

<u>Policy Title</u>	Educational Visits Policy
<u>Policy Category</u>	Compliant
<u>Owner</u>	Executive Director Quality
<u>Group Executive Lead</u>	Executive Director Quality
<u>Date Written</u>	February 2025
<u>Considered By</u>	Safeguarding Council
<u>Approved By</u>	Executive Board
<u>Date Approved</u>	June 2023
<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>	To include the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment
<u>Freedom of Information</u>	This document will be publicly available through the Groups Publication Scheme.
<u>Review Date</u>	June 2026
<u>Policy Summary</u>	A policy for staff involved in educational visits including short local visits extending to overseas residentials. It also includes essential planning guidance.

<u>Applicability of Policy</u>	<u>Consultation Undertaken</u>	<u>Applicable To</u>
Newcastle	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form	Yes	Yes
Carlisle	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster	Yes	Yes
Lewisham	Yes	Yes
Southwark	Yes	Yes
West Lancashire	Yes	Yes
Professional Services	Yes	Yes

<u>Changes Made</u>	
<u>Previous Approval Date</u>	<u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u>
Feb 2025	Amendments to Policy to reflect NCG wide use of Evolve EduFocus System
September 2023	Changes to additional requirements for category B activities
June 2023	New Policy

<u>Linked Documents</u>	
<u>Document Title</u>	<u>Relevance</u>
Safeguarding Policy	Overarching approaches to safeguarding – applicable to protect the learners and staff from risks
Data Protection Policy	Set standards for processing data and responding to data subject rights requests as required by relevant legislation such as the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
Positive Student Behaviour Policy	Sets out the expectations for learners at NCG, both positive behaviours and sanctions where standards fall below expectations, including disciplinary measures
H&S policy	Overarching approaches to H&S in accordance with national legislation
NCG Staff Code of Conduct	Sets out code of conduct of staff
Attendance management Policy	Sets out the requirements for learner attendance.
TLA Policy	Sets out high expectations for delivering TLA.
Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons Policy	Sets out the expectations and sanctions associated with misuse of ADW

Driving for Work Policy	Relevant if the visits involve driving.
NCG Careers Education, Information Advice and Guidance Framework	Sets out the NCG framework for the delivery of high-quality careers information, advice and guidance aligned to DfE guidance, Gatsby Standards (experience of the workplace, Encounters with employers) and CDI Framework.

Equality Impact Assessment

	Judgement	Explanatory Note if required
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy / procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in Section 2?	Yes	
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy / procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?		
Age	No	
Disability / Difficulty	No	
Gender Reassignment	No	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	
Race	No	
Religion or Belief	No	
Sex	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy / processes contain any language / terms / references / phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	No	
EIA4 - Does the policy / process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	No	
EIA 5 - Does this policy / process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	No	
EIA 5 - Does this policy / process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	Yes	See section 11 with regard to inclusion.
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	The policy has passed through the: NCG Safeguarding Council - a representative group of experienced managers in this aspect of our work.	

1. Policy Statement

NCG and its constituent colleges is committed to a curriculum that supports the Group's mission of 'Enabling social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education'.

The Group recognises that educational visits make an important contribution to this mission and are an effective way to enhance our learners' personal, social, cultural and academic / skills development. It is therefore NCG policy to encourage and support educational visits to allow our learners to realise these benefits where they form an integral element of their course, subject to available resources.

The safety of our learners and staff is always paramount, but it is important to strike the right balance between protecting our learners from risk and allowing them to learn from educational visits. We accept that not all risks can be eliminated, and mistakes and accidents will happen. However, we aim to minimise them to an acceptable level to provide a safe learning experience through:

- Effective, proportionate risk management and risk assessment when planning educational visits.
- Ensuring those staff involved in educational visits understand their roles, are well supported via regular training, and are competent to lead or take part in them.
- Ensuring real risks are managed during educational visits.
- Compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

2. Legal Context

NCG is legally obliged under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations, to ensure that the health and safety of its employees and learners in their care, is safeguarded while in any way affected by such employer's undertakings.

College staff organising and taking part in educational visits accept responsibility for the care and welfare of learners, regardless of age. They have duties as employees and / or managers under health and safety legislation and are required to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, and others, who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work, and to cooperate with their employer (NCG) regarding the Group's legal responsibilities.

These staff are legally responsible for complying with the policies, training and guidance provided by the College, and should take reasonable care at all times, and cooperate with NCG as their employer to:

- Follow any policy and guidance provided.
- Engage in relevant training offered by their employer.

- Keep up to date with currently acceptable professional practice.
- Look after their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and companions.
- Supervise learners effectively.

The following legislation may also apply to this policy:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act. 2006.
- Equality Act 2010.
- The Data Protection Act 2018 (including GDPR).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (reviewed annually).

3. Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy applies to all educational visits undertaken by learners / students / apprentices across NCG, and to those staff who have responsibility for their planning, organisation, and delivery. The purpose is to set out the requirements for their planning and management to ensure they exemplify best practice, have a clear curriculum focus and are compliant with relevant legislation.

