



# **Educational Visits Policy**

**2025-2027**

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Ratified by the <b>Local Governing Body</b>			
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## 1. Introduction

Pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with the academy. In particular they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits help develop a pupil's investigative skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.

This guide is designed to help ensure that the pupils and staff stay safe and healthy on academy visits.

### 1.1. Staff named within the EVC process:

Headteacher - Paul Hostead

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – Nathan Howard

**IF THE PROCEDURES ARE NOT FOLLOWED THEN THE VISIT WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED AND WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PLACE.** Failure to follow procedures could also lead to disciplinary procedures.

## 2. Offsite Visits, Field Studies and Outdoor Education Guidelines

### 2.1. Educational Visits Policy

This policy is written to help academy staff complete the process so that we can identify hazards and minimise risks. It is important to identify which of the following visits/activities it is and ensure the appropriate planning and preparation is undertaken.

- a) Off-site educational visit led by the academy.
- b) Off-site educational visit where an external provider and facilities are used.
- c) Off-site educational residential visit.

## 3. Planning and Preparation

This is crucial to safety and educational effectiveness. On the few occasions when things do go wrong the cause can almost always be traced back, to at least some extent, to faults in planning.

**It is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off on ANY visit.** This involves considering the dangers and difficulties that may arise and making plans to reduce them.

The **Headteacher – whose agreement must be obtained** and who is **responsible** for planning visits – **will often delegate the detailed planning to the organiser of the visit** or the **group leader**.

Off-site educational visits led by the academy or when an external provider and facilities are used, require approval by the Headteacher. Visit organisers should complete an **academy approved external visit proposal** before the intended trip and an **External assessment (ERA) at least two weeks** before the intended trip. Once the External visit proposal (**EVP**) Form has been completed and signed-off by all relevant people, it should be passed to the office. The office staff will then send a text message or compose a letter (and any other documentation) to send to all applicable pupils.

Off-site educational residential visits require the approval of the Headteacher, governors and the LA and therefore at least a terms notice is required.

**The LA must be notified** of all residential off-site educational visits **at least two working weeks before the departure date**. The Academy EVC will complete the process of LA notification. At present this is only applicable if the visit is a residential, or it involves a dangerous activity.

The aims of all visits should be clearly established from the outset:

- Why are we doing this? Educational learning objective? Links to Curriculum?
- What will it achieve? Intended learning outcomes.
- Who will benefit from it?
- Will it be worth doing – do the expected outcomes justify the means?

You should discuss the outlines of proposed trips with one or more colleagues and with a member of SLT. This will enable ideas to be shared and supplemented.

### 3.1. Risk Assessment

The language of risk assessment requires an understanding and use of two essential definitions:

- **“Hazard”** means anything that can cause harm.
- **“Risk”** is the possibility that someone will be harmed by the hazard.

- **“Control”** is how to manage the risk and/or hazard.

**Risk assessments are carried out by the Visit leader.** Assessments should be completed well before the visit and **should be approved by the EVC and then signed-off by the Headteacher/delegated SLT member.**

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Pupils and staff must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. **Safety must always be the prime consideration. NB. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.**

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards? How likely are these hazards to occur?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place.

### 3.2. What steps will be taken in an emergency?

At The Warwickshire Academy the risk assessment findings are recorded in written form. All staff who may be group leaders (**EVL**) of off-site visits **MUST** be familiar with the academy approved forms.

The Visit Leader **MUST** share copies of the academy approved risk assessment forms to all staff going and get them to read and sign a copy stating that they have read and understood the content.

In the event of an emergency the Headteacher or alternatively most senior member of academy staff available should be notified at the first available opportunity.

The safe return of the visiting party members should be overseen by the group leader in liaison with SLT.

TWA senior team will work together to make decisions on what and how to release information pertaining to any incidents.

### 3.3. Pre-Visit

A pre-visit **must** be made by the Visit Leader who is to lead a group on a visit, (including residentials) to the location even if the location is familiar to them.

#### **The Visit Lead must:**

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the academy visit.
- Obtain advice from the manager regarding evacuation policy/first aid, etc.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk and have a copy if parents wish to scrutinise.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group and ensure they are fully aware of the levels of need of our pupils.
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of pupils there.

