

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Aim

The aim of this policy is to sustain and promote a broad range of off-site educational visits from this Academy, whilst ensuring safe practice and competent supervision.

Background Information Definition of an Educational Visit

Any organised, off-site visit involving students or young people that requires the permission and approval from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the parents/carers of the students or young people attending. A visit may take place at any time of the year and will be submitted through the EVOLVE system for approval by the Education Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) or the Local Authority for adventurous or residential visits.

Key Points for all Visits

- All educational visits must have clearly identified aims and objectives. This includes After School Club activities.
- All educational visits must have an approved competent Visit Leader who is an employee at the Academy.
- Approval for an educational visit and for the designated competent Visit Leader role is made by the EVC.
- All visits must provide evidence of a prepared written Risk Assessment.
- Visit Leaders must carry copies of all supporting documentation on the visit, for example, emergency contacts, itinerary, names and group detail.
- EVCs must retain and record all supporting documentation centrally.
- Parents/carers must be fully informed of all arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments to be considered.

OFSTED's Key Finding from its most recent report on Learning Outside the Classroom (October 2008) states: "When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed **significantly to raising standards** and improving pupils' or young people's personal, social and emotional development."

St Andrew's Academy fully supports the vision behind the Government's 'Learning Outside the Classroom' Manifesto. We recognise that the benefits for young people engaged on educational visits include:

- Raising achievement through organised, powerful experiences and opportunities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Award.
- Participating in challenging physical activity and encouraging a healthy lifestyle.
- Raising self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- Appreciating landscape diversity through exploring natural environments.
- Experiencing a range of built environments, extending their cultural awareness and widening horizons.
- Being involved in teamwork and problem-solving through residential experiences.
- Engaging students or young people and making learning 'real' and relevant.

Inclusion and Entitlement

Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum. All students are entitled to participate, irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities. Each student has an entitlement to experience:

- Effective learning opportunities.
- Success in learning.
- Achieving as high a standard as possible.

Teachers will set appropriate learning challenges, responding to students' diverse learning needs. The Academy will make provision, with well-planned reasonable adjustments made to support students, enabling them, where possible, to participate effectively in **all** educational visits.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher/Senior Manager must:

- Be consulted on any educational visit being organised and kept informed of arrangements, as necessary.
- Ensure that the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is aware of his/her duties and that a clear line of responsibility is established.
- Ensure any Headteacher/Senior Managers who sign approval forms for educational visits must in turn have evidence of recent and relevant training.
- Ensure the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent, trained and is revalidated/accredited through appropriate training courses every three years as a minimum.
- Make sure, through the Headteacher's report, that the Academy Council are kept informed of the nature and progress/success of educational visits.
- Ensure adequate Staff Inset, Visit Leader Training, First Aid and Continued Professional Development (CPD) for educational visits (on EVC training we recommend half yearly Inset for whole staff).
- Ensure that medical and personal/address details for all students are updated annually.
- Consider insurance matters for educational visits and fully inform parents/carers.
- Write and fully inform parents/carers regarding regular and repeated activity that is either on or off-site, including PE and sporting activity and fixtures, or regular repeated programme of off-site educational visits.
- Ensure the Academy and Shaw Education Trust's policy for transporting children in cars is adhered to.
- Ensure parents/carers are informed they have responsibility for transporting their own children to and from venues when transport is not provided.
- Ensure there is an updated Charging and Remissions Policy that links to Shaw Education Trust and National Guidance.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator:

- Promotes and 'Champions' educational visits from the school and takes a lead in policy development, monitoring, Inset and other training for educational visits.
- Approves all visits and notifies the Local Authority for categories of 'Adventurous Activities' and 'Overseas Visits'.
- Ensures approval of educational visits will include approving the competency of the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff (consultation with the Headteacher may be desirable/advisable on occasions).
- Ensure the Visit Leader is an employee of Shaw Education Trust/St Andrew's Academy.
- Ensures compliance with requirements of this policy and guidance document.
- Ensures approval, notification forms, checklists and 'Provider Questionnaires' are completed appropriately.
- Ensures that all the procedures outlined in the Academy policy are followed.
- Supports and advises colleagues in planning visits.
- Ensures that appropriate Risk Assessments are completed and appropriate control measures are in place reducing risk to an acceptable level.
- Ensures that a 'collective discussion/briefing' regarding the risk assessment process prior to the visit has taken place, this ensures ownership of the Risk Assessment by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff.
- Ensures all staff are aware of educational visits procedures via documentation and Inset sessions, staff training and relevant meetings.
- Checks to ensure parents/carers are kept fully informed of visit arrangements and details.
- Ensures accident and emergency procedures are in place and understood by all staff.
- Ensures records of all accident reports and 'near misses' are held centrally in the Academy by the EVC, i.e. the Risk Management Portfolio.
- Ensures records of all visits are held centrally in the Academy by the EVC, i.e. the Risk Management Portfolio for each and every visit, which will include lists of all participants, Risk Assessments, itinerary and programme information.

- Ensures appropriate staff records are collated for all educational visits and then stored, including checks on staff qualifications and driving details (including car insurance with business use if transporting students in own cars).
- Review staff evaluations of trips and provide and encourage staff training and CPD.
- Ensure an annual review of any generic Academy Risk Assessments and an annual 'Fit for Purpose' review of the Academy policy for educational visits.

