

The ReConnect Programme – Off Site Visits Policy

OWNERSHIP:	The ReConnect Programme
AUTHORISED BY:	Chief Operating Officer
REVIEW:	August 2027

Purpose

This policy sets out The ReConnect Programme's arrangements for planning, approving and delivering safe, purposeful off-site visits. It supports young people to access education, enrichment, independence and community opportunities while safeguarding their welfare and managing risk proportionately.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, directors, agency staff, facilitators, volunteers, contractors and external providers involved in organising, approving, transporting or supervising young people away from a ReConnect site. It covers routine local activities, outreach, community-based learning, sports, work-related learning, day visits, adventurous activities, residential visits and travel in the UK or overseas.

Policy Context

AP context (non-school AP): The ReConnect Programme operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP), often delivering one-to-one and small-group programmes. Off-site activity is an important part of engagement and learning. Young people may have SEND, SEMH needs, trauma, medical needs, communication differences, reduced risk awareness or vulnerability in the community. Planning must therefore be individualised, trauma-informed and responsive to changing presentation, without unnecessarily restricting access to beneficial experiences.

ReConnect applies health and safety, safeguarding, equality, data protection and transport law to its own operations and uses current Department for Education, Health and Safety Executive and Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel guidance as benchmark practice where relevant. Risk management will focus on real and significant risks and will enable well-planned activity rather than remove all challenge.

Objectives

- ensure every visit has a clear educational, therapeutic, vocational or wellbeing purpose
- provide proportionate planning, approval, risk assessment and supervision
- consider each young person's needs, strengths, vulnerabilities and views
- set clear arrangements for consent, transport, safeguarding, medication and emergencies
- ensure staff and providers are competent for their assigned responsibilities
- learn from visits, near misses, incidents and feedback

POLICY

Core Principles

- The welfare and safety of young people are paramount.
- All staff have a duty to act if unsafe practice is observed or reasonably anticipated.

The level of planning and approval must reflect the complexity and risk of the visit.
 Supervision is active and risk-based; it is not determined by a single fixed ratio.
 Young people should be included through reasonable adjustments wherever this can be achieved safely.
 Plans must be changed, paused or cancelled if conditions are no longer safe.

Visit Categories and Approval

Category	Typical examples	Minimum approval
Routine local visit	Regular local journeys, shops, libraries, parks, cafes, community facilities or established outreach locations.	Head of Provision or delegated Off-Site Visits Coordinator before the programme begins; local arrangements kept under review.
Non-routine day visit	New venue, longer journey, larger group, unfamiliar activity or visit outside the usual local area.	Head of Provision following review of the visit plan and risk assessment.
Higher-risk or adventurous activity	Water-based activity, climbing, remote terrain, cycling on public routes or an activity requiring specialist competence.	Head of Provision and COO; competent provider and specialist advice where required.
Residential or overseas visit	Any overnight stay or travel outside the UK.	COO and Directors following enhanced planning, insurance and safeguarding checks.

No visit may proceed without the required approval. The approver must be sufficiently independent of the detailed planning to provide effective challenge. Approval may be withdrawn if arrangements or conditions change.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Operating Officer and Directors

- Approve this policy and provide appropriate resources, insurance and governance.
- Approve higher-risk, residential and overseas visits and ensure specialist advice is obtained where needed.
- Ensure serious incidents are managed, notified and reviewed appropriately.

Head of Provision or Off-Site Visits Coordinator

- Confirm that the visit has a clear purpose and proportionate plan.
- Check the competence and suitability of the Visit Lead and accompanying adults.
- Review risk assessment, staffing, consent, transport, provider, medical and emergency arrangements.
- Ensure an emergency contact remains available throughout the visit.
- Keep an auditable approval record and review routine-visit arrangements regularly.

Visit Lead

- Plan and dynamically manage the visit and remain accountable for its safe delivery.
- Know the young people, activity, route, venue, staffing plan and emergency procedures.
- Brief staff, young people and, where appropriate, parents and carers.
- Check attendance, equipment, medication, contact details and travel arrangements before departure.
- Stop or alter the visit where risk can no longer be managed.

All Accompanying Adults

Follow the agreed plan and Visit Lead's instructions while remaining alert to changing risk.

