



Shires Multi Academy Trust

Educational Visit Policy

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Adopted by Trust Board: 6th Sept 2023
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Policy Responsibility: COO

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..... Chair of Trustees

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1. Introduction

All visits, trips and off-site activities are planned, organised, conducted and reviewed in line with the “OEAP Employer Guidance” and with due regard to local LA Policy and process. A copy of this Guidance can be found on the following website www.oeapng.info (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel).

2. Aims

It is the policy of our Trust to offer students a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, environmental, linguistic, historical, scientific, technological, mental, physical development and to raise awareness of diversity, promote community cohesion and prepares them for adult life. The CEO and Trust Representatives recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich curriculum and enhance the learning development of our students:

- To strengthen personal development and the process of self-discovery, enhancing self discipline and self-esteem.
- To develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment, as well as the ability to cooperate with others in a team context.
- To nurture an understanding, tolerance and respect for people from other countries and cultures.
- Encourage students to explore and appreciate the local, national and international community.
- To ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff during offsite activities.
- To ensure the range of trips and visits offer opportunities for all students to participate and that the inclusive principles of the Trust’s Equality policy are implemented in a proactive way.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board must:

- Ensure that policies are in place and that guidance documents are being translated into working systems.
- Ensure that each Academy has its own systems in place to support this process.
- Have the ability to act on behalf of the parents to ascertain if the specific event arrangements and risk assessments are in place and appropriate.

The Headteacher must:

- be familiar with, and understand, the contents of this policy.
- ensure that the management of visits and ventures meets the regulations and guidance offered by the HSE, National Guidance, the DfE and others, as well as conforming to the establishment’s own health and safety policy.
- ensure that the Governing Body is kept appropriately informed.
- ensure that all staff are aware of the details of this policy, related procedures and any guidance documents referred to herein.
- will support the EVC & SBM in assessing the suitability of Visit Leaders and accompanying staff.
- ensure that Visit Leaders are fully supported in the tasks required to arrange a visit
- Have final approval of high risk / overseas / residential visits
- Sign off of all educational visits on the trips system i.e EVOLVE / EXEANT

The Educational Visits Coordinator must:

- Be suitably trained and qualified.
- Be responsible for giving a first line approval for all visits and will have responsibility for giving final approval for visits that are not overseas/residential/or high risk at the discretion of the individual Academy
- Be familiar with, and understand, the contents of this policy.
- Be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that guidance and regulations are followed and to confirm that adequate risk management strategies are in place.
- oversee the trip logging system, Exeant / EVOLVE etc.
- Be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff competency and qualifications, this to include accompanying staff and volunteers.
- Provide information on the training of leaders and volunteers, and provide support for staff and volunteers new to the visit planning process.
- Ensure DBS clearance has been received for all staff and relevant volunteers.
- Ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective.
- Ensure that the establishment has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the Senior Leadership Team should an emergency occur.
- Ensure that the establishment records incidents and accidents (including 'near misses').
- Use and apply suitable record keeping practices.
- Monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice.
- Be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.
- Ensure that any use of pupil information complies with the GDPR & E-Safety Policy.

The Visit Leader must:

- Be suitably competent and knowledgeable about the establishment and its policies and procedures.
- Be familiar with, and understand, the contents of this policy.
- Be suitably qualified, experienced and competent in leading the Visit.
- Be approved to carry out the visit.
- Have carried out an exploratory visit to the venue(s) if possible.
- Calculate the costs involved, considering:- transport, entrance fees, activity costs, residential costs, insurances, photocopying and teaching cover.
- Obtain approval for the visit, as per the process outlined within this policy.
- Follow appropriate procedures whilst organising the Visit.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, referring to National Guidance where necessary.
- Make all bookings via the schools' Finance Assistant, in order to maintain a financial 'paper trail'.
- Identify significant risks from any activity that is under their control, complete risk assessments and devise risk management strategies where necessary, taking appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe.
- Understand that risk assessment is an ongoing and flexible process.
- Ensure that staffing ratios are suitably compliant with National Guidance and gender balanced where possible.
- Ensure that accompanying staff have seen all relevant risk assessments and strategies prior to the trip, and that they have been fully understood.
- Ensure that accompanying staff are suitably qualified.

