



# **Educational Visits Policy**

**Ref: B007**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Chorlton High School values the impact on students' educational and social development through the access of educational visits. The school will use this policy to ensure that it has a robust approach to the management of educational visits.

## **2. Scope of the Policy**

2.1 The policy applies to all aspects of the educational visit and off-site activities. It includes the journey, any residential element and the activities undertaken.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 The Head Teacher will:**

- Assign competent people to lead and supervise educational visits.
- Be aware of the Department for Education advice on legal duties and powers for local authorities, Headteachers, staff and governing bodies.
- Oversee the management of educational visits in their school.
- Ensure that educational visits comply with the guidance provided by the Health and Safety Executive and the Department for Education.
- Ensure that appropriate documentation is completed and records are maintained of educational visits to comply with the guidance provided by Manchester City Council and the Department for Education.
- Ensure that appropriate procedures and training are in place to ensure the efficient management and resolution of any unplanned incidents or emergencies during educational visits (to be covered as part of the Business Continuity Plan).

### **3.2 The School Governing Body will**

- Assign, determine and keep under review the school's own policy on educational visits that will detail the scope and range of visits normally conducted by the school and the procedures by which visits are proposed and approved.
- Ensure that the Headteacher is supported in matters relating to educational visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities.

### **3.3 The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will:**

- Approve educational visits within their delegated authority.
- Seek approval from the Headteacher for any educational visits outside of their delegated authority, or for any educational visits that present a significantly higher level of risk than standard educational visits already provided by the school such as residential visits.

- Ensure that all educational visits comply with this policy and associated guidance and alert the Headteacher to any potential breaches of the policy, including if necessary cancelling educational visits.
- Ensure trip leads and staff have adequate training and DBS, as per school policy for CHS staff.

#### 3.4 The Group Leader will:

- Obtain prior agreement from the appropriate individual before any off-site educational visits takes place.
- Follow school governing body instructions, guidelines and policies. This includes the Educational Visit Guidance as adopted by the school and the Charging and Remissions Policy.
- Be a member of staff, deemed as competent, to undertake the specific visit.

## 4. The Educational Visit Approval Process

- 4.1 All educational visits are required to have been through an approval process within the School to ensure that the relevant people are satisfied that the visit has been adequately planned and organised.
- 4.2 The Headteacher has delegated approval for visits defined as Standard or Sporting trips to the Educational Visits Coordinator. In the event that an educational visit within one of these categories presents a higher risk or is a significantly new type of activity, the Educational Visits Coordinator should seek approval from the Headteacher.
- 4.2 The different types of educational visits and approval level required are summarised below:

<u>Educational Visit Type</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Examples</u>	<u>Approval Level</u>
<b><u>CHS Standard Visits</u></b>	All visits other than sports fixtures, residential and international visits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Extended Learning Experience Week visits (e.g. Challenge for Change).</li> <li>➤ Museum visits.</li> <li>➤ Theatre trips.</li> <li>➤ Transition visits to local primary schools.</li> </ul>	Educational Visits Coordinator

<b><u>CHS Sport Fixture/Competition/Event</u></b>	All Sporting events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ After school sports fixtures with local schools.</li> <li>➤ Tournaments at local schools or sporting venues.</li> </ul>	Educational Visits Coordinator
<b><u>CHS Adventurous Activities</u></b>	All adventurous activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Climbing</li> <li>➤ Ice skating</li> <li>➤ Water sports</li> <li>➤ Trekking</li> </ul>	Educational Visits Coordinator
<b><u>CHS UK Residential</u></b>	All visits in the UK involving an overnight stay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Residential stays.</li> <li>➤ D of E Expeditions.</li> </ul>	Headteacher
<b><u>CHS International</u></b>	All international visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ski Trips to Austria.</li> <li>➤ Year 9 trip to Paris.</li> </ul>	Headteacher

- 4.3 Under no circumstances should letters be issued to parents in relation to any educational visit prior to approval being given.
- 4.4 In the event that a charge is to be made for a particular educational visit, all group leaders must discuss the charging with the Finance team and all letters in relation to the educational visit must be approved by Finance prior to being issued to parents.

