



Educational Visits Policy for Academic Year 2018/19

Policy Area

Non-Statutory Policy

Author

Headteacher

Version

1.1

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Next Review

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Introduction

This policy applies to all educational visits run by ***Coombe Wood School*** (The School) and all members of staff involved in their successful and safe execution. These include: The Headteacher, Local Advisors, the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), Visit Leaders and staff/volunteers attending visits.

The School believes that educational visits are crucial for the wider learning of students. They provide access to knowledge and experiences that would not be possible if students remained in school for the duration of their education and are therefore invaluable in ensuring students can be academically successful whilst becoming well rounded individuals.

Links to other policies and national guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies belonging to the School: Behaviour Policy; Child Protection Policy; Health and Safety Policy; Medical Policy; Pupil Premium Strategy;

This policy was written with reference to guidelines provided by the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) which can be found here: <http://oeapng.info/guidance-by-role/>.

It is recommended that the Headteacher and the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare regularly use the checklist provided by the OEAP: <http://oeapng.info/head-manager/>

It is recommended that the EVC regularly makes use of the checklist provided by the OEAP: <http://oeapng.info/evc/>

Clarification of roles

Folio Education Trust will ensure:

- they have a clear understanding that they are the employer of establishment staff and are fully aware of an employer's responsibilities under health and safety law;
- that each school within the Trust has guidance in place regarding Educational Visits;
- that each school has robust systems to support implementation of the guidance;
- they challenge in order to be clear about how outdoor learning and visits lead to a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness;
- there is an establishment visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures - including emergency procedures - and it supports the principles of inclusion;
- their involvement in the visit approval process is delegated to each individual school;
- a member of the Local Advisory Board approves all residential visits (lead Advisor for Health & Safety);
- there is a trained EVC in each establishment who meets the employer's requirements, with a sufficient time allowance to fulfil the role and training to support the planning and delivery of visits and outdoor learning;

- there are monitoring procedures in place, activities are evaluated, good practice is shared and any issues are followed up to comply with statutory and employer's requirements.

The Headteacher of each school will ensure with the support of Folio Education Trust:

- that they are familiar with their policies for outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom and that these are regularly reviewed;
- that suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- that insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- that best value is obtained when organising Educational Visits and that consideration is given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- that where charges are made to parents, these are within legal and employer requirements and that proper procedures are in place to account for visit finances;
- that where the activity or visit involves a third party provider: appropriate checks have been made and assurances obtained; a clear contract is in place setting out what the contractor is to provide; the provider holds sufficient indemnity insurance.

The Headteacher will ensure:

- they have clearly designated a suitable member of staff as the EVC and that the designated person meets your Employer's requirements, including undertaking EVC training as recommended or required;
- outdoor learning is included within the process of self-evaluation providing evidence that may support how it contributes towards school improvement and overall effectiveness;
- they have assigned sufficient time for leaders to organise activities and visits properly;
- arrangements are in place for the Local Advisory Board to be informed of such visits as are required by the establishment's Educational Visits Policy;

The Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare will ensure:

- they are familiar with their establishment's policies for outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom;
- all activities and visits comply with this guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required;
- they approve all visits on 'Evolve' in good time before they go out; (if the school doesn't use Evolve then the visit must be approved by the Lead Advisor for health & Safety)
- where needed, they have access to expert advice such as from an accredited outdoor education adviser; (speak to Folio Education Trust for further support on identifying a suitable external advisor)
- suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all adults including volunteers, helpers and visitors. Decisions

need to be made about when these adults are engaged in regulated activity and so should be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;

- they support or acts as the EVC in ensuring that: all activities and visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of leadership, information has been shared with parents and consent has been given if required;
- inclusion issues are addressed;
- Risk Management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient;
- all visits are evaluated against the visit objectives. Evaluation should also cover best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any incident and informing of future visits;
- there are suitable Emergency Procedures in place for each visit and the School has an Emergency Plan for off-site visits, including procedures to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident;
- serious incidents are reported to the School's Local Advisory Board and Folio Education Trust as required, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR. (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013)

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will:

- be a champion for all aspects of visits and outdoor learning;
- challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively in order to provide a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards school/establishment effectiveness;
- support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable visits/outdoor learning;
- ascertain that all leaders are appropriately competent, confident and accountable to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated;
- support an apprenticeship/succession planning culture to ensure sustainable activities and visits and the development of competent leaders;
- mentor leaders and aspirant leaders, supporting their on-going development and training and sample monitoring their activity to identify any further training needs;
- ensure that visit planning complies with the School's requirements and that the arrangements are ready for approval within agreed timescales;
- ensure arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all participants and staff;
- ensure details related to off-site activities and visits (including personal details of both participants and leaders) are accessible at all times to designated 24/7 Emergency Contacts in case of a serious incident;
- act as or support the Senior teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare and Local Advisors in approving decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competency to fulfil their roles;
- identify the types of visit that require a preliminary visit by staff;
- ensure Risk Management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient.
- ensure there are contingency plans in place to deal with changing circumstances during a visit (Plan B).

- ensure there are suitable Emergency Procedures in place for each visit and the School has an Emergency Plan for off-site visits, including procedures to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident;
- if the School has it, use 'Evolve' to approve all trip visits that meet the criteria detailed in the policy in good time before the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare;
- ensure that activities are evaluated against their aims for learning and development, that good practice is shared and any issues are followed up and comply with statutory and employer's requirements;
- keep your Senior Leadership Team and Local Advisors informed about the visits/outdoor learning taking place and its contribution to school/establishment effectiveness.
- Oversee and coordinate the monitoring of visits through the following mechanisms:
 - Field visits (at least one per term with different Visit Leaders)
 - Analysing and signing off Visit Leader Evaluations
 - Arranging for peer monitoring to take place that will also be used in succession planning.

Educational Visits Coordinators will be appointed who have:

- significant experience of practical outdoor learning and visit leadership;
- status within the establishment that enables guiding of the working practices of their colleagues.

Visit Leaders should:

- be specifically competent (Being competent means that the leader has demonstrated the ability to lead to the level demanded by the visit, and has sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the activities, the group, and the environments they will operate in);
- be approved to carry out the lead role for the specific activity;
- follow the School educational visit planning process;
- be able to use the chosen environment or venue(s) to provide a wide range of learning or development outcomes;
- liaise with the School's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to ensure that visits have clear aims and are planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks;
- ensure that there is effective supervision;
- take a lead on risk management. It is good practice to involve all the visit leadership team to ensure wide understanding and to give clarity about what they need to do. It is also good practice to involve young people wherever appropriate;
- define the roles and responsibilities of other leaders (and participants) to ensure effective supervision, appointing a deputy wherever possible;
- ensure that child protection issues are addressed (e.g. good safeguarding practice is followed and adults are appropriately vetted and checked);
- provide relevant information to other leaders including the aims and how they can contribute to achieving these, the location, the participants (age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues);
- ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary;

- provide relevant information to parents and participants, and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate;
- make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level;
- ensure that if the visit leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, this is managed to avoid any possible compromise of effective supervision;
- ensure that all leaders and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details;
- evaluate all aspects, both during and after the event;
- report any accidents, incidents or near misses.

Procedural Requirements for school's using 'Evolve':

The following procedural requirements must have taken place for an educational visit to run:

Planning and Approval

- Visit Leaders should follow all steps on the Educational Day Visit Form that can be found on 'Evolve' to run a day visit.
- Visit Leaders should follow all steps on the Educational Overnight Visit Form that can be found on 'Evolve' to run an overnight visit.
- As part of this process, Visit Leaders should take full responsibility for fully assessing any risks including: assessing the suitability of external providers, planning emergency procedures, and providing for any medical needs. They should seek advice from the EVC when required in these instances.
- As part of this process, Visit Leaders should also manage all communication with parents and ensure full consent is in place for the trip to go ahead.
- Day trips must be approved on Evolve by the EVC and the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare.
- Overnight trips must be approved on Evolve by the EVC, the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, Local Advisory Board and the external Local Authority Advisor.

