



National
Guidance

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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Principles

All young people have an equal right to be included in visits. Establishments must therefore plan to enable young people with special needs and disabilities to participate. In schools the governing body is responsible for this duty.

Understanding the needs and abilities of the group is a foundation for visit planning.

See also documents 3.2e "Inclusion" and 1b "Foundations".

Planning

Establishments must consider in advance the needs and abilities of potential participants and plan visits accordingly. This includes making reasonable adjustments so that all can benefit from the experiences being offered.

Planning of visits that have a long lead-in time may have to begin with no knowledge of who will participate. In such cases you should consider the possibility that there might be potential participants with special educational needs or disabilities. In selecting venues, you should take into account their accessibility for disabled young people as well as their suitability for the visit aims.

Where an establishment offers a number of options from which participants can choose, for example during an Activity Week, initial planning should assume that those with special educational needs or disabilities might wish to participate across the whole range of activities. You should ask students to indicate their preferences well in advance, so that detailed planning can take them into account.

Where an establishment has a coordinator for special educational needs and disability (SENCO), they should be involved in future planning at an early stage. The establishment should not find itself in a position where young people with special educational needs and disabilities have restricted opportunity where early consideration and reasonable adjustments would have enabled a comparable experience for everyone. Transition planning should mean that the needs of young people moving between establishments are known.

In some cases, it may genuinely not be possible to find suitable alternatives without significantly compromising the intended outcomes. In these cases, it may be necessary to plan alternative but equally valuable 'parallel' activities. However, the

social and developmental benefits of a group altering their plans and ambitions so as to include a disabled colleague can often outweigh any loss of other benefits.

Preparation

Decisions about how best a young person with a special educational need or disability can participate in a visit may require discussion with a wide range of people, such as head teacher/manager, visit leader, class teacher, parent, SENCO, social worker, carers, support staff, their GP and any third party provider. These discussions should take place well before the visit plan is finalised. This is especially important when considering including or excluding a young person with serious behavioural issues or disabilities.

You should always inform parents well in advance of a visit taking place, to ensure that any needs can be accommodated. Parents will also be able to offer advice on how a young person is likely to respond during a visit.

Where a young person is the subject of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, or other care plan or risk assessment, this should be used to inform the plan for the visit.

All staff involved in any visit should be fully briefed, ensuring that they understand their assigned roles and, in particular, who will be directly supervising those young people who are for example, likely to abscond, display challenging behaviour, or have an epileptic seizure.

A preliminary visit will reduce the likelihood of unforeseen problems, provide familiarity with the site and disabled access where needed and help create confidence about the supervision arrangements before the visit goes ahead. For supervision to be effective, staff should be experienced in dealing with the particular needs of the young people involved.

Levels of Supervision

- Supporting participants with special needs or disabilities on visits may require additional staffing to provide effective supervision.
- Schools must not pass on the cost of additional staff to the young people who require it or to their parents, but the costs can be shared by the whole group through the visit funding arrangements (fees, voluntary contributions, school funds etc.).
- See also document 3.2c "Charging for school activities".

The following factors should be considered when determining staffing requirements:

- The need to administer medication.
- The need for a member of staff to accompany a participant to the toilet.
- Any heightened likelihood of a participant absconding.
- The likelihood of a medical emergency arising.
- The way in which being away from the normal setting will affect behaviour. For example, some young people have unpredictable fears and phobias that will be more difficult to cope with out of their normal environment.
- The risk of violence/assault and therefore the need for skills in de-escalation and positive handling.

- The need for manual handling of participants.
- The need for flexibility for staff working on a 1:1 basis to take a break. Where a member of staff is needed to supervise or care for an individual participant, they should not be considered to be part of the overall staffing ratio, as their role will be focussed on their charge's wellbeing, not on the wider supervision needs of the group.
- If a member of staff is driving a minibus, they will not be able to supervise passengers, nor deal with any emergencies. If participants need supervision while travelling, you should ensure that sufficient staff are available.

