



Branas School

Educational Visits Policy

Implemented 26 th Sept 2022	By Whom T.Lewis	Last Review September 2025	By Whom G.Ashley	Next Review September 2026
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Document History (last 3 versions)			
Date of Issue	Version No.	Person(s) responsible for change	Nature of Change
09/2023	2	G Ashley	Review and update
09/2024	3	G Ashley	Review and update
09/2025	4	G Ashley	Review and Update

Article 3

Adults should do what is best for you.

Article 11

You have the right not to be kidnapped or taken out of the country illegally.

Article 23

If you are disabled, you have the right to special care and support so that you can lead a full and independent life.

Article 29

You have the right to be the best you can be. Education must help you develop your skills and talents to the full.



Description and Ethos of Branas School

OUR CULTURE AND ETHOS

Branas school is an independent special school for boys aged 11 – 18 years who have a history of harmful behaviours. The school is registered for up to 25 young people and consists of KS3, KS4 and 5 classes. As a community we are able to support young people with early childhood trauma and additional learning needs. We offer a secondary education which includes English, Maths, Science, Humanities, Art, PE, Careers, Music, PSHE and Careers. Specialist teachers offer individualised sessions for young people who have gaps in their learning. We are a registered AALA centre which enables our young people to develop their self-esteem and confidence, learning skills outside of the traditional curriculum through climbing, hill walking and kayaking. All young people access a range of qualifications including GCSE's, Functional Skills and AQA Awards. Careers lessons prepare them for life beyond school and transition in to college.

Branas Isaf is an integrated model of care which incorporates Education, Therapy and Care as a support system for young people. Therapy includes the Good Lives Model (GLM) which is grounded in the ethical concept of human dignity and universal human rights, and as such, it has a strong emphasis on human agency.

OUR SCHOOL

Branas School is committed to developing respectful and supportive relationships with all young people. We recognise that our young people 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 young people learn the skills they need to become successful, motivated and resilient young adults who are fully equipped to make a positive contribution to society.



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”

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

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

Offsite Educational Visits Policy

INTRODUCTION

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)

Branas School provides a range of educational visits from short term ones in the local community, a day visit further afield, to visits for several days on expeditions for the



Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. During all visits we ensure we comply with all Welsh Government documentation before any visit is authorized and all precautions are taken to ensure young people’s safety.

AIMS

- To provide a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of educational visits in order to enhance the curricular and recreational opportunities for young people.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure:

This policy applies to all staff at Branäs School when they take young people 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 young people in accessing facilities not available at the main school site;
- To support young people in accessing the outdoor pursuits curriculum available at the school;
- To further enrich and support the learning experiences available in the school;
- To support young people 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 young people in accessing opportunities and resources necessary to achieve progress and accreditation in a range of wider curricular awards

Branäs school recognises that thorough planning and risk assessment of educational visits is crucial to ensure educational success and to safeguard young people, teachers and volunteers. Each visit is designed to provide a rich, learning experience for young people in a safe, managed environment.

CLARIFICATION OF ROLES



Headteacher:

The 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 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, Katrina Flanagan is the Educational Visits Coordinator.

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel, young people and parents/carers are aware of and comply with this policy;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- be responsible for the sanctioning and authorising 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;

Role of the School Leadership

- To support the implementation of this policy
- Ensure all school personnel, young people, parents and carers are aware of and comply with this policy to oversee the systems and practices in relation to adventurous activities and trips
- Ensure support and training is available to all staff
- Ensure policies are made available to all stakeholders as appropriate
- Ensure all accidents and emergencies are dealt with and reported



Key Requirements of Group/Visit Leaders:

- Visit leaders should have the ability/competence to lead to the level demanded by the visit and have sufficient experience and knowledge of the activities, the group and the environments they will operate in.
- Dynamic risk assessment and management **MUST** take place even before trips leave site and group leaders can decide that young people are not able to attend trips if there are factors which would mean this impacts group safety. Whilst the visit takes place, leaders can also dynamically risk assess and consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the young people is unacceptable.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of the group members and stakeholders, risk assessments should be shared where appropriate in advance of any school trip.
- Must ensure that the risk matrix system is completed and up to date before departure and all relevant information is inputted into the risk assessment.
- Ensure the ratio of staff to young people is appropriate for the environment/activities and the needs of the group, identify significant hazards and safety measures to reduce risk to the tolerable level, and make known to the School Leadership as required.
- Have enough information about the young people to assess their suitability for the visit or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed.
- Ensure that all accompanying leaders are familiar with these procedures.
- Have in place procedures/alternative plans for dynamically assessed alterations.
- Group Leaders to ensure that contact numbers for supporting staff are shared as appropriate.
- Seating plans **MUST** be well thought out before departure and agreed with a school manager.

Pupil expectations

- to take part in a pre-departure briefing with staff where necessary



- abide by the ground rules and the standards of behaviour for the educational visit
- look after their possessions and spending money or entrust them to staff members if required
- wear appropriate clothing for an educational visit as directed
- make sure they are keeping themselves and others safe in the school/home transport

Role of supervising adults

- understand their roles in supervisory procedures for educational visits
- Proactive approved restraint techniques used if appropriate and necessary
- Attend all planning and information meetings determined as necessary
- All staff to have school identification on them

Risk Assessment Procedures

Branas School uses a risk matrix system which records associated risks of the young person and can be tailored for each different trip to consider risk which may be encountered.

At school we are keen to allow young people to have experiences to broaden their world view and to enhance learning. As part of this we believe it is important to have a balanced view of risk and to support staff members to take young people off site. We value the importance of considering the benefits to young people to enable us to make a balanced judgement in considering if a trip or visit should go ahead such as:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

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 for consideration;
- The Headteacher will consider the activity summary and decide whether the visit is viable;



- If the visit is considered viable the Headteacher will give provisional approval;
- As appropriate, the Headteacher will present the proposed visit in the Risk & Referral Meeting (held 1st Wednesday of every month) to seek the views of Care Home Managers and therapists;
- The Headteacher 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 to show that it has received approval.
- All finalised plans and risk assessments MUST be reviewed and signed-off by the Headteacher prior to the activity going ahead.

Note: All proposed visits/activities MUST be submitted to the Headteacher 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.

Branas school values the opportunities for young people to explore through outdoor education. The school has an AALA licence which enables the Outdoor Education Instructor to plan a range of activities from hill walking, climbing to kayaking.

The Outdoor Education Instructor is responsible for:

- Holding a relevant and current qualifications or certifications for the activities planned and 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 must make a judgement about the suitability of that person to lead that group on that visit/activity in that environment.**

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 (when necessary) should be carried out by either the 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 young person 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, Branás 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 additional needs. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader has access to this information so that planning can be effective.

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.

- At least one member of staff must be trained in first aid on every school trip to at least a level of emergency first aid at work
- Supervisory adults must be aware of all medical and first aid arrangements and procedures
- The medical information of all young people and carers is known and planned for
- If taking medication on the trip then a secure container should be used to ensure safety and security as outlined in the first aid policy.

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

PLANNING AND INFORMATION MEETINGS

Parents/carers may be invited to attend planning and information meetings before residential or overnight visits take place (if required).

The following information will be available to the parents/carers as required:

- The name of the group leader
- The names of the other staff
- The dates and time of departure and return
- The full contact details of the destination including method of travel
- The itinerary and of the activities planned
- Checklist of clothing and other essentials

MONITORING AND EVALUATION



The Headteacher and Responsible Individual for the school are committed to the highest quality of education through regular scrutiny and monitoring.

PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE

Wherever possible, young people 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.

Young people 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) 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 Outdoor Education Instructor 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.

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, the Headteacher 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 within 48 hours of the visit having taken place, AND, if required, arrange a debrief meeting with the Headteacher;
- 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 teacher, Home Manager 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 the Responsible Individual for the school 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.

