

Court Fields School

Achieve | Belong | Participate



Educational Trips and Visits Policy

Date: February 2025

Due for review: Spring Term 2027

Headteacher at Court Fields School: Polly Matthews

Policy and Procedures for the organisation of off-site activities.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Policy (including Roles and Responsibilities)
3. Procedures and Guidance
 - 3.1 Planning the Visit
 - 3.2 Application procedure
 - 3.3 Risk Assessments
 - 3.4 During the Visit
 - 3.5 Evaluating the Visit
 - 3.6 Residential Visits
 - 3.7 Overseas Visits
 - 3.8 Outdoor Activities
 - 3.9 Charging for Activities
 - 3.10 Emergency planning
 - 3.11 Insurance
 - 3.12 Risk Assessments:
Good Practice and exemplars
 - 3.13 Further Sources of Information

Appendix:

- A: Form 1 – Preliminary Request to SLT**
- B: Form 2a – Timeline/Checklist**
- C: Form 2b – EV1 External Visits Application/Approval Form**
- D: Parent Consent/Medical Form (EV5)**
- E: Trips & Visits: Step by Step Guidance for VLS**
- F: Sample Letter**
- G: The Blackdown Education Partnership Residential Visit Code of Conduct**
- H: PE Department Sports Fixtures Procedures**
- I: Guidance on Preparing your Visit Information Pack for your SLT Contact J: Key to relevant postholders.**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Educational trips and visits are an important part of a student's experience. A carefully planned school trip can bring a subject to life and add relevance to classroom theory. Such visits are often the most memorable parts of life. Educational visits can help to develop a student's investigative, planning and inter-personal skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence. Organising and participating in such visits can also be very rewarding for staff.

However, organising an activity which involves taking students off-site carries with it extra responsibilities, especially for the health and safety of students. There are also issues of cost and implications for potential disruption to the school routine. The member of staff in charge of the activity must plan carefully so that students can learn from the experience in safety.

This policy, and guidance on procedures, is designed to help teachers to arrange trips and visits which are well-organised, safe and educationally valuable.

The next section, **Policy**, describes the steps which must be taken for all school trips and visits organised within the Trust.

The following sections, **Procedures and Guidance**, cover various aspects of organising trips and visits. You should make sure that you are familiar with the relevant sections. This document cannot contain all the specialist guidance that may be necessary for some educational visits. All **Visit Leaders** must have attended a meeting with the Head and/or the Educational Visits Co-ordinator prior to a visit to go through the risk assessment and details of the trip.

The **Appendices** contain examples and master copies of the appropriate paperwork that you should use when running a school trip.

2.0 POLICY

Educational Value

The opportunity to participate in educational visits is an important and desirable part of the education of our students. Educational visits can enrich and extend the experience we offer to students. However, organising and running successful visits can be an expensive and time-consuming activity. Visits are potentially disruptive to the normal routine of the school. Therefore it is important that all visits have clearly stated aims and learning objectives.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety of students and staff on any visit must be the first priority of those involved; the **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)**, the **Visit Leader (VL)** and any staff accompanying the visit.

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes all participants in off-site visits. The Trustees of Blackdown Education Partnership are the employers.

Staff who are acting “in loco parentis” have a duty of care whether the activities happen in or out of school hours, whether the students are on or off the school premises.

Equal Opportunities

Every effort must be made to make all educational visits accessible to all students who are qualified to attend and who are interested in participating. Care must be taken to ensure that students are not discriminated against because of their financial circumstances, gender, race or physical capabilities. The opinions and wishes of parents/carers must be taken into account.

Procedures

The procedures that are outlined on the following pages are designed to ensure that staff and students on an educational visit have a safe and rewarding experience. These procedures **must** be complied with. Staff should also have regard to other relevant procedures as outlined in the **Staff Handbook**.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the health and safety and welfare of school staff and students. In the context of educational visits this involves the need to;

- Provide written guidelines for the Headteacher and teachers, as set out in this policy.
- Assess proposals for residential, overseas, non-local (that is beyond 50 miles) and potentially hazardous activities. Potentially hazardous activities include water sports, climbing, caving, abseiling, hill-walking, skiing and other adventure activities;
- Provide an emergency SLT telephone contact for the duration of the visit where necessary;
- Ensure that training needs have been addressed;
- Provide access to named staff for advice;
- Maintain appropriate insurance cover;
- Have in place procedures to monitor and review safety during off-site visits and activities.

