



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

April 2022

Responsibility	Head Teacher
Date of next review by	April 2025

Signed 
Head Teacher

Date: 23.03.2022

Signed 
Director of Lifelong Learning

Date: 23.03.2022

Introduction

All visits, trips and off-site activities are planned, organised, conducted and reviewed in line with the Worcestershire LA Policy. Worcestershire County Council has formally adopted “**OEAP Employer Guidance**” as “Worcestershire Employer Guidance for the Management of Visits and Learning outside the Classroom”. A copy of this Guidance can be found on the following website www.oeapng.info (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel).

Aims

In accordance with our school ethos, The Aspire Academy is committed to providing: a safe, containing, caring, good humoured and well-disciplined school where strong nurturing relationships are at the heart of everything; a world class Alternative Provision in which we present an environment where all pupils can thrive, grow and achieve through a relentlessly reasonable approach to personal development; opportunities for pupils to build their social capital, resilience, self-esteem and a portfolio of recognised qualifications in order that they may make a positive next-step; all pupils with the opportunities to achieve a positive destination when they leave the Academy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of School: will be in agreement with the Academy Representative for the approval of the high risk/overseas/residential visits. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4g.

The Academy Representative: will be responsible for the approval of educational visits that are residential/overseas/high-risk/deemed requiring scrutiny. This approval will be in agreement with the Head of School. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4f.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (Senior Leader): will be responsible for giving a first line approval for all visits and will have responsibility for giving final approval for visits that are not overseas/residential/or high risk. Approval will be given based on consideration of the educational value to the pupils involved as well as the plans and information including risk assessments submitted to them on Evolve. Approval is also given based on the competency of staff leading and attending the visit based on the type. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4j.

1. **Educational Visits Co-ordinator:** will communicate with staff who are planning educational visits, in order to ensure that paperwork and EVOLVE information is completed within the time frame detailed in the policy. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4j. The EVC will also communicate with the EVC (Senior Leader) on all aspects of the trip/visits.
2. **The Finance Officer:** The Finance Officer will collect and bank payments for visits where charges are permissible; provide trip leaders with accurate reports.
3. **Educational Visit Leader:** Any member of staff who wishes to lead a trip or visit must have attended the Visit Leader training delivered by Worcestershire County Council. The Visit Leader takes full responsibility for the group they lead and will ensure that they have planned the visit in accordance with their training and guidance on OEAPNG. The Visit Leader will only lead visits that they are competent to lead and will only use competent providers. They will also ensure that the visit is fully risk assessed based on the SAGED method including information on individual pupils where required. In addition, they will ensure that they have emergency plans in place and will evaluate the visit afterwards. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4k.

Procedural Requirements

- **Underpinning Legal Framework Duty of Care:** Visit leaders must have read and understood the Underpinning Legal framework and Duty of Care section from the OEAP e.g. section 3.2a.
- **Risk Assessments:** A generic risk assessment is available from the Educational Visits Coordinator and should be completed for every offsite trip/visit. The process of a risk assessment should be to evaluate the pupils attending e.g. medical, special needs, safeguarding or behavioural issues, transport, location and the possible hazards and/or risks that may be encountered. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as Head of Year/Designated Safeguarding Lead/Special Educational Needs register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of pupils attending. Staff should always be prepared to adapt as necessary according to unexpected conditions and always have a 'Plan B'. Risk assessment should be carried out by the Visit Leader in conjunction with the other staff on the visit and possibly pupils. Risk assessments should be shared with all parties on the visit. To assess the competence of a provider, Visit Leaders should sample their risk assessment to be aware of risks that may need to be managed prior to the visit. Please refer to OEAP e.g. section 4.3c.

- **Approval of staff to lead activities and visits:** All staff that lead off-site activities/trips and visits will have undertaken the Worcestershire County Council Educational Visit leader training and will be deemed accountable, competent and confident by the Head of School and/or the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (Senior Leader).
- **First Aider:** It is school policy that, where possible, a qualified first aider should accompany pupils on trips/visits. However, a qualified first aider must be present on all residential and overseas trips or where emergency services may take time to be summoned.
- **Mobile Phones:** The Visit Leader needs to have mobile phone contact, live and accountable to the school, at all times of the visit, except in certain circumstances e.g. whilst driving, in areas of poor reception or at venues such as churches or theatres. However, the Visit Leader, when it is safe to do so, should check for messages or missed calls on a regular basis. Visit Leaders should ensure that the mobile phone is fully charged and operational. This area of the policy must be read in conjunction with the school Minibus Policy.
- **Senior Leadership:** It is school policy that one member from the Senior Leadership Team will be required to attend visits that are overseas.
- **Evaluation of external providers:** It is good practice that Visit Leaders have prior knowledge of the location they are visiting. This will assist with risk benefit management. If a visit prior to the arranged date is not permissible, then full research on the location should be carried out. Evaluation of competence can be carried out by researching websites or brochures, by using a provider with a quality badge (LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) or adventure mark), by looking at visitor risk assessments or by sampling the risk assessments, by accessing data on past visits or by consulting other schools (evolve), preliminary visits or Governing Bodies for the activity. The WCC Offsite Visit Adviser must always be consulted.
- **Parental Consent:** No pupil will be allowed off the school premises for any off-site activity, visit or trip without full parental consent. It is the responsibility of the Parents/Carers to inform the school of any changes e.g. medical needs, contact numbers and address.
- **Residential Visits:** A Parental Information Meeting must be held before any residential visit takes place. This should be included in the visit planning process of that particular visit.
- **Information about participants, medical conditions special needs etc.:** Pupils should be identified and the appropriate measures put in place to deal with emergencies and/or incidents. An appropriate staff- to-pupil ratio should exist on every trip to include cover, should a member of the trip/visit team be drawn away to deal with a specific situation. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as HOY/DSL/SEN register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of pupils attending. This information should be shared with all staff in attendance.

- **Registers:** A register of pupils must be taken prior to departure, during and after all visits, trips and off-site activities.

- **Emergencies:** Visit leaders should take with them at all times the designated emergency contact numbers for the school and Worcestershire County Council. This information must be shared with all sub leaders. A first aid kit must be taken on all off-site activities, visits and trips. A First Aider must be present on all overseas travel and residential trips. Staff are to be made aware that the emergency number 112 called from a mobile phone acts as a GPS location signal for emergency services in the UK. All incidents are to be reported immediately upon return to school.

- **Levels of supervision:** Effective levels of supervision should be in place throughout the visit. For effective levels of supervision to be put in place the visit leader and other staff in attendance should consider SAGED:

- o STAFF Competent? Trained? Experienced? Ratio of staff to pupils?

- o ACTIVITY Simple? Complex? Training required? Consent? Insurance? Licensable?

- o GROUP Prior experience? Age? Behaviour? Medical and/or Special Needs?

- o ENVIRONMENT Location and familiarity? Same as previous times? