



Educational Visits Policy

August 2018

Review: August 2021

Each academy should upload this policy to its own EVOLVE Resources section, together with any other documents specifically related to the academy's visits and off-site activities. To do this go to the 'EVC Dashboard' (orange cogs icon on home page), then click on the Docs tab.

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes each academy a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. I.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, each academy:

1. Adopts the Buckinghamshire Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Bucks Requirements and Guidance**' in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with Trust policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment)**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and the EVC admin assistant and submitted to the EVC/Headteacher for checking and approval.
3. **Visits that are residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for checking.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head/EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

Each academy will have a named **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** who will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for checking, via EVOLVE. The Headteacher is also responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either residential and/or involve an adventurous activity.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Each academy's Governing Body will have a named *Educational Visits Governor*. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE. Responsibilities of the Governors include ensuring that there is guidance, robust systems which support the implementation of the guidance and a clear policy in place. They should challenge and be clear about how outdoor learning and visits lead to a wide range of outcomes and contribute towards establishment effectiveness.

Buckinghamshire Local Authority is responsible for acknowledging that the plans attached to Evolve are sound.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is ready to be a visit leader, the Head will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts. If the visit is off site for only the duration of the school day, the school telephone number is sufficient to give as an emergency contact. However, if the visit is of a residential nature two 24hr contact numbers will be identified (i.e. mobile and/or home phone number). The emergency contacts will have a copy of the Emergency Card (EV8) with the relevant emergency contact details on. They will also have access to all the relevant medical and next of kin information including information relating to all staff accompanying the visit. The visit leader will have a completed Emergency Card (EV7) with them at all times (this will detail the contact details for the emergency contacts).

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

The above is the absolute minimum that each academy must follow.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. However, parents will always be informed of the detail when their child is undertaking an educational visit.

Written consent is only requested for activities which need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside of school hours. A 'one off' consent will be signed by parents when their child enrolls at school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school. Parents also have the option of consenting online using Parentmail, or through a traditional paper consent form.

Specific (i.e.one-off) parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online using Parentmail, or through a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

Each academy will make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act 2010 does not require us to place employees or participants at risk of injury or ill health in order to make reasonable adjustments. If appropriate, we may ask the parent/carer of a particular pupil to accompany them on the visit. If there are any concerns about whether school can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of others on a visit due the specific needs of a pupil, we will seek advice from the Local Authority Health & Safety Team.

Charging / funding for visits

Each academy will arrange payment for visits on an individual visit basis, Visits such as residential trips, which will be more expensive, will have arrangements in place for payment to be made gradually over a period of time leading up to the visit. Those pupils who receive specific benefits may be entitled to a bursary. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Transport

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Each academy will follow the Local Authority advice.

Use of Parents and Volunteers Cars – Each academy follows the guidance in the DCC Educational Visits Policy. The Parent and Volunteer Drivers Agreement form (EV5) will be completed and retained in school. This will be done on an annual basis. Each academy will ensure supervision arrangements are considered and the relevant DBS checks are undertaken. We will also complete the Driving at Work Risk Assessment. (This will also be done where employees are using their own vehicle to transport pupils.) When transporting pupils in private vehicles each academy will ensure the relevant car seats are used as required by law and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

Insurance

All academies are covered through Zurich Municipal. We have also purchased occasional business use insurance.

Swimming Lessons

All children in KS2 take swimming lessons at some point over their time in Key Stage 2. The school adheres to the recommended BLT Swimming Policy.

The Governing Body must ensure that a nominated member of staff is delegated the responsibility of Teacher in Charge of Swimming and applies the Safe Practice in School Swimming Policy to all aspects of school swimming. This will incorporate the proper operation of a third party pool. Governors should meet with the Teacher in Charge of swimming to ensure the policy and procedures contained within the adopted BLT swimming policy are being applied.

