




# Branas School

## Offsite Visits Policy

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*CareTech's children's education services provide a safe and stimulating learning environment in which young people are always offered a fresh start, and empowered to achieve and fulfil their unique potential*

## **1. Description and Ethos of Branas School**

### **OUR CULTURE AND ETHOS**

We are committed to providing a nurturing, safe and vibrant learning environment that fosters a love of learning and enables every student to become the best they can be. Respectful and supportive relationships are at the heart of all that we do: we value every member of the school community equally. We recognise that our pupils bring different experiences, interests and strengths, and we understand these will influence the way they learn. Therefore, we take a child-centred approach to education that recognises and responds to individual need. We celebrate effort and achievements and set high expectations. We are here to help our Learners learn the skills they need to become successful, motivated and resilient young adults who are fully equipped to make a positive contribution to society.

Branas Isaf operates an integrated model of care, education and therapy underpinned by the Good Lives Model. The school exists to improve the quality of life of our pupils both now and in their future. We specialise in supporting the Good Lives Model as a framework to offender rehabilitation, and as an underpinning therapeutic model across both care and education for the development of pupils.

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is grounded in the ethical concept of human dignity and universal human rights, and as such, it has a strong emphasis on human agency. That is, the GLM is concerned with individuals' ability to formulate and select goals, construct plans, and to act freely in the implementation of these plans. A closely related assumption is the basic premise that offenders, like all humans, value certain states of mind, personal characteristics, and experiences, which are defined in the GLM as primary goods.

### **OUR SCHOOL**

Branas School is an Independent School operating within the Branas Isaf Company, a subsidiary of CareTech Community Services Ltd., who are the proprietors.

The school provides specialist education to boys aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, and who are Looked after Children.

### **OUR PUPILS**

All young people in Branas School have a history of harmful behaviours and social, emotional and mental health needs often accompanied by a range of additional learning needs.

Most of the pupils have had interrupted histories in education and care. There are a wide variety of attainments on admission. All have fragile self-esteem and demonstrate difficulties with authority and a lack of trust in adults. Many have experienced loss and trauma, leading to attachment difficulties. As a result, many experience difficulties in forming and maintaining appropriate, positive relationships with others and have a limited ability to work cooperatively.

Pupils are:

- aged 11 to 18;
- boys only;
- placed within the residential setting of Branas Isaf;
- residents from placing authorities throughout the United Kingdom;
- all present a range of harmful behaviours;
- most are in receipt of an EHC plan or a Statement of SEN.

## THE VISION

***BELIEVE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE, ASPIRE***

**BELIEVE** IN OUR TEAM AND IN OUR LEARNERS

**EMPOWER** OUR LEARNERS TO BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES AND THEIR PERSONAL JOURNEY

NURTURE OUR LEARNERS TO **ACHIEVE**

AND **ASPIRE TO BE THE BEST THEY CAN BE.**

The school moto is at the heart of everything we do at Branas School -

*“Community with learning, is a community with heart”*

*“Cymuned a’i chynefin, sy’n chymuned â chalon”*

This vision drives everything we do and will be achieved through:

- A rich, deep and personalised education designed to meet the needs of each pupil;
- A pupil centred, skills focused curriculum that is relevant to the 21st century and inclusive of all;
- Encouraging all members of the school community to strive beyond expectations and develop a lifelong love of learning;
- Offering a broad range of learning experiences within a curriculum that values academic attainment as well as social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of education;
- Providing personalised careers education and guidance, with aspirational next steps planning, preparing pupils for their future;

- Recognising that time is precious; working quickly to turn around pupils' attitudes towards education so they enjoy their time at school and make the most of the opportunities on offer;
- Working collaboratively with our professional partners to support the needs of each individual pupil.

Pupils will:

1. Be challenged to engage in learning and achieve meaningful qualifications that will enable them to take their next steps in education, employment or training;
2. Develop into healthy, resilient and confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society;
3. Create, nurture and maintain healthy positive relationships with others;
4. Experience success, whatever form it takes;
5. Become enterprising, creative contributors ready to play a full part in life and work;
6. Celebrate diversity and develop into ethical, informed young people who are ready to be citizens of the world.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission statement is:

We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment that nurtures mutual respect and encourages reflection so that our pupils develop the knowledge skills and confidence to enable them to achieve their potential in all aspects of their lives.

