



Westgate Youth Project

**Off-site Activities
And
Visits Policy**

April 2021

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Introduction

- 1.1 Westgate Youth project provides many opportunities to enrich the curriculum for its young people through off-site activities and educational visits. These include residential, theme parks and adventurous activities.

The value of off-site activities and visits is well recognised by the Management Committee and fully supported throughout Westgate Youth Project. Safety is recognised as important and careful planning and adherence to WYP procedures is required. Off-site activities and visits must be well managed and responsibilities recognised.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Management Committee must:

- ensure that arrangements are in place and WYP regulations and guidance are being translated into working systems
- ensure that the Management Committee has its own systems in place to support this process: a signatory for the approval system; dedicated discussion and review time at meetings
- have the ability to act on behalf of the parents to ascertain if the specific event arrangements and risk assessments are in place and appropriate.

All off-site activities including visits that are residential, adventurous or overseas will need the approval of the Management Committee, and the Proposed Visit form must be signed by the Chairman, prior to the offsite activity taking place.

The Youth Work Manager must:

- ensure that the management of offsite activities and visits meets the regulations and guidance offered by Westgate Youth Project, as well as conforming to WYP's own health and safety policy
- ensure that the Management Committee are kept appropriately informed and accreditation or verification of providers has been checked
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the objectives of a visit to be inclusive and that issues identified in exploratory visits have been satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment.

- ensure that the WYP guidance and regulations are followed and to confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out
- to be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications, this is to include accompanying staff and volunteers
- to organise the training of leaders and volunteers, and organise thorough induction of staff and volunteers new to the visit
- ensure that procedures for DBS checks are in place as necessary
- to ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective
- ensure that WYP has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the necessary contact should an emergency occur
- ensure that they comply with Westgate Youth Projects requirements for reporting incidents and accidents
- use and apply suitable record keeping practices for young people and leaders off-site
- learn from previous experience, recording successful practice and contacts
- monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice. Be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.

The Leader in Charge must:

- Be suitably competent and knowledgeable about WYP policies and procedures
- plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks
- define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and young people and ensure effective supervision of what they do
- obtain the WYP committee's approval for the visit
- have enough information on the young people taking part in order to risk assess their suitability for the visit or specific activity
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the young people is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- ensure they have details of the base contact
- ensure they have details of the young people's special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively

Parents/Carers must:

- provide WYP with emergency contact number(s)
- sign the consent form
- give WYP information about their child/ward's emotional, physiological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit
- agree the arrangements for sending a young person home early and who will meet the cost

The young people must:

- not take any unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the Youth Workers, and the staff at the venue of the visit
- dress and behave appropriately and responsibly
- if abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten himself or herself or anyone in the group and inform the group leader or supervisor
- if it is an overnight stay/residential sign a Sleepover Contract

3. Guidance Notes for Off-site Activities and Visits

To ensure good practice and to comply with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

All Youth Workers will familiarise themselves with the Offsite Activities and Visits policy.

The Youth Work Manager should be involved in discussing plans for any off-site activity at an early stage. All off-site visits need to be planned including local and routine visits. No non-returnable financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been gained.

Parental consent needs to be obtained and copies of the medical/dietary requirements and emergency contacts details should be taken on the visit by the Leader in Charge. A copy will need to be held by the emergency contact person.

A Proposed Visit form will need to be completed when the visit is non-residential, non-hazardous and in the UK.

In the case of a residential, overseas trip or adventurous activity a Proposed Visit form will need to be submitted to the Management Committee 4 weeks prior to the activity, and signed by the Chairman.

N.B the 4 weeks time scale is a guide line and at the discretion of the management committee can be negotiated.

Risk Assessment forms should be completed for all aspects of the visit e.g. the journey, activities and down time if a residential. External providers may have their own risk assessments that will need to be seen by the Leader in Charge.

A pre-visit is highly recommended to support the risk assessment process and should be carried out whenever possible.

If volunteers are being used for the visit, they will need to be fully briefed and a DBS check must be carried out.

The parents will be informed of the type of transport used. When private cars are used various checks will need to be carried out and guidance provided to volunteer drivers. When coaches and minibuses are used the leaders should ensure the young people are wearing seat belts. A current Minibus permit is required to drive a minibus.

School Journey Insurance may need to be arranged depending on the nature of the visit e.g. if deposits are paid, the young people are taking belongings and the visit is abroad. Parents should be informed of the insurance arrangements.

The supervision ratios need to meet the requirements summarised in the table below though these are minimum ratios and the group leader must consider the young people involved, the type of activities, the site and the experience and competency of the supervising adults.

Supervision ratios and qualifications guidance for non-hazardous ventures

Activity	Qualifications/ staffing	Ratios
Local visits – in the local area, close to support at the base	A minimum of two youth workers required, (one of which must be an experienced LIC)	1 adult for every 10-15 young people
Day visits – more than 60 miles or one hour from base	A minimum of two youth workers required, (one of which must be an experienced LIC)	1 adult for every 10-15.
Residential visit, UK or abroad, and visits abroad	A minimum of two youth workers required, (one of which must be an experienced LIC)	1 adult for every 10 pupils. These ratios do not include the centre/ residential base staff

In an emergency the LIC must:

- Ensure the young people are safe
- Contact their emergency contact person and give them the details
- Follow the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident/incident or fatality.

3.14 During off-site visits there will be a trained first-aider and a first-aid kit will be carried.

On return from the visit, the LIC will report to the home contact when all young people have been safely returned home or to the agreed drop off point and collected by their parents/carers. If there has been an incident, then the appropriate report form must be completed.

3.15 All the planning of the visit could be supported by the use of a checklist.

3.16 **Appendix A**

Off-site Activities and Visits Checklist.

1. Is there a Leader in Charge, adequate staff?
2. A nominated first aider & kit
3. An emergency home contact?
4. Have the risk assessments been written for:
 - a) the journey(s)
 - b) the down time
 - c) the activities
5. Has the proposed visit form been completed & approved by the Chairman?
6. If the visit is adventurous, and/or residential and/or abroad, have the plans been approved by the WYP committee & Chairman?
7. Are the staff and volunteers suitably qualified and competent?
8. Are the staff/young people ratios acceptable according to the WYP guidelines and for the activities proposed?
9. Does the gender of adults reflect the young peoples' gender (essential for residential)?
10. Has a preliminary visit been made?
11. Has parental consent been obtained?
12. Have the staff and volunteers been made aware of the young people's dietary and medical needs?
13. Is insurance arranged where necessary?

14. Is there a planned timetable in place?
15. Has appropriate transport been arranged?
16. Have adequate arrangements been made to finance the visit?
17. Have all young people received a kit list & sleepover contract ?(for overnight stays and residential)
18. Have all the staff and volunteers been properly briefed e.g. roles and responsibilities, supervision styles, significant hazards and their management, groups, emergency procedures?
19. Has all information been given to parents?
20. Is there an evaluation planned?