4. Policy Requirements – The NCG Standard

All staff are required to plan and operate visits in line with this policy and associated national guidelines. All visits will be facilitated using the Evolve platform for planning, notification, approval, monitoring, and communications. Under no circumstances should a visit take place unless it is compliant with the policy and platform.

5. Definitions

The term **Group** refers to the seven colleges and professional services that make up NCG.

The term **learner** is used in its widest sense and includes all learners, whether young people, learners with specific high needs, apprentices, adult learners, or higher education students.

The term **teacher** is used to describe all teaching and training staff, including teachers, lecturers, instructors, skills trainers, learning support practitioners, coaches / mentors, work experience coaches and teachers in managing positions.

The term **carer** is used in its widest sense and includes parents / guardians / local authority carers.

Head of Department: the appointed leader of the school, faculty, or department.

Staff refers to all NCG staff in the organisation, including volunteers, sessional workers, and agency staff.

Visit Authorising Manager: a member of the college Senior Leadership Team, or designate, that has overall responsibility for the educational visit within their college. This individual will oversee the duties of the visit leader and trip authorisation.

Visit Leader: a permanent employee of NCG, who is suitably qualified and experienced to lead the visit and has responsibility for learners and other staff involved in an external visit.

Educational Visit - refers to all academic, sporting, cultural, creative, and personal development activities that take place away from the learners' college and make a significant contribution to learning and development of those participating.

Evolve – a specialist IT platform to support staff with the implementation of this policy in full, and to maintain accurate records.

EduFocus Advice – a third-party advice service from Evolve on all matters relating to educational visits and learning outside the classroom, including technical advice, and checking of all overseas, residential, and adventurous activity visits..

6. Governing Principles

NCG colleges will comply with the following governing principles.

- All visits are proportionally risk assessed and compliant with relevant Health and Safety, Safeguarding, and Prevent regulations, with appropriate control measures in place to negate / minimise risks to learners and staff.
- The Evolve platform will be the sole means of proposing, planning, and seeking visit approval. No visit will take place without all relevant documentation being completed and approved by the designated authorising manager within the approvals process facilitated by the Evolve platform.
- All staff involved in educational visits shall have received appropriate mandatory training and be deemed sufficiently experienced and competent by the authorising manager. They will be members of NCG staff and have up to date mandatory training and be familiar with this policy, its purpose and the potential consequences for learners, staff and NCG if not compliant. For visits deemed a higher risk specific

training may be required, if this is the case advice should be accessed via EduFocus Advice.

- All visits must have a clear curriculum purpose, with demonstrable outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills, personal /cultural development, or link to the NCG Guarantee standards. Learner will not be exposed to groups or information which undermine NCG's commitment to British Values, safeguarding, Prevent and Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging.
- Learners are bound by the expectations and conduct as outlined in the NCG Policy, specifically including the Positive Student Behaviour Policy; Learner Alcohol, Drugs and Weapons Policy; and Safeguarding Policy, which will apply at all times.
- Staff must comply with the expectations in the NCG Staff Code of Conduct – whether the visits take place in normal working hours, or outside of these hours, including weekends.
- Local environments and communities are respected.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1.NCG Colleges

The responsibility for any educational visit rests with the College organising the activity, and therefore the Principal. College leadership teams are mandated to adopt the use of Evolve, which aligns with the content of this policy.

7.2.The Visit Authorising Manager

For low and medium risk (category A and B) visits, the Head of Department (or equivalent is permitted to authorise the visit), for higher risk visits (category C and D) it would be the Principal, or approved deputy / deputies only (who must be a member of the senior leadership team).

This member of staff will be responsible for authorising all college visits which includes:

- A suitably experienced and competent visit leader is in place – some discretion is allowed here, but a reasonable benchmark would at least be one-year full service for low and medium risk activity.
- Signing off all required planning, approval and visit documentation prior to a visit taking place.
- Advising on additional risks and controls that may not have been initially considered by the visit leader.
- Acting to limit, prohibit, or cancel visits where there are reasonable grounds to believe the college is exposing any individual (employee, learners, or member of the public) to unacceptable levels of risk.

- Supervising compliance with all policies, with particular attention to Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

7.3. Evolve Advice

Evolve Advice is a third party, appointed by NCG, to provide support for staff in the planning, approval, and management of educational visits, sports fixtures, and extra-curricular activities. This platform is intended to bring consistency and compliance to the administrative processes whilst reducing administration in the longer term.

- Provide approval for all Overseas, Residential and Adventurous Visits.
- Liaise with and provide advice to on all matters relating to Educational Visits and Outdoor Education, including technical advice.
- Recommend appropriate systems and procedures to ensure suitable management of Educational Visit responsibilities at all levels.
- Review and update guidance if requested, ensuring that it remains in line with DfE recommendations, National Guidance, any employer specific requirements and current good practice.
- Provide advice directly to the Headteacher, EVCs or other persons where requested.
- Liaise with relevant personnel to ensure the suitability of the training programme for Educational Visits Coordinators.
- Represent the interests of the client at relevant national and regional groups and other organisations and provide feedback where indicated.
- Investigate, when necessary and provide immediate feedback on any national issues relating to safety on Educational Visits and Outdoor Education and make recommendations if indicated.