During the trip, staff should ensure they can confirm the following questions:

- Do all staff have a copy of the risk assessment and an in depth knowledge of the key risks and how they can be mitigated?
- Do all staff have a high awareness of any students with serious medical needs and the procedures should an emergency arise?
- Does one member of staff have responsibility for medication and an understanding of when and how this should be administered?
- Have staff all shared their contact details so that you can stay in touch?
- Do all staff know precisely who they are responsible for and how to act should the group get separated?
- Have double headcount procedures been established between staff by the group leader?

- Have group walking and public transport procedures been established between staff by the group leader including one person leading, one at the back and others regularly placed in between?
- Has a register been completed?
- Do all students have your and the EVCs emergency contact details hard copy with as many as possible having it in their mobile phones?
- Do students know the procedures for what to do if they get lost?
- Have students had behavioural expectations explained to them including a total ban on alcohol, drugs, sexual activity and purchasing items that could cause harm?
- Have students had protocols for how to act when unsupervised explained to them including to never be in any less than a group of three, how to avoid potential hazards and what to do in an emergency?

Before any kind of hazardous activity e.g. skiing, water sports, swimming etc. staff should ensure they can confirm the following questions:

- Is this a planned activity that is on the approved risk assessment? If not it cannot go ahead.
- Is expert supervision in place at all times when students are taking part? E.g. instructors, lifeguards etc.
- Do all staff know the procedures should an injury arise? e.g. how to contact emergency services in this country, where is the nearest medical centre?

All trips should then be fully evaluated.

Monitoring

The EVC is responsible for monitoring visits through the following mechanisms:

- Field visits (at least one per term with different Visit Leaders)
- Analysing and signing off Visit Leader Evaluations
- Arranging for peer observing to take place that will also be used in succession planning.

Induction, training, apprenticeship, succession planning

The EVC and Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare will receive annual training from the OEAP and this will be tracked by the school's Human Resources Manager.

The EVC and Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare will run training on Educational Visits for any members of staff involved or likely to be involved in visits. This will be done on the same cycle as Child Protection Training. Visit Leaders and potential Visit Leaders will be included in this but will receive bespoke training in accordance with their role covering the relevant details of this policy and appropriate guidance.

The school will run an Educational Visits Leadership Scheme that will be overseen by the EVC to ensure Visit Leaders have the appropriate level of training and experience. Records must be kept up to date each term. Details of this scheme can be seen below:

Grade	Experience	Training	Is able to...
4	Has led at least one overnight domestic visit and attended and observed at least one foreign overnight visit.	Educational Visit Leader Trained First Aid Trained	Lead overnight foreign visits
3	Has attended and observed at least one overnight visit and led at least two domestic day visits.	Educational Visit Leader Trained First Aid Trained	Lead overnight domestic visits
2	Has attended and observed at least three educational visits	Educational Visit Leader Trained	Lead domestic day visits
1	No experience of attending or observing an educational visit.	Educational Visit Leader Trained	Go on all educational visits with a qualified Visit Leader

Risk management and risk-benefit assessment

Risk management, in the context of outdoor learning and off-site visits, is a two stage process:

- The identification of the potential benefits to be gained from an activity, along with any risks to the health and safety of those involved.
- The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgement to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.

All Folio Education Trust school take a common-sense and proportionate approach to risk management, recognising that risk assessment and risk management are tools to enable students to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether and it should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork.

Categories of Visit

There are two broad categories of visit requiring different levels of planning:

- **Routine visits** that involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by the School's procedures and policy. Such visits should require minimal planning or preparation beyond what is needed to make best use of the learning opportunity. In

a school context, they are simply lessons in a 'different' classroom. Examples of this type of visit includes supervised work being undertaken in areas in close proximity to the school site. This also includes external tournaments and competitions held in other schools.

- **Visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment.** A visit moves into this category because one or more aspects cannot be managed adequately by existing procedures and policy. This may be due to distance from the establishment, the nature of the activities, the environment or venue(s), the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. The additional steps needed to manage these aspects should be identified and recorded.

Three levels of risk management

Risk management involves answering two basic questions:

- a. What could go wrong?
- b. What are we going to do about it?