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 2026

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

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

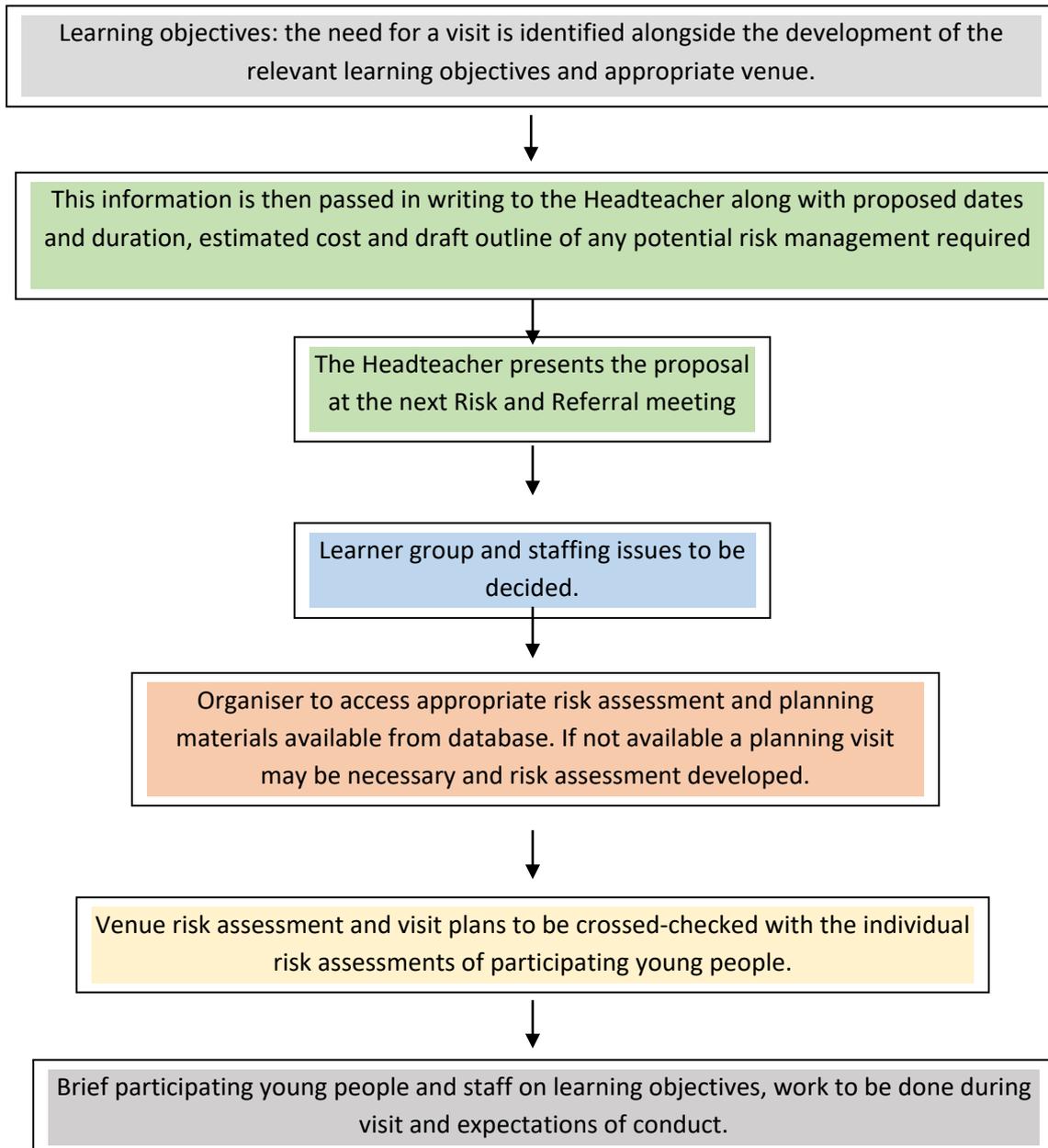
- Health & Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy



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)



Appendix 3

Off-site Educational Visit Checklist

Brief outline of visit/ activity:

Venue:

Date:

Visit Leader:

Young person 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



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: _____



“Community with learning, is a community with heart”
“Cymuned a’i chynefin, sy’n chymuned â chalon”

