

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Two Counties Trust is committed to ensuring that the safety of students, employees and others on educational visits is managed to minimise risk as far as practicable and in developing its procedures is guided by the guidance and procedures issued by the Department for Education and the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom.
- 1.2 To achieve this objective the Trust will ensure that in every school:
- all visits are approved by the Headteacher.
 - all visits are to be of an educational value.
 - a person is nominated to coordinate educational visits and that person will be trained in the role of an Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC)
 - group leaders are trained and experienced to lead a visit.
 - all visits are planned.
 - thorough risk assessments are completed.
 - all employees are briefed prior to each visit.
 - emergency arrangements are established for all visits.
 - the ratio of adults to students is appropriate and proportionate to the needs of the visit.
 - adequate insurance is in place.
 - adequate child protection measures are in place.
 - parents are notified of all visits and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular academy trip or activity.
 - consent is obtained from parents for all visits.
 - arrangements are made for students with medical or special needs.
 - adequate first aid is available.
 - contingency plans are made.
 - safety during visits is monitored and reviewed.
 - visits incorporating an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the provider must hold a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all External Visits involving children and young people and, where relevant, vulnerable adults. It applies regardless of whether the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.
- 2.2 External Visits are defined as events that involve children and young people (or vulnerable adults) being away from their normal school, centre or residential home premises, while in the care of the school or other service. This includes educational visits, outings, school trips and off-site activities such as: local visits to parks, museums, libraries and sports facilities; cultural, educational and recreational, exchange trips, outdoor activities, residential and field trips.

3. Inclusion

- 3.1 All students will be included on educational visits regardless of their special needs, race, religion, culture, gender and gender orientation. Within the risk assessment the schools will identify children with disabilities, special educational or medical needs and address how their needs will be catered for. All educational visits must have specific stated objectives that are appropriate for the participating students.

3.2 All students should be given the opportunity of learning outside the classroom and benefiting from participation in a wide range of visits and activities, including learning outside of the classroom, local activities, day visits, residential, field studies and outdoor adventure activities. Whether their emphasis is adventurous, academic, sporting, cultural, spiritual or creative, offsite visits and outdoor learning provide first-hand experiences that inspire and enhance learning and development in ways which are powerful and lasting. They provide a foundation for life-long learning and healthy lifestyles, as well as complementing classroom learning and enriching the curriculum.

4. Procedures and Approval of Visits

- 4.1 Under the health and safety laws, schools are required to obtain appropriate approval for Educational visits.
- 4.2 All schools within the Trust must use the Evolve online system for notification, authorisation, approval and monitoring of visits. The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and the Headteacher can use Evolve to plan, authorise and monitor visits. Certain visits (those in Category 3 below) require approval from the Local Authority. Key information about a visit is available through Evolve in the event of an emergency.
- 4.3 EVCs are responsible for setting up access for school staff to use Evolve and providing guidance.
- 4.4 For the purposes of notification and approval, external visits are classified into three categories. These are based on the 'Radar' model described in the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP) National Guidance.

Category	Definition	Requirement for notification and approval
Category 1	Low risk day visits and activities with no additional significant hazards. On site non-adventurous activity. Visits in and around the establishments local area. Regular sporting fixtures.	Approval required from Headteacher. Evolve may be used but is not required. Completed EV4 required. Specific risk assessment required.
Category 2	Visits requiring enhanced planning with event-specific risk assessment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residential visits not in Category 3 • Non-residential visits not in Categories 1 or 3 	Must be approved by the EVC and authorised by the Headteacher using Evolve 4 weeks before visit takes place.
Category 3	Higher risk visits, defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits outside the UK • Visits which include adventure activities • Visits to remote or hazardous locations 	Category 3 visits must be submitted for approval at least 8 weeks prior to the visit. Must be approved by the EVC and authorised by the Headteacher using Evolve and then final approval by the Local Authority.

5. Category 1 Visits

- 5.1 Low risk visits in and around the school's local area and regular sporting fixtures must be approved by the Headteacher, parental consent obtained and risk assessments completed.

