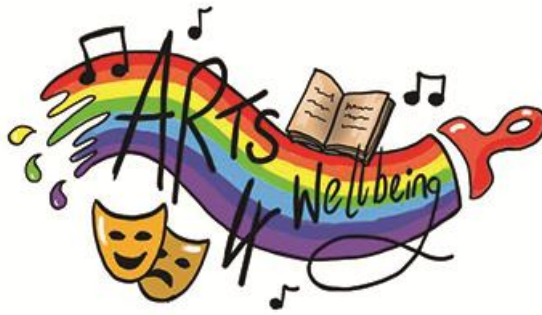




Off-site Trips and Visits Policy

1. General Policy Statement

a. Policy Statement

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of their employees and anyone who may be affected by their activities.

Arts 4 Wellbeing recognises and accepts its responsibilities to staff and members involved with all external visits. Arts 4 Wellbeing will endeavour to ensure that risks arising from offsite visits are reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

b. Scope of the Policy

Arts 4 Wellbeing Policy for offsite visits covers all off site activities. These activities will range from short visits to local landmarks and residential to overnight stays.

c. Objectives

To ensure that all offsite visits are adequately risk assessed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff and members.

To provide guidance and support for all staff involved with offsite visits.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

a. Board Members

The Board Members should be satisfied that the Manager and all staff members are aware of the policy and that they have suitable and enough arrangements in place to ensure the policy is always complied with.

Specifically, they should:

- i. ensure that all offsite visits have a specific and stated objective;
- ii. ensure that the manager/group leader shows how their plans comply with regulations and guidelines, including Arts 4 Wellbeing health and safety policy document;
- iii. ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance;
- iv. assess proposals for certain types of visit, which should include visits involving an overnight stay or travel outside the UK.

b. The Manager

The Manager should ensure that visits comply with regulations and Arts 4 Wellbeing health and safety policy. The Manager should ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

The Manager should be clear about their role if taking part in the visit as a group member/supervisor. They should follow the instructions of the group leader who has sole charge of the group.

The Manager should ensure that:

- i. suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been carried out prior to the visit taking place.
- ii. adequate member protection procedures are in place and that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- iii. training needs have been assessed for the staff and members;
- iv. the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;

- v. the group leader or another person is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- vi. group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- vii. staff on the visit are appropriate people to supervise members;
- viii. ratio of staff to members is appropriate and parents have signed consent forms where appropriate;
- ix. arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the members;
- x. the mode of travel is appropriate and travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points;
- xi. they have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name;
- xii. the group leader, group supervision and nominated Arts 4 Wellbeing contact have the names of all the members travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and carers and next of kin;
- xiii. there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

c. Group Leader

The group leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. The group leader should have been appointed or approved by the Manager. The group leader should:

- i. Obtain the Manager agreement before any off-site visit takes place. The group leader must complete any off-site activity form, obtain managers signature and ensure the form is displayed on leaving and taken down on returning;
- ii. Ensure there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- iii. a deputy is appointed;
- iv. be able to control and lead members of the relevant age range;
- v. be suitably competent to instruct members in an activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place in;
- vi. be aware of safeguarding issues where appropriate;
- vii. ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- viii. undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents where appropriate;

- ix. undertake and complete a risk assessment;
- x. ensure that staff are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- xi. have enough information on the members proposed for the visit to assess suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- xii. ensure the ratio of staff to members is appropriate for the needs of the group;
- xiii. consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the members is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such and eventuality;
- xiv. ensure that the groups' staff have the details of members needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- xv. consider the arrangements in the event that a member is to be prevented from undertaking an activity.

d. Staff

Staff members must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances. They should:

- i. follows the instructions of the group leader and help with discipline;
- ii. consider stopping the visit or activity notifying the group leader, if they think the risk to the health and safety of the members in their charge is unacceptable.

e. Adult Volunteers

Adult Volunteers on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Adult Volunteers acting as staff must:

- i. do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- ii. not be left in sole charge of members except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- iii. follow instruction of the group leader and help with control and discipline;
- iv. speak to the group leader if concerned about the health or safety of members at any time during the visit.

f. Members

The group leader should make it clear to members that they must:

- i. not take unnecessary risks;

- ii. follow the instructions of the leader and other staff including those at the venue of the visit;
- iii. dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- iv. looks out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it.

Any members whose behaviour may be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these members should be fulfilled in other ways whenever possible.

g. Parents/Carers

The group leader should ensure that parents/carers are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions.

The group leader should also tell parents/carers how they can help prepare their sons/daughters visit by, for example, reinforcing the visits code of conduct. Parents/carers should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a student home early and who will meet the cost.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents/carers for whom English is a second language.

Parents/carers will need to:

- i. Provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers;
- ii. Sign a consent form. Give the group leader information about their sons/daughters emotional, psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit (usually by means of the consent forms).

3. Planning Visits

a. Planning

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum or swimming pool, it is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties that may arise and making plans to reduce them. In practice, the Manager who is responsible for planning visits will often delegate the detailed planning to the organiser of the visit or the group leader. The Manager must satisfy him/herself that the person planning the visit is competent to do so and has the necessary relevant experience.

b. Risk Assessment

The group leader should carry out risk assessments, which Arts 4 Wellbeing is legally required to do. An assessment must be completed before the visit and should be approved by the Manager.

A risk assessment for a visit need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. Specialised information for some visits may be necessary and the person assessing the risks should be competent.

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Members must not be placed in situations that expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be adequately controlled then the visit must not take place.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- i. What are the hazards?
- ii. Who might be affected by them?
- iii. What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- iv. Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- v. What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- vi. The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all staff on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. The Manager should also be given copies so that approval, as necessary, can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place.
- vii.
- viii. In the event that the Manager is not satisfied that effective planning has taken place the visit will not be allowed to proceed.
- ix.
- x. Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be made at regular intervals, and careful monitoring should take place with a review of the assessment as necessary.
- xi. The group leader and other staff should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

Before booking a visit, the group leader should obtain a documented assurance that providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place.

Detailed advice on risk assessment can be obtained from the Manager. The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- i. the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- ii. the location, routes and modes of transport;
- iii. the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;

- iv. the ratios of supervisory staff to members;
- v. the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- vi. the special educational or medical needs of members;
- vii. seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- viii. emergency procedures;
- x. how to cope when a student becomes unable or unwilling to continue;
- xi. the need to monitor the risks and react to any changes throughout the visit.

f. First Aid

First aid should form part of the assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities, the Manager or the group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. For certain types of visit e.g. outdoor activities, it is preferable for the group leader to have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first aid box is taken. For adventurous activities it is sensible for at least one of the group's supervisors to be a fully-trained-first-aider. This may not be necessary where suitable alternative first aid arrangements are in place. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The conditions for the provision of first-aid are:

- i. a suitably stocked first-aid kit;
- ii. a person appointed to be in charge of the first-aid arrangements;
- iii. the numbers in the group and the nature of the activity;
- iv. the likely injuries and how effective first-aid would be;
- v. the distance to the nearest hospital;
- vi. all minibuses by law are required to carry a first-aid kit.

4. Supervision

a. Ratios

It is important to have a high ratio of adult staff to members for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- i. sex, age and ability of group;
- ii. members with special educational or medical needs;
- iii. nature of activities;
- iv. experience of adults in off-site supervision;
- v. duration and nature of the journey;

- vii. competence of staff, both general and on specific activities;
- viii. requirements of the organisation location to be visited;
- e. Head Counts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of members should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. All staff should always carry a list of all members and adults involved in the visit. The group leader should establish rendezvous points.

f. Remote Supervision

Where the aim of visits is to encourage independence and investigative skills, and where some of the time on visits such as trips abroad and fieldwork may be unsupervised. The group leader should establish during the planning stage of the visit whether the members are competent in remote supervision and where appropriate should ensure that the parents/carers agreed this part of the visit. The group leader remains responsible for members even when not in direct contact with them.

Where appropriate, parents/carers should be told before the visit whether any form of remote supervision would take place.

5. Preparing Members

a. General

Members who are involved in a visit planning and organisation, and who are well prepared, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Providing information and guidance to members is an important part of preparing for a visit. Members should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Members must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major cause of accidents. Members should be informed of the contents of the risk assessment and be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety and that of others.

b. Equal Opportunities

Every effort should be made to ensure that journeys and activities are available and accessible to all those who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc. All members should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. If the visit is to cater for members with special needs, a suitable venue should be selected.

d. Information to Members

The group leader should decide how information is provided but must ensure that the members understand key safety information.

Where visits involve multiple activities with differing requirements each activity will need to be assessed and separate information provided. Members should be aware of who is responsible in any instances where the group leader has delegated responsibility to another member of staff or instructor.

If at any time, there is a change in the planned schedule new activities should be assessed and members provided with appropriate information.

f. Transport and Members

Members using transport on a visit should be made aware of the basic safety rules including:

- i. arrives on time and wait for the transport in a safe place;
- ii. do not rush towards transport when it arrives;
- iii. wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- iv. never tamper with any of the vehicles equipment or driving controls;
- v. bags may not block aisles or cause obstructions;
- vi. never attempt to get on or off the moving transport;
- vii. never lean out of or throw things from the window of the transport;
- viii. never get off a vehicle held up at traffic lights or in traffic;
- ix. never run about or pass someone on steps or stairs while vehicle is moving;
- x. never kneels or stand on seats;
- xi. never distract or disturb the driver or impede the drivers vision;
- xii. stay clear of doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- xiii. after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- xiv. if you feel unwell tell a member of staff

The group leader should ensure that members know what to do if they miss the scheduled departure time.

g. Members with Medical Needs

Additional safety measures to those already in place in the Arts 4 Wellbeing may be necessary to support members with medical needs during visits.

