



Educational Visits Policy 2023-24

Introduction

The school, through this policy, wishes to enhance students' education and contribute to raising students' progress and achievement by providing opportunities for teaching and learning to take place in appropriate and relevant contexts and venues out of school.

Objectives

- To ensure that students participate in school visits safely and securely;
- To ensure that students' learning is enhanced to maximum extent;
- To safeguard students' rights for equal opportunity to participate;
- To ensure a clear and unambiguous understanding by all staff of the rationale for approving applications to take students on visits;
- To ensure that responsibilities for staff are clear and that required formalities and agreements are adhered to.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored to promote students' learning, progress and achievement and broaden their educational experience, protect their health and safety, and safeguard their school-based learning.

Visits in school time need to be approved by a member of the senior management team and meet pre-determined criteria.

Health & Safety

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, require that risk assessments be undertaken for each of the hazards identified, such that suitable and sufficient control measures can be put in place to minimise the dangers for students and staff.

The senior management team and trustees have responsibilities and a legal duty to ensure that trips and visits are conducted in such a way that participants and staff are not subjected to unacceptable levels of risk to health and safety.

Insurance and Finance

Appropriate insurance taken out by the school includes travel cover for school visits both in the UK and abroad. Additional insurance will be taken out for specialist trips as required.

More Specific Guidance and Procedures Monitoring and Evaluation

Visits in school time need to be approved by a member of the senior management team and meet pre-determined criteria:

1. Enable all relevant students to participate, regardless of means;
2. Include an assurance that relevant LA guidance and statutory regulations with reference to the health, safety and supervision of students will be met in full;
3. Have due regard to the affect that the visit will have on other subjects in the students' curriculum and the affect the trip might have on the work of colleagues and take these factors into account where possible in the planning;
4. Be directly related to the students' formal curriculum or provide direct support for their learning in one or more of their subjects or the trip has a wellbeing outcome.

Visits taking place outside the school day need satisfy only the first two criteria. Extended visits (i.e. visits of more than one day) should ideally take place during school holidays, or non-curriculum time, in order that there is minimal impact on students' learning wherever possible.

Health & Safety

Trips and visits are tools that provide and maximise educational opportunities for young people outside their normal educational surroundings. The arrangements put in place to manage trips and visits must, therefore, recognise that these may include potentially hazardous activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, require that risk assessments be undertaken for each of the hazards identified, such that suitable and sufficient control measures can be put in place to minimise the dangers for students and staff.

An activity can become dangerous when certain factors, or a combination of factors, occur. These could include various elements such as weather, water currents, inexperience of young persons, indiscipline, the nature of the students, the unexpected, equipment failure, lack of effective safety controls, lack of training and experience of leaders or even interference by other parties (this is not an exhaustive list).

Risk assessments need to be thorough and well thought through so that the risks present are minimised and/or mitigated. A generic electronic risk assessment is available for visits on Office 365; staff need to be mindful that each visit is unique, and the most important part of any risk assessment is the minimisation of any risks **specific to that visit**.

There are five steps to risk assessment;

1. **Look for hazards**
2. **Decide who might be harmed and how**
3. **Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done**
4. **Record your findings**
5. **Review your assessment and revise it if necessary**

When undertaking risk assessments, several variables need to be considered:

1. The number of students involved.
2. The age of the students, their sex, ability, and general behaviour.
3. The previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits.
4. The time of the day and the time of the year.
5. The travel arrangements.
6. The hazards of the environment being visited.
7. The numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers.
8. The nature of the visit.

The senior management team and trustees have responsibilities and a legal duty to ensure that trips and visits are conducted in such a way that participants and staff are not subjected to unacceptable levels of risk to health and safety. The senior management team and trustees must be satisfied of the competence (training and experience) of staff to undertake and supervise the various activities and ensure that appropriate training is provided where necessary.

