

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Last update: March 2018

This policy should be read in conjunction with the guidelines for educational visits in the staff handbook, the DfE guidance 'Health and Safety: advice on legal duties and powers' (Feb 2014) and Gloucestershire County Council 'Offsite Visits Manual'.

School visits are a valuable and important part of school life. They are encouraged, whilst keeping disruption to a minimum. Educational visits can involve an element of risk and whilst school cannot give safety guarantees, it is essential that the risks are assessed and that all precautions are taken to ensure the safety of participants. The aims and objectives of the visit must be clearly identified and understood.

All teachers and supervisors who are responsible for looking after others have a duty of care in common law. If the persons in their care are under the age of 18 they will be in loco parentis and will be expected to exercise the same degree of care a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would exercise. The group leader and supervisors are in loco parentis until the children have been returned to the care of their parents or carers. Visit leaders must follow the procedure for handing over students to parents/carers as laid out in the emergency procedure sheet given to all visit leaders

School procedures for educational visits

- a) Guidance on the procedure for organising a visit is given in the 'School Visits and Journeys' section in the staff handbook.
- b) There will be equal opportunities for students to participate in school visits regardless of physical constraints subject to Health and Safety considerations.
- c) All relevant information must be made available and discussed with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator before the Headteacher or Governors approve the visit or journey, as appropriate.
- d) An outline plan of overseas visits, others of high cost which are known at the start of the academic year will be presented to Governors at the start of each academic year.
- e) The Headteacher will authorise non-hazardous day visits within the UK and the Governors will authorise residential visits, overseas visits and any trips where hazardous activities are planned.
- f) Staff must apply for approval of a visit three weeks in advance for the UK, (five weeks for UK residential and potentially hazardous trips) and one term in advance for foreign visits to allow for meeting with the Education Visits Co-ordinator and dealing with all of the relevant paper work.
- g) Trips that arise at short notice will be given due consideration. Staff must not assume that approval will be given. Staff will be informed as to the reasons why approval is not given for a visit.
- h) Organisers of visits will adhere to all current legal requirements for the care of young people. This includes risk assessments (online using the QES programme) and ensuring that the necessary police checks (Children's Barred List and DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service) are made for all adults involved in the visit and up to date where necessary. Risk assessments need to be read by all assistant leaders and visit staff prior to departure. Student lists, consents, itinerary and emergency contact numbers need to be left at reception.
- i) Staff organising a visit or journey must check for students who are not permitted to go on school visits. Names of students who give cause for concern on a visit or journey must be given to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator upon return from the visit. There must be hard evidence for behaviour to be a reason for exclusion from an educational visit.
- j) If a trip is oversubscribed, all students who return the paperwork by the deadline will be entered into a draw. Staff will consult the list of students who have previously not been successful in gaining a place on a trip and give these students priority by not including them in the draw. This list needs to be updated if a student has been given priority.
- k) The following statement must be included in the details about a visit to parents; 'previous behaviour both in school and on school visits will be taken into account in deciding whether to allow a student to take part in this visit'.

- l) Letters to parents about the visit must not be issued prior to approval being given. Staff will use the generic trips letter to ensure consistency. Deadlines given to parents for the return of money and paperwork must be strictly adhered to so that parents and students experience consistency of expectations.
- m) A letter need not be sent to inform parents every time there is a sports fixture but a current list of fixtures must be made available and consent for participation in regular fixtures obtained. Each member of staff responsible for a particular team will be allocated a specific mobile telephone for all fixtures to ensure that parents are able to make contact with the staff member.
- n) Various forms will be completed before departure e.g. parental consent forms, medical forms, and risk assessment. Any student who has not returned the necessary forms will not be permitted on the visit or journey. Up to date medical information about the students on a trip must be given to the visit leader by parents/carers and by the trips administrator.
- o) All residential trips must have a parent information evening to communicate to parents/carers the key information about the trip, health and safety, and behaviour expectations.
- p) There must be a member of the department organizing the visit who remains at school in order to facilitate the smooth cover of lessons.
- q) Financial support will be available for students so that they have equal opportunities to participate in visits regardless of their financial circumstances. A subsidy is available to students who are eligible for Pupil Premium or Post-16 Bursary funding for trips which cost over £15. Only one overseas trip per Key Stage can be subsidised. For all trips which are considered essential to the course a voluntary contribution will be requested.
- r) The financial viability of a trip is essential.
- s) Trip accounts need to be finalised within one month after the trip.
- t) If the amount charged for a visit exceeds the actual cost, refunds will be paid equal to the difference as follows:
 - If the excess is £5 or more.
 - If the excess is less than £5 but is 10% or more of the trip cost.