#### **If using a provider, research them appropriately:**

- Do the values and ethos of the provider match your expectations?
- Is there a clear understanding about the responsibility for supervision at all times during the visit?
- What are the respective roles of provider staff and your staff?
- What provision will be made for our pupils' special needs?
- How flexible is the programme to meet changing circumstances?

#### **ALL STAFF HAVE A DUTY OF CARE TO ENSURE THAT ANY PROVIDER USED MEETS ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS.**

When using external providers and facilities ensure you have read National Guidance from OEAP (<https://oeapng.info>).

### 3.4. First Aid

**First Aid should form part of the risk assessment.** Before undertaking any off-site activities, the Visit Leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed.

On any kind of visit there must be one member of academy staff or place of visits staff with an up to date first aid qualification or if within walking distance from academy a designated member of academy staff.

**For residential visits at least one of the group's staff to be a fully-trained first aider.** The person given designated responsibility for administering any regular medication will hold a copy of **medication details** for all pupils involved with the visit.

All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The **minimum** first aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first aid box or pack.
- A person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements.
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- Other considerations when considering first aid should include:
- The number in the group and the nature of the activity.
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be.
- The distance of the nearest hospital.
- First aid should be available and accessible at all times.

### 3.5. Ratios

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adults to pupils for any visit. This will be decided in consideration of the below factors and in response to the specific needs of each group. Ratios will be considered and signed off as part of visit proposals by the EVC or Head Teacher:

- Sex, age and ability of the group.
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs.
- Nature of activities.
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision.
- Duration and nature of the journey.
- Type of any accommodation.
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited.
- Competence and behaviour of the students.
- First aid cover.

At our academy, it is vital that the Visit Leader speaks to the students' class staff and finds out potential risks when going off-site in order to appropriately staff the visit.

#### **4. Residential Visits**

Other issues for the Visit Leader to consider include the following:

The leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.

- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the group's use.
- Ensure there is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation.
- Ensure the whole group are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routine, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.

- The manager of the accommodation should be asked for assurances that all staff, including temporary workers, have been checked as suitable for work with students.
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times.
- There should be drying facilities.
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment, etc., and for the safe keeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch.
- There should be provision for students with special needs and those who fall sick.
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure and electrical connections safe.
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the accommodation.
- There should be recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.
- The place of residential should be able to meet any particular cultural or religious needs of the group.
- There should be an appropriate number of group supervisors on standby during the night.

## 5. Farm Visits

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking students to a farm should be carefully planned. The risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

Check that the farm is well-managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. Always undertake a pre-visit.

There are some basic safety rules. **Never let pupils:**

- Place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths after feeding the animals.

- Eat until they have washed their hands.
- Sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities).
- Ride on tractors or other machines.
- Play in the farm area.

Further advice is contained on the Health and Safety Executive's website – [Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions or Open Farm](#).

## **6. Clothing**

Specific clothing will be determined by:

- Weather.
- The nature of the activity.
- Where and when the activity takes place.

When using providers, it is important to know what clothing/equipment is required and that it is suitable.

## **7. Communicating with Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers should be informed in writing of any off-site activity unless it is a regular part of the academy curriculum which parents/carers have already been informed about.

Before residential visits, parents/carers should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where written details of the proposed visit should be provided. There should be alternative arrangements for parents/carers who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication in English. This is a legal requirement. Parents/Carers need to be aware that the teachers and other staff on the visit will have a 'duty of care'.

The following information on matters that might affect pupil health and safety should be imparted to parents/carers:

- Dates of the visit.

- Visit objectives.
- Times of departure and return – parents must have agreed to meet their child on return if an educational visit extends outside of the normal school day.
- The location where the pupils will be collected and returned.
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- The size of the group and the level of supervision at all times
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Details of provision for educational or medical needs.
- Procedures for pupils who become ill.
- Names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Standards of behaviour expected and general group discipline, including prohibited items. This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign.
- What pupils should not take on the visit or bring back.
- Details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.