All staff supervising visits should be aware of member's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets should be held by all group

leaders, containing details of each member's needs and any other relevant information provided by parents/carers. If the member's safety cannot be guaranteed a parent or care assistant should be requested to accompany the student.

The group leader should discuss the member's individual needs with the parents/carers. Parents/carer should be asked to supply:

- i. details of medical conditions;
- ii. emergency contact numbers;
- vi. parental permission if the member needs to administer their own medication or agreement for a volunteer to administer;
- vii. information on allergies/phobias;
- viii. information on any special dietary requirements;
- ix. information on any toileting difficulties, special equipment or aids to daily living;
- x. special transport needs for members who require help with mobility.

Enquiries should be made at an early stage about access and facilities for securing wheelchairs on transports and at residential centres etc, if appropriate. If ramps are not going to be available in certain places, the organisers may wish to arrange to take portable ramps with them. The group leader should at an early stage assess whether manual handling skills will be needed and, if so, whether training should be sought.

If staff are concerned about whether they can provide for a member's safety or the safety of other members on the trip because of a medical condition, they should seek general medical advice from the Manager or further information from the member's parents.

The group leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and members with pre-existing medical conditions.

h. Members with Special Educational Needs

The Arts 4 Wellbeing should already be familiar with the nature of a member's special educational needs. Any limitations or problems that members may have should be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for a member with Special Educational Needs and behaviour of some members may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- i. is the member capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- ii. can the activity be adapted to enable the member to participate at a suitable level?
- iii. will additional/different resources be necessary?

- iv. is the member able to understand and follow instructions?
- v. will additional supervision be necessary?

It may be helpful to the member if one of the supervisors already knows them well and appreciates their needs fully.

6. Communication with Parents/Carers

a. Information to Parents/Carers

- iv. safety whilst on stops or rests during the journey. Group leaders should plan with the driver sufficient stops at suitable areas to ensure the safety of all group members including the driver. Drivers of buses and coaches must comply with the legislation covering the maximum periods of driving and minimum rest periods;
- v. safety of the group in the event of an accident or breakdown. The group should remain under the direct supervision of the group leader or other staff wherever possible;
- vi. head counts, by the group leader or another delegated staff member should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport;
- vii. responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened.

d. Private Cars

Staff who drive members in their own cars must ensure their passenger's safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying members and all the relevant documents need to be seen and copied by the Manager. The Arts 4 Wellbeing should also vet volunteers before they are permitted to drive members in their own car. If necessary, assurances should be requested by the Manager.

The driver is responsible for making sure that members always have a seat belt and use it. Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

The Manager or group leaders who wish to use parents or volunteers to help transport members in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the members in their cars. It is advisable that parents driving members are not put in position where they are alone with a student. The group leader should arrange a central dropping point for all members rather than individual home drops.

The group leader should scrutinise carefully the following list of exclusions on the policy.

e. Hazardous Activities

Hazardous activities to be notified prior to travel

Abseiling Assault Courses	Boxing Bungee Jumping	Climbing Canoeing Cricket Tours Cross-country Skiing Coasteering
Dry Slope Skiing Duke of Edinburgh Awards	Fencing Flying	Gliding Go-Karting Gauge Walk
Hang Gliding Helicopter Hockey Hot Air Ballooning	Ice Hockey Indoor Rock Climbing	Judo Kayaking Jet Skiing
Microlite Motor Cycling Mountain Biking Mountaineering Usual Mountaineering Advanced	Overlanding	Parachuting Para Sending Pot Holing/Caving Power Boating
Quad Biking Quasar Laser War Games	Rafting (White Water) Rock Climbing Rugby/Soccer Tours	Sailing – Open Seas Ski or Scuba Diving Snorkelling Soccer/Rugby Sub-Aqua Surfing
Trampolining	War Games (paintball) Water Skiing Wrestling	

The above list is not exhaustive.

g. Transport

When hiring coaches etc the group leader should check that the company used has appropriate insurance.

The group leader should check that the member of staff driving a minibus abroad is appropriately insured and that their driving licence is valid for the countries to be visited or passed through en route.

Staff, other adults or members using their own cars to carry members on Arts 4 Wellbeing visits should ensure that their vehicle is properly licensed and that the insurance covers its use on Arts 4 Wellbeing business.

Members should be familiar with all equipment used or taken without direct supervision and, in addition to training; an initial element of adult supervision in the use of equipment may be required. The condition and suitability of any equipment, particularly safety equipment, taken or used during these activities should be addressed separately.