

SPTA Learning Outside the Classroom (LoTC) Policy

Key points

- As an employer, SPTA is required to ensure that its employees are provided with:
 - appropriate **guidance** relating to visits and LOfC activity;
 - employer-led **training** courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood;
 - suitable **systems** and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated;
 - access to **advice**, support and further training as required.
- All SPTA academies are required to have a current SPTA-trained Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) in post
- If an Academy does not have a nominated EVC, then that role will rest with the Principal.
- All SPTA academies are required to use the Evolve system as their internal system to record all their LOfC visits and activities.
- The risk assessment process for any LOfC must be recorded and suitable and sufficient control measures be identified for any significant risks.
- All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group expectations.
- It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available
- The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:
 - an entitlement to participate
 - accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
 - integration through participation with peers.
- Planning should reflect the consideration of legal and good practice requirements, ensuring:
 - The plan is based on academy procedures and employer guidance.
 - All staff (including any adult volunteer helpers) and the young people to be involved, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their role in the risk management process.
 - Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained.
 - Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers (making full use of national schemes that accredit that assurances have already been obtained by credible inspection regimes).
 - Designated emergency contact(s) have been identified that will work on a 24/7 basis where required.
 - All details of the activity provision are accessible to the emergency contact throughout the period of the activity.

Guidance

- Detailed offsite visits operational procedures are available via the Evolve system.
- Access to Evolve is assigned by each Academy to those members of staff acting as visit leaders, EVCs or with responsibility for approving visits.
- Template risk assessments, minimum qualifications for leaders and suggested staff: student ratios are include in the operational procedures

Training

- The relevant training courses for SPTA employees are
 - SPTA Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Training - all SPTA academies are required to have a current SPTA-trained EVC in post
 - SPTA Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Revalidation - all SPTA establishments are required to ensure that their EVC undertakes a formal revalidation normally every three years or attend the annual networking forum.

- SPTA Visit Leader Training – this course is required for all those who lead LOtC activities and is a requirement of SPTA leaders from September 2013 or within nine months of Academy conversion.

Systems

- SPTA uses an online database system for notification and approval called Evolve which is accessed at **www.sptavisits.org.uk**.
- All SPTA academies are required to use the Evolve system as their internal system to record LOtC visits and activities.
- All overseas visits and activities that include an adventurous activity require SPTA approval.
- Visits requiring approval by the SPTA should be submitted at eight weeks prior to the day of the visit wherever possible.
- In the case of complex visits such as expeditions abroad it is essential that initial approval is sought before any contract is signed with the provider and before any financial transactions are made.

Advice

- The nominated officer in SPTA is: Mr M Whittle, Tel: 01302 379 240, Tel: 07939683591, E-mail: Michael.whittle@schoolpartnershiptrust.org.uk
- Further guidance is available from the Outdoor Education Consultant, Mr David Barham who can be contacted via the SPTA contact details above.