## OUR VALUES AND AIMS

Our values are:

- **Aspiration** : We encourage each other to be the best we can be
- **Curiosity**: We never stop learning and wondering about the world
- **Independence**: We think for ourselves and determine our own future
- **Innovation**: We look for new and creative solutions to problems
- **Reflection**: We learn from our experiences
- **Tolerance**: We value difference and respect other people's opinions
- **Trust**: We believe in the honesty and reliability of others



### Our Aims:

- All pupils will undergo a 2 week induction period where we look to initial assess and diagnose learners within core subjects areas and look to support a transition timetable to reintegrate learners successfully back into education
- Within the first 6-weeks all pupils will undergo in depth assessments in order for us to fully understand them and their needs for effective learning;
- Everyone in Branas Isaf supports and challenges pupils to invest in education as a priority for a successful placement;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve at least 95% attendance in school;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to engage in creative learning experiences appropriate to their needs, and supported by an accurate individual learning plan;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve nationally recognised academic awards in core subjects;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to achieve accreditation in a wide range of subject areas ;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to become independent learners;
- All pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, and build positive relationships with those around them;
- All pupils are enabled to take part in decisions that shape their lives, the school and the community in which they live;
- All pupils are supported to demonstrate the behaviours needed to stretch themselves and cope with the challenges of learning;
- All pupils are enabled to attend and participate in regular therapy sessions;
- All pupils learn strategies to manage their feelings and know where to go for help when things are difficult;
- All pupils will have the opportunity to participate in work experience and work-related learning opportunities;
- All our pupils learn the skills to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts;
- All our pupils learn the skills to use digital technologies creatively and safely in preparation for the world in which they will live;
- All pupils are supported and challenged to lead healthy, active lifestyles and be prepared to make a positive contribution to society as adults.

## 2) Offsite Educational Visits Policy

### 2) a. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND GUIDANCE

This policy should be read with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations (2004)
- Care Standards Act (2000)
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations (2018)
- Children Act (2004)
- Children and Families Act (2014)
- Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act (2007)
- Data Protection Act (2018)
- Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers 2014
- Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999
- Education Act (1996)
- Education Act (2002)
- Employers Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969
- Equality Act (2010)
- Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations (1981)
- Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (1974)
- Local Transport Act (2008)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) (Amendment) Regulations (2006)
- OEAP National Guidance documents as found at <http://oeapng.info>
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (2013)
- School Standards and Framework Act (1998)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- The Education (Independent Schools Standards (Wales)) Regulations 2003
- The School Premises Regulations 2012
- Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)

We encourage educational visits as we believe they ‘offer an invaluable opportunity to enrich young peoples’ learning, raise their self-esteem, increase their motivation and appetite for learning and raise levels of achievement in many aspects of their life and education.’ (Welsh Assembly Government 2008)

## 2) b. INTRODUCTION

This policy applies to all staff at Branas School when they take pupils on off-site educational activities. This includes outdoor pursuits, physical education, off-site educational visits and all off-site visits connected to enrichment day and wider curriculum opportunities. It must also be considered when staff arrange work in the community and work experience placements. Staff includes all members of the teaching team and all members of the residential care teams who support in the school day.

The School uses off-site education activities as a part of the school curriculum for a variety of reasons:

- To support pupils in accessing facilities not available at the main school site;
- To support pupils in accessing the outdoor pursuits curriculum available at the school;
- To further enrich and support the learning experiences available in the school;
- To support pupils to access the wider community in order to better develop social and independence skills, reduce isolation, and better prepare them for adult life in society;
- To support pupils in accessing opportunities and resources necessary to achieve progress and accreditation in a range of wider curricular awards

Educational visits provide a variety of opportunities to enable our students to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience and offer a valuable enhancement to the curriculum. We regard them as an essential element of good secondary teaching practice. We recognise that thorough planning and risk assessment of educational visits are crucial to ensure their educational success and safeguard students, teachers and volunteers. Each visit is designed to provide a rich, learning experience for students in a safe, managed environment.

### **Principles:**

- Young people should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and safety measures should help them to do this safely.
- It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life.
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity.
- Staff should be given the training they need so that they can keep themselves and children safe, and manage risks effectively.
- Employers, school staff and others also have a duty under the common law to take care of students in the same way that a prudent parent would do so.
- Schools should seek to be inclusive; reasonable adjustments should be made to allow as many students as possible to be involved in offsite activities.

## 2) c. CLARIFICATION OF ROLES

The normal responsibilities for each of the roles is outlined in National Guidance, and described as follows:

### **Proprietors / Senior Management Team:**

The proprietors are represented by the Head of Education Services as Responsible Individual for Branas School. This ensures that proprietor responsibility for the school is maintained, and this includes responsibility for ensuring appropriate Health and Safety is maintained within the school.

Dependent on the circumstances, the Headteacher may require authorisation for an offsite educational visit to be given by the representatives of the proprietors.

### **Executive Headteacher:**

The Executive Headteacher has responsibility for the daily operation of the school, and this includes ensuring all systems are properly developed and implemented effectively, and maintaining overview of these systems. In accordance with the Health & Safety policy for the school, the Headteacher maintains responsibility for Health & Safety practices, either directly, or by management responsibility for a delegated person, as in the case of the EVC.

For the purposes of Offsite Educational Visits, it is the responsibility of the Executive Headteacher to ensure that the EVC is carrying out their role effectively, correctly and in accordance with this policy. The Headteacher will have oversight of all offsite educational visits, and will have final authorisation for whether they take place or not, once review of correct procedures, planning, risk assessments and accompanying paperwork has taken place.

At Branas School, Stephen Myers-Whittaker is the Educational Visits Coordinator.