Maintain active supervision and appropriate professional boundaries.

Report concerns, changes, near misses, safeguarding issues and incidents promptly.

Do not consume alcohol, illegal substances or anything that impairs their ability to supervise.

Planning and Preliminary Checks

Planning must begin early enough to resolve foreseeable issues. A preliminary visit should be completed for new or complex locations where it would materially improve planning. If this is not reasonably practicable, the Visit Lead must obtain reliable current information from the venue, maps, providers or other suitable sources.

The visit plan must address, as applicable:

purpose, itinerary, timings, route, venue and alternative arrangements

participant needs, group dynamics, accessibility, staffing and supervision

travel, driver, vehicle, parking, drop-off and collection arrangements

venue and activity hazards, weather, seasonal conditions and environmental risks

provider competence, licences, insurance, safeguarding and risk information

food, hydration, allergies, medication, first aid and personal care

communications, emergency contacts, missing-person actions and contingency plans

costs, consent, information to families and required documentation

Risk Assessment

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be completed or formally adopted before the visit. Venue or provider assessments may inform ReConnect's planning but do not replace consideration of the journey, supervision and individual young people. Generic assessments may be used for genuinely routine and stable activities when supported by relevant individual risk information.

The assessment must consider the likelihood and potential severity of harm, existing controls, further action, responsible persons and review triggers. It must include risks created by behaviour, absconding, exploitation, public contact, transport, roads, water, animals, weather, equipment, environment, medical needs and any activity-specific hazards relevant to the visit.

Dynamic risk assessment continues throughout the visit. Staff may vary the route, activity, group arrangements or timing where this reduces risk. A significant change must be communicated to the Head of Provision or emergency contact as soon as practicable and recorded afterwards.

Individual Needs, SEND and Inclusion

Planning must draw on current risk assessments, EHCP information where available, medical details, behaviour and support plans, safeguarding information and staff knowledge. Young people and parents or carers should be involved where this improves safety and participation. Reasonable adjustments may include familiar staff, smaller

groups, visual schedules, preparation visits, quiet spaces, adapted transport, specialist equipment, flexible timings or a personalised emergency plan.

A disability, medical condition, SEND or SEMH need must not automatically prevent participation. Where participation cannot be made safe through reasonable adjustments, the decision and rationale must be documented and a meaningful alternative offered where practicable.

Supervision and Staffing

Staffing decisions must be based on the activity, environment, travel, group size, ages, individual needs, staff competence and ability to manage an emergency. The usual ReConnect one-to-one model may be maintained where needed; group visits may use different arrangements following assessment. Ratios are a planning outcome, not a substitute for judgement.

At least one adult must be designated Visit Lead.

Roles, individual allocations and communication arrangements must be clear.

Staff must know when and how headcounts or register checks will occur.

Any planned remote or indirect supervision must be specifically assessed and approved.

A young person must never be left without an agreed safe supervision arrangement.

Where only one member of staff is present, the lone-working and emergency plan must be explicit.

Safeguarding and Professional Conduct

ReConnect's safeguarding, staff conduct and whistleblowing requirements apply throughout every visit. Staff must maintain professional boundaries, avoid unnecessary one-to-one isolation, use approved communication channels and respond immediately to disclosures or concerns. Intimate or personal care must follow the young person's agreed plan and preserve dignity.

Photographs, recordings, location sharing and social media use must follow consent, safeguarding and data protection requirements. Staff must not use a personal device to record young people unless specifically authorised under ReConnect procedures and necessary in the circumstances.

Consent and Information for Parents and Carers

ReConnect will obtain informed consent appropriate to the visit. An annual or programme consent may cover clearly described routine local activities where families have been told the usual nature, area, transport and supervision arrangements. Parents or carers will still receive sufficient information about planned activity and significant changes.

Specific written consent is required for non-routine visits, higher-risk or adventurous activities, residential visits, overseas travel, significant changes to the usual arrangements, or where the Head of Provision determines that individual circumstances require it. Consent does not transfer ReConnect's duty of care.

Information should include the purpose, date, times, destination, travel, activities, staffing approach, clothing or equipment, food, cost, contact and any material risks. Emergency and medical information must be current.

