



EDUCATIONAL VISITS & OVERNIGHT STAYS POLICY

POLICY AGREED: SUMMER TERM 2020 BY FULL GOVERNING BOARD

POLICY TO BE REVIEWED: SUMMER TERM 2023

Please refer to Cheshire West and Chester Health and Safety Guidance “Educational Visits and Overnight Stays” (revised 2010). (See EVOLVE documents)

All educational visits carry a degree of inherent risk. In order to meet legal and moral obligations in respect of school visits, risks must be assessed, and practical controls introduced to minimise the chance of injury.

Education visits are extremely varied in nature and so are the ages and aptitudes of the pupils undertaking them. Therefore, it is inappropriate to treat all educational visits alike and impossible to anticipate every eventuality within guidelines. In practice, a balance must be struck between constraining safeguards and the pursuit of educationally worthwhile activities.

Basis legal requirements, risk assessment forms, the role of the Governing Board and the Headteacher can be seen in the document **Cheshire West and Chester Health and Safety Guidance “Educational Visits and Overnight Stays” (revised 2010).**

Responsibilities of the EVC

The Headteacher will nominate a member of the SLT to take on the role of Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The EVC will support the Headteacher in the approval process by overseeing the EVOLVE system. Where necessary the EVC will organise training and support for staff in the role of carrying out educational visits, residentials and carrying out risk assessments.

Responsibilities of the teacher or visit leader

Regarding the responsibility of the teacher the following should be observed: -

General Principles

The visit leader should:

- Be physically and mentally fit to undertake the role of the leader.
- Have the necessary skills and qualifications.
- Be able to work within his/her own ability.
- Have adequate experience of the type of visit and kinds of activity involved.
- Be capable of managing emergencies and institution rescue/survival procedures.

Specific Principles – Please refer to Cheshire West and Chester Health and Safety Guidance “Educational Visits and Overnight Stays” (revised 2010).

The Visit leader has overall responsibility for the visit and should:

- Make the Headteacher clearly aware of the benefits of the visit.
- As part of the planning process, make a full assessment of the risks associated with the proposed visit and precautionary measures which will be used.
- Ensure that there are adequate staffing levels, determined by the teacher and agreed by senior management which, in addition to the teacher, can comprise of classroom assistants and adult volunteers. Teachers considering deviating from usual staffing levels should consult the Headteacher.
- Staffing should be great enough to cope in the event of a foreseeable emergency happening, with some idea of how a foreseeable emergency would need to be handled.
- Many hazardous activities might require a higher level of staffing than those with less risk.

- It is desirable, though not always practicable, for mixed parties of pupils to be accompanied by adults of both sexes.
- Where a visit is made jointly by two or more schools, the party should be accompanied by staff and volunteers from all the participating schools, preferably in proportion to the respective numbers of pupils from each school.

Adult Volunteers

The use of adult volunteers is acceptable in so far as they have the enough skills to match the tasks and contingencies likely to arise.

The principle of “in loco parentis” continues to apply to the use of adult volunteers, but teachers need to be aware that action following an accident could be brought against anyone in charge of a party as well as the Headteacher, Governing Board or LA.

Adult volunteers should be adequately briefed on what is expected of them and **not be left in charge of a group at any time.**

Adult volunteers should be advised to take out private accident insurance cover.

Pupil Supervision

A system of pupil supervision and recall is essential. This should be simple, understood by all, and practised.

Close supervision of the pupils during the night should be ensured by responsible adults sleeping close to the pupils. Pass keys will be needed to gain entry to any self-locking doors.

Hazardous activities

Every activity should not be banned just because it has some degree of inherent risk. However, risk analysis must always be undertaken and in advance. Where there are hazards that would not usually arise in school, additional risk control measures must be considered and established. Teachers should complete the risk benefit assessment forms (see ‘forms’ on EVOLVE)

Examples of hazardous activities or those involving special skills are:

- camping/pony trekking/horse-riding/cycling/sailing/rowing swimming or diving in sea, rivers and lakes/field and environmental studies/industrial sites/any person delivering an activity involving hazards or requiring special skills should hold the relevant award qualification as laid down by the National Governing Board for that activity.