The Board of Governors has delegated responsibility for authorising Category A visits to the HT and Category B visits to the HT and CoG or a nominated governor. (See Appendix J for examples of Category A and B trips).

The Headteacher

The Headteacher should ensure that visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the Board of Governors through this policy. (See the Trust’s Health and Safety Policy). The Headteacher should ensure that the Educational Visits Coordinators are competent to fulfil the role and that adequate training is given to keep the EVCs up to date with relevant regulations.

The Headteacher (through the EVC) should ensure that the Visit Leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit. (The Headteacher should be clear about their own role if taking part in the visit as a group member/supervisor. He/She should follow the instructions of the Visit Leader who will have sole charge of the visit.)

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The ***Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)*** is appointed by, and works in conjunction with, the Headteacher. The EVC is involved in the planning and management of all educational visits that are led by school staff.

The general functions of the EVC are as follows:

- To liaise with the Visit Leader to ensure that the educational visit meets the school's requirements, including those of risk assessments.
 - To support the Head and Governors with approval and other decisions.
 - To check that all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins.
 - To check that the preliminary risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place.
 - To ensure that the Visit Leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
 - To check that the Visit Leader or another teacher is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.
 - To ensure that competent people are assigned to supervise a visit.
 - To organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit.
 - To ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service certificates are in place as necessary.
 - To ensure that Visit Leaders
 - o Provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.
 - o Obtain the consent or refusal of parents.
 - To keep records of individual visits including
 - o Reports of accidents and 'near-accidents'.
 - To review systems (including a review of risk) and, on occasions, monitor practice.

The EVC must also check that;

- The Visit Leader has made arrangements for the dietary medical and/or special educational needs of all the students.
- Adequate first-aid provision will be available.
- The mode of travel is appropriate.
- Travel times out and back are known, including pick-up and drop-off points.
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- They have the address and phone number of the visit's venue.
- A school contact has been nominated (this may be the Headteacher) and the Visit Leader has details.
- Non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children.
- That the ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate.
- The Governors have approved the visit, if appropriate.
- The Visit Leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures.
- The Visit Leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and students travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

The Visit Leader

There should always be one member of staff, ***the Visit Leader (VL)***, who has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. The Visit Leader should have been appointed or approved by the EVC on behalf of the Headteacher.

The Visit Leader should:

- Obtain the HT's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place.
- Follow governing body regulations, guidelines and policies.
- Appoint a deputy where appropriate.
- Clearly define each supervising adult's role and ensure that all tasks have been assigned and ensure all staff are aware of the risk assessments.
Be capable of controlling and leading students of the relevant age range.
Be suitably competent to instruct students in the relevant activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.
- Be aware of child protection issues.
- Ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of group members and parents.
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment using the school proforma or the EEC system and submit these to the EVC.
- Review the activity (annually for regularly undertaken visits/activities) and advise the EVC and Headteacher where adjustments may be necessary.
- Ensure that teachers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves.
- Have enough information on the students proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed.
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors to students is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the students is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality.
- Ensure all staff take responsibility for overseeing appropriate behaviour, rewards and sanction of students.
- Ensure for all residential trips abroad that parents and students sign a code of conduct form.
- Ensure all parents are fully informed of arrangements and, for trips abroad, the VL must hold a parent/student meeting prior to departure.
- Submit a list of students they intend to take to the SLT member responsible for KS3/KS4 for checking before any students or parents are informed they have a place on the trip.
- Ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact.
- Ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures.
- Ensure that the group's teachers and other supervisors have the details of students' special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively.
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below.
- Liaise with other Subject Leaders to ensure that students' withdrawal from lessons does not impact on exams or controlled assessment.

Teachers

Teachers on school-led visits are acting in the course of their employment, whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the Headteacher and Governors. Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They should;

- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and help with control and discipline;
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the Visit Leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the students in their charge is unacceptable.

Adult Volunteers

Non-teacher adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

Non-teacher adults acting as supervisors must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Not be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment. Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline. Speak to the Visit Leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of students at any time during the visit.

Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The Visit Leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions. The Visit Leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a student home early and who will meet the cost. (Usually this will be the insurance in the case of illness or injury, and the parents in any case where a student has contravened the code of conduct)

Special arrangements may be necessary to inform parents for whom English is a second language.

