

## Trust Educational Visits Overarching Principles Policy number 14

<b>Key Manager</b>	Governance Manager
<b>Ratified by BT</b>	Winter 2019
<b>Review Dates:</b>	<b>Winter 2022</b>
<b>Location of Policy:</b>	Trust wide
<b>Access to Policy:</b>	Open
<b>Policy Context:</b>	This Policy applies to all staff of the Trust and to those others offered access to such resources.

### Revision History

Revision Date	Description	Sections Affected	Revised By	Approved By
10/12/2019	New Policy	New Policy	Trust Governance Manager	Trust Board
Winter 2022				

### **Introduction**

A common approach to the management of off-site visits and related activities.

Nene Education Trust (NET) acknowledges that off-site visits and related activities can have a positive impact on young people's learning and development and fully supports and encourages visits that are well-planned and managed.

As the employer of staff in their academies, NET has a statutory responsibility to ensure that employees:

- are provided with information and guidance when arranging off-site visits and activities for their young people;
- have clear policy and procedures in place to ensure that the guidance is followed;
- have access to appropriate training so that they understand what is required of them when taking young people off-site.

In order to meet its responsibilities NET has:

**CEO:** Mr C Hill  
Mountbatten Way, Raunds,  
Wellingborough, Northamptonshire  
NN9 6PA

**T:** 01933 623921  
**E:** [enquiries@neneeducationtrust.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@neneeducationtrust.co.uk)  
[www.neneeducationtrust.co.uk](http://www.neneeducationtrust.co.uk)



- acquired external advice and guidance regarding off site trips from Plumsun. This is an online based system to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits across all school in the Trust
- drawn up Policy and Guidance for off-site visits & related activities which states the requirements of NET and links to the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance' and Plumsun;

In addition, NET will provide:

- Support for training key stakeholders in the visit process;
- Emergency Planning and Critical Incident support;

Plumsun incorporates many features that bring together all aspects of the visit process on a single platform accessible to all NET academies:

- A robust, customisable visits notification and approval procedure that supports visit planning by leaders and monitoring and approval by EVCs, senior managers and the Trust;
- A resources area providing access to downloadable material and links to national best practice information and guidance;
- A communication system that supports the approval process and also enables users to communicate across the Trust;
- Plumsun site provides facilities that enable all users to plan visits, monitor the use of providers and gain an overview of visits in planning and those that have been approved;
- A Reporting tool to provide reports against standard and customised criteria, which enables the Trust, as well as individual academies, to analyse and evaluate visits.

## **Types of trips**

### **1.1 Routine visits**

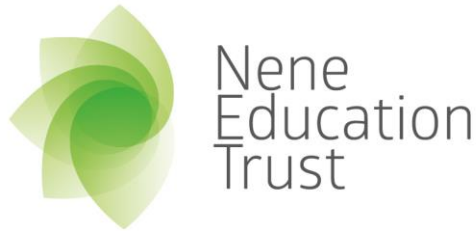
These involve no more than an everyday level of risk, such as slips and trips, and are covered by a school's current policies and procedures. They only need a little extra planning beyond the educational aspect of the trip. They can be considered as lessons in a different classroom.

### **1.2 Trips that need a risk assessment and extra planning**

These are trips not covered by current policies. This could be due to things like:

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- the distance from school
- the type of activity
- the location
- needing staff with specialist skills

Sometimes a school may just need to review its current plans or arrangements that were successful on previous trips. However, some trips will need risk assessments, detailed planning and informed approval by the designated School Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The person given the job of managing this should:

- have the [skills, status and competence needed for the job](#)
- understand the risks involved
- be familiar with the activity

Plans should be proportionate and sensible, focusing on how to manage genuine risks.

## **2. When to get consent from parents/carers**

A school must always get written consent for nursery age children.

For children over nursery age, written consent is not needed for most trips, as they're part of the curriculum. However, it's good practice to tell parents/carers about them.

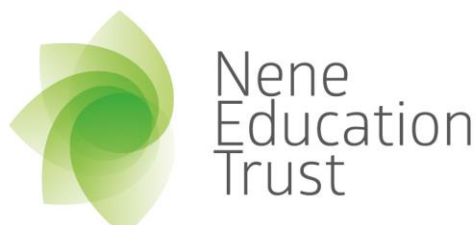
Written consent is usually only needed for trips that:

- need a higher level of risk assessment
- are outside normal school hours
- are overseas
- residential trips
- overnight visits

For routine day to day trips during school hours schools should ask parents/carers to sign a copy of the school off site visits consent form when their child enrolls at the school establishment. This will cover them for their whole time at the school.

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Schools should still tell parents/carers about these trips and give them the opportunity to withdraw their child.

### **3. Using outside organisations**

Schools using an outside organisation to provide an activity must check they have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) awards the [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) to organisations who meet nationally recognised standards.

Schools can [check if an organisation holds the LOtC Quality Badge](#).

If an organisation does not hold the badge, the school must check that they're an appropriate organisation to use. This could include checking:

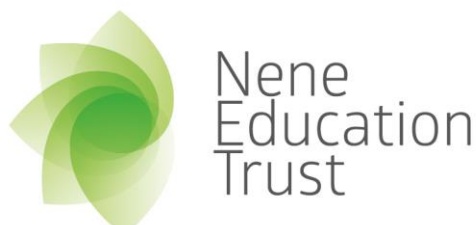
- their insurance;
- that they meet legal requirements;
- their health and safety and emergency policies;
- their risk assessments;
- control measures;
- their use of vehicles;
- staff competence;
- safeguarding;
- accommodation;
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have;
- that they have a licence where needed.