Where a person with parental responsibility cannot be contacted and urgent treatment is required, staff will act in the young person's best interests and follow emergency-service advice.

Young People's Responsibilities

Expectations will be explained in an accessible and non-alarming way. Young people are expected to follow reasonable instructions, stay within agreed boundaries, use seat belts and safety equipment, treat people and property respectfully and tell staff immediately about hazards, illness, distress, separation or safeguarding concerns. Expectations and consequences must be adapted to age, understanding and individual need.

The Visit Lead may pause, change or end participation where behaviour creates a risk that cannot be safely managed. Responses must be proportionate, safeguarding-led and consistent with ReConnect's behaviour and restrictive intervention arrangements.

Transport

Transport must be suitable, lawful, insured and approved. Journey planning must consider driver competence, vehicle condition, seat belts, passenger needs, accessibility, weather, fatigue, safe stops, breakdowns, parking and safe collection or handover.

- Anyone driving for work must hold the correct licence, have appropriate business-use insurance and meet ReConnect's driving-for-work requirements.

- Drivers must complete required vehicle checks and must not use a handheld phone or drive while impaired, unfit or dangerously fatigued.

- Every passenger must use the legally required seat belt or approved restraint unless a lawful exemption applies.

- Public transport assessments must address waiting areas, platforms, roads, crowds, behaviour, separation and alternative routes.

- Taxis and external transport providers must be authorised and subject to proportionate safeguarding and procurement checks.

- No unauthorised person may transport or collect a young person.

External Providers and Adventurous Activities

The Visit Lead must establish that an external provider is suitable for the activity and participants. Checks should include public liability insurance, competent staff, safeguarding arrangements, risk management, equipment standards, emergency procedures and relevant accreditation or licensing. A provider's Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge may support due diligence but does not remove ReConnect's responsibility to plan and supervise the visit.

Where the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 apply, the provider must hold the required licence. Only suitably competent persons may lead specialist or adventurous activities. Clear responsibility must be agreed between ReConnect staff and provider staff before the activity begins.

Medical Needs, First Aid and Welfare

The level of first-aid provision must be determined by the visit risk assessment. Staff must have access to relevant medical information, emergency contacts and medication in a secure but readily available form. Medication must be transported, administered and recorded under ReConnect's medical procedures. Rescue medication must remain immediately accessible to the authorised person.

Plans must address allergies, dietary needs, hydration, sun protection, temperature, toilets, personal care, rest and emotional regulation. Staff must know the location of local emergency assistance where the activity or environment makes this necessary.

Water, Swimming and Remote Environments

Visits near water require explicit assessment of drowning, tides, currents, water quality, edges, weather, rescue and supervision. Swimming or water entry must not occur unless it is planned, specifically approved and supported by competent supervision and appropriate safety arrangements. Spontaneous entry into water is prohibited.

Remote, rural, woodland or coastal visits must consider navigation, mobile coverage, weather, fire, terrain, ticks, animals, separation, emergency access and an alternative route or activity. The group must carry suitable communication, first-aid and emergency equipment.

Before Departure

The Visit Lead must complete a final check before leaving:

- approval and consent are in place
- attendance is confirmed and the base contact holds the participant and staff list
- medical, safeguarding and individual risk information is current and shared on a need-to-know basis
- staffing, roles, communication and emergency arrangements are understood
- transport, weather, venue status, equipment, funds, food and medication have been checked
- young people have been briefed and are appropriately dressed and equipped

Emergency Procedures

The Visit Lead must carry or have reliable access to the visit plan, participant list, emergency contacts, key medical information and ReConnect's emergency procedure. A named base contact who is not on the visit must be available and able to access the full plan.

In an emergency, staff should:

- protect life, move the group from immediate danger and provide first aid within competence
- call 999 or the relevant emergency service without delay where required
- account for all participants and maintain appropriate supervision
- contact the ReConnect base emergency contact as soon as it is safe

follow emergency-service and venue instructions and preserve relevant evidence

record key facts, decisions, times and communications

avoid media or social media comment and protect confidential information

ReConnect's senior incident lead will coordinate family and commissioner communication, additional support, business continuity and any statutory or insurer notification. Parents and carers should normally be contacted through ReConnect rather than independently by multiple staff.

