



Educational Visits & Off-Site Activities Policy

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Review Cycle:	Annually
Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Policy Owner:	Charity Lead
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1. Purpose

Autism Angels recognises that educational visits and off-site activities can provide valuable opportunities for children and young people to develop confidence, independence, life skills, social skills and wider learning experiences.

This policy sets out the arrangements for planning and managing educational visits and off-site activities undertaken as part of Autism Angels provision.

It should be read alongside relevant Autism Angels policies and risk assessments, including:

- Offsite Activities Risk Assessment
- Transporting Clients Risk Assessment
- Supporting Independence Risk Assessment, where applicable
- Lone Working Risk Assessment, where applicable
- Daily Risk Assessments
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

2. Scope

For the purposes of this policy, an educational visit or off-site activity is any planned activity involving a child or young person leaving the Autism Angels site as part of their provision.

This may include local walks, visits to shops or community facilities, educational or recreational activities, life-skills activities and other appropriate opportunities within the wider community.

3. Deciding Whether a Child or Young Person Can Participate

Participation in an off-site activity will be considered individually and will not be automatic.

The Lead Facilitator will consider whether the activity is appropriate and can be safely supported, taking into account the individual child or young person's:

- age, understanding and individual needs;
- communication, sensory and emotional regulation needs;
- known risks or behaviours;
- ability to follow safety instructions and remain with the agreed group or supporting adult;
- level of independence and supervision required;
- previous experience of off-site activities, where relevant;
- information provided by parents/carers and, where appropriate, the school or Local Authority; and
- any relevant information contained within their individual support information, risk assessments or care plans.



The nature and environment of the proposed activity will also be considered. Autism Angels reserves the right to determine that an off-site activity is not appropriate for an individual where their needs cannot be safely supported within that particular environment or with the staffing available.

Where appropriate, additional staffing, one-to-one support or an accompanying parent/carer may be required.

4. Parent/Carer Consultation and Consent

All planned educational visits and off-site activities involving a child or young person will be subject to consultation with their parent/carer.

Parents/carers will be provided with appropriate information about the proposed activity and given an opportunity to discuss any concerns, additional needs or reasonable adjustments required.

Additional consent paperwork must be completed before a child or young person participates in an educational visit or off-site activity.

Where transport is to be provided by Autism Angels, this will also be discussed with the parent/carer and appropriate consent obtained.

5. Planning and Risk Assessment

Educational visits and off-site activities must be appropriately planned and proportionate to the nature of the activity.

The Autism Angels Offsite Activities Risk Assessment must be followed. Where an activity, venue or environment presents risks that are not adequately covered by existing Autism Angels risk assessments, an additional activity or venue-specific risk assessment will be completed before the visit takes place.

The Lead Facilitator will determine an appropriate staffing and supervision ratio based upon the activity, environment and individual needs of the children and young people attending.

Relevant emergency contact details and a working mobile telephone must be available during the visit.

6. Transport

Where Autism Angels transports a child or young person as part of an educational visit or off-site activity, the Autism Angels Transporting Clients Risk Assessment must be followed.

Transport by Autism Angels should be kept to a minimum where suitable alternative arrangements are available.



Vehicles must be roadworthy and appropriately insured, drivers must hold an appropriate valid driving licence, and all applicable road traffic legislation must be followed.

Where a child or young person's needs or behaviour could affect the driver's ability to drive safely, consideration will be given to having an additional Autism Angels team member, volunteer or parent/carer present.

7. Safeguarding and Supervision

Autism Angels' usual safeguarding arrangements continue to apply during all educational visits and off-site activities.

Children and young people will be appropriately supervised throughout the activity according to their individual needs and agreed level of independence.

Where an activity is specifically intended to develop independent living or community skills, the Supporting Independence Risk Assessment must also be followed.

Team members should remain aware that members of the public and other individuals encountered within community settings will not necessarily have undergone safeguarding checks. Appropriate supervision and professional boundaries must therefore be maintained.

8. Emergencies, Incidents and Changes to the Visit

If circumstances change and the Lead Facilitator considers that an activity can no longer be undertaken safely, Autism Angels may amend, terminate or cancel the activity.

In an emergency, the immediate safety and wellbeing of the child or young person will take priority. Emergency services and parents/carers will be contacted where appropriate, and Autism Angels' normal incident reporting and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

9. Responsibility and Review

All Autism Angels team members and volunteers involved in educational visits or off-site activities are responsible for following this policy and the associated risk assessments.

The Lead Facilitator is responsible for ensuring that appropriate planning, consent, staffing and risk-management arrangements are in place before an activity proceeds.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following a significant incident, change in practice or relevant change in guidance or legislation.