United Learning – Health and Safety Topic Policy

Educational Visits **Campion School**

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United Learning

Health and Safety Topic Policy – Educational Visits

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1. Scope

1.1 This Policy forms part of the health and safety arrangements detailed in the 'United Learning Group Health and Safety Management Policy'. It outlines the arrangements in place to achieve compliance with the duties contained within the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

1.2 It is applicable primarily to schools, but some principles will apply to central office events and will require elements of this Policy to be read in conjunction with the *Event Safety Policy*.

2. Implementation

2.1 The overarching principles of this Policy must be implemented within 12 weeks of the date of publication.

3. Interpretation

3.1 The following definitions apply to this policy:

- OEAP – Outdoor Education Advisors Panel – the national body of educational visits advisors and who produce the National Guidance for Educational Visits, of which United Learning is a member.
- OEAP NG – the National Guidance for educational visits produced by OEAP.
- LOtC – Learning Outside the Classroom
- LOtC Quality Badge – a national award operated by the Council for LOtC that recognises activity/event providers or venues that meet educational provision and safety requirements.
- EVC – Educational Visits Coordinator

4. Educational Visits

4.1 This Policy uses the OEAP definition for educational visits as being:

- Any occasion when a young person takes part in a structured and employee-led learning activity which is carried out beyond the boundary of the normal operational base, but excepting the following:
  - Where establishments operate on a split site
  - Work experience placements
  - Physical Education: only the journey to and from the venue is covered by national guidance. The activity supervision should be that required or recommended by specialist PE guidance, such as that provided by the employer and Association for Physical Education (AfPE).

4.2 The principles outlined in this Policy and OEAP NG must be followed for all activities that meet the above definition.

5. The Status of OEAP National Guidance

5.1 OEAP National Guidance (OEAP NG) has been formally adopted by United Learning as the management system and guidance to be used by all schools in the management, delivery, and review of all educational visits.

5.2 OEAP NG starts from three basic principles:

1. Well planned and facilitated opportunities to learn in the real world, away from the classroom, and to experience adventure, help to improve the lives of young people.

2. Delivering learning outside or off-site does not need to be more difficult than delivering it inside a classroom. Planning and management should, therefore, be practical, proportionate, and non-bureaucratic.

3. The key to effective and successful outdoor learning and off-site visits is: The right leaders doing the right activities with the right young people in the right places at the right times.

5.3 OEAP NG is comprehensive and extensive; there is no benefit to be derived from repeating its content in this Policy. It is expected that Head Teachers, Educational Visits Coordinators, Visit Leaders and other relevant school staff will familiarise themselves with OEAP NG content and keep themselves appraised of any developments or updates as relevant to their area of responsibility.

5.4 OEAP NG provides information on a broad range of topics relating to educational visits, however, this Policy only highlights those key elements that relate to health and safety management. For example, there is also detailed guidance on making the case for educational visits, inclusion, and visit charging systems.

6. Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

6.1 An Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is a member of school staff appointed to coordinate Educational Visits and with the status to effect change and be the focus of good practice. EVCs are required to be experienced in managing leading and trips, it is not purely an administrative function.

6.2 It is possible, however, for a member of support staff to take on the EVC role provided that a development programme for their competencies has been developed, implemented and can be evidenced. The EVC checklist available from the OEAP NG website can be used for this.

6.3 An EVC's key functions are to:

- Be a champion for all aspects of educational visits and outdoor learning
- Challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use educational visits and outdoor learning effectively in order to provide a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards school/establishment effectiveness
- Support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable educational visits/outdoor learning
- Mentor leaders and aspirant leaders, supporting their ongoing development and training and sample monitor their activity to identify any further training needs
- Ensure that planning complies with this Policy and OEAP NG requirements and that the arrangements are ready for approval within agreed timescales
- Support the school's Head and/or Governors in approval decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competency to fulfil their roles.
- Ensure that every activity is evaluated against its aims for learning and development, that good practice is shared and any issues are followed up
- Keep the school's Senior Leadership Team and Governors informed about the visits taking place and their contribution to education outcomes

6.4 EVCs must have completed an OEAP EVC training course and have this refreshed every three years. Course locations and dates can be searched for via the OEAP website.

