

OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY

FOREWORD

Freedom Foundation AP is a site for KS1 & KS2 Alternative Provision. They are referred to as Freedom Foundation AP/AP for the benefit of students and this document.

01 AIMS

Freedom Foundation AP will not be routinely scheduling off-site visits, our delivery to students will take place primarily on-site. However, on the rare occasion that an off-site visit may take place (e.g., to a recording studio), this policy sets out our approach to planning and operating off-site visits, ensuring the health and safety of staff and students, and making sure that visits are available to all students.

Off-site visits are activities arranged by the AP which require students to leave the AP premises, having been authorised to do so by the Head of Provision or another designated member of staff.

02 LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance.

- [Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

03 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

03.1 HEAD OF PROVISION

The Head of Provision is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for off-site visits

- Making sure staff have received any necessary training
- Ensure that commissioners are happy for the trip to go ahead
- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise off-site visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead off-site visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit
- Assess outside activity providers
- Advise the trustees when they are approving off-site visits
- Assess the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Evaluate all off-site visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

03.2 TRIP LEAD

Every off-site visit will have one member of AP staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Conduct a pre-visit wherever possible
- Plan the proposed visit, considering the health and safety risk to students, staff and volunteers
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the AP has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents/carers are given accurate information about off-site visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the AP or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, students and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour

- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for students and others

03.3 STAFF

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all student and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for off-site visits, as well as how to act while taking part. AP staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all off-site visits from the Head of Provision
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents/carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all students' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage student behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

03.4 PARENTS/CARERS

By agreeing that students can take part in off-site visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the learner that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the visit

03.5 VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers attending off-site visits, including parent/carers volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of AP staff and act accordingly

- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for students
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure students under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

03.6 STUDENTS

Our AP behaviour policy also applies to all off-site visits. This includes the expectation that students will:

- Follow instructions given to the while on the visit
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Students will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit and will be expected to uphold the AP's behaviour policy at all times.

04 PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The decision on whether or not an off-site visit will take place will be made by the Head of Provision, and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the AP
- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-student ratio

- Inclusion and accessibility

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by AP staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place to reduce any risks

See Appendix 1 for our off-site visit information form for the planning and approval of a visit.

Once a risk assessment for each learner and the venue has been approved by the Head of Provision, and the trustees (if relevant), staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide off-site visit information.

Written parental consent will be required for off-site visits that take place outside of normal AP hours, and for any visits requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

Freedom Foundation AP will evaluate each off-site visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of any future visits.

04.1 INCLUSION

All students, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our AP life, including off-site visits.

04.2 SEND

If a learner with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g., medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the off-site visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the AP day.

We will adjust the off-site visit programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all AP staff and students.

05 RISK ASSESSMENT

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all off-site visits.

This will be completed using the AP's risk assessment template and approved by the Head of Provision. Existing risk assessments or those provided by the destination itself might also be used to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and students), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, AP staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the Head of Provision and, where appropriate, third-party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the Head of Provision and a copy taken on the visit.

05.1 STAFF RATIOS AND FIRST AID

Risk assessments for each off-site visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all off-site visits, we will make sure:

- At least one supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all visits
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the AP's first aid and health and safety policies
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip

- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with students at any time
- The off-site visit lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls

05.2 TRANSPORT

Transportation for trips will be organised by the AP, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure students, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the AP site.

05.3 USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

06 VOLUNTEERS

Where appropriate, parents/carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise students alongside staff members on off-site visits. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

- The needs of the students going on the trip
- The setting and circumstances of the trip
- Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed at least 2 weeks ahead of the visit and asked to confirm their attendance in writing. They will also be asked to confirm they agree with the expected behaviour. See Appendix 3 for

our volunteer code of conduct for educational visits.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with students or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

07 COMMUNICATION AND CONSENT

We will contact the parents/carers of students invited to take part in an off-site visit at least 1 month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be sent by both letter and email, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Staff-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the AP
- Expected behaviour and consequences of students' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for off-sites visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

We will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

08 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the Head of Provision. The Head of Provision will then contact parents/carers as required and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

One member of staff will always accompany a learner seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a learner being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other students. In the unlikely event that a student cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the Head of Provision who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the learner when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the AP with the rest of the students.

If a learner has chosen to leave without permission, the normal protocol will be followed. See Appendix 4 to see this protocol.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

09 CHARGING AND INSURANCE

Where necessary, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of off-site visits, but this will be entirely optional and will not affect students' ability to take part fully in the trip.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to:

- Cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers
- Travel insurance
- Accident and medical cover
- Loss of luggage and other personal items

10 RELATED POLICIES

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Medical Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equality and Diversity Information Policy

REVIEW

Freedom Foundation AP keep this policy under regular review:

Review of this policy: April 2025

Next review date: April 2026

Reviewed by: Laura Grant

Position/role: Director of Freedom Foundation

APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED VISIT PLANNING INFORMATION

To be completed by the AP staff member proposing the off-site visit and submitted to the Head of Provision.

Proposed Trip Information:

Submission Information		
Name of AP staff member proposing the visit:		
Date of Request:		
Response required by (date):		
Topic	Off-Site Visit Information	Additional Comments
Destination		
Trip date		
Travel distance		
Length of stay		
Purpose of visit / benefits		
Number and age of students		
Transportation options		
Cost breakdown, including multiple options where available		
Resources required, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Staffing- Volunteers- Physical supplies- Transportation		
Accommodation options, where needed		
Insurance needed, where applicable		
Risk assessment plans and first aid provision		
Any additional information, if required		

APPENDIX 2: RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

Risk Assessment Information						
Date of assessment:			Date(s) of trip:			
Trip leader:			Assessor:			
Trip destination:			Checked by:			
Hazard	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action: who?	Action: when?	Done
E.g., slips and falls caused by wet floor	Students and staff	Appropriate footwear to be worn, first aid kit to be carried at all times	Follow additional instructions from destination staff as appropriate	Trip leader	Duration of trip	

APPENDIX 3: VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOUR AND CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct sets out the expected behaviour for volunteers attending off-site visits. Volunteers should read and sign this form, showing that they understand and agree to follow this code while acting on behalf of the AP. If you feel you cannot agree with this code, please speak to the Trip Leader or Head of Provision at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from the trip.

A copy of this form will be kept in the AP office, and you may ask for a photocopy to keep for yourself.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers agree to:

- Remain professional and respectful with AP staff and students at all times
- Listen to and act on instructions from AP staff
- Dress appropriately for the trip
- Arrive at the agreed time and remain until the visit is concluded and they are told they may leave by AP staff
- Pay attention to potential dangers and raise concerns with staff
- Act responsibly and demonstrate good behaviour to students
- Report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a learner to staff as soon as possible

Volunteers agree not to:

- Exchange contact details with students unless told to by a member of staff
- Engage in physical contact with students unless appropriate or required

- Share inappropriate personal information (i.e. personal beliefs, religious views, relationship status)
- Use demeaning, offensive, abusive or insensitive language
- Smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) for the duration of the visit
- Allow themselves to be left alone with a learner
- Take photographs or record students

As a volunteer, I have read and agree to this code of conduct and will follow the rules set out above.

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 4: STUDENTS CHOOSING TO LEAVE SITE

