



National
Guidance

Using OEAP Outdoor Learning Cards

Scope and remit

Outdoor Learning Cards introduce a range of activities for use with children from the Foundation Phase through to Key Stage Three and beyond. They have been created to assist and accredit non-specialist leaders to deliver high quality outdoor learning, off site visits and learning outside the classroom activities and to help young people to develop a range of skills related to these activities. They support learning across the curriculum, will help to promote physically active and healthy lifestyles and will help young people to develop positive attitudes towards self, others and the environment.

The activities engage young people in safety education by encouraging them to manage risk sensibly and will contribute to raising achievement by providing high quality outdoor learning experiences. The resource pack is available only by attending a recognised OEAP course provided by an OEAP-accredited course director. Courses are facilitated by local authorities and can be accessed by contacting your local authority Outdoor Education Adviser or OEAP (see www.oep.info).

Geographical boundaries

The cards are designed to encourage greater use of the school grounds and the local area.

Activities

Activities are based on the ideas contained in the pack of 50 learning cards. Each card provides an initial idea that can be developed to support a wide range of learning outcomes and curricular areas.

Range of Benefits and Learning Outcomes (examples)

- Cooperating and working with others
- Support subject-specific curriculum
- Improved enthusiasm and motivation
- Appreciation of the local environment
- Group decision making
- Effective communication - Listening and Speaking
- Managing risk

- Safety Education
- Coping with challenge
- Experiential learning

Place within curriculum planning

The learning cards can be used with all year groups. The following are examples:

- Yr 3 development of literacy skills (using rope slings)
- Yr 4 shelter building as part of a project on Nomadic Lifestyles
- Yr 5 development of numeracy skills using the school's bouldering wall.
- Yr 6 development of navigational skills based on journey to and in the local park.
- Year 10 maths or English revision using orienteering exercises or bouldersing wall activities

Leader Competence Requirements

The Visit Leader must be competent. In addition to the specific Outdoor Learning Card training, they must meet their employer's competence requirements to run any off-site activity. Assistant Leaders should be assessed to ensure that they meet competence requirements that are regarded as necessary.

Volunteer helpers should only be considered competent to undertake their allocated roles and responsibilities when they have received a group and event specific briefing.

Lesson Plan and Operational Requirements

- Outdoor Learning Card Activities should be embedded in lesson planning,.
- The Activity Leader **must** ensure they follow their establishment's policy and approval process for any off-site activity.
- The Activity Leader may require the assistance of teaching assistants or volunteer helpers.
- Weather conditions and suitable clothing/footwear must be considered and contingency plans put in place in case the weather or ground conditions make the activity inappropriate.

Emergency Procedures

Appropriate emergency procedures must be in place for both on site and off site activity. See the document "Emergency Procedures for Visit and Activity Leaders" in this Guidance.

Sample Risk Assessment for OEAP Outdoor Learning Card Activities

This sample risk assessment is intended to cover the most common hazards. You should edit it or add to it as appropriate to cover the specifics of your activities. The benefits and learning outcomes are outlined above and the following control measures attempt to strike an appropriate balance between the benefits and risks

Hazards & Risks	Control Measures
1. Poor or inappropriate party leadership.	1. Leaders meet their employer's competency requirements. At least one member of staff has undertaken OL Card training, has pre-visited any off-site venues and has walked the route. Adult helpers must be fully briefed.
2. Road traffic and road crossings.	2. Staff and children appropriately briefed on group movement and management strategies.
3. Children lost or separated.	3. Children to be allocated to sub-groups. Leaders briefed on fixed meeting points/"break-outs".
4. Behavioural incidents involving members of the public.	4. Staff to be briefed on potential behavioural issues. Children allocated to sub-groups with these issues in mind. Children set clear behavioural expectations.
5. Child Protection issues.	5. Staff and Volunteers understand their responsibilities and have been vetted in line with the employer's policy. Children briefed on staff expectations about their interaction with members of the public.
6. Weather extremes.	6. Young people are briefed about their clothing and footwear needs. Suitability of outdoor clothing checked by staff on the day. Contingency plans in place should the planned activity be unsuitable due to weather or ground conditions.
7. Group-specific medical and other support needs.	7. Staff to be briefed on any medical, special learning or behavioural support needs with allocation of additional staffing as identified.
8. Activity-specific hazards e.g. misuse of camp stoves, inappropriate behaviour on a bouldering wall and deep-water hazards and drowning in ponds.	8. Children to be appropriately briefed about the nature of the hazards and how to stay safe in accordance with the OL Card training and Learning Pack. Staff should have access to "Group Safety at Water Margins" (DfES/CCPRC 2005). Close staff supervision.