### **The Executive Headteacher will:**

- ensure all school personnel, students and parents/carers are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the proprietor representative and coordinator;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- be responsible for the sanctioning and authorizing of all educational visits whatever the duration or purpose;
- ensure that Visit Leaders have appropriate training and are sufficiently competent, experienced and qualified;
- ensure all volunteer helpers/supervisors are subjected to a Disclosure and Barring Service criminal records check before they take part in an educational visit;
- ensure all accidents and emergencies are dealt with and reported;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;



### **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC):**

*“A member of Establishment staff appointed to coordinate all Visits and with the status to effect change and be the focus of good practice. Such a person should be an experienced visit leader with sufficient status within the establishment to guide the working practice of colleagues leading visits.”*

The EVC for Branas School is responsible for the processes whereby an educational visit is planned, prepared and realised, whether this process is carried out by the EVC or where carried out by other members of the teaching team, under the supervision of the EVC. The EVC is also responsible for the promotion of this policy and procedures, the development of the staff team and the coordination of all aspects of offsite educational visits across the School. The EVC is Stephen Myers- Whittaker, he is accountable to the Executive Headteacher.

OEAP guidance suggests that, for the purposes of Branas School, the role of the EVC should consider the following:

- Ensuring that they have an understanding of how outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom can support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people, and raise achievement.
- Ensuring that they have attended EVC training as recommended or required by the employer, and other training appropriate to effective delivery of the role (e.g. training in first aid, risk assessment, understanding the needs of the pupils, behaviour management, outdoor activities, other training beyond the scope of any EVC training undertaken but relevant to role)
- Ensuring that all activities and visits meet guidance requirements.
- Ensuring that the Headteacher and members of Visit Leadership Teams have access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that the Employer’s guidance and Establishment procedures are properly understood.
- Ensuring that there is an Establishment Visit Policy. As a minimum, the policy will need to make a link between the Establishment’s procedures and this guidance.
- Supporting the Headteacher with approval of visits and other decisions.
- Supporting the Headteacher in ensuring that all members of Visit Leadership Teams are competent.
- Monitoring of Visit Leader planning, and sample monitoring of visits.
- Organising the training of members of Visit Leadership Teams.
- Ensuring that where the Visit Leadership Team includes someone with a close relationship to a group member, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
- Ensuring that DBS checks are in place as required.
- Ensuring that establishment policy provides sufficient guidance to Visit Leaders about information for parents and parental consent.
- Checking that there are 24/7 Establishment Emergency Contacts for each and every visit and that Emergency Procedures are in place.
- Ensuring that medical and first aid issues are addressed.

- Ensuring that emergency arrangements include Emergency Contact access to all relevant records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party, including staff.
- Ensuring that individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with Employer requirements and Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure. Risk management documentation must be updated if necessary.
- Ensuring that there is an Establishment procedure for recording “near accidents/near misses”, including any resulting learning points and action.
- Ensuring that they keep their knowledge up to date via EVC update processes and EVC Revalidation courses as recommended or required.
- Ensure the planning and delivery of any offsite visit is done in accordance with this policy and all required paperwork is completed competently.

**Visit Leader:**

*“The designated person responsible for the Visit and who will have overall responsibility for the safety and conduct of Participants and the Visit Leadership Team. “*

For the purposes of Branas School, the Visit Leader is the person who has designated responsibility for the visit, its planning and preparation, and its realisation. The Visit Leader will be responsible for the coordination of the visit, the staff accompanying the visit and the young people involved in the visit.

The Visit Leader must work with and seek support from the EVC/Headteacher in the organisation of a visit to ensure the School’s policies and procedures are adhered to. **The Visit Leader must not carry out a visit until authorised by the Executive Headteacher.**

The Visit Leader will be the single contact point for the EVC/Headteacher during the organisation of a visit, and the contact point between the School and those on the visit once it is underway. This is so as to avoid any confusion or misinformation arising during organisation and implementation stages.

With the support of the EVC, the Visit Leader must complete an evaluation of the visit once it has been carried out, and ensure all relevant documentation is filed with the EVC for future use.

Please note that, at times, the roles of EVC and Visit Leader will NOT be mutually exclusive. On these occasions the EVC must ensure that both roles are completed effectively and should seek advice and support from a senior member of staff.

## 2) d. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

### RISK ASSESSMENT:

*Supervising a group of young people in any environment involves judgement based on a combination of experience, training, and tacit knowledge. Whether the environment is indoors or out, on-site or off-site, the same risk management principles apply. The difference is in how contained and controllable the environment is. Anyone working with young people in an indoor setting should feel able to use off-site or outdoor environments, and will find that their work becomes more powerful and memorable as a result.*

*Risk management is not about risk elimination. If young people work in an area of nettles and brambles they may get scratched or stung. This is not necessarily a problem - appropriately planned, it is experiential learning and part of growing up. There is no question that outdoor learning and off-site visits are enormously beneficial to the education and development of young people. However, to achieve these benefits involves acceptance of some element of risk. Indeed, there is a benefit in young people experiencing such risks in order to learn to manage them for themselves and improve their ability to look after their own safety.*

<http://oeapng.info> – [Guidance Document 4.3f](#)

**ACTIVITY / VENUE:** Before embarking on an offsite educational visit, the Visit Leader must produce a risk assessment for that specific venue/location. It may be that the venue itself is happy to provide their own risk assessment, and should be contacted during the organisation process.