6. Category 2 Visits

- 6.1 Staff wishing to undertake a Category 2 visit must seek approval from the Local Authority using the Evolve system. After the online form, all risk assessments, provider documents, EV4 and any other relevant documents have been checked and approved by the EVC and Headteacher, they must be submitted to the Local Authority at least 4 weeks prior the visit taking place. Staff must make the EVC aware of the visit.

7. Category 3 Visits

- 7.1 The requirement of Category 3 visits is to be approved by the EVC and authorised by the Headteacher at least eight weeks prior to the visit. This is to provide time for any issues arising to be dealt with to allow approval to be given by the Local Authority. For more complex visits, more time should be allowed.
- 7.2 School employees should not sign contracts with providers or make commitments to participants for parents until they are sure that requirements for approval can be met and are encouraged to ask the Local Authority to comment on unsubmitted draft plans in Evolve for complex visits at an early stage, which could be a year or more before the visit.
- 7.3 Following all visits, the Visit Leader should undertake a review. Any incidents, accidents should be reported in accordance with the reporting requirements.

8. Parent / Carer Consent

- 8.1 It is a requirement that a signed parental consent form (EV4) is obtained from the parents/carers of all students participating in Educational Visits. Students will not be permitted to attend an educational visit without parental consent.
- 8.2 For residential visits and visits abroad, it is expected practice that parents and guardians are invited to a briefing meeting where the visit is described and they can meet the leaders involved and ask questions. Where participant information is carried on excursions leaders must ensure that personal information is stored securely and disposed of appropriately when no longer required.
- 8.3 The Department for Education has produced guidance on understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility. This is available within the Guidance and resources section of EVOLVE.
Before a complex undertaking parents and guardians should be encouraged to attend a briefing session where a discussion can be held and written details of the proposed visit can be shared. There should be alternative arrangements put in place for parents/guardians who cannot attend, or who may have difficulty with communication in English.
- 8.4 So that an informed decision about their child's participation can be made, parents should be advised of the aims, objectives and value of the visit and the risks involved. Parents and guardians need to be informed of any significant hazards, especially those that they might not reasonably be expected to be aware of. Parents and guardians must be informed if health and safety standards are expected to be below those of the UK, e.g. in developing countries there may be a lack of vehicles with seat belts. It is useful to point out that there is always some level of risk in any activity, but that the visit will be managed to minimise risk as much as possible.
- 8.5 The following information should be provided initially to inform parents/guardians:

- dates and times of the visit
- purpose and educational value of the visit
- location, proposed itinerary and activities
- risks involved
- transport arrangements and name of any travel company involved
- accommodation/catering details
- cost/voluntary contribution requested
- year groups, number of participants, number of staff and name of group leader
- supervision arrangements, including arrangements for free time and any remote supervision
- code of conduct/standard of behaviour expected (parents may be expected to fund the early return of a participant whose conduct or behaviour puts him/herself or others at risk)
- medical and other information required on parental consent form
- insurance arrangements.

8.6 Where a visit includes travel abroad, additional information may be required such as:

- copy of the insurance policy
- passport and visa arrangements
- any vaccinations or medical preparation required

8.7 As organisation progresses, more detailed information should be passed onto parents and guardians such as:

- dates, times and place of departure and return (including arrangements for collection of participants at the end of a visit)
- any revisions to previous information
- pocket money arrangements if appropriate
- medical arrangements and reminder to bring prescribed drugs such as asthma inhalers
- advice on necessary clothing, equipment and footwear including advice on the climatic conditions of the destination and advised protection against sun, insects etc.
- checklist of clothing, equipment, passport/identity card, EHIC (European Health Insurance Card), medication and other essentials
- weight and size limits on luggage, particularly when travelling by air
- name and telephone number of emergency contact and/or address and telephone number of place(s) to be visited.

8.8 Disciplinary requirements should be made clear to both parents/guardians and participants. Leaders should be very explicit about rules on alcohol, smoking and illegal drugs, general behaviour and the policy on sleeping arrangements.

