



TAPESTRY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Off Site Visit Policy

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1.0 Aims

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

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

The Trust fully recognises that learning outside the classroom helps to bring the curriculum to life as it provides deeper subject learning and increases self-confidence. It also helps pupils develop their risk awareness and prepares them for their future working lives the Tapestry Learning Partnership adopts the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP) National Guidance for all educational visits available at www.oeapng.info

2.0 Employer responsibilities

As the employer, Tapestry Learning Partnership meets its obligations to provide staff with guidance, training, and support in the following ways:

Appropriate guidance

The appropriate guidance for the management of outdoor learning, off site visits and learning outside the classroom is the OEAP National Guidance web site – www.oeapng.info

Training to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood

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

- Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Training – requires EVC's to be appropriately trained with the training refreshed at least every 3 years.
- Visit Leader Training – requires that **all** employees who lead trips or visits of a residential nature (unless to an approved Learning outside The Classroom (LoTC) or Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) provider within the UK) or whereby they lead an adventurous activity to undertake this training prior to leading the visit.

Note: Local trips within the School Learning Area (see Appendix 1) or day trips to public access environments regularly visited by schools and residential visits to LoTC or AALA provider within the UK, may be led by competent staff who have not attended Visit Leader training on authorisation of the Headteacher.

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

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

Access to advice, support, and further training

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

3.0 Application

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

The Trust adopts the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP) National Guidance available at www.oeapng.info

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

4.0 Pupil/Student Behaviour

Whilst wishing to provide opportunities, both educational and social, the school retains the right to refuse an individual pupil/student from participating in a visit. This could apply if he/she could not be trusted to behave in an acceptable manner, or where it was considered inappropriate for other reasons, such as a child who has misbehaved prior to the visit, and it was felt wrong to reward him/her by allowing participation in the visit.

Parents must be informed of the right to refuse pupil/students from participating in trips on the grounds of behaviour by each Visit Leader via the first letter informing parents of the trip. Prior to the trip pupils/students and parents will need to sign a Code of Conduct form for all residential trips.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

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

As the employer the Trust must be informed of all residential visits, foreign travel and any adventurous activities for example climbing, caving and water sports.

Headteacher

The Head has responsibility for the final approval and monitoring of all visits. Local area visits and others agreed at Academy level will be approved by the EVC.

The Head should ensure that the management of visits meets the regulations and guidance offered by the OEAP National Guidance, Department for Education and others as well as conforming to the school's own Health & Safety Policy

The Head should ensure that the Trust is kept appropriately informed and that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive and that issues identified in exploratory visits have been satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment

The Head should ensure that staff have opportunities to undertake CPD relating to good practice and procedures, and where necessary to obtain formal qualifications.

See OEAP's National Guidance for the role of the Headteacher [OEAP National Guidance](#)

Visit Leaders

- Be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and Trust policies and procedures.
- Plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks, with support from the EVC if required, including a pre-visit to the venue.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and students and ensure effective supervision of what they do.
- Agree with a senior member of staff for them to act as the Emergency Contact, should a trip be taking place outside of school hours, and ensure they have a full trip pack.
- Obtain Head/Deputy approval for the visit, and Governor's where appropriate, within the defined timescales for visit approval.
- Have enough information on the children taking part to risk assess their suitability for the visit or specific activity.
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the students is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality.
- Ensure leaders have the details of the established Emergency Contact.
- Ensure that all staff taking part in the trip are fully briefed, including on their own role and responsibilities.
- Ensure that the use of any student, staff or parent information complies with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Enter details of the trip onto online, ensuring it is updated as soon as any information changes.
- Prepare and manage a trip budget, ensuring it is cost-neutral, includes a contingency and that any surplus funds are returned in equal measure to all contributing parents/carer.

See OEAP's National Guidance for the Role of the Visit Leader - [OEAP National Guidance](#)

The School Education Visit Coordinator (EVC)

- Liaise with the Outdoor Education Adviser where appropriate.
- Be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that satisfactory risk assessments have been carried out.
- Oversee the trip logging system, online.
- Be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, to include accompanying staff and volunteers.
- To provide information on the training of leaders and other staff, and to provide support for staff and volunteers new to the visit.
- Ensure DBS clearance is in place for all staff and volunteers.
- To ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective.