7.4 Visit Leader

The visit leader has a crucial role to play in the successful and safe facilitation of an educational visit. As such, they will be deemed suitably experienced and competent (by the college leadership team / Principal) in organising such visits, the supervision of learners, and all relevant health and safety matters. The Visit Leader must be a permanent member of NCG staff, volunteers, or agency members of staff are not permitted to lead visits.

They will have overall operational responsibility for:

- The leadership of the visit
- Completion of all process documentation via Evolve.

- The appointment of suitably experienced accompanying visit staff to ensure appropriate learner / staffing ratios, and a nominated contact at college base.
- Briefing learners, and staff in relation to the visit.
- The visit leader will ensure that carers / employers are given sufficient information in writing for low and medium risk visits (category A and B) or are invited to a briefing session for higher risk visits (for example category C and D trips). Evidence of this shall be uploaded to Evolve.
- The supervision, discipline and conduct of the learners and staff for the duration of the visit.
- Maintaining the safe custody of all personal information taken away from Group premises.
- Undertake a dynamic risk assessment during a visit to identify any potentially hazardous environmental, social, situations factors, and take appropriate steps to leave the environment or remove the risk before it causes an accident or incident.
- Be contactable at all times, where possible, for college leaders and family members in the event of an emergency.

7.5 Accompanying Visit Staff

Accompanying staff must endeavour to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent / carer would do in the same circumstances. Accompanying staff will:

- The preferred approach is for those accompanying staff to only be permanent members of NCG.
- Under the direction of the visit leader, assist with the organisation of activities and discipline of the learners.
- Ensure that the established codes of conduct, for leaders and staff is adhered to.
- Consider stopping the activity and notify the group leader, if they think the risks to the health or safety of the group members in their charge, is unacceptable.

7.6 Nominated Contact at College Base

Dealing with unexpected situations can be aided by a central figure. The nominated contact will act as the contact staff member for both the staff, and the learners' families if required. Within the evolve system and for each trip there shall be a record of the following:

- Details of the place to be visited, contact personnel and telephone and mobile numbers as appropriate.

- A copy of the contact details of all the learners' carers.
- A copy of the next of kin details for adult learners', this can be signposted through student records held elsewhere but must be present.
- A copy of the contact details of the Visit Leader and accompanying staff.
- Be fully briefed and aware of their responsibilities including the action to take in the event of a serious incident.

7.7 Visit Host staff (if applicable)

This is a wide category of individuals that could include:

- Employer hosts / supervisors for industrial visits.
- Staff from specialist providers, hosting the learners, for example outward bound leaders.

In all cases the duty of care, and compliance with NCG / College policy remains with the member of NCG staff who is leading and supervising the visit or experience. In some cases, host staff may be required to hold specialist qualifications, and / or be leading high risk activities (such as outward bound). It is the responsibility of the visit leader and host staff to obtain, check, and fully comply with any localised and specific risk assessments, by considering the individual abilities and needs of the learner group.

Evolve requires that the following organisation shall be utilised with the Evolve system to ascertain assurance.

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) awards the [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) to organisations that meet nationally recognised standards.

Colleges can [check if an organisation holds the LOtC Quality Badge](#).

If an organisation does not hold the badge, the college must ensure that they are an appropriate organisation to use. This could include checking:

- their insurance
- that they meet legal requirements
- their health and safety and emergency policies
- their risk assessments
- control measures
- their use of vehicles
- staff competence
- safeguarding
- accommodation
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have
- that they have a licence, where needed.

The college should have an agreement with the organisation that makes it clear what everyone is responsible for. This is especially important if they will be taking over supervision of the children.

7.7 Carers

Carers should be able to make an informed decision as to whether their child should go on the visit.

Carers should:

- Read the pre-visit information and / or attend the briefing (if required).
- Sign the consent form.
- Provide the visit leader with an emergency contact number(s).
- Provide the visit leader with relevant medical / dietary details, including any medication currently being taken in writing (by means of the consent form) and any other relevant information (about their child's emotional, psychological, and physical health) which may affect their participation in the visit).
- Help prepare their child for the visit, for example, by reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.
- Agree the arrangements established for a member of the group returning home due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Be clear about any kit or equipment requirements before the visit – for example, some families may not have the means to purchase specific equipment for a visit. If this is the case, it should be referred through to learner support / bursary funds for assistance where relevant and funding supports the required resources.

Special arrangements may be necessary for learners who have particular or special needs. This should not be a barrier to participation.

The Visit Lead / SLT reserve the right to prohibit a member of the learner group from attending if they feel that any of the following could be compromised:

- Health and safety of the wider learner group.
- Welfare and safeguarding of the wider learning group.
- Reputation of the College / NCG.

