

POLICY TITLE: EDUCATIONAL VISITS

STATUS: Non Statutory

REVIEWED BY: TEFAT

DATE of REVIEW: July 2015

AIM

Well planned and executed educational visits provide pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school and beyond. Provision of 'real-life' opportunities enables pupils to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them.

TEFAT encourages academies to maximise opportunities for children to engage with valuable learning experiences outside the school site while ensuring they are well planned and safe.

Statutory Guidance

DfE advice on health and safety covering activities that take place on or off school premises, including school trips [Health and Safety: Advice on Legal Duties and Powers](#) 2014

DfE recommended [consent form](#) for school trips and off-site activities

Links to other Policies

This policy should be read alongside the academy's curriculum statement, its health and safety policy and equalities policies.

Responsibilities

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for the wellbeing and safety of children and staff at all times while they are on TEFAT academy-organised trips and visits. S/he must:

- ✿ ensure that the Education Visits Coordinator has suitable training and experience to make sound professional judgements in relation to trips and visits
- ✿ ensure that the Trip Leader has suitable training and experience to manage an educational visit successfully and safely
- ✿ approve all trips and visits and check that they comply with TEFAT policy and current H&S requirements

- ✿ provide TEFAT with details of residential trips, trips abroad and trips/visits that involve higher risk activities. Such trips should be discussed with and approved by the Regional Director at least a term in advance, and details should be sent to finance@elliottfoundation.co.uk to ensure that appropriate insurance is in place.

Educational Visits Coordinator

The Educational visits Co-ordinator will ensure that:

- ✿ the Principal and Local Governing Body have approved the visit
- ✿ appropriate insurance cover is in place
- ✿ the risk assessment is complete and that the visit destination meets all H & S requirements
- ✿ trip leaders are suitably qualified/experienced if acting as an instructor
- ✿ all supervisors on the visit have sufficient expertise to supervise children and have appropriate DBS clearance
- ✿ parents have signed consent forms
- ✿ arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children
- ✿ travel arrangements are confirmed and advised appropriately
- ✿ the address and phone number of the visit's venue and contact name(s) are distributed to parents and key staff
- ✿ the names of all adults and pupils in the travelling group, the contact details of parents and next of kin of staff and volunteers are circulated appropriately.

Trip Leader

The Trip Leader is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should be appointed by the Principal. The Trip Leader should:

- ✿ Inform the Trip Coordinator of the intended trip and complete all relevant documents
- ✿ nominate and obtain authorisation for suitable members of staff to assist on the trip
- ✿ be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not
- ✿ undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents / carers
- ✿ undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- ✿ consider the health and safety of the group at all times
- ✿ check suitability of all pupils proposed for the visit
- ✿ observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- ✿ ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see below)
- ✿ Arrange a parents' information event
- ✿ ensure all information and documentation has been authorised by the Principal.

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit

Teachers on school-led visits continue to act as employees of TEFAT during and outside normal working hours.

Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- ✿ care for each individual child as any reasonable parent would
- ✿ follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline
- ✿ consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable
- ✿ not transfer/handover a duty of care to a third party

Responsibilities of pupils

Pupils must:

- ✿ not take unnecessary risks
- ✿ follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- ✿ dress for the conditions and behave sensibly and responsibly
- ✿ look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the Trip Leader accordingly
- ✿ not undertake any task that they fear may be out of their comfort zone or that they think will be dangerous

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be prevented from participating on the visit or may be sent home at the discretion of the Trip leader. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Exploratory visit

Wherever possible the Trip Leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ✿ ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the visit
- ✿ assess potential areas and levels of risk
- ✿ ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. It is essential to see and inspect copies of the venue's health and safety status, policies and insurance.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be completed in advance of a visit using an Evaluation Form. The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- ✿ what are the risks?
- ✿ who may be affected by them?
- ✿ what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- ✿ can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- ✿ what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- ✿ what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit?

