



National  
Guidance  
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## Leadership and Management

Competent and effective leadership is a key element of good practice in the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom. This applies to leadership of organisations by the employer, leadership of establishments, and leadership of activities and visits.

Leadership is about setting and communicating a clear purpose and vision, and uniting a team of people around it.

Management is about providing the environment and the tools that empower and enable people to translate the vision into reality.

### Establishments

Governors/Trustees, Headteachers/Managers and Educational Visits Coordinators have a vital role in setting a compelling vision for how outdoor learning and off-site visits will contribute to the work of their establishment. For example, in a school they might set out how these activities will enliven the curriculum, improve motivation and attitudes to learning and ultimately educational attainment, and contribute to students' personal and social development.

They should ensure that this purpose and vision is reflected in the establishment's ethos and culture, so that everyone is working together with a common goal and shared values and so that opportunities are available for all.

The establishment should have policies and procedures which are enabling, reflecting the establishment's vision and ethos, and which guide staff, including visit leaders, in the right direction. See the following OEAP National Guidance documents:

- [1b "Foundations"](#)
- [4.3a "Good Practice – the Basics"](#)
- [5.3b "Writing an Establishment Visits Policy"](#).

It is important that the roles and responsibilities of establishment staff involved in outdoor learning and offsite visits are clearly defined. OEAP National Guidance document [3.1b "Establishment Roles and their Interdependence"](#) sets out typical roles, including the key role of Educational Visits Coordinator, and includes links to other documents which describe these in more detail.

A key element of the management of visits and activities by establishments is the training, deployment and support of leaders, ensuring that they are accountable, competent and confident, and that the ratio of leaders to participants is sufficient for effective supervision. See:

- [3.2d "Approval of Leaders"](#)
- [4.3b "Ratios and Effective Supervision"](#).

The following documents can be used to evaluate the preparedness and effectiveness of an establishment:

- [5.1a "Establishment Self-Evaluation form"](#)
- [5.1c "Self-Evaluation and the Ofsted Framework"](#).

## Employers

Establishments work within the vision, ethos, culture and policies created by their employer. Employers should therefore ensure that these are compelling, empowering, enabling and clearly communicated.

For advice on specific considerations for employers, see OEAP National Guidance document [3.1a "Requirements and Recommendations for Employers"](#), which includes links to documents giving guidance for those in employer roles, including the key role of Outdoor Education Adviser.

## Visit Leaders and Activity Leaders

The roles and responsibilities of Visit Leaders, Activity Leaders and Assistant Leaders are described in these OEAP National Guidance documents:

- [3.4k "Visit or Activity Leader"](#)
- [3.4L "Assistant Leader"](#).

Just as employers and senior establishment staff have a responsibility for setting and communicating a purpose and ethos for the organisation and establishment, so do visit and activity leaders for their groups.

Leaders' responsibilities also include the supervision and welfare support of participants. The following OEAP National Guidance documents provide important advice about the leadership and management of groups:

- [4.1a "Avoiding Accidents and Emergencies"](#) (especially the section on Good Leadership Habits)
- [4.2a "Group Management and Supervision"](#)
- [4.3f "Risk Management – Some Practical Advice"](#).

Leaders have the additional responsibility of tuition – the facilitation of participants' learning and development through teaching, instruction, coaching, training etc. See OEAP National Guidance document [4.2f "Facilitating Learning and Development"](#).