The school should have an agreement with them that makes it clear what everyone is responsible for. This is especially important if they'll be taking over supervision of the children.

### **4. Adventure activities: caving, climbing, trekking, and watersports**

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These kind of activities should be identified and risk assessed as part of the visit beforehand. Staff managing or leading visits must not decide to add such activities during the trip.

Always consider the abilities of the children when assessing risk.

Organisations need a licence to provide some adventure activities. Organisations who hold the LOTC Quality Badge should hold a licence for the activity they provide.

[Find out more about licensing](#) on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website.

### **Watersports**

When planning watersports, consider the need for:

- instructors
- lifeguards

Schools should take particular care when using hotel swimming pools and other water leisure activities which may not have a trained lifeguard. Although there are no swimming pool specific health and safety laws, the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) provides advice when undertaking adventure specialist activities, including swimming.

### **5. Trips abroad**

Trips abroad can have extra risks and need a higher level of risk assessment.

Schools should make sure any organisation that is providing activities holds the LOTC Quality badge or similar local accreditation.

The HSE does not cover incidents overseas. However, it can investigate work done in Britain to support the trip, like risk assessments. School staff could also be liable under civil law for any injuries to the children due to negligence.

If the trip includes significant risks, such as challenging terrain, going to remote places or extreme climates, follow the guide to the [British Standard for adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom](#) as the basis for the planning and risk assessment.

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Organisations employed by the school should follow this too. If they have LOTC Quality Badge then they follow this standard.

Schools should consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's detailed guidance on [safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas](#) when organising adventure visits abroad. A [teachers' pack](#) is also available.

## **6. Knowing what to do in an emergency**

Schools should have an emergency response plan that covers what to do if there is an incident away from school. Schools should also have a communications plan that covers how routine communications should be handled, including regular check-ins and calls to reassure people.

Trip leaders should be familiar with these plans.

Schools can get advice on these plans from their outdoor activity adviser or the [OEAPwebsite](#).

## **7. Evaluating trips**

Set up a clear process for evaluating all visits once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. Schools should keep a record of any incidents, accidents and near misses.

This will help the school:

- evaluate whether its planning has worked
- learn from any incidents which took place

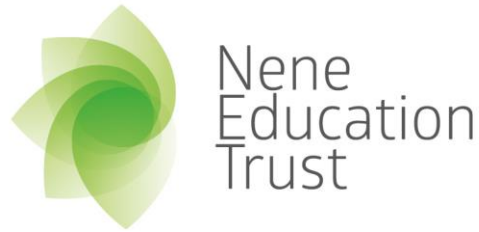
## **8. Educational visits coordinators**

Schools should appoint an educational visit coordinator (EVC) and make sure they have the training they need. The Principal has this duty if there is no coordinator.

The coordinator works with the local outdoor education adviser to help their colleagues in schools to assess and manage risks.

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The coordinator should:

- be an experienced visits leader
- have the status to be able to guide the working practices of other staff
- be confident in assessing the ability of other staff to lead visits
- be confident in assessing outside activity providers
- be able to advise headteachers and governors when they're approving trips
- have access to training, advice and guidance

Coordinators can also get guidance on the [OEAP website](#).

### **9. Student behaviour**

The schools standards and expectation of behaviour must be adhered to at all times. Students are expected to set a good example of the School whilst participating in a trip.

Any behaviour that contravenes the expectations established by the trip organiser and the school, may ultimately result in a student being sent home from a residential or overseas trips as soon as transportation can be arranged. It will be parents/carers'/carers' responsibility to arrange such transportation and with reasonable speed. Prior to the any trip taking place, behaviour and conduct in lessons and around school may determine whether a student can be part of this trip.

Please note that failure to adhere to the rules may also jeopardise your son/daughters place at school and could result finally in suspension or permanent exclusion.

NET is a fully inclusive Trust and every effort will be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. Every reasonable effort will be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate full and be actively involved. If this is not possible alternatives will be explored.

### **10. Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits**

NET will take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996 (Please see NET Charging Policy)

Payments relating to residential, and overseas trips

**CEO:** Mr C Hill  
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Parents/carers will be notified of the total cost of such a trip, this includes a payment schedule and forms part of the terms and conditions of the trip and as such failure to adhere to the schedule may result in their son/daughters place being withdrawn and the non-refundable deposit being retained.

If a child is withdrawn from a trip for any reason other than that covered by the insurance certificate i.e. if a child has an illness or suffers from an injury then all payments made up to this date will not be refundable. The reason for this is that financial payments need to be made to the organising company to secure their trip. If students are withdrawn the school loses payments already made and potentially may be charged an additional cancellation fee.

If a student is ill or injured and not in school on the date of the trip and thus unable to participate on the school trip then in order that a refund **MAY** be made it is essential a **medical certificate** is provided covering the dates of the school trip.

It is a requirement of Parents/carers to complete and sign terms and conditions and return to school in order for their child to be included on the trip. Failure to return the required T & Cs will result in their child being omitted from the trip.

#### **10. Insurance for Off-site Activities and Visits**

Employer's Liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and the NET holds a policy that indemnifies it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. The NET also holds Public Liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff. The indemnity covers activities such as off-site activities and visits organized by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible.

Personal Accident Insurance is provided for all employees in the course of their employment, providing predetermined benefits in the event of an accident. However, Visit/ Activity Leaders may wish to consider taking out less limited personal accident cover privately, or obtain cover through a professional association.

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