If the venue is an outdoor location, or if the venue is unable to provide a risk assessment, then a risk assessment must be completed by either the EVC or the Visit Leader. This will usually require a visit to the location, prior to the educational visit, in order to accurately assess the venue and complete the risk assessment.

If an ACTIVITY is to be carried out at the location, which will be facilitated by members of the school team, then the activity itself must be risk assessed, with the location as a component of the risk assessment.

If the visit is to a location/venue for the specific purpose of engaging in an activity facilitated by the venue or by a third-party provider, then the risk assessment either provided by the venue/provider or completed by the school must account for the specific activity at that location. The school must adapt the risk assessment provided by any third party to be relevant to the needs of the pupil group.

A risk assessment will always be carried out prior to the visit, and must use the Branas School risk assessment template, and will cover:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the party leader put the safety measures in place?

- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

**PUPIL PARTICIPANTS:** All pupils admitted to our school have their own individual needs and present a range of individual risks. Parallel to the activity/venue risk assessment, the risk assessment of the activity MUST include an assessment of the individual pupil members participating in the visit and consider how their own individual needs and risks might have an effect when applied to the proposed activity or venue. This is done by using the risk assessment for the individual, present for the home and school, and applying the identified risks therein to the risk assessment for the activity proposed, and demonstrating how any identified risks can be reduced or minimised.

*“The age, competence, maturity and behaviour of the participants must be matched to the other variables, and any individual, medical or special needs addressed.” ([oeapng.info](http://oeapng.info))*

**EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES:** All offsite activities require the provision and use of appropriate equipment and resources, whether this is as simple as suitable footwear to walk around a venue or the specific personal protective equipment required for certain outdoor pursuits or other, more hazardous activities.

**The Visit Leader / EVC must:**

- make clear in its risk assessment, what equipment and resources are required in order to reduce the risk for an individual participating in an activity;
- make clear how any necessary equipment or resources are to be provided (whether the responsibility of the home and young person or the responsibility of the school);
- ensure that necessary equipment and resources are present on the day of the activity, prior to the group leaving to complete the activity;
- ensure that staff accompanying pupils have the same expectations of equipment and resources applied to them as young people;
- ensure that any equipment or resources provided by the school for an activity are supported by a rigorous process for quality monitoring and testing as fit for purpose.

**NB:** It is expected that generic activity risk assessments for activities carried out regularly by the school, such as outdoor pursuits, would include a standard list of PPE equipment and resources required for that activity to take place safely.

**JOINED-UP THINKING:** Branäs School operates within an integrated therapeutic model, alongside residential care and therapy. The pupils who attend the school come with a particular range of needs and risks associated with a variety of sexualised behaviours, and additional learning needs. In order to ensure that all parties are aware that an activity is proposed and that the full range of risks have been considered there MUST be effective communication between ALL parties involved in the care, education and therapy of the individuals concerned. In order for this to happen the Headteacher must raise any proposed activity with the management team for Branäs Isaf at the Risk and Referral Meetings.

### APPROVAL OF STAFF TO LEAD ACTIVITIES AND VISITS:

The school should have clear processes for approving Leaders to lead visits or activities. This should ensure that Leaders are **accountable, confident** and **competent** to lead the specific visits or activities for which they are approved.

Being **accountable** means that the Leader has been engaged through an appropriate recruitment process, which includes vetting and induction into the establishment's policies and procedures. The details of this process may depend upon whether the Leader is employed, contracted or acts as a volunteer, but in all cases should be thorough. Regardless of a Leader's employment status, they should understand the chain of accountability, what is expected of them, and the establishment's policies and procedures.

Being **confident** includes Leaders having the ability to take charge of a situation while being aware of, and understanding, their abilities, as well as their limitations.

Being **competent** means that the Leader has demonstrated the ability to operate effectively, and has sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the activities, the group, and the environments in which the visit will take place. Competence is a combination of skills, knowledge, awareness, judgement, training and experience. It is not necessarily related to age or position within the establishment. It is situational – a leader who is competent in one activity or environment may not be so in another, and it involves breadth as well as depth.

Relevant experience is not necessarily gained by repeating the same thing several times, but by experiencing a range of different activities and environments.

For adventure activity leaders, competence is best demonstrated through:

- Holding a National Governing Body leadership/coaching award at an appropriate level, or
- Being "signed off" by a suitably-qualified Technical Adviser appointed by the employer.

