

EAST MIDLANDS
EDUCATION TRUST

School Visits (Educational)
Policy



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Education Trust

SCHOOL VISITS (EDUCATIONAL) POLICY

Policy Statement

The Trustees accept their responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subordinate health and safety legislation and acknowledge the requirement to ensure that participants are kept safe whilst on visits and journeys away from their normal place of attendance.

Statement of Safety Policy

The Trustees recognise that the participation of children and young people in a wide range of visits, journeys and experiences is important in promoting learning and development. As part of their responsibilities, Governors and Principals/Head Teachers will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants while travelling to, and engaged in, activities away from school whether provided by school or a contracted provider.

Statement of safety organisation

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

Governors will ensure that all visits are properly planned and the necessary approval obtained before a visit takes place. The Governors have agreed to delegate the responsibility of viewing trip outlines and agreeing planned school visits to the Principal/Head Teacher.

Principal/Head Teacher

The Principal/Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that all visits and trips are planned, organised, controlled, monitored and reviewed in accordance with relevant Health and Safety legislation and Government Guidelines and Regulations.

The Principal/Head Teacher will authorise all visits and, where applicable, seek the approval of the Governing Body.

The Principal/Head Teacher will confirm the qualifications, training records and experience of the Group Leader who will lead the specific visit and the supervisory personnel, and will approve these people as suitable to lead/supervise the visit/s.

The Principal/Head Teacher will agree, with the named Visit Coordinator (VC), the duties delegated to the VC, or in absence of a VC, fulfil this function themselves.

Visit Coordinator (VC)

The School Visits Coordinator will undertake duties as agreed with the Principal/Head Teacher. The basic duties associated with the role are defined as:

- ensuring that all visits are considered within the with guidance provided from the expert sources the school chooses to use and are suitably recorded.
- assessing whether competent people will lead or supervise a visit
- assessing the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit. This may include reference to training and awards, observation or verification of experience
- assisting Visit Leaders with risk assessment
- organising the training of leaders of visits. This might involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness etc
- ensuring that DBS disclosures are in place
- as necessary working with the Visit Leader to provide parents and guardians with full details of the visit beforehand and to obtain the parental consent or refusal
- organising the emergency arrangements and ensuring there is an emergency contact for each visit
- keeping records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents'
- reviewing systems and, on occasion, monitoring practice
- Training and assisting staff to use the school's recording processes.

The VC will be conversant with good practice, issued by Government Departments, National Governing Bodies and national interest groups

Visit Leader

The Visit Leader should be conversant with this policy and any additional requirements/procedures their School requires and will comply with these requirements.

The Visit Leader will liaise with the VC throughout the planning and preparation of their trip to ensure that any activities or events that may place staff or other participants at significant risk are assessed and that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place.

The Visit Leader will ensure that all parents of children on their trip are provided with all required information, which may include risk assessment information, and that any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place.

The Visit Leader will undertake all necessary planning and preparation before the visit, as detailed in this guidance, including curriculum planning, risk assessment and briefing of other leaders, parents and participants.

The Visit Leader is responsible for overall organisation during the visit, including leadership of staff, achieving desired aims, supervision of participants (including 'free time') and the overall health and safety of the whole group

The Visit Leader will be fully familiar with emergency procedures and contact numbers.

The Visit Leader will be fully aware of any child protection issues

The Visit Leader will ensure that adequate first aid provision will be available

Supervisory staff

All staff assisting with supervision on any trip will be conversant with EMETs School Visits (Educational) Policy and any additional School's Visit Guidelines which an individual EMET school may have produced and will comply with these requirements.

All staff will ensure that the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed.

All staff will ensure that once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified; they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader.

Staff will feed back information to the Visit Leader to enable a full review of the trip to be completed.

External Providers

If an activity involves the use of an external agency (such as a specialist activity provider) they must be thoroughly scrutinised as appropriate by the Principal/Head Teacher and the VC.

It is the responsibility of the external provider to risk assess and manage safety for the services they are specifically contracted for, also to show due regard for equality.

However, Visit Leaders and Supervisory staff also have a responsibility to ensure the appropriate supervision and pastoral care of participants throughout any excursion.

Many industry-specific approval and endorsement schemes exist that offer assurances to booking groups such as the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge and currently, where specific adventurous activities are delivered it is a legal requirement for agencies to hold an Adventure Activities Licence.

Parents and Carers

Parents (or other legal carers) must be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on visits and what the expectations will be of them and their child.

In order to do this, they will be provided with sufficient information in writing and be invited to relevant briefing sessions.

Parents and guardians will provide written consent, including an acknowledgment of their and their child's responsibilities for the visit and provide the school with necessary medical information to ensure safe inclusion and emergency contact arrangements.

Arrangements

It is especially important that staff use the most up to date guidance when planning and executing visits away from their normal place of work.

There are 3 identified categories of visits within the Visits Guidance for Children and Young People, which require differing levels of approval:

Category A – Locally Approved Visits

These are visits and activities that are generally perceived as being routine events presenting low levels of risk. These events can be adequately managed through the use of the school's generic risk assessment forms and School Visits Policy. Sports fixtures are generally organised by the PE Department and lists of students participating are given to the school. PE Departments should hold their own generic risk assessments for such trips which includes travel arrangements where necessary.

Category B - Visits

These are events and activities that do not normally form part of the routine curriculum. They may extend beyond normal operating hours, necessitating a late return, but do not involve an overnight stay.

Approval for these trips must be obtained from the Principal/Head Teacher. A record of these visits **must** be entered onto the school system. This will provide a suitable record of trip details and approval provided.

Category C Visits

This is the most complex and demanding activity level, where participants and staff may be involved in residential visits, adventurous activities, activities with higher than normal risks and trips to higher risk environments.

The Principal/Head Teacher must give approval for category C events.

Specific consent must be obtained for all such events and specific information provided to parents and guardians. This is usually facilitated by attendance at planning meetings or information sharing events with participants and parents.

Specific competency may be required to lead such events and a higher level of familiarisation will be required of staff who work on these trips. This may be through a familiarisation process, induction specific to the activity/location or a level of competency which can be evidenced.

Outside providers may be employed to deliver part or all of the visit or activities. These will require any necessary checks being made to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient to do so. They will be required to complete the school based system for recording their suitability.

Additional insurance cover may be required; the Visits Leader should check with the VC that the appropriate level of insurance required for the planned excursion is in place.

Approval must be recorded on a school based system.

Visit Leaders must:

- refer to and work within, the generic risk assessments pertinent to the planned excursion
- plan according to guidance contained within generic risk assessments and the nature of the trip
- complete a specific risk assessment for the planned event/activity
- obtain outline approval for the trip as outlined in the School's guidelines for trips and from the Principal prior to commitment of non-returnable funds
- obtain specific consent from parents and guardians on the school based form.
- ensure that competent staff are allocated to supervise the trip; suitable competence must be clearly identified to the Principal with support of the VC..
- ensure that the Principal has considered the application for approval together with details of the proposed programme; specific risk assessments produced and any other relevant information and the Principal's approval has been confirmed.

Reviewed by: Trustees

Review date: Autumn 2017

Next review due: Autumn 2020