

Educational Visits Policy

Review Date	Reviewer	Adopted	Implementation
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Revision History

Issue Number	Page Number	Revisions Made	Date
3	Whole document	DFE guidance remains unchanged - no revisions made	June 2020

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1. Context

The North East Learning Trust believes 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 our Academies, supportive and effective learning environments. 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.
- Opportunities for meaning, making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- 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.

2. 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, the Trust will

1. Adopt the relevant Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Educational Visits, Off-Site Activities and On-Site Adventures Policy and Guidance**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopt 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.

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All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school 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

3. Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. Visits/activities that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.

The Visit Leader completes the Visits Proposal Form for approval by SMT/Link Manager. These are entered on EVOLVE by the EVC once approved.

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 submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.

3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.

As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

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 of School 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.

The **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** will support 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 before submitting them to the Head of School. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The **Head of School** has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential, or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The **Local Academy Council's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. There is no requirement for governors to approve visits, but they will be informed at regular governor meetings what visits have taken place and what is planned.

The **Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

4. Staff Competence

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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 competent to be a visit leader, the Head of School will consider 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.

5. 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. 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 1). 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.

6. Educational Visits Checklist

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The Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. The Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

7. Parental Consent

Parents/carers 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.

However, specific parental consent will be obtained for visits of a residential, overseas, or adventurous nature. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

8. Inclusion

All Academies within the Trust 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 the 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 to the specific needs of a pupil, we will seek advice from the DCC Health & Safety Team.

9. Charging / funding for visits

Charges for visits will be in accordance with the Trust's Charging and Remissions Policy.

10. Transport

All minibus drivers must be approved by Academy and must have had MIDAS training. The drivers do pre-use checks on every occasion they are driving the school minibuses. All Academies will follow the Local Authority advice and the Trust's Safeguarding Policy in relation to the use of staff cars to transport pupils/students. 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.)

All Academies will follow 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

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be done on an annual basis. All Academies will ensure supervision arrangements are considered and the relevant DBS checks are undertaken.

When transporting pupils in private vehicles Academies will ensure the relevant car seats are used as required by law and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

11. Insurance

The Trust is covered by Zurich Insurance Company for activities when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the community within the UK. We are not covered for personal accident benefits or loss of personal property while on educational visits. If necessary, we can arrange this insurance for individual visits.

For overseas visits separate insurance will be taken out.

Appendix 1 – Emergency Procedure

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

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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 Trust's Communication and Marketing Team 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 (EV7).
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

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