The Trip Leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if appropriate. The Trip Leader should consider the following when assessing the risks:

- ✿ the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- ✿ the location
- ✿ the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- ✿ the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- ✿ pupils with special educational or medical needs
- ✿ the quality and suitability of available equipment
- ✿ suitable conditions for the activity ie: weather and timing

A risk assessment form is available from help@elliottfoundation.co.uk

Residential visits

Hostels and Hotels

The trip leader should check in advance that:

- ✿ s/he should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the children's – the academy should endeavour to obtain a room plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance
- ✿ the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group
- ✿ access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times
- ✿ separate male and female sleeping areas must be used for pupils and adults
- ✿ the whole party is aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel
- ✿ security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- ✿ locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group
- ✿ there is adequate storage for clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables;
- ✿ there is adequate lighting – and it is advisable to bring a torch
- ✿ there is provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs
- ✿ there is adequate safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)

Coastal visits

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming. The Trip Leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- ✿ Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, will **not** be allowed.
- ✿ tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked;
- ✿ ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags;
- ✿ establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- ✿ look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc;
- ✿ Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- ✿ cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times.
- ✿ consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. In-water activities should take place only following completion of an appropriate risk assessment and measures have been put in place to control identified risks. Any activities in water must be supervised by a qualified lifeguard.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays or travel abroad it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider in the group.

The Trip Leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services and the distance to the nearest hospital.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements
- An Accident Report Book

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The contents of a first-aid kit may depend on what activities are planned.

Supervision

It is important to have an adequate ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The following should be considered:

- sex, age and ability of group
- special needs pupils
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in off-site supervision
- duration and nature of the journey
- type of any accommodation

As a general guideline, the following ratio of adults to pupils should be followed, but each visit should be assessed on an individual basis through the risk assessment process

EYFS	1:4
Key Stage One	1:5
Key Stage Two	1:10

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required or external trainers are required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. All adult supervisors, including school staff must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times, particularly pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with SEN. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

The academy's Education Visits Coordinator and/or the Principal is responsible for checking any external trainers/supervisors have the appropriate clearance including valid DBS certification.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the Local Governing Body must ensure that the Trip leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Local Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Trip leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

Preparing Pupils

Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and others' safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include consideration of health and safety issues.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. Children should be encouraged to have a go during the visit but they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Should the behaviour of pupils cause concern for their safety and others, then consideration should be given for the withdrawal from an activity. On residential visits the Trip Leader may consider the early return home of a child dependent on the circumstances.

Information to pupils

The Trip Leader will determine how information is detailed to pupils. Pupils should understand:

- ✿ the aims and objectives of the visit / activity
- ✿ background information about the place to be visited
- ✿ how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- ✿ why safety precautions are in place
- ✿ why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- ✿ what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- ✿ who is responsible for the group
- ✿ what to do if approached by a stranger
- ✿ what to do if separated from the group
- ✿ emergency procedures
- ✿ rendezvous procedures

Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules

- ✿ All pupils and staff must wear seat belts
- ✿ Pupils should be aware of safe crossing procedures
- ✿ Adequate supervision at all times when travelling
- ✿ Head counts are carried out when the group is getting off or on to transport

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The academy must not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to accommodate children with special needs and disabilities whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit.

When assessing the suitability of a venue, the trip leader should specifically check whether there are appropriate adaptations to meet the children's needs e.g. access for those using wheelchairs, or facilities to address personal care needs.

Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures that may be need to be addressed at the planning stage. Where necessary, individual risk assessments should be carried out.

Communicating with Parents / Carers

Parents should be aware that staff will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information should be advised in writing as well as through a meeting to parents / carers prior to a visit:

- ✿ dates of the visit
- ✿ times of departure and return
- ✿ mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
- ✿ details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- ✿ names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
- ✿ the visit's objectives
- ✿ details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
- ✿ Insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
- ✿ clothing and equipment to be taken
- ✿ money to be taken
- ✿ the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to
- ✿ standards of behaviour expected

Parental consent

The Academy must seek a separate parental consent form for:

- ✿ adventure activities
- ✿ visits abroad

Such visits carry an additional layer of risk and must be approved by the Regional Director and the Finance Director.

If parents withhold consent the pupil must not be taken on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupils in some other way, wherever possible. The academy's parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

If there is a pre-trip meeting, the academy may wish to provide an interpreter to assist parents who do not speak English fluently. Forms should be translated to ensure that parents are fully aware of what they are being asked to sign.

The Local Governing Body will:

Review this policy, with guidance from the Principal, and alongside the updated Elliot Foundation policy, every two years.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This statement will be reviewed biennially by TEFAT.
Equalities impact assessment considered

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: July 2017