The academy approve pro-formas for **Information Required from Parents/Guardians Prior to Residential Off-Site Visits** and **Consent Form for Off-Site Visits** will need to be completed and returned for each pupil in the group.

Medical Consent forms will be within the parental consent form. Parents/Carers are asked to agree to the pupil's receiving emergency treatment, including the administration of a general anaesthetic and to surgical operations in the case of an emergency (in accordance with the recommendation of a qualified medical practitioner).

If parents/carers do not agree to this, the Headteacher may decide to withdraw the child from the visit – given the additional responsibility this would entail for the Visit leader.

#### 7.1. Contact with Parents/Carers during a Residential Visit

The Visit Lead should ensure that parents/carers can contact their child via the academy contact and the group leader in the event of a home emergency, and that they have a number to ring for information in the event of an incident during the visit or a late arrival home. Parents/Carers should therefore:

- Know the destination details.
- Be aware of the emergency contact arrangements at home and at all the venues the group will visit.
- Provide contact numbers for day and night use in an emergency.
- Group leaders should arrange for parents to be told by the academy of the group's safe arrival using SMS Service.

#### 7.2. Use of Mobile Telephones

Pupils will not be permitted to take their mobile phones on visits, including residential visits.

If there are any individual mitigating circumstances these can be discussed on a case-by-case basis with a member of academy SLT.

#### 7.3. Students with Special Educational or Medical Needs

Every effort should be made to include pupils with special educational or medical needs in academy visits, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group.

**Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios** and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Additional safety measures to those already in place in academy may be necessary to support pupils with medical needs during visits. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All teachers supervising visits should be aware of a pupil's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures.

Summary sheets held by all teachers, containing details of each student's needs (within their assigned responsibility group), and any other relevant information provided by parents/carers, is one way of achieving this.

The Visit leader should discuss the pupil's individual needs with the parents/carers.

The Visit leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and pupils with pre-existing medical needs.

Any limitations or problems that a pupil with special educational needs may have, should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment.

Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for a pupil with SEN and the behaviour of some pupils may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Is the pupil capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- Can the activity be adapted to enable the pupil to participate at a suitable level?
- Will additional/different resources be necessary?
- Is the pupil able to understand and follow instructions?
- Is the pupil able to follow direction to keep themselves and others safe in an offsite environment?

It may be helpful to the pupil if one of the staff already knows them well and appreciates their needs fully. The group leader should discuss the visit with the parents of pupils with particularly complex needs to ensure that suitable arrangements have been put in place to ensure their safety.

## **8. Scope of Educational Visits**

Visits should be arranged that will support and enhance the planned curriculum. This may also be used as either a spring board to learning or as a summing up of learning. As an open-minded academy, we will likely include visits to all places of worship. These visits will both underpin

the differing values and beliefs of other cultures and faiths and allow the students opportunities to explore different cultures and beliefs.

## **9. Procedure on the Day of a Planned Visit**

On the day of a planned visit, staff must double check the names of all staff and student attending are accurate on the completed risk assessment. Amend as needed and ensure this form has been handed to the main office before leaving site.

The risk assessment must confirm the details of the visit (class name, day, location, time out, time in, staff involved with the visit and staff emergency contact details), the names of all pupils involved, the pupils' medical information, permission and that they are actually present on the day so that the academy office know who is off-site if there is a fire alarm or evacuation.

For large visits it may be appropriate for the Group leader to establish a communication network through mobile phone (text message/temporary message group e.g. Whatsapp) to establish and maintain immediate contact in case of emergency. This is to be deleted and removed on the completion of the Educational Visit.

## **10. Appendices**

The below academy templates will be developed and added to this policy:

- External visit proposal
- External assessment (ERA)
- Information Required from Parents/Guardians Prior to Residential Off-Site Visits
- Consent Form for Off-Site Visits

## **11. Changes**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Section</b>
no changes part of review cycle	n/a	n/a	n/a

Educational Visits Coordinator name changed	14.03.2025	3	
Added information about collection from school if a visit extends after the normal school hours	5.3.2026	10	
Added contact information protocol for larger Educational Visits	5.3.2026	13	