



# Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

**Arbour Academy**

<b>Approved by:</b> Julie Owen Headteacher	<b>Date:</b> September 2023
<b>Review Date:</b>	September 2025

At Arbour Academy, we want all pupils to have the opportunity to learn through a wide range of first hand experiences. That throughout their time at Arbour they will be excited by their learning experiences, be inspired to try new things and develop interests in new things. Through the use of outdoor learning, we intend for the pupils to become passionate and knowledgeable about the environment and how we can look after it.

Our whole curriculum is based on the six principles of Nurture, and promotes learning, growth and emotional wellbeing. Our pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to learn outside the classroom. The use of our school grounds, local environment and trips further afield alongside visitors to the school are part and parcel of our day-to-day teaching and learning. On average 3 lessons a week, in each year group, are taught in the school grounds or at a local provider such as local allotments. Each half term there is a focus on a particular 'Big Theme' topic which incorporates elements of learning outside the classroom - either in the form of a field trip or visitor to the school. We take every opportunity to offer pupils enhancements to their learning. Pupils will watch visiting theatre groups and musicians. They have worked with local artists, visited Salford cathedral and local places of worship. They have been taught about their local environment and have visited places of local and national interest. All students have a two hour weekly Healthy Minds and Bodies lesson that incorporates walks and other activities such as yoga. Pupils learn about caring for our environment, what we can do to help our local and global environment and work with conservationists and the RSC at Salford.

## **The Role of the Governing Body**

Governing Bodies should:

- Be fully aware of all their responsibilities
- Access training if required
- Ensure that the Headteacher, those responsible for trips and the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) are supported in matters relating to educational visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities
- Approve all overnight, adventurous or overseas trips
- Ensure that all visits have specific, stated and communicated learning objectives
- Ensure that the Visit Leader's plans for the visit adhere to the national Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) Employer Guidance (EG) at [www.oeapeg.info](http://www.oeapeg.info) as well as the school's health and safety policy
- Ensure that visits are reviewed and evaluated for impact on learning and inclusion as well as for safety and quality
- Be aware that they may be involved in adjudicating parental complaints or dealing with an emergency

## **The role of the Headteacher**

The Headteacher should have an understanding of the rationale that underpins LOtC and the supporting rationale with an awareness of obtaining best value, matched to whole school learning and development plans. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships etc. To comply with best practice, the Headteacher should ensure there is a clearly designated Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The Headteacher must ensure that arrangements are in place for visits to be officially notified to/approved by the Governing Body where necessary.

The Headteacher must

- Be fully aware of all their responsibilities
- Access training if required
- Ensure that the EVC is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities
- Ensure that visits are reviewed and evaluated for impact on learning and inclusion as well as for safety and quality
- Be aware that they may be involved in adjudicating parental complaints or dealing with an emergency

## **The role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)**

The functions of the EVC are to:

- Have an understanding of the leading and managing LOtC and the supporting rationale

Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that school guidance and procedures are properly understood

- Support the Headteacher and Governing Body with visit approval and other decisions • Attend EVC training
- Lead on assessing the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit • Organise relevant training of activity and visit leaders i.e. Visit Leader Training, first aid, hazard awareness etc.
- Ensure that suitable child protection procedures are in place, including the vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers
- Ensure that suitable arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people involved and that inclusion issues are suitably addressed
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated. This process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents
- Review procedures on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure and, on occasion, monitor practice

## **The role of the Visit Leader**

The Visit Leader is the person whom the Headteacher and EVC have approved to take overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and for the health and safety of the group. To ensure accountability and a clear audit trail, a sole Visit Leader should be appointed and they should be an employee and part of a chain of specified roles and responsibilities rather than a volunteer. The key requirement for a Visit/Activity Leader is that they are competent, not that they hold a particular post, title or job description. Other employees (Instructors, Coaches, and Teaching Assistants etc.) may function as a Visit Leader, providing they are competent to carry out this role. Being competent requires that the leader can demonstrate the ability to operate to current standards of recognised good practice.

The Visit Leader must:

- Have an understanding of LOtC and the supporting rationale
- Follow all the employer regulations, guidelines, policies and procedures
- Be formally approved to carry out the visit
- Be specifically competent and/or qualified
- Plan and prepare for the visit, leading on risk management.

In accordance with best practice all staff and where appropriate young people also should be involved in the planning and risk management process to ensure wider understanding and consolidate skills for life

- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, appointing a deputy wherever possible
- Ensure that where any accompanying adults includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management
- Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure that there is adequate access to first aid treatment and supplies for the entire duration of the visit
- Collate and make available relevant information for staff on the trip and senior leaders responsible for the trip
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on: the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities, the nature and location of the activity
- Provide relevant information to parents and young people and arrange pre visit information meetings where appropriate
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and any third party providers who need it have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- Understand that the overarching duty of care remains with accompanying school staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk

## **The role of teaching and non-teaching staff**

Accompanying staff must:

- Have an understanding of LOtC and the supporting rationale
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Take reasonable steps to avoid exposing young people to dangers that are foreseeable and beyond those that they can reasonably be expected to cope with
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity and notify the Visit Leader if it is felt that there is an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the young people in their charge

## **The role of Volunteers**

Volunteers must:

- Be suitably competent and knowledgeable about school and employer policies and procedures - insofar as they affect any responsibilities assigned. Be DBS cleared as appropriate.
- Ensure they understand the role, responsibilities and limitations they have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff
- Be prepared to contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event
- Ensure they are briefed on the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities, the nature and location of the activity
- Make every effort to report problems to the accompanying Visit Leader/Assistant Leaders as soon as possible. The overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying Visit Leader and Assistant Leaders, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, a volunteer should report this as soon as possible.

## **The role of Pupils**

Pupils must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow immediately the instructions of the Visit Leader, staff, volunteers, activity instructors and other adults e.g. venue staff
- Be sensitive to local customs when abroad
- Be aware of anything that may harm and threaten them and tell someone in charge as soon as possible if they are concerned

## **The role of Parents**

Those in a position of parental authority should be aware that in a school-based situation, where a LOtC activity takes place and within the school premises, wholly in curriculum time (within the normal school day), then school does not require parental consent. However, where such activities will take place beyond the school gate, school undertakes to inform parents of visit details in writing so that parents can make an informed decision as to the participation of their child. This may be by a letter sent home via child; general information letter, newsletter. Where visits are more complex e.g. residential trips, overseas exchange visits, visits involving adventurous activities etc. in line with best practice school undertakes to hold a pre-visit briefing session where parents can receive information and ask questions to ensure they have a proper understanding of what they are consenting to.

Parents must:

- Complete and sign a form when their child joins the school to consent to all school activities which take place off-site and for their child to receive first aid; emergency medical treatment to include the administration of an anaesthetic or blood transfusion and emergency pain relief.
- Give or refuse consent as requested for their child to be transported in a private car by a specific named driver
- Provide on request any information to the Visit Leader that may impact on their planning of a visit or would affect their ability to fulfil their responsibilities under their professional duty of care e.g. physical, psychological or emotional health issues; allergies; phobias; medication (including dosage and who may administer it); special dietary requirements; details of any recent illness and/or contact with contagious or infectious disease; personal care or continence issues; history of sleepwalking; water confidence and swimming ability; religious requirements etc.
- Provide on request at least one, but preferably two emergency contact names and telephone numbers which can provide 24/7 cover for the duration of the visit