For further information about appropriate technical qualifications, to lead or advise on specific adventure activities, see the qualifications matrices produced by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) in AALA guidance note 5.18 available at:

<http://webcommunities.hse.gov.uk/connect.ti/adventureactivitiesnetwork/view?objectId=582565>

Approval should never be assumed but must involve professional judgement. **The Headteacher / EVC, though joint consideration, must make a judgement about the suitability of that person to lead that group on that visit/activity in that environment.**

There are various ways to help make an informed judgement about a colleague's competence, including:

- Observations of their group management and supervision skills within their day to day work in the establishment.
- Evidence of relevant experience – e.g. assisting on visits or leading visits in a previous establishment.
- Their personal interests and experience relevant to the proposed activities and environments.
- Evidence of having undertaken appropriate training.
- Evidence of relevant qualifications, including any specific qualification required by the law, the employer or the establishment (e.g. in First Aid).

Any approval to lead off-site visits must also include a judgement about how an individual will react in a crisis, without the immediate support of the establishment around them. Will they remain calm and take control of the situation or will they let the situation control them? It is good practice to keep evidence of Leader approval as well as records of experience (visits led or assisted on).

[adapted from <http://oeapng.info> Guidance Document 3.2d]

#### EVALUATION OF EXTERNAL PROVIDERS:

When planning an off-site visit, you should thoroughly research the suitability of the venue and check that facilities and third party provision will meet your group's needs and expectations. This is an essential element of risk-benefit management and is critical in deciding how you will supervise the young people effectively. A preliminary visit is essential and should be carried out by either the EVC or the Visit Leader who has been approved to lead the visit.

Preliminary visits enable the Visit Leader to address the following questions:

- Will the venue or facility be suitable to meet the planned aims and objectives of the visit?
- Are there any particular hazards or threats which need to be considered in your risk-benefit assessment and emergency procedures?
- What will be your options if the conditions of daylight, water level, temperature and weather, or under-foot conditions, differ significantly from the pre-visit?
- Do you have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the venue, facilities and activities to feel confident when planning the visit?
- Will the venue be able to cater for the full range of group needs, including any special needs?
- Will the group need any specialist equipment?
- Are there any staff training needs?
- Will participants need to be prepared or trained?

It is sensible for a Visit Leader to take a camera on any preliminary visit, as photographs can be a great aid to briefing both the Visit Leadership Team and the Participants.

[for further guidance please refer to <http://oeapng.info> Guidance Document 4.4h]

### **PARENTAL COMMUNICATION AND CONSENT:**

Parents/Corporate Parents will be informed in advance of each activity and will be given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular school trip or activity. We will ensure that we comply with all guidance documentation before any educational visit is authorised and all precautions are taken to ensure students' safety. However, Branas School obtains general written permission for local visits on admission (see Admissions Policy), but timely emails will be sent as reminders to corporate parents/carers.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' MEDICAL CONDITIONS & SPECIAL NEEDS:**

In order to effectively plan for an activity, the Visit Leader MUST have any information in respect of any specific medical conditions and/or particular special needs. It is the responsibility of the EVC to ensure that the Visit Leader has access to this information so that planning can be effective.

For example, the Visit Leader will need to plan the safe storage and administration of any medications required by a pupil on the activity, especially any controlled substance, or may need to plan for any specific mobility, supervision or support needs a young person may require.

It is good practice for the Visit Leader to complete a summary sheet for each young person participating in the visit, summarising any particular needs, information, and contact details. These sheets can then be carried by the Visit Leader whilst on the visit in case the information is needed quickly.

[for further guidance please refer to <http://oeapng.info> Guidance Document 4.4j]

### **3) OFFSITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS PROCESS:**

#### **3) a. PRIOR NOTIFICATION AND APPROVAL OF VISIT PLANS:**

##### **For New/ one-off Visits:**

All offsite educational activities must be given sufficient time to be planned and organised effectively. A series of steps must be followed if the idea for a particular visit is to be proposed and planned.

- An activity summary sheet (the proposal) must be submitted to the Headteacher / EVC for consideration;
- The Headteacher / EVC will consider the activity summary and decide whether the visit is viable (see considerations in previous section);
- If the visit is considered viable the Headteacher / EVC will give provisional approval;
- As appropriate, the Headteacher will present the proposed visit in the Risk & Referral Meeting (held 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of every month) to seek the views of Care Home Managers and therapists;

- The Headteacher / EVC will coordinate the full planning process for the activity, and arrange for it to go ahead. An activity summary sheet MUST have the signature of the Headteacher or EVC to show that it has received approval.
- All finalised plans and risk assessments MUST be reviewed and signed-off by the Headteacher / EVC prior to the activity going ahead.

**Note:** All proposed visits/activities MUST be submitted to the Headteacher / EVC with sufficient notice for them to be presented at this meeting, or wait until the next meeting takes place.

**For Regular / re-occurring Activities:**

Some activities, such as outdoor pursuits, P.E. or community placements, take place on a regular basis; often weekly. For these activities, once the approval process (above) and risk assessments have been completed, then the activity can be continued on a rolling basis. However, all risk assessments for these activities MUST be reviewed termly, AND, should any element change, such as venue or individual participants, then that element of the risk assessment and activity plan must be reviewed and amended prior to the activity taking place.