9. Payment for Visits

9.1 Cost for all visits needs prior approval from the Headteacher.

All educational visits must be paid for in full by the date specified on the visit information letter either in cash or via Pebble (or equivalent) Payments will not be accepted on the day of the visit.

10. Medical consent

10.1 Medical evidence as to the fitness of a child or young person to participate may be required if they have had a recent serious illness or are suffering from a serious condition.

10.2 A declaration of agreement to emergency medical treatment, including anaesthetic and blood transfusion, should also be included. Whilst doctors might be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without parental consent, if parents do not agree to emergency treatment it may be reasonable for nominated managers to withdraw a participant from the visit, given the additional responsibility this could entail for the group leader.

10.3 The EV4 parental consent form should be used for all residential visits and visits abroad.

There is no requirement to carry evidence of consent for a visit within the UK, however for visits abroad proof of consent and the right to travel with children and young people may be required and copies of such consent should be carried by leaders.

11. Consent for transport in private vehicles

11.1 Consent should be obtained specifically for the transport of children and young people in the private vehicle of a member of staff or other participant as part of the organisation of a visit. Proof of business insurance for all vehicles is required before students are permitted to travel.

12. Early return

12.1 Arrangements for the early return of a student from a visit whose conduct gives reason for concern may be required. A written agreement may be necessary identifying who will meet any costs incurred.

13. Communication between participants, parents and guardians and an establishment

13.1 Establishments should consider the issue of communication between participants on excursions and parents and guardians back at home.

A central point of contact is useful (usually the establishment) to make contact with those on visits should the need arise. This can be provided on the consent form together with contact details for the accommodation and Visit Leader in the event of a home emergency.

13.2 Consideration should be given to the use of mobile phones throughout a visit, for some participants this may be appropriate, for others it may be a hindrance to the purpose of the trip and its smooth running. While being extremely valuable in emergency situations, they can also cause serious miscommunication if used randomly and without thought.

Mobile phones are also open to misuse and can have implications for safeguarding. Subsequently establishments and leaders should consider if and how they are accommodated on residential experiences. This should be agreed by all participants, parents and guardians prior to an event.

14. Insurance

14.1 School visits are covered by the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), however when a trip is Category C then confirmation should be sought from the provider to ensure that the visit is suitably covered and no additional insurance premium is required.

15. Responsibilities

15.1

- All staff have a duty of care for the welfare and safety of all students taking part in an educational visit.
- Every person has a duty to stop or curtail any activity when it is considered that unsafe practice has been observed.
- Every adult accompanying the visit must have a role.
- The Visit Leader should brief all adults as to their roles and responsibilities during the educational visit.

16. Headteacher

16.1 The Headteacher must ensure that all Visit Leaders are competent to carry out their

responsibilities. The Local Authority provides Visit Leader training courses and can advise about competence requirements.

16.2 The Headteacher of the school has the overall and final responsibility for academy educational visits ensuring:

- responsibilities for educational visits are properly organised and adequate risk assessments have been completed
- appointment of an appropriate competent member of staff to act as Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) to promote, support and lead educational visits for the school and ensure that appropriate specialist advice and backup is available to the school
- guidelines made by LA for educational visits are followed
- consideration is made to the suitability of all proposed educational visits
- all documentation (including risk assessments) are approved correctly

17. Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC)

17.1 The EVC for the school has the responsibility to promote, support and lead on the management of educational visits via EVOLVE Local Authority Educational Visit Approval System, ensuring that:

- all educational visits procedures are complied with and all documentation is completed
- the approval requirements for each visit are clearly communicated to Visit Leaders
- all documentation in relation to each educational visit is retained
- support and guidance is provided to Visit Leaders.
- any accident/incident on a visit is notified to the Headteacher and a record is kept and that future visits are reviewed in light of previous incidents

18. Visit Leader

18.1 A Visit Leader is the person responsible for planning and leading a visit, which may involve other members of staff and volunteers.