This process happens at three levels:

1. **Generic** – Policies and procedures that apply across a range of visits (normally recorded) This is guidance or practice that remains constant regardless of the nature of the visit. It covers the management of risks identified as relevant to all visits involving similar activities.
2. **Visit-specific** – Carried out before the visit takes place. This is the identification and management of any risks not already covered through generic risk management. It is unique to each occasion and should address staffing, activity, group and environment
3. **Dynamic/on-going** – Carried out continuously throughout the visit (not necessary to record). This refers to the on-going monitoring of all aspects of the visit/activity by the visit leadership team. The group and the level of risk must be monitored and assessed throughout and, if circumstances dictate, activities should be curtailed or amended (e.g. change to plan B). In practice, it is often these on-going decisions of the Visit Leader(s) that determine whether the group remains safe and whether the activity is successful. Hence a competent visit leadership team is essential.

Folio Education Trust's expectations for risk management recording and approval

- Staff leading 'routine visits' do not need to undertake a risk assessment so long as planned activities and arrangements involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by our normal procedures and policies.
- Staff leading 'visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment' should construct a risk assessment using Section 10 of the Planning an Educational Visit Form that can be found on Evolve. They should pay particular attention to the following guidance:

It is vital that the Visit Leader:

- adapts the wording of the 'generic' risk assessment to the actual activity, local circumstances and environment as appropriate;
 - includes any additional measures to cover all hazards and risks not referred to in the 'generic' assessment;
 - understands Appendix I of the 'generic' risk assessment: *Guidance on Risk Assessments for Off Site Activities*
 - adapts the 'generic' risk assessment to consider the staff and students involved and who may be affected including their specific medical conditions;
 - Includes how you will mitigate risks for students with epipens.
- Staff should seek guidance on creating risk assessments from the EVC as appropriate.
 - Risk assessments should be checked by the EVC and Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare for day visits as part of the approval process on Evolve and amended if necessary.
 - Risk assessments should be checked by the EVC, the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, the relevant Lead Advisor and Local Authority Advisor for overnight visits as part of the approval process on Evolve and amended if necessary.
 - Visit Leaders will be trained in how to manage risk and record this during their training sessions explained above.

Staffing Ratios

Visit Leaders should always operate with a minimum teacher:student ratio of 1:20 for a 'routine visit' depending on the needs of the students being taken.

Visit Leaders should always operate with a minimum teacher:student ratio of 1:15 for 'visits requiring additional planning, and some level of specific risk assessment' depending on the needs of the students being taken and the risks involved.

Assessing venues and providers

When planning an off-site visit, Visit Leaders should research the suitability of the venue thoroughly and check that facilities and third party provision will meet your group's needs and expectations. This is an essential element of risk-benefit management and is critical in deciding how you will supervise the young people effectively.

When choosing a suitable provider Visit Leaders should consider the following questions:

- Do the values and ethos of the provider match their expectations?
- Is there a clear understanding about the responsibility for supervision at all times during the visit?
- What are the respective roles of provider staff and school staff?
- What provision will be made for any special needs?
- How flexible is the programme to meet changing circumstances?

- To what extent will you be able to involve the provider in evaluation of the visit's learning objectives?

Visit Leaders have a duty of care to ensure that any provider they use meets acceptable standards. This may be as simple as checking that the chosen provider(s) hold appropriate accreditation. Where the provider has no external accreditation, or where your needs are not straightforward, checking the provider may involve further questioning and information gathering. If a provider does not hold a suitable accreditation which covers all aspects of their provision, then Visit Leaders must use other means of gaining assurances about relevant aspects of their operation including:

- Insurance.
- Compliance with legal requirements.
- Health, safety and emergency policies and procedures.
- Risk assessments.
- Use of vehicles.
- Staff competence.
- Safeguarding.
- Accommodation.
- Sub-contracting.

Visit Leaders are able to request a preliminary visit to explore these issues further if necessary. This would be particularly important if the provider/venue were unaccredited or if initial research did not allow easy access to those aspects listed above.

Volunteers

If using volunteers on an Educational Visit, Visit Leaders must act in accordance with the School's safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and procedures to ensure the appropriate Debarring Service Checks are in place or, if not, the appropriate level of risk assessment. Visit Leaders must seek advice from the school's Human Resources Manager as appropriate. If using volunteers, Visit Leaders should consider the level of training and experience of the volunteer and, if there are gaps in this, how they will be remedied before the visit to ensure all supervising members of staff are sufficiently competent. Questions to consider include:

- Is the volunteer used to working with young people?
- Is the volunteer first aid trained?
- Has the volunteer been on educational visits with activities and arrangements similar to the visit they plan to assist on?
- Is the volunteer experienced in managing risk in the context of an educational visit?

Volunteers will only be Visit Leaders in exceptional circumstances. Were this to occur, the approval of the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare will be required to ensure they are sufficiently experienced and competent.

Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Should a critical incident occur on an Educational Visit, the following guidelines should be followed:

- The Visit Leadership Team should stabilise the situation to the best of their abilities, contacting the emergency services as appropriate.
- The Visit Leadership Team should contact the School's Emergency Contact.
 - This will always be either the EVC or, if they are on a trip and / or the Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare.
 - In the event that either of these individuals are unreachable, or if the incident is sufficiently serious, Visit Leaders should contact the Headteacher directly.
- The School's Emergency Contact should decide the level of response required and, when necessary, initiate the Emergency Plan and alert the Folio Education Trust's Emergency Contact.
- The School's Critical Incident Plan for Off-Site Visits must be initiated;
- Folio Education Trust's Emergency Contact will support the School to initiate their Critical Incident Plan for Off-Site Visits.

The first senior manager contacted should:

- Take on the responsibilities of the Critical Incident Response Team Lead until they are relieved.
- Establish and maintain communication with the School and, if necessary, the group involved in the Incident.
- Ascertain the nature of the emergency and cascade this information to all staff required by the School's Critical Incident Plan.
- Make some initial decisions about the level of support needed and put in train the formation of a suitable Critical Incident Response Team to provide this. This may need to be physically convened or virtually convened using conference call/electronic solutions.
- Ensure that essential information is obtained, recorded and relayed to allow the Critical Incident Response Team to assess the situation correctly.
- Warn all staff trained for the Travelling Team role to stand by.
- Brief the Critical Incident Response Team as soon as this is assembled (virtually or physically).

Any incidents on educational visits that had the potential to become critical but did not should be reported to the EVC for full evaluation so that procedures can be changed if necessary to ensure the risk of the incident being repeated is minimised.

Behaviour

All students and staff are expected to observe the expectations laid out in the Home-School Agreement whilst on educational visits. Expectations specific to Educational Visits include:

- It is completely prohibited for students to purchase or consume alcohol or any illegal substances whilst on an educational visit.
- It is completely prohibited for students to engage in any form of sexual activity whilst on an educational visit.
- It is completely prohibited for students to purchase or use any offensive weapons whilst on an educational visit.

Should expectations of the School not be met whilst on an educational visit, Visit Leaders should sanction students appropriately and in the spirit of school's Behaviour Policy. Should the incident be serious, particularly relating to the previous list, Visit Leaders should seek advice from the EVC or Senior Teacher responsible for Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare.

Visit Leaders should communicate behavioural expectations as close to the start of the visit as possible.

Visit Leaders must also ensure that the conduct of staff is safe, professional, appropriate and in line with the School's Staff Code of Conduct. On extended visits, Trip Leader should look to rotate duty staff to provide respite and leisure time.

Inclusion

The School:

- presumes the entitlement of students to participate in educational visits;
- aims to provide accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- supports the principle of student integration through participation with their peers.

The School recognises that it is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

The School recognises that expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and is reasonable.

Insurance

Folio Education Trust ensures the correct type and level of insurance is in place for each educational visit run by the School. Any concerns over whether a child is insured, such as if they have recently committed or considered self-harm, should be checked with the insurers.

Finance

The Trust has a Charging and Remissions Policy. We will aim to finance all educational visits of students on Free School Meals and will also explore funding educational visits of students supported by the Pupil Premium on request from parents. Requirements for accounting, banking and reporting will be met and checked annually by external auditors.

Folio Education Trust charges an administration fee to parents of all students wishing to partake in an educational visit. This is 2.5% of costs for day visits and 5% for overnight visits.

This is comprised of:

- Parentpay administration fees of 1.5%;
- EVC specific costs - To be confirmed
- All Risks Travel insurance - approximately £4.40 per pupil;
- Administrative staffing costs in finance in the Front Office.