**PLEASE NOTE: ALL OFFSITE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES MUST UNDERGO THIS APPROVAL AND PLANNING PROCESS PRIOR TO THEM TAKING PLACE**

**3) b. LEARNING VALUE:**

For an offsite visit to be educational it must have a learning purpose or value. There must be a demonstrable value to enhancing or progressing the learning of the pupils taking part in the visit/activity. Therefore, every offsite educational visit or activity MUST have planned Learning Objectives / Outcomes, and the visit / activity must show planning to demonstrate how these objectives will be met and outcomes achieved.

In deciding approval for the visit or activity to be arranged the Headteacher or EVC should request a brief summary document of the planned visit which clearly outlines what the learning purpose of the visit will be (as learning objectives), how these will be achieved by the visit, and what the outcomes for the learner will be in successfully participating in the visit/activity.

[See Activity Summary Sheet – APPENDIX]



### 3) c. PREPARING STUDENTS:

Wherever possible, students will be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This may include considering health and safety issues.

Students must understand key safety information. This includes:

- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- why safety precautions are in place;
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- what standard of behaviour is expected from students;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group;
- emergency procedures;

### 3) d. RESOURCES & EQUIPMENT:

As discussed in the 'risk assessment' section, all activities require the use of particular resources or equipment. This includes adequate numbers of staff for supervision of young people, and the transport of the group to and from the venue.

The planning process must ensure due consideration of any equipment needed, and its source, staffing ratios and transport arrangements. The Visit Leader must ensure that they can demonstrate that these are all in place prior to visit/activity taking place

**ALL VISITS MUST** be equipped with a First Aid Kit and staffed by **AT LEAST ONE** person with appropriate and current First Aid training and certification.

[See Planning Checklist – APPENDIX 3]

### 3) e. TYPES OF VISIT REQUIRING CONSULTATION WITH AN EXTERNAL ADVISER BEFORE APPROVAL:

Certain types of proposed visit may require consultation with an external person in an advisory role prior to the visit being approved.

In particular, **outdoor activities** not previously undertaken, or at a venue not previously used, or for a multi-day trip (>1 day). On these occasions it would be appropriate for the EVC to consult with Branas School's external adviser on Outdoor Pursuits to discuss the proposed activity and any particular risks that might arise, and prior to approval being given. It would also be advisable to consult with AALA to make sure that the proposed new activity falls within the remit of the service's AALA Licence.

If there is a proposal to take pupils on an extended trip, either within the UK or abroad, each pupil's Local Authority **MUST** be consulted, and authority given for the trip to take place.

### 3) f. CHECKING OUT AND CHECKING IN – BEFORE AND AFTER A VISIT

#### The Visit Leader **MUST**:

- Ensure that they have a copy of all risk assessments and planning documents with them on the visit;
- Ensure that they have all required resources for the visit prior to commencement and that these resources are fit for purpose;
- Have arranged a point of contact at the school, either the Headteacher or EVC, who will be available to communicate with throughout the duration of the visit / activity;
- Notify the point of contact that they are leaving site and that the activity is commencing;
- Report in with point of contact on return to the school to advise them that the visit/activity has concluded;
- Complete a Visit Evaluation form and submit this to the Headteacher / EVC within 48 hours of the visit having taken place, AND, if required, arrange a debrief meeting with the Headteacher / EVC;
- Report and record on any additional documentation arising out of the visit, such as incident, accident, or physical intervention reports, within the timescales and processes required for that documentation;
- Ensure that all documentation for that visit is put together in a single pack and entered into the schools offsite educational visit folder.

### 3) g. EMERGENCIES

#### In the event of an incident or emergency the group leader will:

- Evaluate the situation to ensure that all members of the group are kept as safe as possible;
- Evaluate the situation to make an on-the-spot risk assessment as to how the group can be managed best to minimise the risk arising, or reduce the likelihood of any further risk increasing;
- Immediately communicate with the point of contact at the school to advise them of the circumstances and the current plan of action – **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR ADVICE OR HELP**;
- Maintain regular communication to advise the point of contact as the situation progresses;
- Maintain control of the group, and an overview of the situation, whilst liaising with any other parties involved; such as emergency services or members of the public;
- Be prepared to administer first aid or support until help arrives;
- Report and record all accidents or incidents as per company processes;
- Be prepared to terminate the activity and return all participants to the school if this is the safest course of action.
- Be prepared to direct any public or media query to the point of contact. **DO NOT** give unapproved interviews without prior consent from CareTech senior management. **DO NOT** allow any public or media enquiry to distract you from your responsibility to the group as visit leader.

#### In the event of an incident or emergency the point of contact (Headteacher / EVC) will:

- Communicate effectively with the visit leader to offer support, advice and direction;
- Begin a written chronological report of events as they unfold;
- Immediately communicate with the Head of Service, Managing Director and young people's Local Authorities to let them know that an emergency has arisen and the details as known;
- Be prepared to deal with any public or media enquiry that might arise as a result of the emergency or incident; **BUT** do so only with authorisation from CareTech senior management (Managing Director or above), or direct the enquiry to someone more senior.
- Be prepared to initiate the Critical Incident Plan for the Service.
- **MUST** be available to see the emergency through to conclusion, supporting and coordinating the situation until all parties in the group are safely returned to school OR to some other agreed place of safety.