## 5. **The Educational Visit Administration Process**

- 5.1 The School currently uses the Handsam Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTC) system to support the administration of educational visits.
- 5.2 The system provides a structured process for collecting all the required information in connection to an educational visit including risk assessments, emergency contact information, medical issue control measures and finance and absence prompts.
- 5.3 Failure to follow the procedures outlined will result in the planned educational visit being unapproved and therefore cancelled.
- 5.4 Any member of staff potentially organising an educational visit should first speak to the Educational Visits Coordinator to obtain log in details to the Handsam system and then follow the process below:
- 5.5 A detailed standard operating procedure exists for staff to follow and is located in:

**Staff Shared/Curriculum Areas/Enrichment/Educational Visits.**

	Description
<b>Step 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trip Planner selects the appropriate LOtC plan on the system.</li> <li>• They then complete the 'Visit Request' on the LOtC plan.</li> <li>• This is then submitted via the system and is sent to the Educational Visits Coordinator.</li> <li>• The Headteacher or Educational Visits Coordinator will approve the request (dependent on the type of educational visit, as detailed in section 4 after satisfying themselves that the visit is seen as appropriate to the needs of the school.</li> <li>• Letters can be issued to parents through SchoolComms once approval has been given at this stage.</li> <li>• Visits using the 'CHS Sports Fixture/Competition/Event' plan sports fixture can then go ahead without further planning.</li> <li>• Standard, Adventurous, Residential or International visits require further planning and should go to Step 2.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Trip Planner will proceed and complete the 'Visit Management Plan'.</li> <li>• The Head Teacher or Educational Visits Coordinator will formally approve the visit planning after satisfying themselves that the visit has been adequately planned and organised.</li> <li>• Visits using the 'CHS Standard Visits' plan can then go ahead without further planning.</li> <li>• Adventurous, Residential or International visits require further planning and should go to Step 3.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For Adventurous Activities, UK Residential and International visits the trip planner will complete the 'Visit Arrangements' on the LOtC plan.</li> <li>• The Head Teacher or Educational Visits Coordinator will formally approve the visit planning after satisfying themselves that the visit has been adequately planned and organised.</li> <li>• Following approval then the visit can go ahead.</li> </ul>

## 6. Insurance Cover

- 6.1** The school will maintain an appropriate level of insurance cover, including Public Liability, Employers Liability, Vehicle Insurance and Travel Insurance plus Winter Sports Cover as appropriate.
- 6.2** Full details of the insurance cover can be obtained from the Finance team and summary details will be available on the school website.

## **Appendix 1: Required Planning Procedures for Educational Visits**

The following guidelines must be followed by any member of staff wishing to plan and lead an educational visit or trip. Failure to follow the procedures outlined will result in the planned visit being unapproved and therefore cancelled.

Where staff are concerned regarding these procedures, have certain issues or have limited experience of visits, they must firstly contact the Educational Visits Co-ordinator [EVC], in order to gain guidance and advice.

### **Organising an Educational Visit**

Chorlton High School uses the Handsam Online LOtC and School Visit System [[www.handsam.org.uk](http://www.handsam.org.uk)] for all educational visits. When staff organise a visit they must initially register with this company through the EVC.

There are 5 plans for Educational Visits at Chorlton High School. Depending on the type of visit, the procedure to gain approval is different. The first thing a prospective group leader must determine is under which plan their visit falls.

- Standard Visits
- Sports Events
- Adventurous Activities
- UK Residential
- International Residential

**Standard Visits and Sports Events** are routine visits that generally involve straightforward journeys and involve no greater risk posed to staff and students than they would encounter in a normal day-to-day activity.

All completed documentation for these visits should be approved by the EVC at least 10 days prior to the actual visit.

**Adventurous Activities Visits** involve a higher level of risk and therefore a greater degree of planning. Activities include water sports, indoor and outdoor climbing, caving, ice-skating, orienteering and trekking. All completed documentation for these visits should be approved by the EVC at least 10 days prior to the actual visit. Providers need to meet the requirements of the Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority.

**UK Residential Visits** are visits that involve at least one overnight stay in the United Kingdom and have an increased level of risk. The accommodation should be visited to ensure safe and suitable, number of students in rooms etc. If a visit is not possible then necessary provision should be made such as ensuring the company is reputable, conversation with the provider and reviews of other school users for example. All completed documentation for these visits should be approved by the EVC at least 14 days prior to the actual visit. These visits require full approval of the Headteacher.

**International Visits** include both residential and day visits to countries other than the United Kingdom. The accommodation should be visited to ensure safe and suitable, number of students in rooms etc. If a visit is not possible then necessary provision should be made such as ensuring the company is reputable, conversation with the provider and reviews of other school users for

example. All completed documentation for these visits should be approved by the EVC at least 21 days prior to the actual visit. These visits require full approval of the Headteacher.

Guidance notes for the Handsam Log In procedure and Standard Operating procedures on completing the fields for each Plan can be found in Staff Shared, Curriculum Areas, Enrichment, Educational Visits.

### **Use of external providers**

When using an external provider such as a coach company, a theatre venue or an outdoor pursuits company the trip leader is responsible, along with the EV, in checking the credibility of the company. Transport booked, through CHS Finance Department, will be with reputable companies who are fully insured with an operator's license. Staff will ensure that students are never left unsupervised with the driver or other transport company employees. When using an external venue such as a theatre, Challenge for Change, Media City etc. they will provide their own building risk assessments and fire evacuation procedures which should be included in the HANDSAM planning. If external individuals are working with students, for example, a sports leader or workshop practitioner the students should always be accompanied by CHS staff. If there is exception to this, for example an instructor on a ski trip, the trip lead must ensure they have checked the DBS of the staff involved and that the company responsible for the trip has met all the trip leads expectations for the safety and well-being of the students.