If a Young Person Goes Missing

Separation or a missing young person must be treated according to the individual risk and circumstances. Staff must not create further danger by leaving other young people unsupervised. The Visit Lead will:

confirm when and where the young person was last seen and check the immediate safe area

alert venue security or responsible staff and prevent avoidable group movement

contact police without delay where there is immediate danger, high vulnerability, suspected crime or the young person is not quickly located

notify the ReConnect base contact, Head of Provision and parent or carer

share an accurate description, clothing, relevant vulnerabilities, contact details and likely destinations

follow the Missing Child or Young Person Procedure and record all actions and times

Police contact must not be delayed solely to complete an area search. When the young person is found, staff must check welfare, obtain medical help if needed and complete a safeguarding-led return discussion and incident review.

Incidents, Near Misses and Early Return

All accidents, injuries, safeguarding concerns, medication issues, vehicle incidents, missing-person events, significant behavioural incidents and near misses must be reported under ReConnect procedures. Where relevant, evidence and provider records should be obtained. Senior leaders will consider notifications to parents or carers, commissioners, safeguarding partners, HSE, insurers or other authorities.

The Visit Lead may return early or arrange an alternative activity if wellbeing, behaviour, weather, staffing, transport, venue or another condition makes continuation unsafe or inappropriate. Safe supervision and authorised handover must be maintained throughout any revised arrangements.

Records and Data Protection

Visit plans, approvals, consent, risk assessments, participant information, provider checks and incident records will be stored securely in line with ReConnect's Data Protection Policy and retention arrangements. Staff must carry only the information needed for the visit, keep it secure, share it only on a need-to-know basis and return or securely dispose of temporary copies afterwards.

Training, Monitoring and Review

Staff leading visits will receive induction and proportionate training in visit planning, safeguarding, risk

assessment, emergency action and relevant specialist skills. Competence will be assessed through experience, qualifications, observation and knowledge of the young people and activity.

The Head of Provision and COO will monitor implementation through approvals, sampling of documentation, incident and near-miss reviews, staff feedback and periodic observation. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following a serious incident, significant operational change or relevant change to law or guidance.

Related ReConnect Documents

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy and Risk Assessment Policy
- Transportation and Driving for Work Policies
- Missing Child or Young Person Procedure
- First Aid and Administration of Medication Procedures
- Behaviour and Restrictive Intervention Policies
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy and Privacy Policy
- Critical Incident, Lockdown and Business Continuity Plans

Appendix 1: Visit Approval Checklist

Check	Required evidence
Purpose and itinerary	Clear learning or wellbeing purpose, dates, times, route, venue and contingency.
Approval	Correct visit category identified and authorisation recorded.
Participants	Final list, needs, individual risks, accessibility and group dynamics reviewed.
Staffing	Named Visit Lead, suitable adults, roles, competence and supervision arrangements.
Risk assessment	Visit, travel, venue, activity and individual risks assessed and communicated.
Consent and information	Appropriate consent obtained and families given sufficient information.
Transport	Driver, licence, insurance, vehicle, route, restraints and collection arrangements checked.
Provider	Insurance, competence, safeguarding, licensing and emergency arrangements checked.
Medical and welfare	Medication, first aid, allergies, food, hydration, clothing and personal care planned.
Emergency plan	Base contact, communications, contacts, missing-person and alternative plans confirmed.
Departure check	Attendance, weather, venue status, equipment and briefings confirmed.
After the visit	Incidents, near misses, records, feedback and learning completed.

Appendix 2: Key Legal and Guidance Framework

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Equality Act 2010

Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004

Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, where applicable

Department for Education: Health and safety on educational visits

Health and Safety Executive guidance on school trips and sensible risk management

Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel National Guidance, used as benchmark practice

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, used as benchmark safeguarding practice

Current law, government guidance, emergency-service instructions and any commissioner requirements take precedence where they require a different response.

VERSION CONTROL

We will review our documentation regularly and we reserve the right to amend our policies and procedures at any time.

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/ Reviewer	Approved by:
1	29/08/2026	Initial Version	Naomi Hamer	Director