Committee.

This person's role is to "enable and ensure" by acting as a "critical friend".

S/he will ensure that: -

- S/he has a clear understanding of whether the management board or governing body is the direct employer of establishment staff; in which case the body will carry the same responsibilities as those of a Director of Children's Services;
- S/he has an understanding of how outdoor learning supports a wide range of learning outcomes;
- S/he has access to employer guidance as well as establishment policy, and a training package to support it;
- Establishment policy clarifies his/her involvement in the visit approval process;
- There is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements;
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements
- The establishment visit policy supports the principles of inclusion
- There are monitoring procedures in place

Competence

Competence is a combination of experience, training/qualifications and common sense.

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants.

Consideration will be given to the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (check Visit History on the Educational Visits spreadsheet)
- b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- d) Is the leader an employee at the establishment?
- e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision making abilities?
- g) What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- i) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- j) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications, especially if leading adventurous activities? (See Appendix 1 of HCC Employer Guidance)
- k) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

This establishment operates a process of apprenticeship and succession for all staff likely to be involved in organising, leading or accompanying offsite visits and LOtC activities.

The establishment undertakes to ensure that all such staff, will undergo an induction process that typically entails Visit Leader Awareness training, either in-house or from the LA's Offsite Visits Adviser, access to (and training where required) the establishment's visits area on the shared drive and VLE and practical experience of accompanying visits and LOtC activities *before* being tasked with leading a visit for themselves.

Planning (see NG docs 1.1d, 3.3e, 4.3a, 5.2b, 5.2e)

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, based on the level of the visit

(See Appendix A).

Risk Assessment

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes or attachments.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question: '*What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?*' It should focus on those issues that are specific to the individual event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event. Significant issues must be recorded on Form OV1, either as notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is relevant to the needs of the group.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. The provider's risk assessment should be provided alongside the risk assessment for the visit.

Use of generic risk assessments

A selection of generic risk assessments is available in Word format from the Health & Safety pages on the shared area, VLE and Hertfordshire Grid.

Whilst not exhaustive, the control measures contained within these documents are probably sufficient to cover most eventualities likely to be encountered in the course of most offsite visits and LOtC activities.

Staff are encouraged to compile their own "event-specific" risk assessments which can then be reviewed and re-used as required.

Plan B

Alternative arrangements should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

Where appropriate, all alternative activities should be fully considered and risk assessed beforehand.

Seeking Assurances from Provider

Many providers have websites and offer information packs which contain the sorts of information required for a risk assessment and these should be used.

To reduce bureaucracy for both Visit Leaders and Providers, leaders should take advantage of national schemes that have been established to eliminate the need for questionnaires and forms as advised in LA guidance e.g. **LOtC Quality Badge, AALS Licence and 'Adventuremark'**.

Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of Health and Safety, and Visit Leaders need not seek further verification. The LOTC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.

Visit Leaders may ask for copies of risk assessment documentation and may seek assurance of a provider's competence to deliver their activities safely by means of a Safety Management statement if this is not already provided.

Preliminary Visits

Wherever reasonably possible, it is good practice for the Visit Leader to make a preliminary visit to a venue or provider beforehand in order for them to familiarise themselves with the layout and surroundings, and any site-specific procedures or issues which may have an impact on the visit or members of the group.

Within the UK, highest priority for preliminary visits will be where no serving member of staff from the establishment has visited before, then when the Visit Leader has no experience of the venue/activity.

For overseas visits, advantage should be taken of any offers by tour operators for "leaders' orientation"-type visits.

Participants

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, and will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

Outcomes (see NG doc 5.1c)

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Reference to Educational Objectives is made on Forms OV1 and OV2.

Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including:

- Relationships
- Emotional & spiritual
- Cross curricular
- Individual
- Teamwork
- Environmental

Preparatory work should take place in advance of the visit where appropriate. This, in conjunction with activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow-up work.

['High Quality Outdoor Education'](#) can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place.

Staffing and Supervision (see NG docs 4.2a, 3.2g)

The Governors require that the school s that an **appropriate level of supervision at all times** for all visits and that such supervision is 'effective'. This must have been approved by the EVC and Headteacher in accordance with Governing Body policy.