- Where external providers are used, carry out appropriate checks, seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation or licensing before committing the school to the contract. Areas of responsibility, with respect to all activities involved, must be clarified in advance.
- Ensure that where the school minibus is being used, drivers are fully aware of the school policy in relation to its use, and are fully qualified to drive it.
- Ensure that parents are suitably informed, have the opportunity to attend open meetings about any residential trips, and can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary or organisation of the visit.
- Make parents aware of the schools' expectations of them, as detailed in this policy.
- Ensure that written consent is obtained from parents/carers where appropriate, and that they are kept fully informed as to the activities involved and the whereabouts of their child at all times.
- Ensure that monies received from parents are recorded centrally via main reception or online through ParentPay. This is monitored by the trip leader.
- Have enough information on the staff/pupils taking part in order to assess their suitability for the visit or specific activity.
- Ensure that the necessary First Aid requirements are in place.
- Enter full details of the trip, with accompanying forms and documentation, on to Exeant / Evolve, the school trip logging system prior to departure.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff/providers and the young people, and ensure effective supervision of what they are expected to do (including external providers).
- Ensure the leaders and others have details of the pupil's special educational or medical needs.
- Be aware of the steps to take, should an emergency situation arise.
- Carry a working mobile telephone.
- Ensure that visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the staff/young people is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality.
- Ensure that final approval has been granted before departure.
- Maintain a Duty of Care amongst everyone involved throughout the Visit, acting accordingly.
- Fully evaluate the visit upon return to the school using Exeant / Evolve.

Accompanying Staff must:

- be suitably competent and knowledgeable about the establishment and its policies and procedures.
- be familiar with, and understand, the contents of this policy.

Parents/Carers must :

- Provide the Visit Leader with emergency contact number(s).
- Sign the consent form.
- Give the Visit Leader information about their child's emotional, physiological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit.
- Make payment where necessary and appropriate.
- Support the school in making it clear to their child, what the expected 'code of conduct' will be for the duration of the visit, and understand that if their child's behaviour causes concern for their safety, or that of others, they may be withdrawn from the activity/visit.

The Pupils must:

- Not take any unnecessary risks with themselves or others.

- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit.
- Dress and behave appropriately and responsibly at all times.
- Be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Have an awareness of anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and inform the Visit Leader or supervisor if such a thing is identified.

4. Procedural Requirements

Underpinning Legal framework Duty of Care: Visit leaders must have read and understood the Underpinning Legal framework and Duty of Care section from the OEAP e.g. section 3.2a.

Risk Assessments: A generic risk assessment is available from the Educational Visits Coordinator and should be completed for every offsite trip/visit. The process of a risk assessment should be to evaluate the students attending e.g. medical, special needs, safeguarding or behavioural issues, transport, location and the possible hazards and/or risks that may be encountered. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as Head of Key Stage/Designated Safeguarding Lead/Special Educational Needs register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of students attending. Staff should always be prepared to adapt as necessary according to unexpected conditions and always have a 'Plan B'. Risk assessment should be carried out by the Visit Leader in conjunction with the other staff on the visit and possibly students. Risk assessments should be shared with all parties on the visit. To assess the competence of a provider, Visit Leaders should sample their risk assessment to be aware of risks that may need to be managed prior to the visit. Please refer to OEAP e.g. section 4.3c.

Approval of staff to lead activities and visits: All staff that lead off-site activities/trips and visits will have undertaken Educational Visit leader training and will be deemed accountable, competent and confident by the Headteacher and/or the Educational Visit Co-ordinator.

First Aider: It is Trust policy that, where possible, a qualified first aider should accompany students on trips/visits. However, a qualified first aider must be present on all residential and overseas trips or where emergency services may take time to be summoned.

Mobile Phones: The Visit Leader needs to have mobile phone contact, live and accountable to the school, at all times of the visit, except in certain circumstances eg whilst driving, in areas of poor reception or at venues such as churches or theatres. However the Visit Leader, when it is safe to do so, should check for messages or missed calls on a regular basis. Visit Leaders should ensure that the mobile phone is fully charged and operational.

Senior Leadership: It is Trust policy that one member from the Senior Leadership Team will be required to attend visits that are overseas.

Evaluation of external providers: It is good practice that Visit Leaders have prior knowledge of the location they are visiting. This will assist with risk benefit management. If a visit prior to the arranged date is not permissible, then full research on the location should be carried out. Evaluation of competence can be carried out by researching websites or brochures, by using a provider with a quality badge (LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) or adventure mark), by looking at visitor risk assessments or by sampling the risk assessments, by accessing data on past visits or by consulting other schools (evolve / exeant), preliminary visits or Governing Bodies for the activity. The County

Offsite Visit Adviser must always be consulted.

Parental Consent: No student will be allowed off the school premises for any off-site activity, visit or trip without full parental consent. It is the responsibility of the Parents/Carers to inform the school of any changes e.g. medical needs, contact numbers and address.

Residential Visits: A Parental Information Meeting must be held before any residential visit takes place. This should be included in the visit planning process of that particular visit.

Information about participants, medical conditions special needs etc: Students should be identified and the appropriate measures put in place to deal with emergencies and/or incidents. An appropriate staff- to-student ratio should exist on every trip to include cover, should a member of the trip/visit team be drawn away to deal with a specific situation. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as HOKS/DSL/SEN register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of students attending. This information should be shared with all staff in attendance.

Prior notification and approval of visit plans: All visits should be entered onto Evolve / Exeant and no visit is allowed to proceed unless the visit has been approved by the appropriate person(s).