7.8 Learners

- The visit leader should, when briefing the learners, make it clear that they have to act in accordance with expectations and conduct as outlined in the Positive Student Behaviour Policy at all times.

8 Categories of Educational Visit

Educational visits are classified as category A to D dependent upon the activities planned within the visits, the duration, location, and the use of transport within the visit.

Note these relate to the Relate directly with the proviso of risk assessment, built into the Evolve system are question sets appropriate to the level of the visits with an additional caveat that overseas, overnight, and adventurous visits are assessed and approved by Evolve Advice

Category	Not exhaustive:
A – Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local, one-off day / evening, supervised visits e.g. field study trips that are not using college / public transport. There are no material risks, other than those a learner would experience getting to / from college during normal routines.
B – Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits involving college organised / public transport but not involving overnight accommodation. Visits to places of interest, museums, theatres, libraries, government buildings, etc. Where there is a potential increased threat level from terrorism due to the nature of the venue, perceived high value target, such as buildings of religious significance, religious events, political events, large gatherings of people, high profile sports / entertainment events, large transport interchange, large gathering of people, etc. Visits involving the use of tools or equipment. Visit to a place of employment i.e. factory / site. Participation in sporting events, where there is a potential risk of injury due to the nature of contact sport. Travel involving several modes of transport and transition points e.g. bus to train.
C – High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervised visits requiring overnight accommodation within the UK. Camping and outdoor adventure activity e.g. rock climbing / abseiling.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact sport with a higher likelihood for injury – for example boxing and rugby.
D – Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits overseas, and/or requiring transport by Flight or Ferry.

9 Control of Risk

For all activities, the use of Evolve is mandated to document and control risks:

- As per the governing principles outlined in section 6, and in addition:
- Adequate insurance cover is in place – both college and venue. The Visit Lead should request a copy of the public liability insurance before the visit. (Under no circumstances should staff or learners sign a waiver to waive their right to bring a claim for personal injury).
- All relevant documentation has been completed and approved in advance of the visit date on Evolve and the visit is approved.

Requirements for category B activities (to assist with planning):

A desk-based review to establish:

- The quality of facilities is suitable and adequate.
- The venue staff are competent to conduct the activity.
- The venue has risk assessments and/or is judged to have appropriate safety arrangements in place.
- Confirmation that the venue has adequate insurance (see footnote)
- Consider the additional risk of terror related incidents, identifying any unusual/elevated risks and associated control measures. Reference the Visits and Threat from Terrorism advice links (in the guidance section of this document) and confirm basic emergency instructions with the learners in the event of a terrorist related incident. For example, run, hide, tell, meet points, register taking, emergency phone numbers.

Footnote:

Please note the education visit will only be covered under NCG's public liability policy, if the visit has been risk assessed. The visit leader/appointed manager is required to check that the venue has public liability insurance/self-insurance in place. Please note this does not need to be a copy of the certificate, but it must be documented in the risk assessment to indicate that the trip leader/manager has asked and has been assured that the venue is covered.

Additional requirements for Category C activities:

- As per category B risk activities.
- Safeguarding of learners during overnight accommodation – consideration given to sleeping arrangements (by sex / gender).
- Ensuring staff sex / gender ratios are appropriate given the sex / gender of the learner group.
- Emergency arrangements (including those local to the venue) and communication schedule established.
- Detailed activity itinerary.

Additional requirements for Category D activities:

- As per category B and C risk activities.
- Detailed activity itinerary by the visit leader.
- Detailed activity risk assessment completed.
- Contact details provided for all Staff for the destination British Consulate in the event of a serious incident taking place [British Consulate & British Embassy \(british-consulate.org\)](http://british-consulate.org)
- Consult and assess the requirements and risks of the destination in relation to the trip through the Foreign Travel Advice Website <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>
- Consult any overseas sector specific requirements. (For example, vaccinations if working in a care / health setting).
- The NCG Travel Insurance Form is completed and submitted to insurance@ncgrp.co.uk. Please note plans for overseas trips must be specifically referenced in the annual planning form distributed and collated by the NCG Legal and Contracts Team. If not, the visit lead must inform the NCG Legal and Contracts Team of the trip description, destination, number of staff and student participants and the length of stay (in days), at the earliest opportunity.

10 Inclusion

NCG actively supports learners with physical, learning, and sensory disabilities to participate fully and safely in external visits and work experience placements, making any reasonable adjustments required.

Staff are reminded that it is unlawful to treat a learner differently based on their protected characteristics (such as disability, sex, religion, or belief) less favourably; or by failing to take reasonable steps to ensure that learners are not placed at a substantial

disadvantage. However, this is not always practicably possible, and some activities may not be safe or suitable for all learners.

Therefore, risk assessments will take account of any additional steps needed to ensure that learners with physical, learning, and sensory disabilities, or those with medical conditions are included on external visits and work experience placements wherever possible. The Visit Lead will consult with specialist staff / carers and learners and take advice from relevant healthcare professionals to ensure that learners can participate safely, wherever reasonably and possible.