7. Role of the Visit Leader

7.1 The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the learning, development and supervision of a visit's participants and the safety of all, including the rest of the leadership team.

7.2 A Visit Leader's key functions are to:

- Be competent to carry out the lead role for the specific activity
- Be able to use the chosen environment or venue(s) to provide a wide range of learning or development outcomes
- Liaise with the school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to ensure that visits have clear aims and are planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks
- Ensure that there is effective supervision
- Take the lead on risk management
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other leaders (and participants) to ensure effective supervision, appointing a deputy wherever possible
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed
- Provide relevant information to other leaders including the aims and how they can contribute to achieving these, the location, the participants (age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues)
- Ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary
- Provide relevant information to parents and participants, and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level
- Ensure that if the visit leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, this is managed to avoid any possible compromise of effective supervision
- Ensure that all leaders and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details
- Evaluate all aspects, both during and after the event
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses

7.3 School must ensure that all Visit Leaders are competent to carry out the role. Further guidance on approving leaders is given in OEAP NG document 3.2d *Approval of Leaders.* In line with OEAP guidance, visit leaders should have their competence reviewed for every trip ensuring that they are competent to lead *that* group on *that* visit in *that* environment.

7.4 Visit leaders should be considered for OEAP training. This is particularly important for those leading on more complex visits, e.g. residentials, adventure activities, overseas visits. Details on training are available from the OEAP website. Whether or not OEAP training is provided, competence must be verified in line with Section 7.3.

8. Educational Visits Management Plan

8.1 All schools are required to develop an establishment visit policy that covers all topic areas in the OEAP NG guidance document 5.3b *'Writing an Establishment Policy for Outdoor Learning, Off-site visits, and Learning Outside the Classroom'* and includes references to the requirements of this Policy.

9. Visit Planning and Management

9.1 Risk management, in the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, involves a risk-benefit assessment, as opposed to the standard risk assessment process used across health and safety. It is a two-stage process:

1. The identification of the potential benefits to be gained from an activity, along with any risks to the health and safety of those involved.
2. The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgement to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.

9.2 In carrying this out the following 'SAGE variables' should be considered in the planning, management, and delivery of visits:

- **Staffing**: who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available staff numbers, abilities and experience.
- **Activities** to be undertaken: what do you want the group to do and what is possible?
- **Group** characteristics: prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.
- **Environment**: indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance; and the ease of communications between the group and base.

9.3 Educational Visits can be broadly divided into two categories:

1. Category 1 (Standard) - those visits that involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by existing policies and procedures. Such visits should require minimal planning or preparation beyond what is needed to make best use of the learning opportunity. In a school context, they are simply lessons in a 'different' classroom.

9.4 Category 2 (Enhanced) – those visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment. A visit moves into this category because one or more aspects cannot be managed adequately by existing policies and procedures. This may be due to the distance from the school, the nature of the planned activities, the environment or venue(s), the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. Further details on visit categories and the sort of planning required for each is available in OEAP NG document 1b *Foundations*.

10. Visit Approval/Sign Off

10.1 United Learning operates a fully delegated visit approval system. That is, the final decision on whether or not an educational visit has been adequately planned and arranged, and that sufficient contingency arrangements are in place, rests with the School's Head Teacher, possibly with the input of the School's LGB, who must be satisfied that this Policy and OEAP NG has been followed.

10.2 Where Schools do not feel they possess the necessary competencies to do this locally and that they would benefit from expert oversight of their visit planning and management, they should engage the services of an Outdoor Education Advisor (OEA), who will be a member of OEAP. You can search for an OEA via the OEAP website. There is no OEA centrally employed and all schools are strongly advised to engage the services of an OEA to assist with all of their educational visit needs. OEAs are able to offer much more than just safety advice.