Staff who wish to lead adventure activities must have approval to do so by the Headteacher and Local Authority on behalf of the school. Approval will be based upon evidence of competence, which may include evidence of relevant qualifications, training and experience

18.2 Visit Leaders must:

- complete all relevant Educational Visits documentation, including risk assessments and consent forms via EVOLVE
- complete risk assessments or acquire assessments completed by external agencies (for example, a tour operator) as appropriate
- ensure all students have made necessary payments and completed the necessary documentation within the specified timescales
- For overseas visits, to ensure photocopies of pupil passports (and EHIC cards if relevant) have been taken
- Ensure that for an overseas visit, all non-British citizens have visa entitlements to re-enter the country
- plan for students with special educational needs, pre-existing medical condition or a disability and ensure appropriate provision
- lead the trip in accordance with the approval given by the Headteacher and ensure all staff and students are fully briefed and that emergency arrangements are in place
- record the details of any accident or incident in line with the school policies
- completed the Visit Leader training as recommended by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel.
- to provide the opportunity of financial support towards the trip being available for students who are pupil premium

18.3 In addition the Visit Leader will:

- arrange for Parental Consent Forms to be sent and returned to the school.
- ensure all lessons are covered where other teachers are providing supervision on the trip.
- completes Risk Assessment Action Plan for Educational Needs student
- complete the Emergency Contact Information
- complete an educational visit register to include all students attending the visit
- ensure there are sufficient numbers of first aid trained staff and collect the relevant amount of first aid kits for the number of students attending the visit
- brief all members of staff and adults accompanying the trip
- brief students on expectations and health and safety
- ensure students participating will be registered on the day of the trip
- while on visit implement and monitor safety standards in line with risk assessment
- notify Headteacher or other nominated person of safe return
- review the visit

By signing the Risk Assessment, the Visit Leader confirms that all adults on the visit have read, understood and adopted the written Risk Assessment.

19. Supervisory Staff

19.1 All staff assisting with supervision on any educational visit will be conversant with the school's guidance and the specific risk assessment/s for that event and will ensure that:

- the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed
- once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader

20. Staffing of Educational Visits

20.1 Ratios:

- Teaching staff 1:15
- Support staff 1:10
- Volunteers 1:8

20.2 It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Students with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of 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 students
- First aid cover

20.3 For local visits where there are first aid provisions at the venue a visit may be approved without a member of academy staff being first aid trained. This is decision will be made by the Headteacher on an individual basis.

20.4 Except in special circumstances and with the agreement of the Headteacher, there must always be a minimum of 2 members of staff with any visit. For certain visits a higher ratio will be

appropriate because the visit leader has to ensure that there is a safe level of supervision at all times.

20.5 For visits abroad, at least 3 members of staff must accompany the party unless the number of students is fewer than 10, in which case there should be 2.

20.6 If an adult who is not a member of staff is accompanying the trip then they must have an up to date and valid DBS check, authorised by the HR department.

20.7 No member of staff can be included in the staffing ratios if they are accompanied by their own child who is a minor (under 16).

20.8 Visit Leaders must be experienced and have undertaken training as recommended by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel.

21. Sporting Fixtures

21.1 The level of supervision should be at least in the ratio of one member of staff to 15 students. At the end of a fixture, staff must ensure that all students are supervised until they are collected.

21.2 The use of students' cars to transport other students is not allowed.

22. Remote supervision

22.1 This refers to the practice of supervising students from a distance rather than being right alongside them for the majority of the time. Remote supervision for students may be integral to the activity; such as on Duke of Edinburgh Award activities, on other visits there will be occasions when it is appropriate for students to experience some independence, for example souvenir shopping or down time in a programme.

22.2 In organising such activities Visit Leaders still remain responsible for participants and must follow all relevant advice in this document in relation to risk assessment, planning and preparation.

Visit Leaders must assess the risks of the particular location, situation or activities proposed and the competence of the participants to act sensibly and take responsibility for themselves. Some locations and activities, including beaches and swimming, are not appropriate for remote supervision. Parents/guardians must be informed of the supervision arrangements and their written consent obtained.