If the difference is less than either of these amounts, the administration costs in making the refunds with respect to individual students will exceed the refund. Therefore, the difference between the income and expenditure for the visit will be transferred to the student support budget.

Refunds will be made to the student's ScoPay account. Parents may request a cheque for funds to be withdrawn from the ScoPay account. If there is a large balance, a cheque refund may be made in any case.

- u) If a subsidy has been made by the school towards the cost of a trip, any refund will reflect the percentage of that subsidy.
- v) A percentage of the cover costs (not exceeding fifty percent) needs to be incorporated into the costing of the trip. The Schools Visits Coordinator will advise on the percentage.
- w) An evaluation of the visit by the group leader is required upon return to school within 4 school weeks (residential, overseas and potentially hazardous trips only). This will be passed to Governors to be recorded. Staff are strongly encouraged to provide a newsletter item for residential trips.

Supervision

- a) For non-residential day visits, the ratio of teaching staff to students must be no less than 1:20.
- b) For residential and overseas visits, the ratio of teaching staff to students must be no less than 1:10 subject to a minimum of 2 members of teaching staff for any visit.
- c) For residential and overseas visits involving students in Years 7 to 11 which includes boys and girls, there must be at least one male and one female member of staff. For single sex groups, there must be at least one member of staff of the relevant gender.
- d) Other adults, for example associate staff or parent helpers, may accompany school visits. The ratios for residential trips are as follows:
 - Two teachers Maximum of 20 students
 - Two teachers and one other adult Maximum of 30 students

- Each additional teacher or other adult (subject to point e below)
Maximum 10 additional students
- e) Parent helpers and other non-staff adults must not be allocated sole responsibility for a student or group of students on a school visit. KLB staff must make up a minimum of 50% of the supervising adults
 - f) Members of teaching staff must be a member of a recognised school teachers' union or association if they are taking part in or responsible for organising an educational visit. This requirement is made to ensure that if there is a difficulty during or arising from the visit, those staff involved have access to suitable advice and representation should that be necessary.
 - g) Off site visits must be led by a member of the school's teaching staff on a permanent or fixed term contract.
 - h) Newly Qualified Teachers will not lead off site visits.
 - i) Parent helpers or other non-staff adults who accompany a school trip or visit will be subject to a DBS check.
 - j) All adults involved in school visits must be aware of the school's safeguarding policies and guidance and the child protection procedures.

Safety

- a) Exclusion from a visit can be made on Health and Safety grounds; this overrides the Disability and Discrimination Act.
- b) The levels of supervision on the visit or journey are those given in the document 'Offsite Visits Manual' (Gloucestershire County Council).
- c) Group leaders will take with them the handbook of practical information; medical consent forms, the risk assessment form. All visit staff need to know the whereabouts of this information. Student information needs to be kept safe and any loss of such information needs to be reported to the Headteacher immediately.
- d) Any activity which has intrinsic hazards over and above the normal day to day risks and requires particular supervision, specific qualifications and experience of the group leader will need the use of a licensed provider.
- e) Standards of dress and behaviour will be made clear to the students prior to the visit.
- f) The group leader must take a mobile telephone on the visit.
- g) Group leaders or supervisors will have a working knowledge of First Aid or know where to access First Aid.
- h) An accident report form must be completed at school when an accident occurs on a school visit.
- i) The procedure in case of emergency is included in the visits handbook and in the trip leader's pack of information.
- j) Staff organising a visit or journey must not use a member of their family as the contact person as this may cause personal conflict in the case of an emergency. A non-teacher may be asked to be the contact person but they must have access to making financial decisions in cases of urgent need. At least one member of SMT needs to be amongst the emergency contacts so that the Headteacher can be contacted if needs arise.
- k) A driver of the school mini bus must have passed the school mini bus test and be over the age of 21 years. There must always be another approved adult for journeys outside a radius of 40 miles from the school.

Transport by car

For school employees

- the drivers have passed their test a minimum of 2 years prior to the visit taking place;
- responsibility for the insurance of private vehicles rests with the owner or driver concerned. The school cannot provide insurance to protect the interests of the driver if an accident were to happen;
- All prospective drivers who are employees must have a "business use" extension to their "domestic and pleasure" policy;
- The school insurance's 'Own Business Use' extension for staff without business use on their policy only applies to unforeseen emergencies. Transporting students to a school visit would not, in general, be seen as an emergency.
- All employee drivers should produce documentary evidence for the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) when seeking approval for the visit to take place

For non-employees The school cannot provide insurance to protect the interests of the driver and passengers if an accident were to happen. However, where a volunteer driver is undertaking journeys, the driver should seek clarification from his/her insurance company and notify the Visit Leader. Particularly where any financial transaction is involved, insurance cover must be checked.