If the outcome of a risk assessment is that the residual risk to the health and safety of the learner, or to others is unacceptably high, as a result of a learner's particular need, taking into account all reasonable adjustments, then the decision not to include the learner on that occasion will be communicated to the carers of the learner by the visit leader. If this is the case the visit leader should consider other worthwhile and rewarding opportunities for the learner.

End of Policy

Additional Notes and Essential Guidance

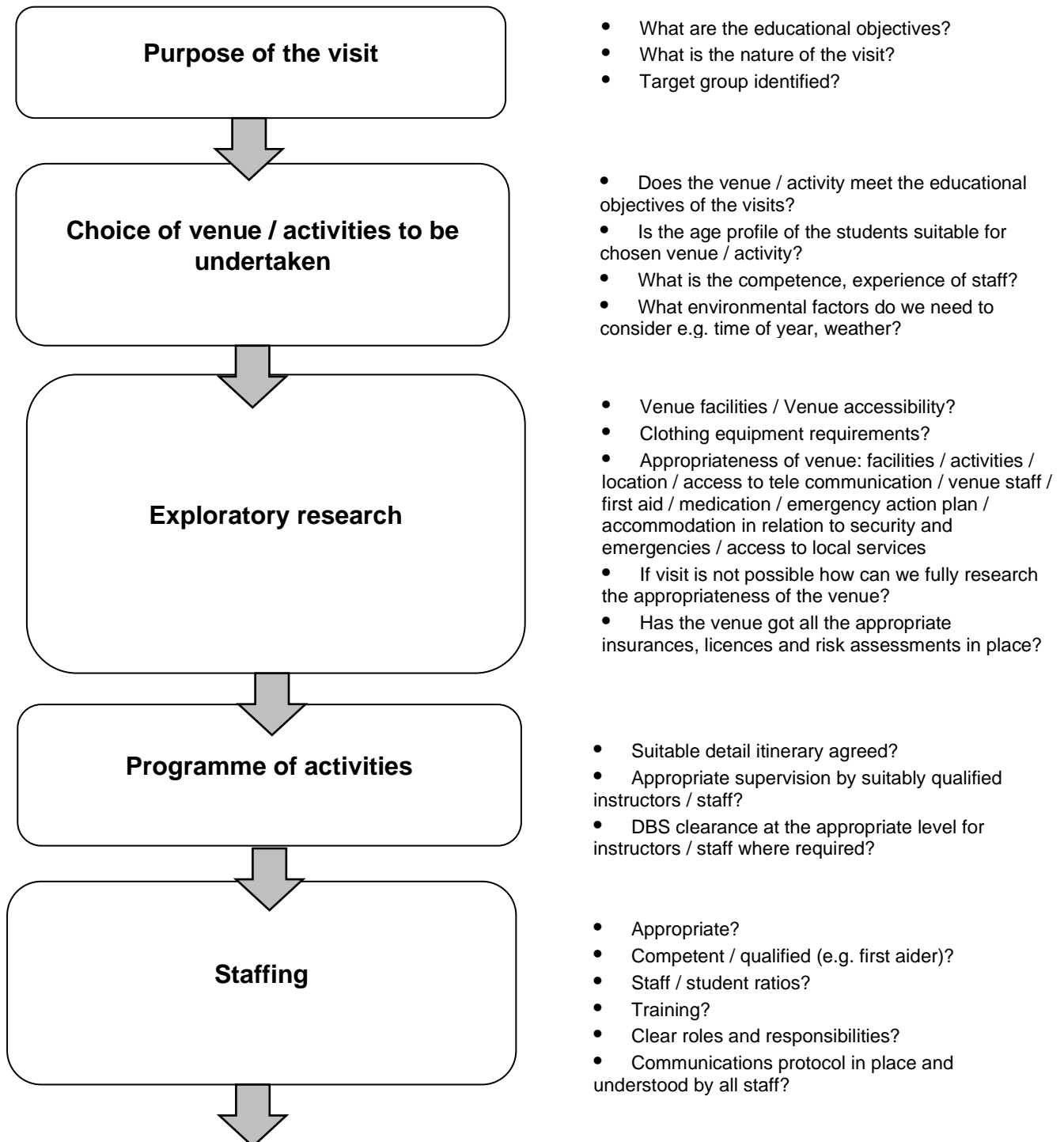
1. Overview of Planning Process

Whatever the visit, it is essential that planning takes place by the visit lead to identify the major issues that need to be addressed. This involves considering the educational aims, the programme and itinerary to support these aims, the risks that may arise and the measures necessary to reduce these.

The terms risk assessment and risk management are used to describe the process of addressing the risks of any visit / activity and the steps taken to counter them. The process of risk management is paramount in the overall planning of any educational visit.

Evolve is a software platform procured by NCG to assist staff in the planning, administration, and delivery of a safe and purposeful educational visit. We know from other providers that whilst the requirements may at first seem burdensome, the mitigation of risk, consistency of recording and approval, is well worth it. Evolve has a series of radio buttons and document upload requirements which is intended to step through the risk process and document our 'controls'.