The visit leader and EVC will make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;
- the contingency or 'Plan B' options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

A useful 'starting point for consideration' is 1 adult:10 young people. Where departure from this starting point results in fewer staff, the justification should be recorded as a note on the risk assessment

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Staff and volunteers who work *frequently* or *intensively* with, or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process. For the purpose of this policy:

- '*frequently*' is defined as 'once a week or more'.
- '*intensively*' is defined as 3 times in a 30 day period or overnight (2am - 6am).

Remote Supervision

Young people must be supervised throughout all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision.

'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff;
- the emergency systems in place.

Use of Voluntary Helpers

The use of parents and other adults with a clear association with the school, as helpers or supervisors on offsite visits or LOTC activities, is seen as a valuable means of encouraging or maintaining closer links

with the local community and accessing a wider set of skills and experience than may exist amongst the school's staff.

Such volunteers will need to understand and consent to the fact that they will be answerable to the visit/activity leader.

It is a fact that a volunteer will not be accountable through a legalistic audit trail (as would exist were their involvement based on a contractual relationship) and is therefore the case that a volunteer helper cannot be appointed as a Visit Leader.

It is good practice that all adult helpers and volunteers are subject to DBS checking; however this may not be required where there is no possibility for unsupervised direct contact exists.

Clear DBS -checks must have been returned before a volunteer adult helper may participate in a residential visit or activity.

Emergency Procedures

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of, and adhere to, the school's policy on emergency procedures.

The school maintains a number of mobile 'phones specifically for use during offsite visits which should have all relevant contact details pre-programmed into them. It is each Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure these 'phones have:

- the correct details programmed into them beforehand;
- fully-charged batteries (and chargers available if necessary)
- sufficient credit available for the duration of the visit

Beware of over-reliance on mobile 'phones; in event of an emergency a land-line should be used wherever possible.

For all "out of hours" and residential visits there will be a nominated person(s) that can provide 24/7 cover as an Emergency Contact and that the person(s) so nominated will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit. This will include medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff as well as young people.

Consideration will be given to the following:

- Criteria for identifying the nominated Emergency Contact(s)
- Is more than one Emergency Contacts required?
- Procedure for lodging visit plans to enable them to be accessed in the event of an emergency?
- Have procedures been tested?
- Is it possible to demonstrate a proactive response, to any pattern that can be recognised within incidents?

Visit Leaders should also complete and carry an Emergency Contacts sheet (OV9).

First Aid (see NG doc 4.4b)

It is not always necessary that qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit or LOtC activity. First aid issues for any LOtC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is "appropriate" will be determined by:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- Know how to access qualified first aid support.
- Have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation that requires those leading such activities to hold a current first aid “qualification”. To be a “qualification”, the first aid course must include a formalised assessment process; otherwise any certification will have the status of a certificate of attendance. In practical terms, the course will be a minimum of 16 hours.

It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

Approval of Visits

Approval is delegated to the Headteacher for all day and residential visits, including those with adventurous activities run by accredited centres

However the following types of visit require further approval.

- Overseas (anywhere that involves crossing a substantial area of open sea, including Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides and the Channel Islands) trips considered to be routine will require approval from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
- Those involving one or more adventurous activities to be led by a member of the school staff will require approval from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors. An adventurous activity is defined in the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 as being climbing, caving, remote trekking, waterborne activities, and other activities that present hazards over and above those in everyday life.
- Trips to countries or areas where either the Foreign Office advice indicates a significant risk, or national news highlights significant recent concerns, will be referred to the Facilities Committee for approval. This will also apply in cases where the Foreign Office advice or national news indicates heightened concern once a trip is organised. Where trips became high risk at short notice they are to be referred to the Chairman of Governors (or the Chairman of the Facilities Management Committee in his absence) for approval on behalf of the Governing Body

Regardless of whether a visit should be notified to the Governing Body or not, there should be a clear, unambiguous audit trail for arrangements with clear evidence of approval. Such evidence will usually be recorded on the visit documentation.

The process for approval has three main stages:

1. Visit/activity proposed and planned by Visit Leader and accompanying colleagues;
2. Arrangements scrutinised by EVC until satisfied to recommend approval;
3. Arrangements re-scrutinised by Head or Governing Body and, when satisfied, approved.

An offsite visit or LOtC activity should not proceed without clear evidence of approval.