- Completing risk assessments – member of staff carries a copy of this with them, together with emergency contact numbers in the school swimming folder (with copy held centrally by Headteacher)
- Ensuring all staff accompanying pupils to school swimming have read and understood the current Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- Ensuring staff accompanying school swimming are qualified in both the delivery of school swimming & safeguarding
- Maintaining a central record of staff qualifications and training (in school swimming folder) – BLT hold a central data base for all staff trained where individuals hold qualifications gained from other providers, They must submit copies of certificates to the BLT swimming team.
- Keeping current copies of the 'Conditions of Hire'
- Completing the Bi-annual 'Governors Checklist' issued by BLT, **see Appendix I in Swimming Policy.**
- Check that the school has requested the pool's Normal Operating Procedure (NOP) and Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and ensure that accompanying school staff read these and sign to show an understanding of their responsibilities during the visit to the pool. These documents need to be kept in the School Swimming Folder.

I. **Teacher in Charge of School Swimming**

- Maintain School Swimming Folder (see Governor section above)
- Visit the pool before swimming programme commences to understand all relevant NOP/EAP aspects, risk assess & plan your programme with your Specialist Swimming Teacher
- Complete Trips & Visits form (agreed by Headteacher)

- Undertake Risk Assessments, signed by all staff involved (including Headteacher). This will include written information on pupils with medical conditions and /or additional needs and **must** be shared with the Specialist Swimming Teacher.

II. Accompanying School Staff

School staff have overall **DUTY OF CARE** that applies for any activity in which children are involved and they cannot transfer their duty of care to anyone else. This applies to all activities within the school curriculum and extra-curricular activities organised by the school during and outside of school hours, whether on or off school premises.

In relation to swimming this means that:

- Children are appropriately supervised when changing
- Children are under control at all times
- A head count is taken before, during and after sessions. This should be recorded in the swimming registers
- The NOP and EAP are enforced; all staff on poolside should be aware of the emergency procedures of any external provision, ensuring that children are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency evacuation
- School Teachers/staff have an overview of the teaching of their children and the conduct of their class
- **School Teachers/staff remain on poolside to provide an assisting role to teach swimming (they must hold a minimum ASA Fundamentals of School Swimming certificate)**
- School Teachers/staff have the responsibility for monitoring the progress of the pupils, regardless of who directs the sessions
- School Teachers/staff should be aware of the additional needs or medical conditions of the pupils they are teaching so that correct measures/ precautions can be put in place
- School Teachers should accompany their own classes to their swimming lessons whenever possible, as they know their children in a unique way.

When public pools are used for school swimming, the duty of care remains with the school staff. Specialist Swimming Teachers may be employed to assist with the teaching of the lesson, but it is essential the school staff remain on poolside. Specialist Swimming Teachers also have a duty of care for the pupils directly in their control and for ensuring an appropriate swimming programme for the group. It is the responsibility of the school staff to monitor the progress of the pupils, regardless of who teaches them, equally the teaching programme needs to be agreed to before the course and if necessary moderated during the course. Having a teacher standing on the side passively watching is a massive waste of talent and energy, which could otherwise benefit the class. Involvement, not simply lesson observation, not only reduces teacher pupil ratio, but also enhances the quality of experience for the pupils concerned.

Registration and Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

Teachers are provided with a club list so they are aware who should be attending an after school club each day. Early Years, KS1 and lower KS2 children are accompanied to their clubs by a teacher or teaching assistant. The adult in charge of the relevant club takes a register at the start of each session which will then be immediately delivered back to the office. If a child is marked absent and they have attended school that day, a member of the office team will phone their emergency contact number to check where they are.

At the end of the club, staff will take the children outside to meet parents/carers. If an upper KS2 child is to walk home on their own, permission must be granted beforehand. Any child who is not collected will be brought back into school and parents/carers will be contacted.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent, although we will normally inform parents of a local visit that is due to take place
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below)..
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- Each academy should outline the areas it includes in its School Learning Area

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.)
- Uneven surface near the river
- Hurt while tree climbing

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head/EVC or Deputy must give verbal approval before a group leaves. Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of staff approved to lead in this setting is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A staff mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.