Visit Leader, Teaching and Support Staff

- The Visit Leader must ensure there are clear educational aims for the visit, be specifically competent and approved as the Visit Leader by the Headteacher/Senior Manager/EVC.
- Have a thorough up-to-date knowledge of the Academy's Educational Visits Policy and procedures.
- Understand the importance of the 'collective discussion/briefing' regarding the 'risk assessment' process prior to the visit, ensuring ownership of the Risk Assessment by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff.
- All staff included on a visit must have a clear understanding of accident/emergency procedures.
- The Visit Leader must carry an Emergency Contact List of everyone going on the visit in addition to the Emergency Base Contacts with the home/school contact and the school office. This list must include names, addresses and telephone numbers of each student and adult, any special medical requirements, any negative consents to medical treatment, any special dietary requirements, helpers and the groups that the children will be in.
- The Visit Leader must carry the contact details of the school office and the home/school contact and be aware of the procedures to follow in the event of an accident or incident.
- Ensure parents/carers are kept fully informed of visit arrangements, details and itinerary.
- Plan the visit carefully, carry out Risk Assessments prior to the visit and ensure that copies of these details are given to the Headteacher/Senior Manager and EVC in the agreed time.
- It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to give appropriate and clear information regarding Risk Assessments and roles and responsibilities to any additional adult/volunteer helpers, and if possible invite them to take part in the 'collective discussion/briefing' to promote 'ownership'.
- Collate and check parental consent forms for all students. A clear Risk Assessment must be made for any named child with known medical or behavioural issues.
- It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure everyone involved is suitably briefed at all stages of the visit. All group members must be clear of rules and behaviour code. Students should be involved in the ongoing Risk Assessment.
- The Visit Leader has responsibility for the whole group and must ensure the following documentation is taken on all visits: all relevant students' medical and consent information, the Risk Assessment including a Plan B, itinerary details, emergency contact details and 'Critical Incident' emergency numbers.
- Copies of these documents must be kept by the Visit Leader, the school office and a copy of emergency contacts.
- It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure adequate first aid has been considered and provided for the visit and that first aid kits are taken along with individual student's medical kits and requirements as appropriate.
- All staff and adult helpers should be made aware of who is responsible for first aid. The Risk Assessment must show evidence first aid has been considered.
- Transport for all visits must meet Local Authority guidance/standards. The itinerary, the arrangements and drop off and collection places must be checked and agreed upon.

Notes on 'Risk Management' and the Planning and Preparation for Educational Visits

Thorough preparation for a visit must be undertaken. The EVC and the Headteacher/Senior Manager should be consulted regarding the arrangements, nature and purpose of the visit. The visit should have clear educational aims and should tie in with the work that has been planned for that term.

The following must be addressed in further planning:

- Matters of supervision, Provider checks, content of all the activities, first aid and transport must be considered and organised in advance.
- Parents/carers must be advised of the details of any visit and kept fully informed. Any cost of the visit must take into account the Academy's Charging and Remissions Policy.
- All necessary permission/consent slips must be obtained.
- A charged mobile phone should be taken on all trips. Check that mobile phone coverage is in the area that you are visiting.
- An Emergency Contingency Plan B needs to be in place, detailing alternative arrangements due to inclement weather, transport breakdown etc.

How to undertake a Risk Assessment and who to submit it to

In addition to the above planning, a written Risk Assessment (a statutory requirement) must be made for any proposed educational off-site visit. It should:

- Identify any significant risks which students, staff and helpers may be exposed to and outline any control measures that will be put in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level.
- Be passed on to the EVC and Headteacher/Senior Manager for consultation and approval.
- During the visit, be kept with the Emergency Contact List and other planning and risk management documentation.
- Check if the venue and/or Provider have their own Risk Assessments.
- Ensure a suitable 'collective discussion/briefing' takes place regarding the Risk Assessment prior to the visit, ensuring ownership of the Risk Assessment by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff. Any generic risk assessments must be changed, adapted or modified to suit the specific considerations and needs of the group during this discussion/meeting.

The six main considerations in undertaking Risk Assessments are:

- Type of Group (needs and behaviours).
- Staffing (ratios and competency).
- Equipment.
- Venue/activities.
- Travel.
- Emergency Procedures.

More detailed prompts under each consideration, to help in undertaking Risk Assessments, may be obtained from the EVC. **With more hazardous or unusual visits, close contact between the Academy and the venue/provider is an important safeguard. A preliminary staff visit should be made if possible. Seek advice of the Headteacher/Senior Manager/EVC.**

Risk Assessments must be passed on to the EVC/Senior Manager via the EVOLVE system as follows:

- Off-site visits – two weeks prior to the visit. (The LA will require at least one month's notification for Adventurous Activities and six months notification for Overseas Visits).

During the Visit

In addition to measures documented on the Risk Assessment, staff should:

- If travelling by coach, ensure the driver has the Academy's contact details.
- Allocate staff to students, so each member of staff knows who they have responsibility for at all times.
- Carry a class list/register. This is to be called before starting a trip and departing from any visit.
- In addition, a head count should be done regularly and at the very least every time students leave the coach and when they get back on the coach.
- Ensure adequate supervision and check students are always given suitable briefings in their group with their group leader and staff take regular head counts.
- Be prepared to make 'ongoing' professional judgments related to assessment of risks. Do not be afraid to make changes to Risk Assessments in light of changed circumstances (Dynamic Risk Assessments).

After the Visit

- A post-visit evaluation report should be completed via the EVOLVE system, any accident/incident details recorded and the Risk Assessment reviewed appropriately.
- Where possible, encourage students and adult helpers to contribute to this report.
- A copy of the report should be given to the EVC.