The Range of Activities

The following are offered as a breadth of activities that might be included as off-site activities that are undertaken by school;

- Adventurous activities using licensed providers
- Residential activities during school time
- Day or part day visits using transport
- Swimming pool visits
- Farm visits
- Field visits
- After school sporting activities
- Day or part day visits on foot

Adventure activities and adventurous activities can be classified in three categories:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. No significant risk | A |
| 2. Some higher risk or higher profile activities | B |
| 3. Demanding activities that, if not school led, would need licensing, or are potentially hazardous e.g. canoeing, high rope activity | C |

- Risk Level A - Low Risk (Museum, Theatre, Study Centre, Parkland)
- Risk Level B - Medium Risk (Walking within non-remote country, residential visits, cycling on roads)
- Risk Level C - High Risk (Adventure Activities Licensing Authority activities, field study in remote areas, City Locations, in or near water, overseas visits)

Category A

These comprise activities that present no significant risks. They should be supervised by a teacher who has been assessed as competent by the Senior Management Team and/or Trustees to lead this category of educational visit. Activities should be conducted following the school's standard visit procedures.

Category B

These comprise some higher risk or higher profile activities. Safe supervision requires that the leader, as a minimum, has undergone an additional familiarisation process to the activity and/or location.

Category C

This is the most demanding category. It includes all those activities that if not school led would be in the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. It also includes activities that fall outside the scope of licensing or are less commonly pursued by student groups such as motor sports whose safe supervision requires that the leader should normally complete some prior test of his/her specific competence. Such testing might include a recognised course of training or an assessment of competence by an appropriate body. At the employer's discretion category C may also include activities not currently licensable such as high rope courses, sub-aqua activities or canoeing in placid waters. Competence personnel in this area and needs to be the relevant to the activity (e.g. Site Experience Employee).

In assessing the appropriate category an outdoor education advisor should take account of the environment in which the activity will take place.

- In or near water
- In winter conditions
- On or near cliffs or steep terrain
- In an area subject to extremes of weather or environmental change

Field study activities next to open water, such as pond dipping, might rate as category B. Winter camping might rate as category C, as might off road cycling over steep terrain. Category C includes any activity in water.

Ratio of Adult to Child Required When Making a Visit

School Year	Category A Comparatively Low Risk Activities	Category B Medium Risk Activities	Category C High Risk Activities
Ratio YR 7- 13	1:4 depending on age and activity minimum 1 competent adult per group	1:3 depending on age and activity minimum 1 competent adult per group	1:2

Responsibilities

1. Trip Leader

One person, the trip leader, shall have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and shall have regard to the health and safety of the group.

2. Supervisory Staff

- Staff on school-led visits act as employees of the school, whether the visit takes place within normal school hours or outside those hours;
- Staff must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent/carer would do in the same circumstances;
- Staff and all other adults assisting the trip leader must consent and agree that the trip leader has full authority to reasonably direct their supervision of the students;
- When abroad, staff should abide by all laws and be aware that there may be local customs that should be considered.

3. Staffing

The organisation of and participation in trips is a voluntary activity.

- The school should ensure that there is an appropriate supervision level at all times and that this level of supervision has been approved by the senior management team.
- Requirements for further adult supervision can be met by using staff, trustees, parents/carers and volunteers. However, any person who has not had a criminal conviction check should never be left in sole charge of students (DBS check). In addition, it is important to mention that any duty of care cannot be handed over to a third party and so off-site instructors cannot be used in any ratio considerations;
- See ratios set out in table above. However, consideration will need to be given in relation to the specific needs of students, for example, a student may require one to one supervision.

Procedures and Protocols

Dates of proposed visits should ideally be submitted at least eight weeks prior to the visit date.

Consumption of Alcohol on a Trip

Whilst some sixth form students may be of legal drinking age on the date of the trip, alcohol is not permitted to be consumed whilst on the visit. This information should be communicated to students and their parents/carers before the visit takes place.

Behaviour

All students and staff who participate in trips and visits that are organised in the confines of this policy are governed by the same rules as regards to conduct and behaviour as those staff and students who remain in school. As such, any behavioural incidents must be logged and consequences sought through the appropriate senior member of staff.

