



OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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This policy meets all the requirements of SEN and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. It will be reviewed annually or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new legislation.

Index of Contents

	Page
Statement of Purpose and Principles	3
Introduction	3
LifeBridge Legal Responsibilities	4
Responsibilities	5
Risk Assessment	6
Transport	6
Accommodation	6
External Providers	7
Insurance	7
Briefing Learners	7
Emergency Procedures	7

LifeBridge ASEND Principles for Health and Safety

PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure visits are worthwhile and educationally valid.
- Outline the legal requirements and responsibilities for visits.
- Provide a mechanism for the approval for all visits.
- Provide a planning outline for all visits.
- Cover all issues of Health and Safety that might arise with visits.
- Cover all types of visits LifeBridge might make.
- Provide a means of recording all visits made.

INTRODUCTION

LifeBridge ASEND recognises the significant educational value to learners of visits and activities away from the immediate LifeBridge environment and believes that staff should be encouraged to organise and take learners out on such trips.

Such trips should:

- Enhance learners' understanding of curricular activities.
- Develop learners' social skills including resourcefulness, independence, initiative and self-reliance.
- Provide opportunities to develop skills
- Enable learners to spend time happily and consciously sharing experiences with others.

LifeBridge recognises and accepts that such visits may present risks to the health and welfare of learners. Educational trips and visits will therefore be planned and operated in accordance with this policy and procedures followed so that everyone involved understands their responsibility and can participate fully in the learning outside of the classroom.

All educational trips and visits will be appropriate and relevant to the age, maturity, capabilities and needs of the learners participating and will be compatible with the ethos of LifeBridge.

In the context of this document the "visit leader" is the member of staff in charge of the visit.

This policy has been written with due regard to:

- "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits" DfES 1998 (HASPEV)
- "Part 1 supplement: Standard for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits" DfES July 2002
- "Part 2 supplement: Standard for Adventure" DfES July 2002
- "Part 3 supplement: A Handbook for Visit leaders" DfES July 2002
- "Group Safety at Water Margins" DfES/CCPR

A copy of all of the above document can be obtained from the Director of Post-nineteen Provision.

LIFEBRIDGE LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Common Law, LifeBridge Leadership management team has a duty “to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions likely to cause foreseeable injury (physical or mental)”. This duty is owed to members of staff, learners and others, such as parent volunteers, who may be involved.

Also, under Common Law, and in line with the Mental Capacity Act (2005) the members of staff accompanying learners on a visit may also have ultimate responsibility for learner safety. Occasionally, this duty of care can be temporarily be transferred to others e.g. an instructor at an activity centre where the activities are controlled by those instructors/experts.

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA) requires employers to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of:

- Its employees (under section 2)
- Those persons not in their employment who may be affected by it, i.e. learners, parents, visitors and volunteers (under section 3)

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) sets out the following requirements:

- Employers should carry out risk assessments and introduce arrangements for planning, organising, controlling, monitoring, and reviewing the management of health and safety. These assessments should address risks to which employees and learners are exposed, to ensure that appropriate control measures are taken to protect their health and safety.
- Where employers implement preventative and protective measures they should be based on the following principles:
 - Avoiding risks
 - Evaluating risks that cannot be avoided
 - Combating the risk at source
 - Adapting the work to the individual
 - Adapting to technical progress
 - Replacing the dangerous by non-dangerous or less dangerous
 - Developing a coherent overall prevention policy
 - Giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures
 - Giving appropriate instructions to employees
- Provide access to competent advice
- Employers should devise emergency procedures, especially for off-site visits and particularly those involving water and remote locations.
- Employees should be provided with information on the risks identified by the assessment and the preventative and protective measures implemented.
- Employers shall, in entrusting tasks to employees, take into account their capabilities as regards health and safety.

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), if participants in off-site visits, either employees, learners or volunteers die or are severely injured (defined as an injury resulting in hospital admission for more than 24 hours), the incident should be reported to the enforcing authority (HSE) by telephone and followed up on a Form F2508 within 10 days (please refer to the Director of Post-nineteen Provision for further information).

Also, under RIDDOR, all accidents and incidents (near misses), no matter how minor, should be recorded in an accident book. Whilst any off-site centre will have similar duties, visit leaders should maintain their own records for LifeBridge's purposes. Any accident as part of an off-site visit should be reported.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Visit Leader: The visit leader will have responsibility for the allocating the supervision of learners and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for the learners' health, safety and welfare.