- Ensure the school has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with emergency services and advisor at MD Boon should an emergency occur.
- Ensure that the school complies with the Trust's requirements for reporting incidents and accidents (including 'near misses').
- Support the Head and Deputy in the management of and evaluation of educational visits.
- Use and apply suitable record-keeping practices for both pupils/students and leaders off-site, with due regard to Data Protection legislation.
- Learn from previous experience, recording successful practice, and be able to use them and move on.
- Monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice. Be able to report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.
- Ensure that any use of pupil/student, staff or parent information complies with the Data Protection Act 2018.

See OEAP's National Guidance for the role of the EVC - [OEAP National Guidance](#)

Educational Visit Advisor Service (EVA)

Visits and activities, listed below will be checked by an independent EVA (who should be deemed competent to provide advice and guidance) before the activity takes place – of this policy detailing the process to be followed:

- Overnight stays
- Foreign travel
- Adventurous activities
- Duke of Edinburgh expeditions

The Trust obtain advice/support relating to educational visits from the Health and Safety professionals at YMD Boon Ltd.

The following visits will not fall under the remit of YMD Boon Ltd Health and Safety professionals:

- Visits where schools choose to directly lead and deliver adventurous activities i.e. school staff member leading a climbing activity, kayaking, skiing etc.

The Trust require all adventurous activities to be delivered by a LoTC/AALA badge/licence holder unless specific permission to deviate from this has been given by the Head.

6.0 Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

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

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

- Where there is a high complexity factor, and the visit has not happened previously.
- When the visit is solely led by the school.
- Residential visits, visits abroad, exchange visits, adventure led by the school staff all have aspects of complexity.

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

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

- The LOtC Quality Badge
- AALA licensing
- Adventuremark

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

The OEAP National Guidance 4.4f – Assessing an adventure activity provider check list, 4.4h – using external providers and facilities and 8.1q – Provider Questionnaire - [OEAP National Guidance](#) should be followed when undertaking pre visits and assessing providers.

7.0 Types of visits and approval

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

- 1. Visit / activities within the School Learning Area and which involve no more than an everyday level of risk**

Visits that are part of the curriculum and take place during the school day do not require consent. Those that are not part of the curriculum or extend beyond the school day can be covered by blanket consent, but information will be provided to parents in advance, and they will have the opportunity to withdraw their child.

2. Day visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities

Visit Leaders to gain outline permission for the visit from the Head and collate and input information onto the online system. All information must be uploaded prior to submitting to the EVC for approval at least 4 weeks in advance. Once reviewed by the EVC, final approval for the visit will be given by the Head.

3. Residential visits and visits involving foreign travel

Visit Leaders to gain outline permission for the visit from the Head. Visit Leader to collate and input information onto the online system. All information must be uploaded prior to submitting to the EVC for approval at least 4 weeks in advance. Once reviewed by the EVC, the visit will be given outline approval by the Head and must inform the CEO. Once outline approval has been given, the visit will then be scrutinised by the EVA to ensure the visit complies with the OEAP National Guidance after which final approval will be given by the Head.

Third party providers who hold the LOtC quality badge/AALA or Adventuremark do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a provider form (NG document 8.1q provider questionnaire) [OEAP National Guidance](#)).

Returned questionnaires must be scrutinised by Visit Leaders.

4. Visits involving adventurous activities

Visit Leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence ([AALA website](#)) or an LoTC quality badge ([LoTC website](#)).

If not, the Visit Leader must get consent from the Head and send the OEAP National Guidance document 8p provider questionnaire [OEAP National Guidance](#)). Returned questionnaires must be scrutinised by Visit Leaders.

APPROVAL SUMMARY TABLE FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Type of Visit	Planning/ Recording Process	Risk Management	Checking/ Scrutiny Process	Final Approval
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On-site/Local Learning Area	Recorded online /not Recorded on online	Local Learning Area Risk Assessment	EVC	Head
Day Visit outside Local Learning Area	Recorded on online	Provider risk manages activities (LoTC/AALA) or Provider Statement completed. School risk manages journey to venue and non-provider led activities using risk assessments supplied by YMD Boon Ltd	EVC	Head
Adventurous provider led	Recorded on online	Provider risk manages activities (LoTC/AALA) or Provider Statement completed. School risk manages journey to venue and non-provider led activities using risk assessments supplied by YMD Boon Ltd	EVC online submits to EVA for scrutiny.	Head
Adventurous school-led	Recorded on online	School risk manages journey to venue and activities	EVC <i>EVA will not scrutinize school-led adventurous activities</i>	Head
Residential	Recorded on online	Provider risk manages	EVC	Head

		activities (LoTC/AALA) or Provider Statement completed. School risk manages journey to venue and non-provider led activities using risk assessments supplied by YMD Boon Ltd	online submits to EVA for scrutiny 4 weeks prior to visit.	
Overseas	Recorded on online	Provider risk management for activities School risk manages journey to venue and non-provider led activities using risk assessments supplied by YMD Boon Ltd	EVC online submits to EVA for scrutiny 4 weeks prior to visit.	Head
Duke of Edinburgh Provider or school-led	Recorded on online	School risk manages journey to venue and non-provider led activities / provider led activities	EVC online submits to EVA for specialist DoE scrutiny	Head

