BwDBC Residential Homes Off-site Visits Policy





1 Contents

1.	Importance of Off-site Visits		
2.	Purpose, Status & Remit3		
3.	BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits & Adventurous Activities and OEAP National Guidance4		
4.	EVOLVE		
5. Roles and Responsibilities			
	5.1 Visit Leaders	.4	
	5.2 EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator)	.4	
	5.3 The Senior Manager	.5	
	5.4 The Head of Service/Service Leader	.5	
6.	Staff Competence	.5	
7	Types of visits6		
8	Visit planning and Approval		
9	Planning a visit – the visit leader's job list9		
10	Guidance for Visit Leaders10		
11	Consent10		
12	Risk Management		
13	Monitoring12		
14	The EV3 Form – The Establishment Self-Assessment Form/ Compliance Checklist		
15	Induction, training, apprenticeship, succession planning12		
16	Assessing venues and external providers	13	
17	Volunteers	13	
18	Emergency Procedures1		
19	Behaviour	13	
20	Inclusion		
21	Insurance1		
22	Finance14		
23	Transport14		
24	First Aid arrangements14		
25	Appendix A1		

1. Importance of Off-site Visits

We believe that educational visits 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 Residential/Short breaks Service* a supportive and effective learning environment.

Supporting Off-site visits and Adventurous Activities across the service is a key driver in engaging, inspiring and enthusing young people, enabling learning and development through real life experiences and helping all our young people to realise their potential. The service remains committed to promoting such experiences and recognises the impact and value they can have on children and young people's learning and development.

The benefits of children taking part in activities/visits (but are not limited to):

- To promote everyday experiences, life skills and social skills.
- 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)
- 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 riskbenefit 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.

2. Purpose, Status & Remit

This document outlines the service policy and procedures for activities/visits. It includes the use of standard operating procedures and generic/specific risk assessments for local, routine visit in order to reduce bureaucracy and help support staff to manage activities/visits in a simple and effective way. The level of planning should be proportionate to the complexity of the activity/visit.

All staff are required to plan and execute activities/visits in line with this policy. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities of key staff.

This policy must be approved by Head of Service/Service Leader and should be reviewed on an annual basis or when required in response to any incident or lessons learned.

3. BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits & Adventurous Activities and OEAP National Guidance

Residential/Short breaks Service adopts the **BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and** Adventurous Activities which is available in the 'Guidance' section on the BwDBC EVOLVE website.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with the 'BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities'.

The 'BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities' is underpinned by the National Guidance www.oeapng.info.

4. EVOLVE

EVOLVE (www.blackburnvisits.org) is the web based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system, used by BwDBC.

All staff leading or accompanying visits should have an EVOLVE login giving access to the BwDBC EVOLVE website. Staff requiring a login should see the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) who is able to set up logins for staff.

Staff should see the section in this document named 'Types of Visits' for details of what needs to be recorded on EVOLVE.

All relevant BwDBC guidance is available on EVOLVE.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Visit Leaders

Visit Leaders are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying staff and the children in this process.

Staff must not sign any contracts; enter into any agreements; pay any money or deposits; or advertise visits with young people until outline permission has been obtained from the Senior Manager. (Eg rock climbing or a residential visit organised by Residential/Short breaks staff.)

Staff must make appropriate checks of any third party providers.

Visit Leaders should refer to:

- Section 5.1 of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities
- The 'Visit Leader Checklist' from the National Guidance

5.2 EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator)

The EVCs for each establishment are listed in Appendix A (Where there is more than one active EVC please list all the names but clearly label who has been designated as the 'lead' EVC.)

(The EVC should attend a full BwDBC EVC training day, and thereafter attend EVC update training at least once every 3 years.)

The EVC will support and challenge colleagues over visits. They are the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans before submitting them to the senior manager for approval.

The EVC should refer to:

- Section 4 of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities
- The 'EVC Checklist' from the National Guidance

5.3 The Senior Manager

The Senior Manager has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits.

The Senior Manager should refer to:

- Section 5.3 of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities
- The 'Head or Manager Checklist' from the National Guidance

5.4 The Head of Service/Service Leader

They will be informed of/ asked to approve in principle the more complex Level 3 visits (eg overnight residential visits) prior to them taking place.