Additional monitoring

In its evaluation of LOtC, “How far should you go”- 2008, Ofsted recommends that it is good practice to sample monitor offsite visits and LOtC activities by means of field visits. (see NG doc 2.4a)

From time to time the EVC may recommend, or the Head/Governors/LA may decide to, sample monitoring by field visit as an additional means of ensuring safety of participants and quality of provision.

Consent

Section 35 of the Education Act 2004 states: *'Where a visit is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time, then parental consent is not necessary although it is recommended good practice to ensure that parents are informed'*.

Annual consent is appropriate for regular routine activities that take place during normal school hours.

For all other visits, consent should be obtained on an individual visit basis. Information provided to parents prior to granting consent should include full details of the activities and any other significant information.

Insurance (see NG doc 4.4c)

In addition to the standard public liability cover which is in place, insurance cover should be arranged for each visit in consultation with the visits administrator. Personal accident / travel insurance must be taken out for all visits abroad. For all other visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Body (where applicable), Headteacher, and Educational Visits Coordinator (where separate) to determine whether additional insurance should be taken out.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See www.dh.gov.uk

Inclusion (see NG docs 3.2e, 4.4i, 6d, 6l)

This establishment policy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification.

Visit Leaders are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises.

It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and normal work practices.

Behaviour Code

A behaviour code should be in place as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young persons' behaviour. The code needs to be explained to both the young people and those in a position of parental support before the visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where the code is breached. As part of encouraging social

responsibility, students and parents should sign to declare their agreement to abide by the behaviour code for all visits. As part of the request for consent, parents should sign and accept responsibility for removing young people in prescribed circumstances.

An example of a behaviour code is shown in Appendix B. Unless there are exceptional reasons this should be used for ALL trips. All variations must be agreed with the Headteacher.

Staff Expectations

The document "Expectations of Staff", available on the Life VLE, is a summary of the expected safe and professional conduct by all staff. Extracts from the document which are particularly relevant for educational visits are shown in Appendix C.

Transport (see NG doc 4.5a)

Private Cars (see NG 4.5c)

Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Headteacher, and included on the Risk Assessment for the visit.

Coaches

The school deals with favoured coach companies which meet all relevant UK legislation.

Minibuses (see NG doc 4.5b)

The school follows the HCC Minibus Guidance:

- <http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/rsu/driving/advice/minibus/>

All drivers of minibuses should undertake HCC's Minibus Drivers' Assessment Scheme training, and keep that training current (5 yearly reassessments). This applies to pre & post 1997 licence holders operating under the section 19 permit scheme as 'volunteer drivers'. Post 1997 licence holders may drive a minibus provided:

- Drivers are aged 21 years or over.
- They have held their category B driving licence for at least two years.
- The minibus is being used by a non-commercial body for social purposes, but not for hire or reward.
- Drivers are not being paid to drive the minibus, other than out-of-pocket expenses.
- The minibus does not exceed 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if specialised equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers is included) gross vehicle weight.
- No trailer is towed.

All minibus drivers should hold a full D1 Driving Licence

Public Transport

For public transport within the Greater London area contact 'Transport for London', who offer special arrangements for establishment parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. See [Transport for London](#) Tel. 020 7918 3954.

Swimming

We acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

Swimming pools (life-guarded)

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly life-guarded pools abroad, the establishment's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.
- Unless suitably qualified, the school's staff should not have responsibility for life-guarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.

Hotel (and other) swimming pools

Visit Leaders should check the life-guarding position in advance.

If life-guarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the visit leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety.

Staff must be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the venue will provide back up. Staff should also know if they have exclusive use of the pool, as other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

If a young person in the party holds an appropriate qualification then their role should be emergency lifeguard action, but supervision should remain the responsibility of the school's staff.

Open water swimming

Specific permission from the Headteacher is required.

The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.

Weather, Clothing & Survival

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;
- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