Parents will need to:

- Provide the Visit Leader with emergency contact number(s).
- Sign the parental consent and medical forms.
- Give the Visit Leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit (usually by means of the appropriate form).
- Ensure their child is adequately prepared and equipped for the trip in line with the information given by the VL.

Students

The Visit Leader should make it clear to students that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- If abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the Visit Leader or supervisor about it.

Any students whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group **may be stopped from going on the visit**, or if necessary, and possible, sent home early. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

Students, whose poor behaviour compromises either Health and Safety, or the reputation of the school, may be refused permission to join other educational visits.

3.0 PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

3.1 Planning the Visit

Thorough planning is essential if the educational activity is going to be a success.

3.2 Application Procedure

At an early stage in planning the educational visit you should discuss the arrangements with the EVC. You will need to know the answers to the following questions:

- What are the intended learning outcomes?
- Say whether the visit is essential, desirable or recommended.
- Which groups of students will be involved?
What are the likely dates? And duration?
How many staff will be needed? (See Guidance on levels of supervision below)
- Estimate of costs?

Approval must be sought at least one term in advance although in exceptional circumstances this can be commuted at HT's discretion.

Visits are not automatically agreed.

Guidance on Levels of Supervision

There must always be at least two supervising adults, however small the party, so that adequate supervision can be maintained in the case of emergency. An exception to this rule is for some routine visits, e.g. sports fixtures, where a single member of staff may be sufficient as long as suitable contingency plans are in place (in case of emergency, vehicle breakdown etc). Approval from the EVC is required in every case.

For all visits in the UK there should be a **minimum** ratio of 1 staff to every 15 students.

The level of supervision depends on the nature of the activity, and a higher ratio of staff to students may be deemed necessary when a risk assessment is completed.

For Category B trips the ratio should be proportionately higher but at least 1:10.

Travel

The school minibus must be booked through the relevant member of school staff where appropriate. All staff that drive the minibus must have passed the minibus test and hold a valid licence. Staff must not drive when over-tired; Visit Leaders should consider whether a relief driver is necessary.

Parental Consent

Parental consent must be received for all students attending any off-site activities. A letter should be written informing parents of the purpose and nature of the visit following the example given.

Where possible online consent to be used.

Any students without parental consent are not to go on the visit.

Visit Leaders must ensure they have the relevant parental consent for the category of trip. Students are not allowed to attend offsite visits without this.

For overseas visits, and for some UK residential visits, it is necessary to hold a parents' briefing meeting so that parents can be fully informed about the visit. During the meeting, staff must go through the risk assessment and allow parents to read it.

3.3 Risk Assessments

Before you decide to arrange an educational visit, it is good practice to consider what educational objectives you wish to achieve, and then, how a visit might help to achieve them. If the visit is the best means of achieving those aims, a Risk Assessment must be carried out.

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done.

In practice, risk assessments, which employers are legally required to do, are led by the Visit Leader, but all staff have a responsibility to contribute to the risk assessment as necessary. A preliminary assessment should be completed well before the visit, and submitted to the EVC and the Headteacher. The assessment should be reviewed, and revised as necessary, before and during the trip. A RISK PROMPT list is available on EEC. This is a list of some of the risks which may be encountered on educational visits.

This is not a comprehensive list. It is intended as an aid to planning and cannot serve as a full risk assessment, which is likely to vary for each visit, depending on the location and the nature of the student group.

The primary aim of the risk assessment is to ensure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. When risks are identified, control measures need to be put in place to remove or reduce the risk. The control measures should be understood by those involved. Some control measures may be assigned to a specific member of staff, e.g. a named member of staff may be responsible for regular roll calls, to reduce the risk of losing students.

Where necessary, risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational needs and medical needs are to be addressed. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not normally be deviated from and should include details of contingency measures – i.e. you should have a plan B, if things go wrong.

The Health & Safety Executive has produced a leaflet "5 Steps to Risk Assessment" as a simple guide. You should refer to this. The link is [Managing risks and risk assessment at work – Overview -HSE](#)

The VL must brief all students about dangers of travel on trains, ferries, buses and aircraft, in line with any relevant risk assessment.

STEP 1: Look for the hazards

STEP 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

STEP 3: Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done

STEP 4: Record your findings

STEP 5: Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **Generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place;
- **Visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group; and
- **Ongoing risk assessments** that take account of, for example, illness of staff or students, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity.