The Residential/Short breaks managers will review and approve this policy on an annual basis and will maintain an overview and monitoring role to ensure that all visits are carried out in accordance with this establishment policy and the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities.

The Head of Service/Service Leader should refer to:

- Section 5.3 of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities
- The 'Head or Manager Checklist' from the National Guidance
- Section 5.4 of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities
- The 'Management Board and Governor Checklist' from the National Guidance

6. Staff Competence

We realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of more complex visits where appropriate
- Regular CPD for all staff involved with visits, including: risk management, emergency procedures, visit leader training, group management, first aid

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken (including any relevant qualifications eg hill walking)
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make on-going risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the children/ young people, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

Accompanying staff should have clearly defined roles, be involved in the planning process and be competent to carry out the roles to which they are assigned.

7 Types of visits

There are three types of visits:

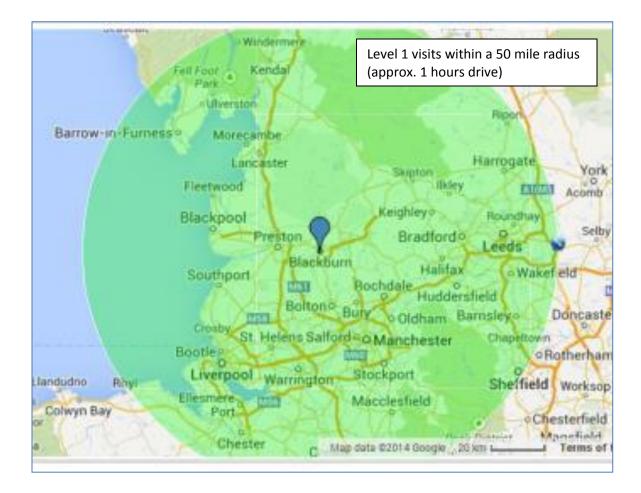
- Level 1 (Previously referred to as simple activities/visits)
- Level 2 (Previously referred to as Level 1 activities/visits)
- Level 3 (Previously referred to as Level 2 activities/visits)

See the table below for further details.

8 Visit planning and Approval

Table 1	Definition of visit	Do these visits need to be recorded on EVOLVE?	Approval process
Level 1	Simple activities/visits: Routine, low risk visits within a 50 mile radius (approx. 1 hour drive)	NO (Recorded in activity book) Required: • Recorded in Activity book • Annual consent • Generic risk assessment (Reducing paper work while maintaining a proportionate level of planning) • Specific risk assessment if required • Risk assessments reviewed annually	 Visit Leader provides risk assessments (generic and if required specific), annual consent, provider information and checks, itinerary any other relevant information Prior approval is in place for Level 1 visits
Level 2	Out-of-area: Outside a 50 mile radius (1 hour drive) Or In-area activities/visits that are unfamiliar Or In-area activities/visits that are of a more complex nature (eg fair, bonfire, air show, commercial/tourist boat trips, involvement in a large scale public event/gathering)	YES (Recorded on EVOLVE) Required: Specific consent Generic risk assessment (Reducing paper work while maintaining a proportionate level of planning) Specific risk assessment if required Risk assessments reviewed annually	 Visit Leader provides risk assessments (generic and if required specific), specific consent, provider information and checks, itinerary, and any other relevant information Checked and approved by EVC and Manager
Level 3	Overseas Residential Adventurous	YES (Recorded on EVOLVE) Required: • Specific consent • Generic risk assessment used as a starting point • Specific risk assessment completed covering any significant additional issues (including young people)	 IDEALLY 30 DAYS NOTICE BEFORE THE VISIT Provisional agreement should be obtained from the Head/Manager before any commitment is made Visit Form completed on EVOLVE by Visit Leader All planning documentation must be attached to the Visit Form on EVOLVE (Including: itinerary, any specific risk assessments, gain written consent from person with PR (or appropriate senior manager), provide person giving consent with appropriate information about the activity/visit, any info from providers, any other relevant info) Checked and submitted by EVC Authorised by Head/Manager Approved by Local Authority