Planning a Visit Flowchart – General Key Questions



Emergency procedures / First aid

- Clear roles and responsibilities of main staff involved?
- First aider identified.
- Familiarisation with educational visit venue to include location / first aid equipment / emergency procedures and the responsible staff identified?
- Arrangement of first aid / emergency procedure meeting with staff / learners on arrival at the venue?
- Immediate access to parental / medical consent form information (telephone numbers etc.) for all learners?

2. Risk Assessment

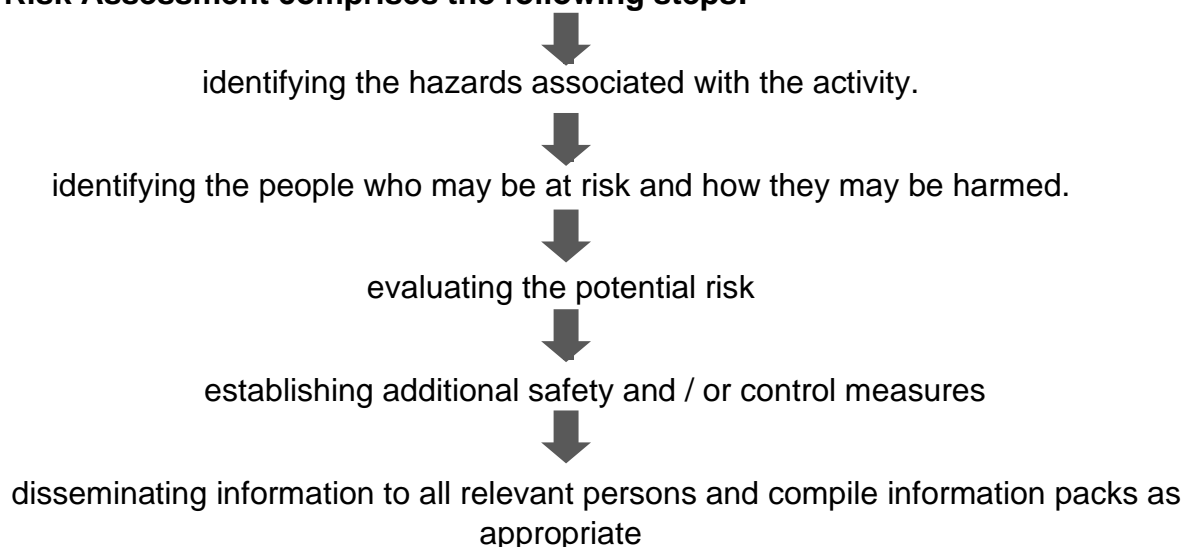
Educational visits can never be entirely risk-free. The aim, therefore, must be to contain risks to within acceptable levels, and effective risk management will make this achievable.

Fundamental to the planning process of any educational visit is the process of risk assessment.

Risk assessment enables colleges to make a reasoned judgement about the level of risk involved and what actions need to be taken to reduce the risk to an acceptable level which permits the visit to go ahead.

Care must be taken not to expose the learners to unacceptable physical or psychological risk, particularly on those occasions when the educational visit aims to exercise the individual's sense of adventure.

Risk Assessment comprises the following steps:



The key question is whether, or not, the risk can be managed. If there are doubts that the risk is manageable, then it is advisable to change the activity and / or the location.

Where there is considerable concern as to the outcome, it is better to pause, review, and redesign the educational visit, than to expose staff and learners to an unacceptable level of risk.

Visit leaders must fully record their risk management decisions in Evolve. The visit leader should understand that risk assessment is a dynamic process and therefore must carry out on-going risk assessments during an educational visit and ensure that appropriate action is taken as necessary e.g. cancelled public transport, learners or staff illness, closed venue, adverse weather conditions. The ability to re-assess and manage changing risks whilst the visit is taking place is a key element of the competence levels required of visit leaders.

4. Supervision and Staffing Ratios

Those planning visits, on the basis of risk assessment, should decide the ratios considering the range of variables. This will be broadly based on:

- the category of the educational visit.
- the specific educational objective(s) and.
- the outcome of a risk assessment.

Other key factors to take into consideration include:

- nature and location of activities to be undertaken.
- age and ability of the group.
- learners with special educational and / or medical needs.
- day visit or overnight stay.
- type of accommodation.
- mixed or single gender group.
- experience of supervisory staff in off-site supervision.
- duration and nature of the journey type.
- competence of supervisory staff, both general and in relation to specific learning activities.
- requirements of the organisation / location to be visited.
- competence and behaviour of the learners.
- prevailing weather conditions and time of year.
- duration and location of planned activities.
- first aid cover.
- Whether supervision will be close or remote

Close (direct) supervision occurs when the learners remain within sight and therefore within a range of direct verbal contact of the college staff. Remote (indirect) supervision is planned and is subject to stringent controls, while the group is not necessarily within direct contact or vision of college staff at all times. Both college staff and the learners will know of each other's whereabouts and clear lines of communication including rendezvous points will have been established. College staff

are required to remain in the area, in which the indirect supervised activity takes place, throughout period.