### 3) h. MONITORING & EVALUATION

#### **Regular Curriculum Activities (Outdoor Pursuits & P.E.):**

An existing monitoring system, under the Quality Framework for Education Services ensures that all teachers undergo formal observation at least twice per year. As part of this system there is an expectation that staff involved in the delivery of regular offsite activity, such as P.E. or Outdoor Pursuits are included in the lesson observation cycle. For further details on the expectations of the lesson observation system please refer to the Education Services Quality Framework, Part 1 – Monitoring.

#### **Offsite Educational Visits Monitoring:**

Part of the role of the EVC, and/or overseeing Headteacher, is the responsibility to monitor and evaluate the process described in this policy to engage pupils in offsite educational activities. The school must keep a folder for the documentation of all offsite educational visits, and the EVC should review completed documentation therein on a regular basis to ensure compliance with policy, competence in completion, and evaluate any necessary requirement for change to the process or addressing staff competence issues. A review sheet [see Appendix] should be completed and appended to the front of any reviewed documentation, and a record sheet [see Appendix] should be kept at the front of the folder to record the dates of review and any actions arising.

Given that all offsite educational activities require authorisation, both at the proposal stage and at completion of planning, this system should ensure that all planning processes and documentation have been effectively completed prior to a visit taking place.

As part of the EVC role, that person should make a random inspection of offsite visits taking place once per term, in order to complete a contemporary evaluation of the visits system in action. A review sheet is provided for this purpose [see Appendix]

#### **Sub-contracted providers**

The school has no authority to formally inspect or observe activities provided by third party sub-contractors, other than its all-pervading duty of care to the young people and staff supporting them. However, all visit leaders are required to submit an evaluation form within 48 hours of returning from a visit/activity, and the account should raise any questions, queries or concerns about the quality, competence, and safeguarding practices of the third party. The Headteacher / EVC MUST look into any concerns so raised and make an informed decision as to the suitability of using that sub-contractor in the future. It may also be appropriate for the Headteacher to raise those concerns with the sub-contractor directly, and in order to give them feedback as to the school's experience, or even as a formal complaint.

**NOTE: That any safeguarding concern relating to child protection arising out of a visit MUST be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Person, and not left 48 hours to be submitted on the activity evaluation form.**

#### 4) REVIEW

This policy and procedures will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued compliance with The Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations and relevant guidance issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.

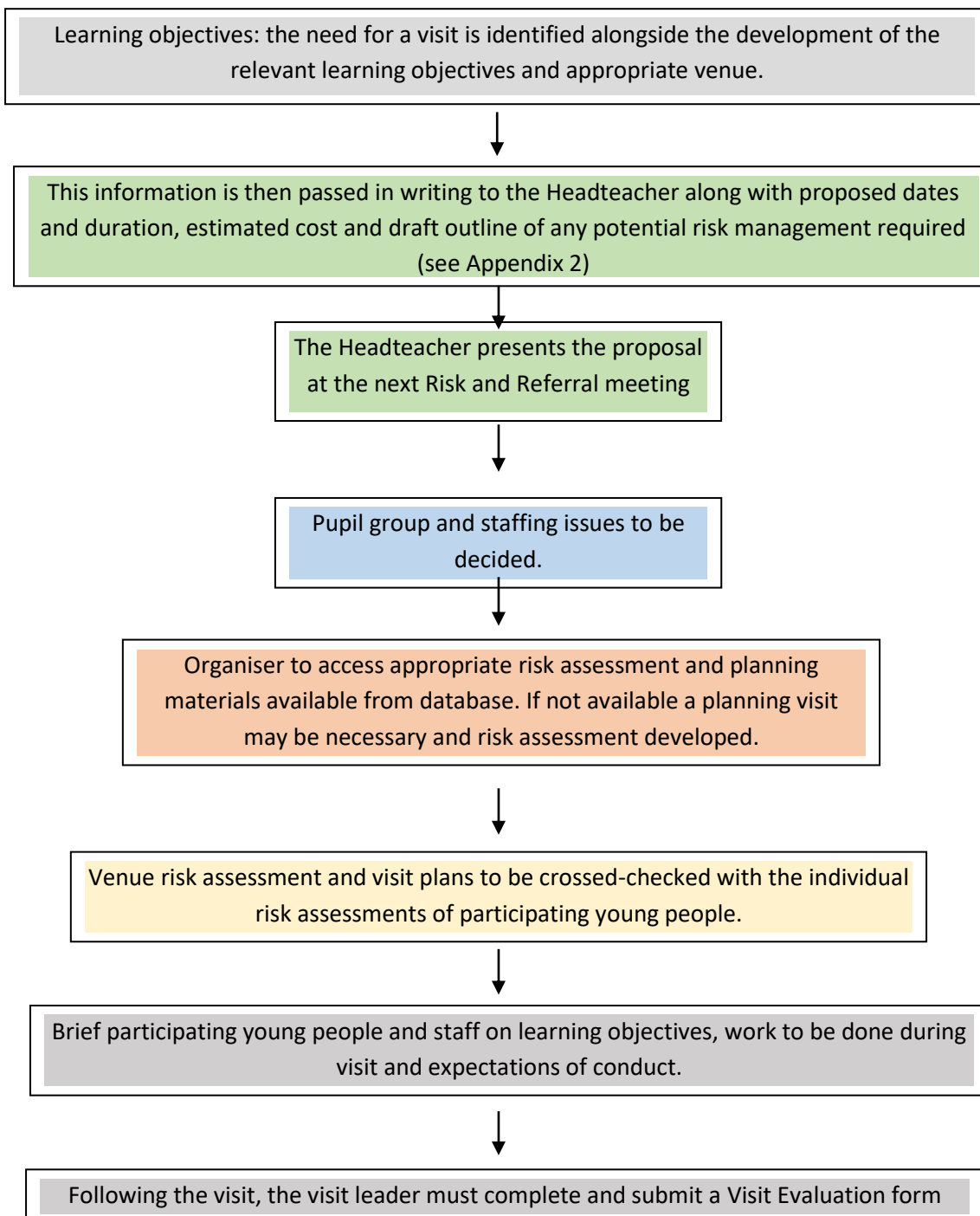
**This document will be next reviewed in September 2024**

#### LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies as follows:

- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Education Services Quality Framework

In the event of any lack of clarity, or of conflict between this policy and other policies for the school, the company or OEAP National Guidance then this policy must be followed and clarity should be sought from the Educational Visits Coordinator for the School.

**APPENDICES****Appendix 1:****ORGANISING AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT**

Appendix 2:  
**Proposed Off-site Educational Visit Summary**

**Brief outline of proposed activity:**

**Proposed date of visit:**

**Venue:**

**Visit Leader:**

**Students involved:**

**Staff / pupil ratio:**

**Learning outcomes/ objectives:**

**Potential risk factors specific to the activity and proposed risk management strategies:**

**Proposal completed by:**

**Date:**

**Proposal approved at R and R meeting on: (date)**

**Comments:**

**Signed:**

**(Headteacher/ EVC)**

## Appendix 3

**Off-site Educational Visit Checklist****Brief outline of visit/ activity:****Venue:****Date:****Visit Leader:****Students involved:****Staff/ pupil ratio:****Checklist:**

1. A preliminary site visit has been carried out by:(name and role)  
(date)
  2. A full risk assessment has been completed. The benefits and risks of all aspects of the visit have been considered and the visit plan has an appropriate balance and an acceptable level of residual risk. Y/N
  3. The visit plan and risk assessment have been shared with all staff concerned and they are clear about what they are expected to do in order to manage the risks. Y/N
  4. Evaluation and visit review arrangements are in place. Y/N
  5. Activities are appropriate to the aims of the visit and the nature of the participants. Y/N
  6. Appropriately competent activity leaders are in the Visit Leadership Team or a suitable Provider has been contracted to lead activities. Y/N
  7. There is a sufficient amount of suitable equipment for activities. Y/N
  8. Up to date contact details, medical information, dietary requirements and information about special needs are available and have been shared appropriately with the staff team and any relevant provider staff. Y/N
  9. Participants have been provided with information about what to do and what is expected of them, and, where appropriate, have been involved in the planning and risk benefit assessment process. Y/N
  10. Safeguarding issues are addressed. Y/N
  11. Inclusion and accessibility issues are addressed. Y/N
  12. Environmental factors (weather, daylight hours, temperature, water levels etc) have been considered. Y/N
  13. There is access to first aid at an appropriate level. Y/N
  14. Accommodation, where used, is safe, suitable and appropriate. Y/N
  15. Travel or transport arrangements are appropriate. Y/N
  16. There is a Plan B/alternative options in place, where necessary. Y/N
- There is an emergency plan in place and leaders, helpers, participants, providers and emergency contacts have been given relevant information about it. Y/N
17. My decision is that this visit is appropriately prepared and should take place. Y/N



APPENDIX 4

Risk Assessment: Off-Site Activities

Activity:

Date:

Activity Leader :

Young People:

Risk No.	Potential Hazard	Persons at Risk	Controls Measures	Priority
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Leader

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Teacher

## APPENDIX 5

Evaluation: Off-Site Activities    Activity: \_\_\_\_\_    Date: \_\_\_\_\_    Activity Leader: \_\_\_\_\_    Young People: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the activity as you expected? \_\_\_\_\_

Was the venue appropriate for the young people concerned?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any unexpected problems / issues? If so, explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did the young people enjoy the experience?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did the young people learn what you hoped they would? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the activity provide good value for money?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you went again would you do anything differently? If so, what?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you recommend other staff to undertake this visit?

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ (activity leader)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 6 – Potential Learning Outcomes for Educational Visits