50 mile radius map around Blackburn



9 Planning a visit – the visit leader's job list

Table 2	Planning a visit – the visit leader's job list			
Required for all visits	 The visit leader will ensure the following steps are completed for all visits: Funding arrangements and charging policy agreed Where practicable a pre-visit should be carried out to check suitability, gather information and to inform risk assessment and planning Ensure the visit: Has activities appropriate to the group Is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks Has effective supervision in place/ is appropriately staffed Complies with the safeguarding policy Record the visit in the activity book The service's Generic Risk Assessment for Off-site visits (see Appendix B) must be implemented by staff for all visits. Where there are any additional significant risks they should be included in an Event Specific Risk Assessment, recorded on an EVS Form and held in the EVC risk assessment file Involve children/young people in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible Ensure parents are kept fully informed where applicable Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults, children/young people and any external provider are: Fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit Know what to do in the event of an emergency Are given information they need about the needs of individual young people Fully brief the base contact back at the establishment and ensure they have access to/copies of all relevant information Make suitable checks on any external providers. Where possible use providers with the <i>Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Bodge</i> (see BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits & Adventurous activities – Section 13.12) Refer to Visit Leader Checklist from the National Guidance 			
Level 2 & Level 3 visits	 All of the above bullet points apply (from the 'All visits' section) as well as the follow points: Level 2 activities/visits: Level 2 visits are recorded in the Activity book and approved by the EVC Specific consent is required for Level 2 Level 3 activities/visits: All Level 3 visits must be entered and approved on EVOLVE Specific consent is required for Level 3 visits All relevant information must be included. The following (where applicable) must be attached to the EVOLVE Visit Form: Itinerary Event-specific Risk Assessment/s (as required) Information provided to parents/carers & young people Copy of EV4 Provider Form (Only required if the provider does not hold an LOtC Quality Badge) Any other relevant information 			
Must be in place for <u>ALL</u> <u>VISITS</u>	 Visit Leader holds the following: List of staff and young people on visit EV7 Emergency card (including 24hr Emergency Contact details where appropriate) First Aid kit & mobile phone Any other relevant documentation/items (eg medication/ contact details where appropriate) Emergency contact (at the base) holds the following: List of staff and young people on visit EV7, EV8a & EV8b Emergency cards (Including Visit Leader contact details while on the visit) Any other relevant documentation (eg medical/ contact details) And should have 24/7 access to all Visit details and documentation 			

10 Guidance for Visit Leaders

Visit Leaders may wish to consider the 'Specific guidance for your role' (for Visit Leaders) which can be found by accessing the OEAPNG website and selecting the Visit Leader role via the 'Browse By Role' link. This will bring up all relevant documents for the role of Visit Leader.

The following OEAP documents may be of particular interest:

- Visit or Activity Leader Responsibilities
- Visit Leader Checklist
- Group Management and Supervision
- Good Practice Basics
- Ratios and Effective Supervision

11 Consent

Staff must ensure that appropriate consent is in place:

- Annual consent for Level 1
- Specific consent for Level 2 & Level 3 visits

Signing school consent forms (non-residential; non-adventurous) is permitted by staff so that opportunities to take part in routine/low risk school visits are not jeopardised by consent issues. This is especially relevant when consent is required at short notice.

12 Risk Management

Generic Risk Assessment for Off-site visits (see Appendix B) must be implemented by staff for all visits. Where there are any additional significant risks they should be included in an Event Specific Risk Assessment, recorded on an EV5 Form and attached to the visit form (EV1 or on EVOLVE).

Level 1 Visits

It is expected that routine, low risk visits (Level 1 visits) will be managed using the **generic risk** assessment.

For Level 1 visits, a routine check of the generic risk assessment to make sure the precautions remain suitable and sufficient is all that may be required. Where additional factors apply such as a group with unusually challenging behaviour; extreme weather; an inexperienced leader; then an event-specific risk assessment may be required to cover any additional issues.

Level 2 & Level 3 Visits

For Level 2 and Level 3 (more complex) visits an event-specific risk assessment must be considered. Any additional significant issues must be recorded along with appropriate control measures. There is no need to repeat any issues already covered adequately on the generic risk assessment.

