**Off Site Visits Policy**

**Introduction**

Glow Education Project is committed to creating a caring, friendly, safe environment in which all learners can develop their skills and knowledge, a place where everyone; staff, learners and visitors; feels secure and relaxed.

**Aims of Procedures**

Glow Education Project are legally obliged to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety, and welfare at work of employees and the health and safety of non-employees who are affected by our activities.

**Procedures**

**Preliminary Planning**

Before deciding on the appropriateness of the visit or activity staff should consider the following points

* **ensure commissioners and parents are aware of proposed visits and consent/authorisation is given**
* What is the aim of the visit?
* will the visit contribute to achieving the aim in the most appropriate way
* what advice is needed before proceeding
* what are the skills/competencies/qualifications of the staff accompanying the visit
* do these meet the needs of the visit/activity
* what relevant skills are required of the venue provider
* does the proposed venue offer value for money

**Risk Assessment**

A full risk assessment should be undertaken, to cover all travel arrangements, and activities planned. Where possible a reconnaissance visit should be made to the venue, particularly where outdoor activities are planned, to inform the risk assessment. This should be written in conjunction with risk assessments undertaken by any provider, or venue. Checks should be made to ensure that any venue has appropriate health and safety policies and insurances in place to cover all planned activities, and that approved, qualified staff are available to cover all planned activities. The following points should be considered as part of the assessment:

* what are the hazards
* who might be affected by them
* what safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level
* can the group leader put the safety measures in place
* what steps will be taken in an emergency
* the type of activities planned
* the location
* the competence, experience and qualification of accompanying staff
* the age, competence and fitness of all participants
* the ratio of competent, experienced and qualified staff of the provider to the number in the attending group.
* the quality and suitability of available equipment
* seasonal conditions, weather and timing

**Activities should not proceed or continue if risks are assessed to be or become too high.** Water based activities involve specific risks. These must be assessed particularly carefully.

Risk assessments for individual participants should also be in place, and any necessary adjustments made to minimise risks associated with individuals.

Where Community transport is to be used this must be arranged within the procedures detailed and only approved drivers used.

**Staffing**

The Education Lead has overall responsibility for the planning and arrangement of educational visits and activities, and may delegate certain planning tasks to staff members with particular interests or relevant experience. Volunteers may assist with the organisation and supervision during visits, they need to be carefully selected and their roles clearly defined. Glow Education Project staff must retain primary responsibility for supervision of the party at all times.

**Staff and volunteers should complete the Staff Information form to provide medical information and contact details**.

At least one of the supervisory staff must be a competent first-aider and hold a valid first aid certificate. Supervising staff should also carry an appropriate first aid kit.

Staff should carry a mobile phone and carry details of out-of-hours cover arrangements and Glow Education Project’s emergency phone numbers.

Staff ratios will vary according to the activity, age group, location and temperament of the group. As a general rule:

* 2 staff to every 15 young people for visits where the element of risk is low, e.g. visits to educational sites, walks
* 2 staff to every 10 young people for all other trips unless circumstances dictate a higher staff ratio is warranted
* mixed groups should be accompanied by at least one male and one female staff member

**A copy of the risk assessment must be given to the Education lead and all staff supervising the trip must read and understand the risk assessment.**

**Communication**

All participants; staff, learners, volunteers should be given full details of the organisation and administration of the visit.

Visit organisers should:

* brief all those participating
* obtain informed parental consent for all those under 18

Formal written parental consent must be obtained for all participants and should be specific to the activities and arrangements for the visit. Parents should also receive full details of the proposed visit, including travel arrangements and emergency contact details.

**During the visit**

All participants should be briefed about the arrangements for the visit, and know who to contact in any emergency.

Staff should be fully briefed on their individual roles and responsibilities, and have contact details with them.

All participants should be aware that they are expected to behave in an appropriate manner, and that they must observe any health and safety procedures and instructions relating to specific activities.

**Emergencies and accidents**

Despite all the best planning and organisation there may still be occasions when accidents and emergencies require on the spot response from Glow Education Project staff and volunteers.

Outdoor Activity Centres and public venues have their own emergency procedures which should be made available. If there is any doubt about these the trip should not be approved.

The following procedures should be followed in the event of an accident or emergency, but if these vary significantly from those of the provider, agreement should be sought on exactly which set of procedures should be followed:

* establish the nature and extent of emergency
* make sure all members of the group are accounted for and safe
* if there are injuries, establish their extent and administer first aid treatment as far as possible
* advise other Glow Education Project staff and the provider’s staff that an emergency has occurred and the emergency procedures are in operation
* ensure that an adult accompanies casualties to hospital
* ensure that the remainder of the group are adequately supervised and arrange for their immediate return to base
* liaise with emergency services until the incident is over
* as soon as practicable, contact your Glow Education Project base and centre Manager giving full details of the incident.

The group leader should make a written record of all details of the incident, and other group members should be asked to contribute written evidence as soon as possible. All accident forms should be completed and if appropriate the local authority or HSE should be notified.

**The following must be taken on every off site activity:**

* Emergency contacts and procedures
* Information on known medical conditions
* Medical equipment such as inhalers, diabetic equipment, Epi-pens as appropriate
* First Aid kits

**Post Visit**

Staff should complete an evaluation of the visit, detailing any unexpected problems encountered, and report any accidents or incidents/near misses on the appropriate forms.

**Policy updated: December 2022**