Staffing ratios for visits may vary according to the activity, age, group, location, and the efficient use of resources. There is therefore a level of discretion afforded to senior leadership teams for practical reasons.

However, a general guide for all categories would be to appoint at least 2 experienced and permanent staff members for up to 18 learners, and multiples thereafter. Higher risk visits (category C and D) must have at least 2 members of staff due to cover / contingency in an emergency. If the cat B and C trip is mixed gender, then staff accompanying must be too. It is also good practice to follow this for Cat A and B visits, however this may not always be practical / necessary (for example if the visit is close to the college campus, or the group is small). Whilst some discretion around the term experienced is necessary, for low and medium category visits an experienced member of staff will have been with NCG for over a year; for higher risk visits the authorising manager will need to consider the specific qualifications and experience of the individual in supervising and managing learner groups. For example, a new career teacher would not be deemed suitable to lead higher risk visits.

The visit leader needs to ensure that there are enough accompanying visit staff to cope effectively with an emergency e.g. to accompany a learner to hospital, escort a learner home, personal illness or attend to a personal emergency.

It may not always be practical for 2 staff to accompany a small group or single learner – for example if journeying to an event / skills competition. In this case senior leaders have discretion to consider other risk mitigation – for example, a duty colleague on call. Naturally, additional permission would need to be sought from carers; hence this should only be used for learners aged 18+, without physical, sensory, educational disabilities.

5. Transport

The visit leader must be satisfied that all the transport arrangements meet the legal statutory requirements for the type of journey proposed.

Areas to Consider:

Visits should use public transport, or reputable national providers if possible (for example rail franchises / National Express)

If outside of the above, in the first instance the college-approved transport provider company should be contacted to arrange transport if coach travel is needed. Where colleges require the use of outside operators to provide transport, it is crucial that they are satisfied that the operator(s) can demonstrate how they meet the below criteria.

- the contacted operator must hold a valid Operator's Licence (this can be checked out by contacting the Department of Infrastructure or looking at their web site);
- the mode of transport is appropriate to the needs of the learners.
- there is adequate supervision during transit.
- those involved in driving hold the relevant licence to drive the vehicle.
- those involved are insured appropriately.
- guidance on the transport arrangements relevant to the particular group, e.g. age and / or developmental needs.

6. Insurance Cover

The visit leader must ensure, well before the group departs, that adequate insurance arrangements are in place. The insurance broker can advise on particular types of insurance requirements and other arrangements:

- medical cover for leaders and group members.
- specialised risk activities.
- activities abroad.
- participants with medical conditions.
- cancellation or another emergency situation.

The visit leader should scrutinise carefully the conditions, list of exclusions, and limits on cover in any policy provided by an outside organisation. If there is any doubt, the insurer should be asked for clarification before departure. The group leader may need to seek further advice from the employing authority or insurance company if not completely satisfied with the insurance cover.

7. Code of Conduct

The expectations for conduct, as outlined in the Positive Student Behaviour Policy for students and the Staff Code of Conduct for staff, apply to educational visits. The visit is not a holiday, and the codes serve as an effective basis upon which to ensure uphold the professional and reputational standards expected of the visiting party.

In advance of an educational visit, accompanying staff, learners, and carers should all be made fully aware of these expectations including sanctions. All learners participating in an educational visit must agree to abide by them at all times during a visit.

It is the responsibility of the visit leader and accompanying staff to maintain standards of behaviour and discipline while on educational visits.

While on a residential, the visit leader and accompanying staff remain responsible for the conduct and safety of learners at all times, regardless of their age. This should be taken into consideration when deciding on appropriate behaviour, practice, and

supervisory arrangements. It may be necessary to devise a duty rota in order that staff can have a break away from supervisory duty, while ensuring that an appropriate level of supervision is maintained at all times.

After carrying out a behavioural risk assessment, the college has the right to refuse any learner from participating in the visit, whose involvement may be considered to be a danger to him / herself or to the group.

8. Communicating with Carers

An effective, two-way communication process between the college, centre and carers is important for all visits. Effective communication will ensure they are made aware of the purpose and nature of the visit and will ensure they inform the college about any particular needs and issues of their child relevant to the visit.

Information to parent / guardian / carer may include:

- the aims and benefits of the visit.
- dates of the visit or series of visits.
- destination details.
- times of departure and return and whether they will be required to meet their children on return.
- the location where the learners will be collected and returned.
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- the size of the group and the level of supervision.
- details of accommodation.
- details of provision for special educational or medical needs.
- names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- the planned programme of activities.
- agreed arrangements for non-emergency contact during the visit.
- arrangements / protocols for carers to contact the child.
- arrangements / protocols for the college or learners to contact their carers.
- a list of potential circumstances when a carer will be contacted by the college e.g. when learner:
 - reports feeling unwell and the symptoms / condition is giving cause for concern.
 - requires medical attention.
 - is injured as a result of an accident or emergency.
 - is involved in a serious breach of the established code of conduct for the educational visit.
- the expected standards of behaviour and sanctions during the visit.
- arrangements for the early return of a learner for any reason during the visit.
- details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether carers need to arrange additional cover.
- clothing and equipment to be taken.
- what learners should not take on the visit or bring back.