The school Risk Assessment form is a vital part of planning for an educational visit. Further advice on completing the Risk Assessment form is available on the EEC risk assessment section or from the EVC.

There are standard risk assessments for coach/mini bus and ferry travel available through EEC or via the EVC.

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

Your risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the Visit Leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should/could take to avoid or reduce the risks.

The EVC should also be given a copy so that approval can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place.

For overseas or residential visits, or those involving potentially hazardous activities, copies of the risk assessment will be made available to the Headteacher and Governors. The VL should also be prepared to answer any concerns parents may raise at briefings/following letters with information.

Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be made at regular intervals, and careful monitoring should take place.

The Visit Leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary. (H&S and DBS checks, policy of venue/nature of activities etc).

3.4 During the Visit

The **Visit Leader (VL)** is responsible for safe conduct of the educational visits. The VL should deploy supporting staff and other adults, as necessary, to ensure the safety of all those on the visit.

In normal circumstances the Visit Leader should adhere to the published itinerary for the visit as detailed to parents and agreed with the EVC. However, if circumstances change such that it may be unsafe to continue, the Visit Leader must adapt the programme as necessary. The VL should consider whether changes to the risk assessment are necessary.

The VL should be able to contact the school, or have an emergency contact for a senior member of staff, if the trip is likely to be out of school office hours. If the trip is out of hours, the VL should have an emergency contact number and medical details for each student.

The VL and other supervising adults should monitor the students' behaviour and ensure that it is appropriate for health and safety requirements and to maintain the good name of the school.

Students should wear school uniform for educational visits, unless otherwise agreed with the EVC before the trip.

Students must not drink alcohol during an educational visit. When on duty, staff must not drink alcohol.

If at any time during the visit, the students are not supervised directly, i.e. there is "remote supervision", the students must be aware of the ground rules and be adequately prepared to be on their own in a group. Group sizes should be considered carefully. Visit Leaders must be confident that students are competent under remote supervision and parents should be aware that this will form part of the visit. As a minimum, students should have:

- Telephone numbers and Emergency contacts, if they get lost.
- Sufficient money.
- Maps/plans and other necessary information.
- Knowledge of a rendezvous point.
- In addition, students should be in groups no smaller than four and know that in case of emergency two stay together, two get help.
- VL must have students' mobile numbers/group numbers.

Behaviour

All VLs must submit a provisional list of students intending to participate in any visit to the SLT member responsible for KS3/KS4 for approval prior to notifying students or parents.

It is important, for the health and safety of all concerned, as well as for educational reasons, that students' behaviour on an educational visit is beyond reproach. There is a code of conduct for students included as an appendix to this policy. For residential and overseas visits, students and parents should sign a copy before leaving. Where behaviour does not meet expectations, supervising staff must intervene. If behaviour is especially poor, or compromises the health and safety of others, the student/s should be closely supervised and may be sent home from a residential visit at the parents' expense (provided that safe arrangements can be made to do so). Students who behave badly on a visit may be refused permission to attend such trips in the future. All inappropriate behaviour must be reported to the Headteacher/Head of House immediately on return to school.

3.5 Evaluating the Visit

After the visit, the Visit Leader, with accompanying staff if appropriate, should evaluate the educational visit in terms of:

- The learning outcomes
- Value for money
- Any safety/behavioural issues which arose.

This feedback should be passed to the EVC within two weeks of returning from the visit.

3.6 Residential Visits

The accommodation must be suitable for the group. In particular it must meet fire regulations and the staff of any hotel/hostel must be checked as being suitable for work with young people. If possible the Visit Leader should visit the accommodation in advance, to check its suitability.

If the travel company intends for students to share bedrooms, the VL must liaise with the Safeguarding officer to assess potential risks.

Levels of supervision may need to be as high as 1 member of staff to 10 students. If it is a mixed group, it is desirable to have at least one male and one female teacher.

3.7 Overseas Visits

Overseas visits require very thorough preparation, well in advance of the departure date. If the trip is organised through a Tour Operator, Visit Leaders should ascertain that it is a reputable company. Detailed advice on all aspects of planning an overseas visit is available on the EEC.

3.8 Outdoor Activities

When planning any adventure activities with a commercial company, it is important that the Visit Leader checks that a licence is held, valid for each activity. Staff who are not risk assessed and cleared through the EEC system will need to be cleared (follow the wizard). This clearance can take some time so leave sufficient time for this to happen.

