



EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND JOURNEYS POLICY

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Educational Visits and Journeys.

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Introduction

Well planned educational visits offer pupils learning experiences that can have a lasting impact on their development. In particular they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. The vast majority of visits and journeys are carried out incident free but the purpose of this document is to provide guidance for such visits and to advise colleagues on appropriate procedures. It is essential that procedures are followed in order to minimize the possible risks involved in all types of trips varying from trips to the theatre to adventure holidays abroad. The bulk of this policy is concerned with non – adventurous day trips and any group leader planning foreign travel, adventure holidays or trips involving overnight stays should also read the relevant sections of the National Guidance available on the Evolve website.

Roles and Responsibilities

EVC

The member of staff designated as the Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC), should demonstrate evidence of competence either through experience of practical leadership or through qualification. The level of competence will relate to the size of the Academy and the types of visits proposed.

- Ensure that competent people lead or supervise a visit.
- Advise group leaders on proposed visits.
- Ensure group leaders are aware of the preparation necessary before visits take place.
- Keep records of individual visits including accidents or “near misses”.
- Review systems within Academy.

The current EVC is Sarah Panton.

Group Leaders

- Undertake a preliminary visit or if not possible, take action to ensure that the venue and journey are safe and suitable for all participants.
- Prepare and take a copy of the Field File on all visits and journey.
- Leave a further copy of the Field File with the local point of contact.
- To manage and supervise the supervision and conduct of the trip.
- Report accidents and “near misses” to the Academy.

Planning Visits

- The educational relevance of all visits and journeys must be clearly defined. The nature of the activities undertaken must be suited to the ages, abilities and aptitudes of the pupils taking part and there should be clear links between the learning activities on the visit and the normal work of the Academy. If a child has a physical disability then access issues must be explored and parents may need to be contacted individually at an early stage and before final costs are established.
- Preliminary visits are strongly advised whenever a new destination is being considered. Firstly to check on the suitability of the venue, secondly to determine the programme and activities for the day and to become familiar with the site with regards to toilets, places for lunch etc and thirdly in order to carry out a risk assessment.
- Where it is not possible to undertake a preliminary visit, there are other things which Group Leaders should do to gain information: Obtain whatever written information is available Contact any experts in the locality who have specialist knowledge of the site Obtain information from other schools/Academies who have visited the site Contact the LA for the area to be visited
- Check that your adult to child ratio is adequate. Guidance suggests that for years 5 and 6 on a day trip a minimum ratio of 1 supervisor for every 10-15 pupils, depending upon the

activity and for years 7 and 8 a minimum of one supervisor for every 15-20 pupils depending upon the activity.

There are many factors to take into consideration when deciding supervisory ratios. Group Leaders will need to apply these as part of the risk assessment before a trip take place. In particular, they should pay attention to the need to maintain a complete programme of supervision, for example when the main group is split into sub-groups.

Wherever possible, mixed gender groups should have at least one male and one female supervisor. Where this is not possible, the implications need to be carefully considered. All supervisors must be aware of their responsibilities for the safety of the children in their care at the time. They should have reasonable prior knowledge of the pupils, including any special needs, medical needs or disabilities. Each pupil must know which supervisor is responsible for him/her group.

- The Group Leader must prepare and take a copy of the Field File on educational visits and journeys.

The Field File should contain;

- Completed parental consent forms.
- Completed nominal role
- Details of the local point of contact
- An itinerary for the visit
- Insurance details with telephone numbers
- Copies of all risk assessments Incident/accident report forms
- A copy of "Emergency procedures"

It may be necessary to take additional copies of the field file when the group members divide into sub-groups during the visit. A further copy of the Field File should be held by the local point of contact.

- First aid provision should be appropriate to the nature of the visit. Group Leaders must undertake a risk assessment that will identify the level of first aid knowledge required and equipment to be carried. On all visits there must be an "appointed person" for first aid. The appointed person should know what to do in an emergency without necessarily having to administer first aid. The Academy should satisfy themselves that as part of their own risk assessment, first aid cover will be provided throughout the visit or journey, both during transportation and at the destination. A properly maintained first aid kit must be available during journeys and activities. Supervisors should be aware of the contents and how these should be used. All staff should be informed about children who are on or liable to need medication. This is particularly important in the case of pupils suffering from asthma, epilepsy, diabetes or who have a serious allergy and may need to carry an Epipen. Children who use or have medication in the Academy such as inhalers should have them or should give them to a member of staff.