Please be aware that when Chorlton High School students attend an organised offsite venue, as a group or individual, under the auspices of representing the school, it is deemed an educational visit. It is irrelevant as to whether they travel directly from school, or from home. It is also deemed an educational visit even if the event has been organised/funded from a separate organisation. If we are aware of a student, being selected because of their association with school, then our duty of care is triggered. This clarification extends to weekends. For example, if a student is identified *through school* and is then selected for a sports club, a local drama group or a dance company, then the school has a duty of care.

If in any doubt, please consult the EVC.

## **The Planning Process**

### **Stage 1: Visit Request**

The prospective group leader should initially meet with Curriculum Leader or attached SLT to propose an educational visit prior to any detailed planning.

If the visit is to be in curriculum time, then staff should ensure that they have completed an 'Absence from Lessons' form and that absence has been granted by the office manager.

If there are any financial implications, for example students to be charged or bookings to be made, then the Group Leader must meet with the Finance Department to clarify the process prior to any letters being sent to parents or bookings made.

Initial approval is only gained through the completion and submission of a Visit Request on the Handsam system to the EVC.



No formal bookings or letters to parents should be done until approval has been given by the EVC.

Using Handsam the Group Leader will log in and select 'add a new LOTC visit' and complete the details selecting the appropriate Plan for their visit. On the Visit Request Form complete all of the information and submit to the EVC.

Due to the regularity of Sports Events, once the plan has been approved by the EVC then the visit can go ahead.

All other plans, once they have been approved they will then move to the stage of planning.

## **Stage 2: Visit Management Plan and Visit Arrangements**

Once initial approval has been gained, the group leader can then embark on the detailed planning on Handsam.

At this stage the group leader makes the necessary bookings, and plans the details of the visit in accordance with DfES guidance. This can be found in Health and Safety of Students on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide 1988 (reprinted in 2001) and DFE Health and Safety Advice 2014. Copies of both of these publications are in Staff Shared and they are available from the Educational Visits Coordinator.

The SIMS system holds a record of all students who have consent for visits in curriculum time and activities immediately after school e.g. sports fixtures. However, information should be sent to parents informing them of the visit. If the students have not got consent, then written Parental Consent will be required. For evening and weekend visits additional written consent is required.

Further documentation to be completed and attached:

- The risk assessments for the journey.
- The risk assessments of the activities in which the students will participate. (Blank risk assessments and generic risk assessments, that can be amended, are available in Staff Shared/Curriculum Areas/Enrichment/Educational Visits.)
- Safety documentation from the transport providers'/tour operators.
- A detailed itinerary for the visit that includes each activity.
- A full information pack for staff on the visit.
- Emergency student contact information including SEN, medical and Pupil Premium information. This should be requested from Admin.
- The information provided by admin includes a 'control measure' column that needs to be completed. This is for the planner to record how to control the risk that the medical or SEN issue poses, for example 'ensure student has their inhaler' for Asthma or contacting home for more information regarding their epilepsy and the risk of seizure on the trip.
- For UK Residential and International visits, Individual Parental Consent Sheets will have to be completed by parents/carers.

Copies of the Emergency student contact information must be taken on the visit and control measures should be in place for any student medical conditions. When uploaded to Handsam this must be titled 'Emergency and Medical Contact list'.

In case of an emergency while the visit is in progress the Group Leader will provide two staff contacts, usually the EVC and a member of SLT. They will have access to full details and registers of the visit.

When the Visit Management Plan has been completed it is then submitted to the EVC for approval.

For UK Residential and International visits, the Visit Arrangements form then has to be completed and submitted for approval.

The Group leader should leave two copies (for Reception and Student Services) of the following information at the main Reception Desk:

- The names of the students taking part in the activity,
- A description of the activity,
- The time that you expect to be back at school and
- An emergency contact telephone number.

If for any reason you are likely to be back at school much later than expected, you should contact the school on telephone number 0161 882 1150 or out of reception hours then call a member of the Estates team. As the trip leader leaves for the trip they should note the Duty manager phone number located on the front door.

The use of the 'Out of School Activity' register will greatly assist the school's reception and caretaking staff when dealing with questions/concerns raised by parents or carers.

### **Stage 3:**

Once the educational visit has been completed then the Group Leader needs to reflect on the success of the trip and if to be repeated any potential improvements.

International Visits have a formal stage on HANDSAM to evaluate the trip in detail by producing a short report of successes and learning points for repeated trips.

A general report about the visit is also required which can then be used in the School's marketing and publicity materials.