Outdoor activities planned through the school, e.g. D of E expeditions, must be done by staff who have the necessary level of qualification. A list of appropriate qualifications can be obtained from the EVC.

Staff leading outdoor activities must possess an appropriate and up to date first aid certificate.

3.9 Charging for Activities

Part of planning for a successful visit involves making sure that expenses can be met. This is usually done from parental contributions. The school office/Finance Office will set up a temporary budget heading for the visit. All costings to be agreed by the school office/Finance Office – VL to liaise with the Business Manager/Finance Officer re quotes for tickets/transport etc. Staff should not take any money for the trip personally. The school office/Finance Office will accept money directly from students and issue a receipt on request. The school office/Finance Office will keep a list of students' names to keep track of who has paid.

Parents should be informed of the costs of the visit and any arrangements and deadlines for paying. Contributions for activities within school time are voluntary, though if parents choose not to pay, the visit may have to be cancelled.

3.10 Emergency planning

Supervisors in charge of students during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that students remain safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in the case of an emergency.

If an accident happens:

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

The Visit Leader will take charge and inform the school contact. The school contact's main responsibility is to link the group with school and parents and to provide assistance where necessary. The school contact should have all the necessary information about the visit.

3.11 Insurance

The Trust has an annual travel insurance plan which covers most activities. Check with the EVC who can provide a schedule for teachers and parents if required, as well as contact numbers in case of emergency.

Full details are on the school website.

3.12 Risk Assessments: Good Practice and Exemplars

Generic Activity Risk Assessments

Risk assessments for common activities are available from the EVC.

School staff will not normally prepare generic risk assessments unless they have accumulated specific experience or other expertise. The **Visit Leader and EVC** should check any generic risk assessment prepared externally (by, for example, an activity or expedition provider, tour operator, or National Governing Body).

Examples:

- The lack of adequate risk management leading to drowning is a major cause of accidental death. Control measures would include assessing the water confidence and ability of students; use of buoyancy aids; competent supervision, with the appropriate ratios for the specific environment, pupil group and level of activity. The generic risk assessment should include advice, or a local ruling, on the circumstances in which swimming or paddling may or may not be permitted (see A Handbook for Visit Leaders)
- Travel entails a risk of injury in a road traffic accident. Control measures would include qualified driver; number of drivers; maximum periods of driving; appropriate seat belts provided and worn; evidence of vehicle maintenance, appropriate supervision levels; and, if appropriate, knowledge of foreign law, experience of driving abroad and with left-side controls.
- Adventure activities. Centres licensed under the adventure activities licensing regulations 1996 can be considered safe in the leading, instructing and equipping of the activities stipulated on the licence. These will have been inspected. There should be no need to risk assess that part of any visit. You will wish to assess other aspects of the visit - for example, accommodation, catering, transport, activities not stipulated on the licence. For non-licensable adventure activities, proof of competence from an National Governing Body (NGB) award or assessment by a technical adviser may be sufficient.

Risk assessors should apply lessons learned from relevant serious incidents, accidents or near-accidents which have occurred locally or nationally. At times it may be necessary to refer to other sources of outdoor education advice. This might be from the Premises Manager within the Trust or from an adviser or suitably qualified consultant (EEC).

Visit/Site Specific Risk Assessment

These are usually undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared or agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks, such as the **EVC**, or experienced or trained **Visit Leader**.

Visit/Site specific risk assessments should inform school-based policies and procedures.

Examples:

- Medical needs of students. Control measures include ensuring the Visit Leader is aware of the known health problems of the group; sufficient medication is provided; there are sufficient adults competent in dealing with the medical problems in the group; and there are contingency measures in place for the group to be adequately supervised if an adult has to accompany a child to hospital;
- Behaviour of students. Control measures include a code of rules and behaviour, agreed as far as practicable with students; rules for supervision (including model behaviour and example set by adults); and competence of supervisors to ensure disciplinary standards;
- Weather etc. Control measures include obtaining local intelligence of tides; potential for flooding or flash floods; likelihood of sudden weather changes in mountains; streams that can change from benign to torrents in a short time etc.; planning the itinerary to take the possibility of change into account; suitable

clothing; ensure students understand the risks and the reasons for the control measures, and having a plan B pre-assessed in case plan A has become too hazardous;

- Crossing roads, railways, rivers etc. Control measures include local intelligence; information on where the controlled or otherwise less dangerous crossing places are; ensuring appropriate levels of supervision and that students are aware of, and comply with, rules;
- Group management decisions. Control measures include establishing meeting and collecting points; code of rules and behaviour agreements; cultural considerations such as dress codes, holy days; induction requirements for support staff etc.
- Staff who are not risk assessed and cleared through the EEC system will need to be cleared (follow the wizard) and sufficient time will be needed to achieve this clearance. This can take some time.