11. Emergency Planning

11.1 All schools must include emergency planning at the planning stage of each visit. OEAP NG contains extensive guidance around emergency planning, including sample checklists for Visit Leaders to be used in the event of an emergency, available here.

11.2 In the event of a major incident occurring, the Visit Leader must immediately notify their Head Teacher who will have access to the United Learning emergency contact/escalation procedure. In the first instance this requires that Head Teachers notify their Education Director who will cascade information to all relevant parties as necessary.

12. Post-Visit Review

12.1 All educational visits should be subject to a post-visit review, the level of detail for which will vary depending on the complexity of the visit. Key questions that need to be answered for all visits are:

- What worked well?
- What didn't work so well?
- What lessons can be learned/what could we do differently going forward?

12.2 Further details on the review process and ways this can be carried out can be found in the OEAP NG document 4.2c *Reviewing*.

13. Monitoring

13.1 As with any other element of health and safety management, Educational Visits should be including in the periodic local monitoring activities carried out as part of each schools proactive monitoring plan. Schools should evaluate their adherence to this Policy and OEAP NG, as well as the local management arrangements in place.

14. Insurance Requirements

14.1 Schools are covered for all educational visits not exceeding 31 days in duration, however, additional notification to Zurich is required for visits which will include winter sports. Schools should refer to the Insurance pages of United Hub for further details and contact Zurich for confirmation that they are covered if their visit will include any 'higher risk' activities.

15. LOtC Quality Badge

15.1 If an organisation possesses the LOtC Quality Badge schools can be assured that their operation has been verified against a nationally recognised level of safety and educational standards, therefore visit leaders do not need to carry out their own risk or quality assessments regarding the activities provided. Site familiarisation visits may still be of benefit.

16. Vetting and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

16.1 For extensive guidance on the application of vetting and DBS checks, please refer to OEAP NG document 3.2g '*Vetting and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks'*.

17. Visits Between United Learning Sites

17.1 Sometimes, schools will arrange visits to other United Learning schools. For the avoidance of doubt, the travelling school(s) need to consider the setup, transport and supervision elements of the visit. It is the Host school's responsibility to manage the remaining health and safety considerations on the day. In practice, this should be relatively straightforward where the travelling school(s) activities mirror those carried out routinely by the Host school.

18. Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award

18.1 The national DofE organisation has no direct involvement in the delivery of DofE programmes, including expeditions. The DofE licenses other organisations to deliver its programmes, but it plays no role in ensuring the health and safety of participants on expeditions.

18.2 Any school that runs a DofE programme, either through a licensed operator or as a directly licensed centre must ensure that their Educational Visits Management Plan details the arrangements that are in place to ensure the safe management and delivery of this programme and in particular, the competence of those persons managing and leading expeditions.

18.3 Further details on DofE considerations can be found in OEAP NG document 7b, *'Duke of Edinburgh Award Expeditions'.*

19. Further Information

19.1 Due to OEAP NG being a 'living' document that is regularly updated, it is not hosted on the A-Z section of United Hub. Instead, it can be found at OEAPng.info

20. Summary of Requirements

- A local Educational Visits Management Plan outlining the process in place for local educational visits management, in line with the requirements of this Policy and OEAP NG.
- EVCs to be OEAP trained, with refresher training provided every three years.
- Visit Leaders to have their competence formally assessed and advised to be provided with OEAP training.
- Schools running a DofE programme to ensure suitable considerations of safety and competence and detail this in the local Educational Visits Management Plan

21. Local Management Arrangements

At **CAMPION SCHOOL** the Educational Visits Management Plan can be located in the events and visits file on teams The following are EVCs

Nik Patel and Louise Osbourne.

22. Declaration of Adoption

This Policy has been reviewed by the senior leadership team and has been formally adopted.

Head Teacher	.....Kim Bradley Smith.....	.....Signature.....	.....Date.....
Governor for Health and Safety	.....XXX.....	.....Signature.....	.....Date.....