There are 3 categories of visit:

- Category 1 visits will be approved by the EVC and the head and will include non-adventurous activities and frequently repeated activities for which a generic risk assessment will suffice.
- Category 2 visits including adventurous activities led by LA maintained centres will be overseen by the LA.
- Category 3 visits will require LA approval and include higher risk outdoor activities, activities led by non-LA centres and residential.

Financing

The school must meet the cost of visits from their own budgets, or by voluntary donations from parents. Teachers must keep clear and accurate accounts on individual parents' contributions, particularly regarding how the money is sent. Receipts must be produced wherever possible.

Record Keeping

- Suitable arrangements must be made for pupil registration.
- Heads must ensure that a full list of names, home addresses and telephone numbers of all pupils and staff taking part is accessible for use in case of emergency. The information should further include the itinerary, address and telephone number of the accommodation used on the visit if applicable, copies of parental consent forms where applicable, and copies of legal documents, such as contracts and insurance certificates. This documentation should also be added to the EVOLVE system.

Emergencies

In an emergency the leader will need to assess the situation at the time and act to:

- Make sure everyone is accounted for.
- Protect the party from further danger.
- Provide first-aid and comfort.
- Notify the police and rescue services, giving essential information about the nature, location and condition of the party.
- Evacuate to safe accommodation if appropriate and possible.
- Notify school/Headteacher/emergency contact name enabling the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to follow the guidelines on the critical incident pack.
- Make no comment to the media unless authorised to do so.

Insurance

The Block Policy provided by the County Legal and Member Services Office covers all educational visits not lasting more than a day. It **does not** cover overnight stays. The school must therefore take out separate provision for residentials.

Transport

Drivers of the school minibuses must have their name on the County Drivers list, drawn up by school and should be competent to handle a vehicle of this size.

Drivers will be legally responsible for the vehicle and therefore should carry out minibus checks, maintain record of use and ensure that the necessary safety equipment is available on the bus.

Medical

- A school party should desirably include a registered first aider.
- The medication needs of individual pupils must be catered for. Medication taken from school must be signed for in the Drugs Book and kept within the secure drugs container.
- Appropriate first aid must be taken on educational visits.

Special Needs Pupils

All staff must be confident that the amount of assistance they have on an educational visit is enough to ensure the safety of all pupils. Outside school it may well be that the staffing ratio may need to be higher to deal with behavioural problems.

FURTHER INFORMATION appertaining to EEC legislation on visits in excess of 24 hours can be found in the County Guidelines.

Residential and Overnight Stays

All teachers must refer to the Cheshire West and Chester policies and guidance documents prior to organising a proposed visit.

Teachers should arrange a preliminary visit to check on suitability, risk assessment, external providers qualifications etc.

Please ensure that before taking any group of pupils on a residential visit that you have followed the following procedures:

- Make enquiries about the proposed venue, carry out a Risk Assessment checking facility on offer, check that the venue is registered with the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority if the visit is to include adventurous activities, a pre-visit to check facilities may be necessary. Obtain details of holiday dates, cost of holiday and check staff availability.
- Letter to inform parents of proposed holiday, with pro-forms to confirm they wish their child to attend, include cost, give opportunity to apply for financial support if necessary and if available. Consent forms/medication forms also to be sent to parents.
- Confirm numbers with centre and complete official booking form.
- Complete insurance forms (available from office) and return to insurance company with payment.
- Arrange coffee morning with parents to discuss details of venue/activity plans, medication/medical forms, cost of holiday, payment methods, kit list, proposed itinerary, transport details, packed lunch (if necessary).
- Return medical details, accommodation details, plus any other details required to the centre.
- Book minibus for required time.

The following forms must be completed/received prior to a visit:

Form A	Application for the notification/approval of educational visits by Headteacher, Governing Board or LA.
Form B	Confirmation from Headteacher/Governing Board for visit to go ahead.
Form C	Parental consent for a school visit.

The following Health and Safety/Risk assessment forms should be completed prior to the visit:

- Health & Safety risk assessment.
- Emergency contact information.

Copies of emergency contact information, parental consent forms, risk assessment, planned itinerary during visit, activity plan should be given to the Headteacher and one for office for reference prior to departing. Visit Leader and Deputy Leader should carry all relevant information during the visit.