

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Off-site Visits Policy

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Coordinator: the Health and Safety Lead

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1. Policy Statement and Purpose

The Haven recognises that, on rare occasions, carefully planned off-site visits may offer meaningful educational or relational value for some learners. As a primarily online provision, off-site visits are infrequent and are approached with a high degree of caution, planning, and safeguarding oversight.

Where off-site visits do take place, learners will normally be accompanied by a parent or carer, and all arrangements will prioritise safety, inclusion, and clear shared responsibility.

This policy sets out the procedures for planning, approving, and managing off-site visits in line with statutory safeguarding, health and safety, and commissioning expectations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Any off-site activity organised or facilitated by The Haven, including educational visits, assessments, examinations, or enrichment opportunities
- Staff, learners, volunteers, contractors, and external providers involved in such activities

3. Core Principles

- **Safety first:** The welfare of learners is the paramount concern.
- **Rarity and proportionality:** Off-site visits are exceptional rather than routine.

- **Shared responsibility:** Parents/carers play an active supervisory role.
- **Inclusion:** Reasonable adjustments are planned to support individual needs.
- **Transparency:** Parents/carers and commissioning bodies are fully informed.
- **Compliance:** All arrangements align with safeguarding, first aid, and health and safety policies.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trip Leader

The Trip Leader (named for each visit) is responsible for:

- Planning and coordination of the visit
- Completion of visit-specific risk assessments
- Liaison with the DSL and senior leadership
- On-the-day oversight of arrangements

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL:

- Reviews and approves all off-site visit proposals and risk assessments
- Ensures safeguarding considerations are central to planning
- Remains available during the visit for consultation and escalation
- Coordinates communication in the event of an emergency

4.3 Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers:

- Follow safeguarding guidance and instructions of the Trip Leader
- Act within the limits of their role and training
- Do not assume parental responsibilities unless explicitly agreed

4.4 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers:

- Normally accompany their child on off-site visits
- Retain responsibility for day-to-day supervision and medical needs
- Provide accurate medical and emergency information
- Give informed written consent prior to participation

5. Pre-Visit Planning and Risk Assessment

5.1 Pre-Visit Checks

Where practicable, a pre-visit is conducted by staff to:

- Familiarise themselves with the location and facilities
- Identify environmental, accessibility, and safeguarding risks
- Inform the completion of a thorough, location-specific risk assessment**

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Where a physical pre-visit is not practicable, equivalent checks are carried out using:

- Venue documentation and maps
- Direct communication with the provider
- Published safety and safeguarding information

5.2 Risk Assessments

- A visit-specific risk assessment is completed for every off-site visit
- Risk assessments are tailored to the individual learners attending, including medical, sensory, and emotional needs
- Assessments include travel, venue safety, safeguarding, medical needs, and emergency procedures
- All risk assessments are reviewed and approved by the DSL prior to the visit

6. External Providers and Venue Due Diligence

Where an external provider or venue is used, The Haven undertakes proportionate checks, which may include:

- Confirmation that the provider has an appropriate Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy
- Review of relevant health and safety procedures
- Confirmation of staff suitability and supervision arrangements
- Clarification of emergency and first aid procedures

Where standards cannot be assured, the visit will not proceed.

7. Medical Needs and First Aid

7.1 Medical Information

- Medical needs of learners are identified in advance through information provided by parents/carers
- Individual Healthcare Plans (where applicable) are reviewed prior to the visit

7.2 First Aid and Medication

- Responsibilities for first aid and medication are managed in line with:

- **The Haven Accidents, Incidents and First Aid Policy v04.26

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- **Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions Policy
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- A trained First Aider is designated for each visit
- First aid kits are carried where appropriate
- Staff do not administer medication unless this has been formally agreed, trained for, and documented in advance

Parents/carers accompanying their child ordinarily retain responsibility for routine medical care.

8. Emergency Procedures and Communication

In the event of an emergency or serious incident:

- Immediate safety of learners is prioritised**
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- Emergency services are contacted where required
- The Trip Leader informs the DSL immediately**
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- The DSL coordinates communication, including:
 - notifying parent carers (where they are not present), and
 - informing senior leadership and commissioning bodies as appropriate

Clear records of actions taken and communications made are maintained.

Where a parent/carers is present on the visit, they are supported to contact emergency services as needed, with staff oversight and DSL support.

9. Consent and Information Sharing

- Written parental consent is required for all off-site visits
- Consent information includes:
 - itinerary and purpose
 - supervision arrangements
 - transport details
 - medical and emergency procedures
- Relevant information is shared with commissioning schools or local authorities where required

10. Inclusion and Accessibility

- Visits are planned with inclusion at the forefront
- Reasonable adjustments are considered for learners with SEND, medical, or access needs
- Alternative arrangements are discussed where participation is not appropriate or safe

11. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

- Each visit is reviewed post-event to identify lessons learned
- Any incidents or concerns inform future planning and policy review
- This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance or commissioning expectations change

This PDF was generated from the published policy at policies.thehavenonline.school on 26 August 2026. The website is the authoritative, most current version of this policy.