Please note any additional risk assessment must be attached to the EV1 or EVOLVE visit form for monitoring by the EVC and Head/Manager before approval can be given.

On-going risk assessments

This is what the staff do on a visit to keep the group safe – 'active risk management'. It involves continuously assessing situations as they unfold and adjusting your response to effectively manage any issues/risks that may arise. This is not a written risk assessment.

All staff are responsible for carrying out effective on-going risk assessments based on competence, experience and common sense. Staff teams must be suitably competent and experienced so that they are able to effectively manage any situations they are likely to encounter on the visit.

What to consider when carrying out an Off-site visit risk assessment

When considering whether there are any significant risks that need managing it is recommended that staff use the following model:

STAGED:

S taffing	(Including competence, experience, ratios, effective supervision)
T imings	(Timings, itinerary, downtime)
Activities	(Programme, activities to be undertaken. Who will lead? Adventurous?)
Group	(Additional needs: learning, behaviour, disabilities, medical. Challenging group?)
E nvironment	(Venue, accommodation, weather, water levels, crowds, other users, culture)
Distance from base	(Including transport arrangements, support systems, residential visits, visits abroad)

Procedures for risk management:

- 1. All staff must be familiar with and use the **Generic Risk Assessment** for all visits. (see Appendix 1)
- 2. Any additional significant risks that are not covered by the generic risk assessment must be recorded on an **Event Specific Risk Assessment** (on an EV5 Form)
- 3. When completing the risk assessment/ planning the staff should ask the following question:

What are the really important things we need to do keep the group safe?

- 4. The **On-going Risk Assessment** is really important this is what the staff do during the visit to keep the group safe (see the Ongoing risk assessment section above)
- 5. All staff have a responsibility to review risk assessments after every visit, including the generic risk assessment. If there are any issues with the generic risk assessment then staff should bring them to the attention of the EVC immediately.
- 6. All staff going on the visit should be involved in the planning process which should include the checking and writing of any risk assessments. The visit leader should take the lead with the planning but as a rule should not complete risk assessments on their own. Ideally risk assessments will be the product of discussions between the staff team.
- 7. Young people should be included in the risk assessment process where appropriate. This can help them learn how to managing risk for themselves.
- 8. All staff, volunteers and young people must be briefed appropriately regarding the risk assessments prior to departure.
- 9. Staff only need to record **significant risks**. Risk assessments should be proportionate, simple and easy to use.
- 10. Where an external provider is being used, the provider has responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activities they deliver. Visit Leaders should <u>not</u> ask for copies of providers' risk assessments. It is appropriate, however, to ask for any information that they publish that is specifically aimed at helping Visit Leaders to manage their visit.

13 Monitoring

The role of monitoring is shared between the EVC, the Senior Manager, the staff and the Governors. The checking and approval process is a very important part of monitoring and is shared between the EVC, Senior Manager and Head of Service.

Field monitoring is also recognised as important. Staff are encouraged to peer monitor and give feedback to colleagues. In addition the EVC, Head or other experienced senior staff should carry out monitoring visits from time to time in order to support staff and encourage good practice.

Any such monitoring should be intelligently targeted to support staff where appropriate and to identify and share good practice.

14 The EV3 Form – The Establishment Self-Assessment Form/ Compliance Checklist

The EV3 Form will be completed annually by the EVC and Headteacher and will be overseen by the Senior Manager and Head of Service.

An electronic copy of the completed EV3 Form will be emailed to the Education Consultant (Learning Outside the Classroom).

Any action points raised by the EV3 Form should form the basis of an action plan and training programme for the coming year. This process can help to fulfil the service's Health & Safety requirements and can help to inform any inspection regime eg Ofsted.

15 Induction, training, apprenticeship, succession planning

The EVC must attend a full BwDBC EVC training day, and thereafter attend EVC update training at least once every 3 years.

New staff must be trained by the EVC so that they are familiar with the procedures for Off-site Visits as part of their induction. This should be included and recorded as part of their induction programme.

All staff should undergo regular training in relation to Educational Visits. This could be on an annual basis and should be at least every 3 years or when significant changes are implemented. The training could be led by the EVC and Head/Manager or by the Education Consultant for Learning Outside the Classroom. BwDBC Visit Leader training (Part 1 & Part 2) is available from the Education Consultant for Learning Outside the Classroom and includes training in risk management, group management, current guidance, visit procedures and EVOLVE.