Pre-visits

For all trips and visits, it is recommended best practice that where possible staff fulfil a reconnaissance visit to become sufficiently aware of any risks that may be undertaken whilst on the trip. In instances where this pre-visit will be chargeable, the appropriate member of staff should inform a member of the senior management team as to the nature and cost of this visit **before** it occurs. The cost of the pre-visit should then be factored into the overall price of the trip so that the school is not left liable for costs incurred.

For residential visits, staff should consider the viability of the trip as a whole in consultation with a member of the senior management team so that the trip is not cancelled before remuneration for the pre- visit is accounted for.

A risk assessment must be completed for every school trip and submitted to the senior management team for approval, four weeks before the visit date(s).

Day Visits

Planning Procedures

Ideally, precise planning for a visit should begin at least four weeks before its date and in conjunction with a member of the senior management team.

Transport

The trip leader must hire coaches from a coach company approved by the Chair of Trustees for educational visits.

Costing the Visit

Costings must be outlined and presented to the Chair of Trustees for approval and consider, where necessary, administrative costs.

Letter to Parents/Carers

A draft letter should now be prepared for parents/carers. There are some standard statements which should be included regarding costs/hardship. Parents/carers will need at least two weeks' notice to pay any contribution and for those requesting hardship consideration to write and receive a reply from the school. When there is no charge, parents/carers must still be notified and must sign a permission slip. Finally, parents/carers will need to be notified that in the case of over-subscription, students may be selected at random or on a first come, first served arrangement.

Vehicles

Any trip which includes the use of a staff owned vehicle needs to be risk assessed as appropriate. In these cases, the driving licence, valid MOT and proof of ownership for the vehicle in question will need to be provided to the senior management team. The school insurance policy covers all vehicles connected with the school for transport use.

Finance

Contributions for a visit should be paid to the trip leader, who will collate and give to the school office.

Permission Slips

Permission slips and consent forms should be collected by the trip leader. Completed forms should be kept by the trip leader. A list of **daytime contact/emergency phone numbers for each student and member of staff** should be collated by the trip leader, circulated to the appropriate staff.

Travelling by Coach

If more than one coach is used on a trip there should be a database of the students and members of staff on each coach. Please note, the trip leader should be on one coach and the assistant trip leader on the second coach. A staff member must be sitting at the front of the coach and another staff member must be sitting at the back of the coach. If a double decker is used, there should be at least one member of staff upstairs and members of staff downstairs.

Procedures on the Day of the Visit

- If the visit is to depart before 8am, the trip leader should arrange for the coach company to collect the party from the school drive without causing an obstruction to other vehicles arriving for the school day;
- Each coach should have a teacher in charge, designated by the trip leader. This teacher should have the relevant mobile phone and first aid kit;
- Staff should spread themselves throughout the coach rather than all sitting at the front to ensure adequate student supervision;
- Explain to students that mobile phones can only be used at the times designated by staff;
- A member of staff should always be available to supervise students awaiting collection by their parents/carers, until all have safely departed;
- Whilst on the journey or before the journey departs, the designated member(s) of staff responsible for the group(s) of students involved **must** brief the students as to the risks that will be undertaken that day and how they can be minimised. These risks should have been identified on the risk assessments;
- Additional student safeguarding arrangements should be in place for certain trips – all students must have the mobile telephone contact details of the trip leader.

B. Residential Visits

For residential visits, the basic procedures are largely the same. However, when costing a visit, passports, visas, insurance are vital when verifying cost.

Ideally, precise planning for a residential visit should begin at least six months before its date. Parents/carers should be given sufficient time to finish making reasonable staged contributions by no later than 12 weeks before the visit. Update meetings between the organiser and the senior management team should be held at least 12 weeks and 2 weeks prior to the visit. A Parents'/Carers' Information Evening should be held 3-4 weeks prior to the visit for all overseas residential trips.

