



National
Guidance

<http://oeapng.info>

Visitor Attractions

Rationale

Visitor attractions are destinations open to the public such as:

- theme and leisure parks
- piers
- fairgrounds
- zoos and animal attractions
- historic sites
- exhibitions
- landmark attractions
- parks and gardens
- science and discovery centres
- workplace attractions.

Many visitor attractions are a potential learning resource and their wide geographical spread means almost every establishment will have opportunities close by. Those within easy reach may add appreciation and depth to participants' awareness of their local and community heritage.

Information on local visitor attractions, places to go and things to do is available from Tourist Information Centres, Town Councils and Chambers of Commerce and by internet search and sites such as www.visitengland.com, www.visitwales.com and www.visitbritain.com

Range of Provision

The majority of attractions are small enterprises with ownership split roughly equally between public (government and local authority), charitable, and private sectors. Just under a half of attractions are free.

Visit Leaders are advised to consult the attraction's staff before fixing the date and timing of a visit so that the visit fits with other activity taking place at the venue and to ensure that it will be suitable for the age and needs of the group.

Quality Standards

Each home nation tourist board has quality assurance schemes covering visitor attractions. Further information can be found on their websites.

Visitor attractions and theme parks are open to the public and so must meet legally required health and safety standards, and it is not necessary to seek assurances about these unless specific issues have been raised. Some visitor attractions hold a Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge or LOtC Site Provider Award, which gives assurance about educational quality as well as safety.

Particular Hazards to Consider and Manage

In researching the suitability of a venue, the visit leader should identify significant potential hazards and plan what to do to manage the risks. These might include the following:

- Car parks and manoeuvring traffic.
- Unclear site boundaries.
- Open water.
- Exposure to height.
- Members of the party getting lost or separated in an environment requiring remote supervision strategies.
- Open access to points of danger e.g. narrow gauge railway lines, main roads, fairground machinery.

Resources that Support Learning

With sufficient imagination, most attractions can be used as educational resources but the nature of educational provision they offer varies greatly. Consequently, it is important that visit leaders check that the chosen venue can provide the range of services required to deliver the planned learning outcomes.

Larger attractions are likely to employ staff with special responsibility for educational visits who can provide a knowledgeable point of contact for planning and arranging visits. While many of these staff may not have formal educational training, they are likely to have considerable experience of hosting groups. At some attractions there are re-enactors, interpreters and demonstrators who can provide specific services as part of the visit.

Most attractions offer illustrated guides and explanatory information to visitors. Some attractions have developed teacher packs and additional publications that provide further subject and topic depth, specifically relating aspects of the attraction to the national curriculum. Their educational materials may also be available on their websites.

Attractions usually recognise the value of young people preparing for and following up the visit, and may offer materials and artefacts for use in pre-visit and post-visit exercises.