Visit Planning Checklist

This checklist is to help ensure:

- The safety of the pupils and staff
- The maximum educational benefit to the pupils
- Effective organization and administration

The following checklist is not necessarily in strict order.

1. Identify the educational purpose/aims of the visit.
2. Read the Academy policy on visits.
3. Identify venues that could meet the aims
4. Obtain preliminary approval for the trip, including date(s), with the Assistant Head teacher using the green 'Additional Activities/Events/Trips' form
5. Make preliminary visits to the venue
6. Draw up a draft plan
7. Identify other supervisors
8. Complete on-line visits form using EVOLVE in good time
9. Undertake detailed risk assessments and attach to on-line visits form
10. Provisional information may have to be sent to parents in order to ascertain possible numbers
11. Make provisional bookings with transport and venues
12. Arrange Insurance
13. Provide final details to parents with consent form.
14. Confirm bookings
15. Ensure the school kitchen is aware of the number of children going on the trip who usually have school dinners or if they have free dinners, will a packed lunch be required
16. Ensure that any staff going on the trip are not on duty or if they are, that duties have been exchanged.
17. Brief supervisors to ensure they understand their responsibilities
18. Ensure the pupils understand what is expected of them.
19. Let other staff know who is going on the trip by leaving a list on the staffroom notice board as far in advance as possible
20. Ensure that two hard copies of the Field File are in place
21. Ensure travel sickness pills have been taken where requested
22. Have the money/cheque available for the entrance fees
23. Check the first aid box(es) is/are available
24. Check weather and prevailing conditions
25. Check that staff have mobile phones that will enable contact between themselves, the local contact and coaches

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill.

The control measures should be understood by all supervisors involved. Risk assessment should explicitly cover how special needs are to be addressed. Risk assessment must be recorded and reviewed.

Risk assessment for educational visits can be considered as having three levels;

- Generic activity risk assessment – which are likely to apply to many of the activities. For example travel by coach or crossing roads. The Academy has produced generic risk assessments.

- Specific visit/site risk assessments – which differ from trip to trip and which must be completed by the Group Leader
- On going risk assessment – which takes account of, for example changing weather conditions, illness or change of preferred activity etc.

Communication with Parents

The list below gives the minimum information which must be given in writing to the parents of children undertaking an Academy trip.

- Date of trip
- Times of departure and expected return
- Method of travel
- Destination
- Name of group leader
- Broad aims of visit
- Total cost per pupil
- Advice on pocket money
- Methods of payment and cancellation arrangements
- Clothing and footwear to be taken
- Any other items that need to be taken
- Inform parents that details of insurance cover are available from the Academy office
- Emergency contact details for parents – this may be the Academy
- On residential visits, parents should be advised of safe arrival (or significant delays) using a telephone chain and/or the Keep Kids Safe text system
- Parents should be advised of the return to the Academy using a telephone chain.

Communication with the (Academy) Emergency Contact

- An emergency contact, normally the Head teacher, must be identified.
- Details of the emergency contacts must be included in the Field File.
- Particularly on residential visits, the Academy's emergency contact should be advised of arrival at the venue and return to the Academy (and of any significant delays).

Preparing the Pupils

Pupils should in addition to the information given to parents be informed of;

- The expected code of conduct whilst travelling to and whilst at the venue
- The need not to endanger themselves or others by inappropriate behaviour
- Any potential dangers
- The need to treat all supervisors with respect and to listen very carefully to all instructions
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- What items not to take on the trip

SEND

All pupils are entitled to be included in all parts of the school curriculum and we aim for all children to be included on school trips. Appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary.

A risk assessment is carried out prior to any off-site activity to ensure everyone's health and safety will not be compromised. Where possible, the TA supporting a particular pupil with SEND within the classroom may attend a school trip.

Trips that involve overnight stays, Foreign travel and adventure activities

In addition to the information given on "non-adventurous" day trips the following information needs to be understood by any group leader undertaking trips involving overnight stays, foreign travel or adventure activities.

Guidance which is available on the EVOLVE website includes details of what is necessary for the organisation of such trips. These details are in addition to the information already given in this policy regarding non-adventurous day trips and must be clearly understood by the group leader.