An apprenticeship model should be used so that inexperienced staff can shadow experienced and competent visit leaders until they are ready to lead visits themselves. This model also allows for effective succession planning.

Training records must be kept by the EVC.

Records of any relevant staff qualifications (eg Mountain Leader Award or First Aid qualification) including a scanned copy of the certificate should be saved on the member of staff's profile on EVOLVE and corroborated by the EVC or Senior Manager. For full details of how this should be recorded then please see Section 16: BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities or contact the Education Consultant for Learning Outside the Classroom.

Off-site Visits Policy

16 Assessing venues and external providers

To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, the establishment must ensure that either:

a) The Provider holds an LOtC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

or

b) An EV4 Provider Form has been satisfactorily completed by the provider

Note: If a Provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not an LOtC Quality Badge, then an EV4 Provider Form is still required.

Where an external provider is being used, the provider has responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activities they deliver. Visit Leaders should <u>not</u> ask for copies of providers' risk assessments. It is appropriate, however, to ask for any information that they publish that is specifically aimed at helping Visit Leaders to manage their visit.

17 Volunteers

Volunteers will require a Criminal Record Check if they are involved in a regulated activity. Staff should discuss this with the EVC and the 'Designated Person' (DP) to establish if a check is required. Criminal Record Checks are now carried out by the DBS (Disclosure and Barring service).

Volunteers should be inducted/ briefed and assessed as competent to carry out their assigned role. They will also require supervision by staff.

18 Emergency Procedures

The BwDBC Emergency procedures for visits can be found on the home page of the BwDBC EVOLVE website (select the Emergencies link on the red band).

In the event of an incident staff must use the EV7, EV8a and EV8b – by doing so staff will be led through the correct procedure.

Both the visit leader and the base contact should have 24/7 access to all the details of the visit, including medical and next of kin information for both the staff and the young people.

The visits emergency procedures should key into the service's emergency planning.

19 Behaviour

Young people will be expected to follow a code of conduct while on Off-site Visits. Where possible the young people will be involved in setting them up so that they can retain some ownership.

Appropriate risk assessments should be in place to cover behaviour issues including any challenging individuals and group dynamics.

Careful thought will be required to determine how mobile phones and other electronic devices will be managed.

20 Inclusion

The service ethos supports inclusions in all areas, including visits. We encourage integration through participation with peers.

All visits must comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Staff must plan early to overcome any inclusion issues. Reasonable adjustments must be made to accommodate any young person with disabilities as long as the adjustments don't unduly impinge on the outcomes/arrangements for the rest of the group.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them is within their competence and is reasonable.

Staff should discuss any issues with the EVC, the Senior Manager and where appropriate the BwDBC Inclusion Support Team. The views of the young person and where appropriate the parent/carers should be included in the discussion.

21 Insurance

Activities covered by the BwDBC Public Liability Insurance.

22 Finance

Staff must ensure that any financial arrangements are approved by the budget holder before any commitments are made (including verbal agreements, bookings, or the signing of contracts). Young peoples' expectations should not be raised until initial approval has been granted by the budget holder/Senior Manager.

Financial arrangements should be clearly recorded and shared with the budget holder.

23 Transport

We follow the guidance in the Transport section of the BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits & Adventurous Activities – Section 13.15.

There is also a risk assessment in place to cover staff transporting young people in their own cars.

24 First Aid arrangements

There will be an appointed person designated as the First Aider on all visits who will have a basic knowledge of First Aid, will carry a First Aid kit and will be responsible for contacting emergency services if required.

All Level 2 and 3 visits (and Level 1 visits that are a significant distance from base) require a qualified First Aider.

See - BwDBC Requirements for Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities, Section 13.16

Off-site Visits Policy

25 Appendix A

EVCs for each establishment					
Apple Trees	Jerry Wood				
The Seeds	Mel Coglan				
Lytham Road	Janet Haworth				
Managers/ Head account holders					
All establishments	Alyson Hanson				
	Mel Coglan				
	Janet Haworth				
	Jerry Wood				
	Pamela Price				