C. Communications and Emergency Procedures During School Day Visits

a) Preparation

1. For day visits, the trip leader must be the key contact. Details of his/her contact number should be given to parents/carers via the letter informing parents/carers of the visit. This should include the key contact's mobile telephone number. The key contact **must** be contactable at any time;
2. The trip leader and accompanying staff must all have a copy of all student details on the trip;
3. For all visits, the trip leader must have the emergency telephone number of a member of the senior management team and a second emergency contact.

b) During the course of the visit

1. The trip leader should ensure that all staff mobile telephones are switched on before the visit departs;
2. The trip leader is responsible for checking the attendance of students and must not depart before he/she is sure that everyone is accounted for;
3. The trip leader is responsible for communicating the names of any missing students from the trip so that the senior management team are aware of any absences. In the event of this being out of hours, a message should be left on the normal school number;
4. If any student has not arrived by the due departure time, the trip leader is entitled to depart but he/she **MUST** inform the school or the emergency contact of this situation;
5. In the case of more than one coach being involved, the trip leader must not depart before other parties;

6. For day visits extending beyond the school day, the trip leader should inform the emergency contact once the party has returned.

c) Emergencies

1. A situation is deemed an emergency if an event occurs which involves the health, safety, and wellbeing of students and/or adults where school and/or parents/carers should be told;
2. The trip leader is responsible for decisions and action taken in an emergency. It is therefore the responsibility of accompanying staff to keep the trip leader informed of any situation that might be deemed an emergency;
3. If a problem arises during school hours where advice is needed or information needs to be given, the trip leader should ring the school and ask for a member of senior management team;
4. If a problem arises outside school hours, unless it is a simple delay, the trip leader should ring the emergency contact. The emergency contact should make other senior management team members aware as necessary;
5. If a problem arises and students have access to telephones, the trip leader should try to ensure that students **DO NOT** telephone parents/carers, unless instructed to do so. All contact with parents/carers should be made via the school or the emergency contact. Rules on student mobile phones for trips will be on a case-by-case basis;

Residential Trips

a) Preparation

1. The organisation of communication and emergency procedures should take place prior to the Parents'/Carers' Information Evening, which must be held approximately 3-4 weeks before departure;
2. The trip leader must be aware of the two emergency contacts and always have their contact details to hand. The emergency contacts must be contactable at **all** times;
3. The trip leader is responsible for preparing information for parents/carers that includes details of the emergency contacts on the trip and their numbers and availability. This should be given to them as part of an information pack distributed at the Parents'/Carers' Information Evening or with the final itinerary. A copy of information given to parents/carers on the evening should be added to the G Drive with other key trip paperwork;
4. The two emergency contacts must be given all information that is made available to parents/carers, e.g. itinerary, flight times, hotel addresses etc., and a list of contact numbers for students and staff.

b) During the Visit

1. Details of the visit's progress will be communicated to the emergency contact. Twitter/Facebook will also be used during the trip to keep parents/carers informed;
2. At an appropriate time during the return journey, the trip leader could either contact the parents/carers via Facebook/Twitter or allow students to contact parents/carers to enable them to meet the party at the designated place promptly;
3. Upon the safe arrival of the party, the trip leader should inform the emergency contact that his/her responsibility is ended.

c) Emergencies

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2. The trip leader is responsible for decisions and action taken in an emergency. It is therefore the responsibility of accompanying staff to keep the leader informed of any situation that might be deemed an emergency;
3. If a problem arises during school hours where advice is needed or information needs to be given, the trip leader should ring the school and ask for a member of senior management team;

4. If a problem arises outside school hours, unless it is a simple delay, the trip leader should ring the emergency contact. The emergency contact should make other senior management team members aware as necessary;
5. If a problem arises and students have access to telephones, the trip leader should try to ensure that students **DO NOT** telephone parents/carers, unless instructed to do so. All contact with parents/carers should be made via the school or the emergency contact number. Rules on student mobile phones for trips will be on a case-by-case basis.

d) Passports

The trip leader and/or deputy must ensure that if required all attending the trip must have a valid passport (the passport must not have expired or be within six months of expiring).

A copy of all passports should be scanned and uploaded to the school secure server. This is to ensure that you can access copy passports should any passports get lost/stolen.

Review Date: September 2024