Ongoing Risk Assessments and Reassessments

The Visit Leader, or other adults with responsibility, should reassess risks while the visit is taking place. Ongoing risk assessments normally consist of judgements and decisions made as the need arises. They should be informed by the generic and visit or site specific risk assessments and take account of local expertise on e.g. tides, potential for flooding etc. They are not usually recorded until after the visit and should be reviewed to inform future planning. Examples of the need for ongoing risk assessment:

- Changing weather, tiredness or illness within the group, behaviour, issues with other groups at same venue etc. Control measures would often include deciding to change to the pre-assessed plan B or swapping activities on the itinerary so that the activity can be carried out on a different day.
- **Emergencies.** Control measures would include establishing the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible; ensuring that all the group are safe and looked after; establishing whether anyone has been hurt and getting immediate medical attention for them; ensuring that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures; ensuring that if a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital, the rest of the group is adequately supervised at all times and kept together; and informing the emergency contact in the school;
- **Visit Leaders are always in charge.** They should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the Visit Leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if it has become too hazardous.

Exploratory Visits

It is good practice for a Visit Leader to undertake a preliminary visit. In the case of an overseas or residential visit, or where potentially hazardous activities are to take place, it may be essential so that the risks can be fully assessed. The visit will enable the Visit Leader to gain first-hand knowledge of the area and route. This knowledge will then inform the risk assessment and pre-planning.

An exploratory visit will give the Visit Leader greater confidence in his or her ability to supervise the pupils. It will help the Visit Leader to concentrate on the needs of the group rather than the unexpected demands of the environment. It should be borne in mind that overseas trekking expeditions cover a much wider range of terrain and circumstances than is found in the UK. The same good H&S practice is expected where some of the leadership of the group falls to a contractor.

If it is not possible to visit the site beforehand, the EVC, Head and Governors will want to be satisfied that alternative arrangements are sufficient for an assessment to be made. Such alternatives might include obtaining advice from those with experience gained from previous visits; heeding reports of previous visits; reliance on tour operators; the use of experienced and reliable local guides where appropriate; a reconnaissance visit by the Visit Leader on arrival at the venue whilst the group remain in the hotel or hostel on residential visits.

Involving Students in Risk Assessment

It is good practice to involve students in assessing and managing risk.

Be aware that students engaged in assessing risks may alarm parents. The letter to parents should make clear the nature of any activities, and convey the real risks and the control measures. Obviously the staff and school still carry the statutory duty of care, even where students are assigned specific tasks relating to risk assessment.

3.13 Further Sources of Information

There is a wealth of experience and expertise in school. The EVC can give advice, or put you in touch with the appropriate member of staff. It may be that for some staff, or for specific activities, further training is required.

Appendix A

TRIP FORM 1 (2022)

Preliminary Request to SLT for Educational Visit for calendar agreement in advance (to be submitted at least one term in advance for any trip).

Title of activity:
Proposed Date/s and Times:
Visit Leader:
Venue
Transport (include name of driver if using minibus)
Year group: Number of students involved:
Staff involved (give specific names if possible and name of First Aider):
Are all adults employed by the Trust or the school? If not, who is going and in what capacity?
Reason for the activity (include educational purpose here):
Brief outline of activity: (include approximate costs if known) to include: Cost of ticket/event per student: Cost of transport ie coach (and/or fuel for school minibus @33p per mile): Parking: Cost of supply/cover @ £160 per member of staff per day (if more than 2 teaching staff on trip) Finance admin fee (2.5%): Final cost per student =
External provider if applicable:

1. Ensure you have checked the school calendar before completing the form.
 2. Please discuss with your line manager before submitting to the School Education Visits Coordinator.
 3. Agreed/not agreed Date:.....
- Comments:

LINE MANAGER	EVC (CHECK COSTS/RATIO)	SLT (CHECK DATE/TRIP PURPOSE/COVER)	ADD TO CALENDAR (AH)	EVC ADMIN – ADVISE TRIP LEADER OF APPROVAL