Student Driving

Students are not permitted use their own vehicles for driving themselves or others whilst on visits. Where there is a potential for students to drive, in any letter to parents, the school shall make clear its policy and actively encourage pupils to take the trip's authorised transport.

Constraints

- a) There will be a maximum of 1 visit per subject in Years 7 - 9
- b) There will be a maximum of 4 visits within the Year for Years 10 - 13. Students will not be permitted to participate in visits which conflict with examinations or controlled assessments.
- c) Consideration will be given to additional visits which cause no disruption to the curriculum. For example, if the visit is in normal lesson time for the relevant subject.

ANNEX

Charging for School Visits (extracted from Charging for School Activities Policy)

Key points

The school, subject to the limited exceptions referred to below, cannot charge for education provided during school hours although voluntary contributions can be requested (see below).

The school will ensure that parents on low incomes and in receipt of the benefits listed on page 3 of this document are informed of the support available to them when being asked for contributions towards the cost of school visits.

School Charging

The school **cannot** charge for:

- education provided during school hours;
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;

The school **can** charge for optional extras (see below).

Optional Extras

Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Where an optional extra is being provided, a charge **can** be made. Optional extras are:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the national curriculum;
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school
 - c) part of religious education.
- transport (other than transport that is required to take the student to school or to other premises where the local authority or the school have arranged for the student to be provided with education);
- board and lodging for a student on a residential visit;

In calculating the cost of optional extras, an amount may be included in relation to:

- the cost of accommodation;
- non-teaching staff;
- teaching staff engaged under contracts for services purely to provide an optional extra, this includes supply teachers engaged specifically to provide the optional extra;

Any charge made in respect of individual students must not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of students participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other students wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

Furthermore, in cases where a small proportion of the activity takes place during school hours, the charge cannot include the cost of alternative provision for those students who do not wish to participate. Therefore no charge can be made for supply teachers to cover classes which continue at school for those students who do not wish to participate which would normally be taken by teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit. For example, if three students in a Year 8 group choose not to go on a field visit during a school day, the charge for the visit cannot include the cost of supply teachers to take classes for the three students who are not participating.

Participation in any optional extra activity will be on the basis of parental choice and a willingness to meet the charges. Parental agreement is therefore a necessary pre-requisite for the provision of an optional extra where charges will be made.

Voluntary Contributions

The school may ask for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities. However, if the activity cannot be funded without voluntary contributions, this will be made clear to parents at the outset. It must also be made clear to parents that there is no obligation to make any contribution.

It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled. This will be made clear to parents. If a parent is unwilling or unable to pay, their child must still be given an equal chance to go on the visit. It should be made clear to parents at the outset what the policy for allocating places on a school visit will be.

When making requests for voluntary contributions, parents must not be made to feel pressurised into paying as it is voluntary and not compulsory. The school will not send colour coded letters to parents as a reminder to make payments and direct debit or standing order mandates should not be sent to parents when requesting contributions.

Transport

The school **cannot** charge for transport provided in connection with a visit which is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

Residential Visits

The school **cannot** charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours;
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education;
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying students on a residential visit which is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.

The school **can** charge for:

- board and lodging and the charge must not exceed the actual cost;
- transport in accordance with the provisions of the 'optional extras' section above.

When a school informs parents about a forthcoming visit, they should make it clear that parents who can prove they are in receipt of the following benefits will be exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging:

- Universal Credit in prescribed circumstances;
- Income Support (IS);
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Child Tax Credit, provided that Working Tax Credit is not also received and the family's income (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) does not exceed £16,190;
- the guarantee element of State Pension Credit;
- an income related ESA (employment and support allowance).

Education partly during school hours

Where an activity takes place partly during and partly outside school hours, there is a basis for determining whether it is deemed to take place either inside or outside school hours. However, a charge can only be made for the activity outside school hours if it is not part of the national curriculum, not part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school and not part of religious education.

Non-residential activities

If 50% or more of the time spent on the activity occurs during school hours, it is deemed to take place during school hours. Time spent on travel counts in this calculation if the travel itself occurs during school hours. School hours do not include the break in the middle of the day.

Where less than 50% of the time spent on an activity falls during school hours, it is deemed to have taken place outside school hours. For example, an excursion might require students to leave school an hour before the school day ends, but the activity does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A 'half day' means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Monitoring

The member of the Leadership Team with overall responsibility for visits will check letters to parents and costing plans to ensure compliance with this policy.

Associated policies: *Safeguarding*
 Child Protection
 Behaviour and Discipline
 Charging for School Activities

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