8.0 Staff Competence

The Trust believe that staff competency is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and supports staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

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

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

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

9.0 Volunteers

Visit Leaders should make every effort to recruit the necessary staffing by approaching colleagues employed by the school.

In the event of failing to produce enough volunteers, with the permission of the Head or Deputy Head, the Visit Leader may invite other appropriately experienced and qualified adults to accompany the trip. They will be given a briefing and overview of expectations and will be subject to a risk assessment in line with safeguarding procedures. Any volunteer accompanying a trip will be required to be with a nominated school member of staff.

10.0 Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision

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

The school will assess/determine effective supervision by proper consideration of:

- Staff competence.

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

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

The Visit Leader should follow OEAP National Guidance 4.3b Ratio and effective supervision [OEAP National Guidance](#) and 4.3c Risk Management [OEAP National Guidance](#)

11.0 Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the Visit Leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan, and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes. See also [OEAP National Guidance](#)

When an incident overwhelms the establishment’s emergency response capability; where it involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Governing Body/YMD Boon.

The school will practice their response to emergency situations on educational visits at regular intervals i.e. school inset training.

12.0 Visit Planning

The Visit Leader checklist – National Guidance document 3.3e [OEAP National Guidance](#) is an important check on the planning of a visit. When a Visit Leader cannot answer yes to a question on this checklist there should be a discussion with the EVC and or Head. In addition, the following steps must be completed for any visit:

- Gain outline approval from the Head to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism/charging policy.

- Ensure the visit:
 - has clear learning outcomes.
 - has activities appropriate to the group.
 - is planned to maximise benefits to the pupils while managing significant risks.
 - is appropriately staffed.
 - complies with the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- Involve pupils in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure emergency procedures include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the Visit Leader.
- Ensure the base contact in the school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.
- Ensure that the visit is correctly approved and recorded.

13.0 Risk Management

The process of risk assessing a visit will inform the group management plan and improve the control of safety. The recording of risks, and of the measures to mitigate the risks, will demonstrate that Visit Leaders have followed good practice. The risk assessment should tell the 'story' of the visit by walking through the itinerary and documenting the risks and control measures for each step. It is essential that other staff on the visit, and the pupil/students, are aware of the risks and the control measures before the trip takes place – ideally, the risk assessment process will involve these groups but if not, then it will need to be communicated to them well in advance of the trip taking place.

There is a legal requirement for the risk assessment process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks. There are generic risks which should be considered for any visit – e.g. children with medical conditions, safeguarding of students, travel arrangements but there will also always be risks which are specific to the individual trip being planned. Although a generic risk assessment exists, each trip should have the individual risks for that trip documented within the trip. The risk assessment must always be tailored to a particular visit, which may include adapting the generic risks and mitigation.

It is important that while staff are on the visit, they recognise potential risk, hazard and harm and intervene appropriately to protect the pupils/students in their care. This process of dynamic risk assessment does not need to be recorded in writing, but staff must be able to explain any adjustments made to the original assessment and why they made them if asked about them at a future date.

Refer to the National Guidance on good practice for risk management [OEAP National Guidance](#)

14.0 First Aid and Management of Medical Conditions

First aid and other medical needs should always be considered in the process of planning and the risk assessment of any visit.

The assessment of the level of first aid cover required should take into account:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the group will be isolated from the support of the emergency services (both in terms of distance and response times).

In all circumstances, one or more of the staff leading the visit must:

- Be a qualified first aider.
- Ensure that sufficient first aid kits are taken on the visit (one per coach).
- Know how to access, and be able to access, qualified first aid support.
- Have agreed to administer an EpiPen or inhaler if a student/pupil with such a condition is present on the visit.
- Ensure that plans are in place to support students with particular medical conditions e.g. diabetes.
- During coach travel in which more than one coach is being used, ensure where students have a particular medical condition, such as asthma, allergies or diabetes the coach in which these students are travelling is staffed by those staff who have agreed to administer an EpiPen or inhaler, or who are trained in supporting students with diabetes.
- Have read this policy in conjunction with the school policies covering safeguarding of children with identified medical conditions.