For any residential visits, foreign travel, adventure activity (including swimming), visits to farms or trips involving large groups of 50+ where more than one coach is used, approval will be subject to advice from the Academy's external consultant. A minimum of 4 weeks would be good practice.

For overnight stays in this country, the guidance available on the Evolve website contains helpful information regarding such trips.

The trip must be logged through the EVOLVE website and appropriate sections completed in good time. The trip should be submitted for approval at least 4 weeks prior to departure.

Miscellaneous Vetting of adult supervisors/instructors

There are occasions when people external to the Academy offer their services, or are enlisted to help with activities. On such occasions it may be necessary to check the credentials of an instructor, to clarify their affiliations, and ensure that DBS (formerly CRB) clearance has been obtained.

The member of staff negotiating such arrangements should consult with the Head teacher or Deputy regarding these matters at the earliest opportunity.

Appendix 1

Transporting children in wheelchairs

Wherever possible, children should transfer from their wheelchair to the vehicle seating with the wheelchair securely stored separately in a purpose made storage area. However, it is sometimes appropriate to transport a child within their wheelchair due to their size, postural needs or reducing the need for transfers.

The majority of newer wheelchairs are designed for use during transportation and the manufacturer of the wheelchair will provide written guidance on this. A car or van may need to be modified however, to allow wheelchair access. Some families choose to put the mobility component of their Disability Living Allowance (DLA) towards a Motability vehicle that allows their child to travel in their wheelchair. Before purchasing a vehicle, advice can be sought from your nearest Mobility Centre.

This information is for the transportation of outdoor use wheelchairs. If the equipment has been designed for indoor use only, the manufacturer's literature should clearly state that it should not be used as a seat in a vehicle. In such cases, the manufacturer should provide guidance on how to transport the equipment safely.

When transporting, the wheelchair must be secured firmly to the vehicle floor with a wheelchair restraint system (also known as tie-downs) so that it may act as close as possible to a standard passenger seat. Never transport a wheelchair without a restraint system - they are essential to protect the child in the event of a crash. Manufacturers' instructions should describe the required anchorage system to the vehicle. As well as securing the wheelchair in the vehicle, the child must be restrained independently of the wheelchair using an occupant restraint (seat belt) which fits snugly over the pelvis (hips), not over the abdomen (stomach).

General guidelines for safe transportation:

The child's safety during transportation depends on the diligence of the person securing the tie-down restraints and it is essential that they have received appropriate training in their use. Manufacturer's instructions should always be carefully followed.

When a child is to be transported in their wheelchair, the therapist, in conjunction with the child and family, needs to recommend and provide equipment that takes the transportation requirements into consideration. A risk assessment should include every type of transport to which your child has regular access.

Never construct or use homemade anchor systems which would likely fail under crash conditions.

Tie-down restraints should be fitted to the main frame of the wheelchair and not to any attachments or accessories (e.g. not around the hand-rims, the spokes of wheels or the footrests). On some wheelchairs, the point where the tie-down should be secured may be indicated on the wheelchair itself.

Lap belts supplied with the wheelchair, chest harnesses, pommels and other positioning aids designed for wheelchair use are not substitutes for a seat belt and are not designed to

provide protection in the event of an impact. But they can be used in conjunction with the seat belt for added trunk support and positioning.

Wheelchairs must never travel facing sideways or on an angle as these positions offer the least amount of protection from crash forces.

Wheelchairs should have their parking brakes applied and (if powered) their power units switched off during transportation. Powered wheelchairs should not be left in freewheel mode.

A headrest is recommended for transportation as they can considerably reduce the risk of whiplash injury on impact.

Do not transport a child with the lap tray still on the wheelchair. In the event of a crash it could cause severe abdominal injuries or become a projectile. Any other wheelchair accessories such as kerb climbers or kneeblocks that can easily be detached and become projectiles should be also be removed and stored.

Where possible, tilt-in-space or recline should not be used during transportation because it changes the body's centre of gravity.

Anti-tip wheels should be in the down position. Although they would be unlikely to hold in a crash situation, they add stability during normal driving starts, stops and turns.

If your child is involved in a vehicle accident, their wheelchair and the restraint system shouldn't be used again until they're checked by the manufacturer or an approved repair agent.