The PE department is not required to complete an application for each fixture or activity that takes place off site. It is acceptable for them to submit an application for all normal activities, including training for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions for the entirety of the academic year.

Registers: A register of students must be taken prior to departure, during and after all visits, trips and off-site activities. A copy of this register should be left in the school office of which pupils and staff have attended the trip.

Emergencies: Visit leaders should take with them at all times the designated emergency contact numbers for the school and County Council. This information must be shared with all sub leaders. A first aid kit must be taken on all off-site activities, visits and trips. A First Aider must be present on all overseas travel and residential trips. Staff are to be made aware that the emergency number 112 called from a mobile phone acts as a GPS location signal for emergency services in the UK. All incidents are to be reported immediately upon return to school. For critical incidents please refer to the school's Critical Incident Policy which can be found on the School network and is available from the Education Visits Co-ordinator/SBM.

Levels of supervision: Effective levels of supervision should be in place throughout the visit. For effective levels of supervision to be put in place the visit leader and other staff in attendance should consider SAGED:

- STAFF Competent? Trained? Experienced? Ratio of staff to students?
- ACTIVITY Simple? Complex? Training required? Consent? Insurance? Licensable?
- GROUP Prior experience? Age? Behaviour? Medical and/or Special Needs?
- ENVIRONMENT Location and familiarity? Same as previous times? Weather Forecast? Water Levels?
- DISTANCE How Far? Transport Required? Residential? Distance from base?

It is the expectation that staff in attendance should get involved with activities or observe activities so that they know what is happening and can stop them if unhappy. Pupils should never feel unsupervised (including on coaches being driven there and back) they should know where a member of staff is located and available at all times. Staff should be visible and patrolling.

Where female/male students are in attendance on a trip/visit, there must be the corresponding gender of staff where practicable. Any implications arising from this will be reported on the Visit Risk Assessment if necessary.

Expectations of Students and Behavior: The schools Behavior Policy applies on all trips and educational visits and where necessary students and parents may be asked to sign an additional code of conduct in conjunction with certain trips and visits. Alcohol, drugs, psychoactive substances and any other illegal substances are not permitted on any trips or visits by students or staff. Appropriate sanctions will be applied on the visit or on the return should any issues occur. Parents will be informed, as soon as possible, of any significant issues. Poor behaviour on or prior to any trip or visit may result in students being excluded from future trips or visits.

Inclusion: The school will endeavor to include all students in trips and educational visits where reasonably possible (venue access, behaviour, all medical needs etc.). Each case will be assessed for each trip/visit. The experience of a Visit Leader will also be taken into consideration. Where there are specific behaviour or medical needs, which may be deemed to be problematic, a preliminary conversation will take place with parents/carers and, where applicable, medical consent will be sought from doctors/consultants (the cost of this will need to be met by the Parent/Carer if required). A separate risk assessment may be necessary for medical/safeguarding reasons. If a student is deemed to be too high risk to themselves and/or other students the school may decide to withdraw that student from the trip. When this is the case Local Governing Body and parents will be involved in the decision making process.

Monitoring: It is the responsibility of the EVC to ensure that all staff are adequately trained to lead and organise a trip; training will be revalidated where necessary and kept on record. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.2b.

Evaluation: Must be completed on Evolve / Exeant within 28 days (Evolve locks the form after 28 days).

5. Volunteers

It is school policy that volunteers are to be over the age of 25 years old and will hold a relevant DBS. Volunteers are, under no circumstances, to assume the positions of Visit Leader or Assistant Visit Leader. Volunteers can be Academy Representatives, members of the Governors, Staff from Trust / partnership schools or any other person deemed responsible at the Headteachers discretion. Under no circumstance is a member of staff allowed to be accompanied by their own dependants to participate on any off-site activity, visit or trip.

6. Insurance

The schools within the Trust are covered by the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA). Employer's liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and Shires Multi Academy Trust holds a policy that indemnifies it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. Shires Multi Academy Trust also holds public liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer, acting within the course of their employment) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of staff. The indemnity covers activities such as offsite activities and visits organised by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible.

7. Charging for school visits

It is the policy of the Trust Board to:

- Ask for contributions from parents for school trips and visits, for which compulsory charges cannot be made, but which are not viable otherwise. Students will not be excluded from such activities because of inability to make a contribution.
- Apply a charge for all board and lodging costs on residential visits except where students are entitled to free school meals.

NB

The following statement must be used in all correspondence relating to charging of activities to students

“If you are in receipt of Benefit and feel you may require some assistance with the cost of this activity, please let us know on the return slip together with evidence of the type of Benefit you receive (eg Photocopy of front page of Benefit book or letter)”

For further guidance please refer to the OEAPeg section 3.2c Charges for outdoor learning.

Please read this policy in conjunction with your individual school’s Trips Handbook