As part of preparation for the trip, a list will be provided of the students' medical and SEN needs. The Visit Leader will need to refer to this during the planning process to inform the risk assessment.

If any medication is administered by staff during the trip, a Medication Log sheet will need to be completed and should be retained with the trip documentation. Depending on the nature of the trip it may also be necessary to collect medical information from staff – for example this will be a requirement when staff are accompanying a residential trip. The Visit Leader will also need to ensure they have up to date emergency contact information for staff.

15.0 Mobile Phone

For residential trips and trips outside of school hours the number of the emergency base contact must be given to parents. Staff must not give personal mobile phone numbers to children.

The school mobile phones must be returned to the trip team immediately following the return of the trip staff to school (or the morning of the next working day when their return is after normal school hours).

16.0 Parental Consent

The school attempts to obtain blanket consent, for all local non-residential visits at the start of each year including sporting fixtures. It is the Visit Leaders' responsibility to ensure that consent has been given by parents/carers for all children on a local trip. Even where consent exists, parents must be given information if their child is taken on a local visit – this can be in letter format.

For any visits beyond the local area, or adventurous trips within the local area, information must be sent home. This should give parents information on the visit and include trip forms which must be completed in full and returned to the Visit Leader before the trip takes place.

Trips and visits require a letter from the Visit Leader to parents setting out the arrangements for the visit.

The letter should include:

- The deadline for the reply slip to be returned, and the statement from the policy on selection of pupil/students.
- Details of the nature and purpose of the visit including date and time.
- Information about transport arrangements including departure and specifically collection arrangements (especially if dark).
- Information regarding clothing/kit.
- Information regarding eating arrangements and any money that the student might require whilst on the trip.
- Information regarding behavioural expectations.
- Information regarding costs (n.b. parents cannot be charged for educational activities which take place during the school day, but they can be asked to pay a voluntary contribution).
- Information regarding any known media at the event and consent for their child's image to be used.
- The deadline for payment and parental consent.

- The Trust's educational visits Consent to Activity, Medical Details and Treatment form must be used for all visits where separate consent is required, see Appendix 4.
- Reference to pupil/student behaviour requirements (see Section 4).
- The standard GDPR statement regarding data sharing.

The text of the letter must be approved by the Head/EVC before it is sent out to parents. See the National Guidance document 4.3d on consent [OEAP National Guidance](#).

17.0 Monitoring

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

The Trust should undertake a sample monitoring of visit documentation to include a residential visit and a day trip at least annually.

18.0 Inclusion

All academies must follow the National Guidance on inclusion see 3.2e [OEAP National Guidance](#)

19.0 Transport

The school must follow the National Guidance on Transport for school trips; see 4.5a transport, 4.5b minibuses, 4.5c Transport in private cars and 4.5d seat belts. The school will choose the appropriate transport provider by ensuring that the National Guidance Coach/Minibus provider form is completed 8.1s [OEAP National Guidance](#)

By foot

- Walk on foot planned to avoid fast roads wherever possible.
- Pavements must be used where available and the dangers of being on the road explained to pupils.
- Supervision on pavements, roads and especially crossing of any fast roads is pre-planned.
- Students/pupils briefed regarding hazards and behaviour required.
- Safety when crossing roads on journeys is a key issue. Where possible pedestrian crossings or footbridges should be used and students/pupils made aware of the rules outlined in the Highway and Green Cross codes.
- Consideration could be given as to whether easily visible clothing could be worn by students/pupils.

By public transport

- Journey is planned and assessed – (key specific risk points identified at this point).
- Careful supervision particularly in crowded areas and entry, exit and change points with head counts.
- Students/pupils know their group and leader(s) and the route they are taking.
- On buses, trains, ferries and boats clear guidelines concerning levels of remote supervision must be given and planned for in the risk assessments.
- The safety of students/pupils whilst waiting to be picked up and at drop off points or getting on and off transport must be considered.
- Students/pupils should never be on their own.

By Taxi

Relevant RA should be taken

By car

- Driver must have signed Driver Declaration form that they are suitably qualified, have business insurance and car is roadworthy.
- Appropriate car seats are used.
- All occupants use seatbelts.

20.0 Insurance

Insurance cover for approved educational visits is usually provided by the school insurance provider (public liability) insurance policy. However, as academies may have moved to different insurance providers when they moved away from local authority control confirmation/checks should be made with the insurance provider before the visit takes place. See National Guidance 4.4c Insurance [OEAP National Guidance](#)