For every off-site visit, fixture or expedition the leader must:

- Have verbal approval to carry out the visit.
- Be suitably competent to control, lead or instruct the learners on the visit.
- Be aware of Safeguarding issues, ensuring that all supervisors are DBS (enhanced) checked.
- Undertake planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of learners, parents or carers, and supervisors, where necessary.
- Ensure that the ratio of supervisors to learners is appropriate for the needs of the group relative to the activity to be undertaken.
- Consider stopping the visit at any time if the risk to the Health and Safety of participants is unacceptable.
- Ensure that supervisors have the details of emergency procedures and LifeBridge contact.
- Ensure that, for any overnight, hazardous, overseas or trip, parents or carers have been informed and included in the planning process where appropriate.

Learners: The visit leader must make it clear to the learners that their responsibilities include:

- Not taking unnecessary risks.
- Following the instructions of the leader and other supervisors, including those at any venues for the visit.
- Dressing and behaving sensibly and responsibly.
- If abroad, being sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Looking out for anything that might hurt or threaten the safety of any member of the party and tell the visit leader of supervisor about it.

Any learner whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be stopped from participating.

Parents and carers: Parents should, when appropriate, be included in the planning of an off-site visit where appropriate. They should be able to make an informed choice about whether their child should go on a visit. The visit leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and/or are invited to any briefing sessions.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

All risk assessments should:

- Identify the significant hazards.
- Identify who might be harmed.
- Evaluate the risk level.
- Identify controls that are in place.
- Implement additional controls if needed.

A generic risk assessment is completed at the beginning of the academic year and can be updated or amended at any time. This encompasses all off site trips the learners may be attending throughout the year. This has to be read and signed by all staff.

For any overnight or long distance trips an additional risk assessment may be required.

TRANSPORT

In selecting the most appropriate method of transport for the visit the following should be taken into account:

- Passenger safety;
- Competence of the driver and whether he/she holds the appropriate licence;
- The number of driving hours required for the journey and the length of the driver day;
- The number of drivers needed;
- The type of journey (locally and long distance);
- Arrangements in case of breakdown or delay;
- Insurance arrangements;
- Welfare breaks on long journeys;
- Supervision on or around transport.

ACCOMMODATION

If accommodation is being used, the following need to be in place:

- UK accommodation must be covered by a fire certificate.
- If abroad, accommodation must comply with the health and safety regulations for that country.
- Appropriate security arrangements must be in place for possessions and for learners/staff.
- Separate male and female accommodation and washing facilities must be in place.
- Staff accommodation must be close at hand.

Parents or carers should have full details of accommodation arrangements if this is appropriate.

EXTERNAL PROVIDERS

If an external provider is being used the following points must be taken into account:

- Approval to use an external provider must be obtained from the Director of Post-nineteen Provision.
- External providers are responsible for assessing the risk of those parts of the visit that they are contracted to provide.
- Financial arrangements are to be made between the 'provider' and LifeBridge – not the learners' parents.
- If using air transport ensure that there is an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) in place.
- If using a tour operator ensure they are approved by a bonding agency (e.g. ABTA).

INSURANCE

LifeBridge has Public Liability cover for all 'approved' activities on-site and off-site but Visit leaders are advised to check that staff and learners are adequately covered and that parents are informed of the insurance cover given by LifeBridge.

BRIEFING LEARNERS

Learners should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. They must understand the standard of behaviour expected of them and why rules must be followed. They must be informed about potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own safety.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of an accident or emergency occurring during an off-site visit or activity the Visit leader should follow the relevant emergency procedures laid down in this section:

- All Visit leaders must carry the name and contact details for the member of SLT on duty for the duration of the visit or activity.
- For minor emergencies the Visit leader will respond by attending the injured ensuring the safety of the rest of the group. On return to LifeBridge they will complete an accident report form.
- For serious emergencies the Visit leader will respond by attending to the injured, ensuring the safety of the rest of the group, summoning help/evacuation by whatever means appropriate and contacting the SLT on duty. On return to LifeBridge they will complete an accident report form.
- In the event of a fatality the Visit leader will respond by attending to any injured and ensuring the safety of the rest of the group. They will then call the appropriate emergency services and the Police, giving the details of location, nature of accident, number of individuals involved and the condition of the group. The contact details of any witnesses should be obtained and the duty SLT contacted. The remaining activity participants should be prohibited from using mobile telephones (in order to maintain the confidentiality of the incident until the next of kin have been informed via the proper channels).

- No member of LifeBridge's staff other than the Head of Post 19 Provision, or the duty member of SLT in his / her absence, is authorised to speak to the press or other media. In the event of an incident it is good practice to make notes as soon as is reasonably possible after the event to help in the recording of the incident on the accident report form.