- advice on pocket money and how it is allocated during the visit.
- the information required from carers about their child.
- details on the cost of the visit.
- the risks associated with the visit (but tempered with information about the college's good safety record, and the overall benefits to the participants).

Information should (where relevant):

- be sent as far in advance of the visit as practicable.
- involve convening a meeting to clarify detail if appropriate. This is particularly important for residential visits, or when the learners are to travel abroad or engage in adventure activities or visits to demanding environments. Where briefing meeting is required, alternative arrangements might need to be made for carers who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication.

Carer Consent

Consent must be obtained for educational visits for learners under the age of 18. This may be done on a blanket basis for regular visits (e.g. Cat A) or on a one-off basis for non-regular visits (Cat B+). The contents of a consent form for a carer to sign will vary according to the category of the visit.

Medical Consent

For visits that require consent, carers should be asked to agree to the young person receiving emergency treatment from NHS professionals. If carers do not agree, the visit lead / authorising manager will remove the learner from the visit.

Contact with Carers during the Visit

All carers of learners taking part in an educational visit should be briefed or provided with a copy of the communication procedure in advance of the visit. These should be clearly defined arrangements / protocols for carers to contact their child.

Carers should therefore:

- know the destination details.
- be aware of the emergency contact arrangements.

There should also be clearly defined arrangements / protocols for learners to contact their careers.

9. Emergency / Contingency Arrangements

Establishing emergency procedures is an essential part of planning an educational visit. Everyone involved in the educational visit should be aware of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Contingency planning relates to areas and circumstances which should be anticipated in advance of an educational visit, e.g. unsuitable weather, transportation problems, cancellation of an event, illness, or injury etc. It should also define roles and responsibilities for all staff involved in the organisation of the trip including senior managers remaining in college.

Those responsible for organising educational visits should familiarise themselves, and others involved, with relevant contingency arrangements.

Visit organisers should ensure that a clear communications plan is established with key contact numbers available. All staff members and carers of those taking part in the visit should be briefed and be provided with a copy of the procedure. It should clearly define the circumstances where contact should be made.

In the event of a medical emergency designated staff responsible for managing first aid / medical emergencies should have knowledge of:

- medical conditions.
- parental advice relating to a medical condition.
- an emergency contact number for carers.
- how to access any medical equipment e.g. the defibrillator at the facility.
- the emergency procedures within the facility.

11 Critical Incidents

A critical incident may be defined as any sudden and unexpected incident or sequence of events which causes trauma within a college community, and which overwhelms the normal coping mechanisms of that college.

In the event of a critical incident (as defined above) occurring during a college visit the college's critical incident management plan, or equivalent measures, should be implemented.

12 Terrorist Attacks

The current global situation means that the possibility of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk faced by us all. Like all risks this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way.

To provide some perspective - the UK government identifies five levels of threat from 'low' to 'critical'. Since 2006, when this level was first published, it has never been below 'substantial' – the middle level.

For advice on how to plan and manage off-site visits while considering the terror threat is detailed in the Evolve platform. Generally:

- Assess the risks given the UK National Threat Level at the time of the visit.
- Be aware of the latest news relating to your destination.
- When travelling abroad check the FCO website [Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) in the early stages of visit planning, at regular intervals and immediately prior to leaving.
- When visiting crowded places, such as a major city, venue, or event, where the risk of attack may be greater, consider within your planning:
 - Possible safe areas or venues, near where you intend to be, that you could use as an emergency shelter.
 - How to minimise waiting time at busy venues. Where to wait and gather for head counts.
 - How to minimise queuing times (such as not carrying unnecessary items) to speed up search and entry.
 - Ensure staff and student phones are charged and numbers shared?
 - A contact card for all participants giving a number to call if separated from the group, and the name and telephone number of the establishment/accommodation.
 - How you would get away in an emergency, bearing in mind that the direct route and planned transport might no longer be an option. Are you aware of alternatives and can you access emergency funds to pay for them?
 - Do you need to leave the site immediately with the crowd at the end of the visit event?
 - The possibility of an enforced overnight stay and what this might entail – for example do you need a reserve of any critical medication?
 - How the leadership team might manage an enforced group split.

During the visit:

- Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings – know where the exits are and where you would run to. Understand the Run Hide Tell general guidance for personal incident response. More detail is available via <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>
- Be aware of the possibility of suspicious items.
- When staying at any place for a prolonged period, for example a shopping mall, identify emergency meeting points.



- Avoid congregating too long around entrances to major public sites.
- At ports and airports, do not linger unnecessarily on the public side of security screening.
- The Citizen Aid App, available for Windows, Apple and Android mobile phone operating systems, is available at: <https://www.citizenaid.org/> All leaders and staff accompanying educational visits should download this key resource for use in emergency situations.

Other sources of advice on terrorism can be found at on the Evolve platform.