Appendix A

Educational Visit and LOtC Levels

LEVEL	Type of visit (examples)	Authorisation	Training required: Visit leader	Further checks/ monitoring
1	Activities that would not expose those taking part to greater risk than that experienced on a day to day basis. Regular visits of one day or less duration (swimming, theatre trips, environmental studies, etc)	Headteacher Single, annual authorisation	Visit Leader Awareness training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment to be reviewed annually by EVC • Visit organisation to be reviewed by EVC annually using Level 1 audit checklist
2	Non routine activities and residential stays. Adventurous and hazardous activities run by licenced/accredited centres.	Headteacher Each visit	Visit Leader Awareness training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment to be reviewed each visit by EVC • Visit organisation to be reviewed by EVC annually using Level 2 & 3 audit checklist
3	<p>Routine overseas visits and adventurous activities, except those covered by level 2.</p> <p>High Risk Overseas Visits</p> <p>Short notice high risk overseas trips</p>	<p>Headteacher and Chair of Governors Each visit</p> <p>Facilities Management Committee Each Visit</p> <p>Chair of Governors, or the Chair of the Facilities Management Committee in his absence. Each visit</p>	Visit Leader Awareness training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment to be reviewed each visit by EVC • Visit organisation to be reviewed by EVC annually using Level 2 & 3 audit checklist • Risk assessments for adventurous activities <u>must</u> have been assessed by a Technical adviser. • Providers must be licensed for adventurous activities and/or accredited under non-statutory schemes. • Audit Checklists and approval forms must be forwarded to the Offsite Visits Adviser for monitoring purposes.

Appendix B Example of a Behaviour Code for an Educational Visit

Dear Parents/Guardians

Below is a list of expectations we feel are necessary for all students to comply with on the coming visit. It is very important that all students are fully aware of these expectations as they are essential to the safety and welfare of all of us whilst we are on the visit. I would be grateful if you could go through these carefully with your child, as we have done at school, and return the reply slip. The consequences of breaking these expectations will be dealt with in a serious manner and referred back to the Headteacher on our return for further action if needed. **Breaches of these rules may lead to the student being sent home at the Parents expense.** However, I do not foresee this situation occurring and hope these expectations will lead to a successful and enjoyable visit for us all.

1. Excellent behaviour is expected at all times.
2. No alcohol is to be consumed at any time on the visit – regardless of the age of the students.
3. No smoking at any time on the visit
4. No use of illegal drugs
5. Do not go anywhere alone. Always inform a member of staff if you wish to leave the group – even if it is a visit to the toilet. We need to know where you are at all times.
6. No racial abuse, bullying, or expression of xenophobic sentiments.
7. No purchase of inappropriate or dangerous materials: e.g. matches/lighters, fireworks, adult magazines and replica weapons.
8. Always listen to and follow instructions immediately when given to you by a member of staff.
9. We are guests in another country and are representing the school at all times; we must respect their culture and way of life.

Yours sincerely

Visit Leader

Reply Slip

Student

I _____ (student's name) have read through the list of expectations and fully understand them. I agree to abide by these at all times.

Signed _____ (Student) Date _____

Parent

I have read and explained the importance of the "visit expectations" and my son/daughter has agreed to follow them at all times and is fully aware of the consequences which would result from not behaving appropriately abroad.

Signed _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date _____

Appendix C Extracts from 'Expectations of Staff'

The full document is available on the staff area of the Life VLE.

The Governors and Staff at Dame Alice Owen's School are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment both for their colleagues and for students. All staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This code of conduct has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being placed in a vulnerable position and and/or being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Alcohol and Drugs

1. All employees are expected to ensure that their personal consumption of alcohol or other substances does not interfere with their ability to perform their duties safely and competently.
2. To ensure the safety of all students and staff, all school employees including those who have direct or indirect contact with students are forbidden from consuming alcohol during the time when the school is in session or when directly responsible for students or the site, including breaks. Any breach of this condition is likely to be investigated under the schools disciplinary procedure.
3. In the case of residential visits the Trip Leader may nominate staff who are officially on duty. Alcohol must not be consumed by these members of staff during the course of their duty. Other staff, who are not deemed to be on duty, may consume alcohol in moderation.

Relationships

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for students to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. A member of staff who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a member of SLT.

Students in Distress

Staff need to consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed student and always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort. Staff should report and record any situations which may give rise to concern to a member of SLT.

Transporting Students

Wherever practical when transporting an individual child in a private vehicle there should be an additional adult acting as an escort. The vehicle should meet all legal requirements, be roadworthy and appropriately insured. The student must wear their seat belt; if space allows, they should sit in the rear seats.

Educational Visits

Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere. Staff are reminded they are in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship. Staff should read the school visits procedures and guidelines before embarking on any school visit.

Communications

Staff should not give their personal details such as home or private email or social networking address to students. They should only give students their home/mobile phone number in exceptional circumstances and for a clearly necessary reason.