

Alternative Learning Environment

Safeguarding Learners in an Alternative Learning Environment

An Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) can be defined as a venue where a learner accesses the curriculum outside of the traditional home learning base/school environment, examples include work visits; a residential experience; business mentoring and e-mentoring programmes.

The role of the Educational Visit Co-ordinator under such circumstances is to:

- Support the Headteacher and governor with approval and other decisions;
- Assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit;
- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit. This will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body. It may include practical observation or verification of experience;
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness etc;
- Organise thorough induction of leaders and other adults taking pupils on a specific visit;
- Make sure that Criminal Record Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary – see Code of Practice 11: Educational Visits and Adventurous Activities (Leicestershire County Council) or Leicester City CYPS – Planning for Safe Trips and Visits Bulletin No.33
- Work with the group leader to obtain consent or refusal of parent(s)/carer(s) and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parent(s)/carer(s) can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis;
- Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit;
- Keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents' (sometimes known as 'near misses');
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice¹

Consequently the role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator is vital in ensuring that health and safety procedures are followed robustly.

¹ Taken from the publication 'Standards for LEAs in overseeing educational visits, July 2002'

Contact	Educational Visit Co-ordinator
Risk Assessment	A risk assessment must be completed by the home learning base/school Tutor/Teacher organising the ALE (see <i>Appendix C - Risk Assessment Work-related off-site learning</i> p.99). This assessment must then be reviewed by the Educational Visit Co-ordinator before the final preparations are made for the ALE. In the event the Tutor/Teacher of the home learning base/school fails to have the risk assessment reviewed and approved by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator this will in effect be a contravention of local safeguarding procedures.
Informed consent of Person and Parental Responsibility²	Consent of the person with parental responsibility is required for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the learner to undertake an alternative learning environment; • the learner to travel independently to and from the ALE; • day time emergency contact telephone numbers of the learner's parent(s)/carer(s); • the passing on of additional information including medical needs (also to be discussed with the learner) • should the placement provider request the taking of photographs
Free Meals	Although the learner is entitled to have a free school meal, alternative arrangements will need to be agreed and made by the home learning base/school.
Absence	Parent(s)/Carer(s) of the Learner are to contact the home learning base/school (where he/she is on roll) in the case of absence
Working days	ALE provision can only occur during the working week
When a pupil cannot go to a placement because it is cancelled or closed for a period of time	Should an ALE provision be cancelled at short notice or closed for one day, the learner must attend his/her home learning base/school.
In the event of an accident in the workplace	The Work Experience Co-ordinator is to notify the learner's parent(s)/carer(s) and the local authority. The appropriate accident/incident Report must be completed and a copy must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retained by the Work Experience Co-ordinator

² Where it is identified that a parent/carer has difficulty either speaking and understanding English or experiences difficulties reading written English, it is imperative that the home learning base/school makes all efforts to gain informed consent before a placement is organised. This may require the use of an interpreter or documents translated.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sent to the respective Health and Safety Department, CYPS Leicester City Council /Leicestershire County Council
--	---

Safeguarding Learners in an Alternative Learning Environment

Below is an aide memoir that summarises the main activities to be completed. The aide memoir does not have to be completed for every learner. A Work Experience Co-ordinator may wish to photocopy the aide memoir and use it when batch placements are organised. If an individual is new to the role of Work Experience Co-ordinator, s/he may wish to use the aide memoir for each placement being organised.

When organising learning in an alternative environment has the following been done by the:

Home learning base/school Tutor/Teacher

A risk assessment has been completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
The risk assessment has been reviewed by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consent of the learner's parent(s)/carer(s) has been obtained	<input type="checkbox"/>

The Educational Visitor Co-ordinator:

The risk assessment has been reviewed and approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------