22.3 Depending on the circumstances and the risk assessment, the factors below should be adhered to when considering remote supervision:

- the visit should be led by an appropriately competent member of staff
- students should be sufficiently competent to act safely and independently in the situation
- maps, plans and/or other information or training for students to act effectively in the environment are available
- suitable clothing and equipment is provided
- risk assessment control measures, agreed rules and boundaries are known by all involved
- written details of the rendezvous points and times and how to contact staff in an emergency and/or return to base are known by all involved
- ensure all have coins, phone cards and/or mobile phones and telephone numbers
- monitoring of the group should occur at appropriate intervals
- the Visit Leader should remain in a position to reach the group reasonably promptly if support is required

22.4 For remote supervision of adventure activities, including Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions, refer to Local Authority guidance. This section provides advice on the gradual withdrawal of supervision, which may have application for indirect supervision in other contexts.

23. Emergency Procedures

23.1 Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

23.2 Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning an academy visit. If an emergency happens the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

23.3 Guidance on Emergency Procedures.

A copy of the following guidelines must be taken by all Visit Leaders and their deputies.

- Establish nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure that all other members of the party are accounted for and safe
- If there are injuries, establish their extent and arrange for first aid
- Establish names of the injured and call relevant emergency services
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that emergency procedures are in operation
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies casualties to hospital
- Ensure that the remainder of the party is adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to the academy
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all children are accounted for
- Control access to telephones until contact is made with the Headteacher or other nominated person until they have had time to contact those directly involved
- Pass full details of the incident (name, nature, date and time of incident, location of incident, details of injuries, names and telephone numbers of those involved, action taken so far)
- Telephone numbers for future communication identify alternate telephone numbers in case telephone lines become jammed)
- The school will arrange to contact the parents of those involved. In serious incidents the parents of all party members should be informed

23.4 Media:

- A designated person should act as the point of contact with the media to whom all involved should direct questions
- Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media
- The Visit Leader should write down as soon as practicable all relevant details. A record should be made of any witnesses. Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted
- All accident forms should be completed and insurers and the HSE should be contacted
- Inform parents of any delays that will be necessitated

23.5 Additional Procedures for Visits Overseas.

Prior to the visit the tour leader should obtain and take with them:

- European Health Insurance Card (where appropriate) and significant medical histories
- Details of insurance arrangements and the company's telephone number
- Location of local hospital/medical services

23.6 In the case of an emergency the framework outlined above should operate. In addition the group leader should notify the British Embassy/Consulate.

24. After the Trip

24.1 The Visit Leader must inform the Headteacher or whoever has been delegated as the school contact that the party has returned safely and ensure that all the students are safely collected from the school by a responsible adult, such as a parent or guardian or permission has been granted to make their own way home.

24.2 If any difficulties or incidents occur on a school trip, the Headteacher must be informed as soon as possible after the trip returns to the school so that appropriate follow up action can be taken quickly.

25. School Lunches

25.1 The school kitchen will provide packed lunches as required for students who receiving Free School Meals. Lunches must be ordered with the kitchen prior to the visit.

26. Monitoring

26.1 Headteachers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy and for the monitoring of visits organised by the school. The EVC is often best placed to carry out routine monitoring. The OEAP National Guidance includes a document on monitoring.

27. Assessing Venues and Providers

27.1 The OEAP National Guidance includes guidance on Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances. The Learning outside the Classroom Quality Badge Standard held by activity providers provides sufficient reassurance that a provider meets nationally required minimum standards of safety and quality. Details of a provider's status can be checked on the Quality Badge website www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk

27.2 If a provider of activities does not hold the Quality Badge, then detailed checks should be made to ensure that it meets required standards. The most straightforward way of doing this is to use a Provider Statement Form – the Local Authority can provide a template.

Document management

Review cycle:	2 Years
Next review due:	3 March 2021
Policy owner	Health and Safety Manager
Approving body:	Board of Trustees

Appendix 1

Educational Visit Flowchart

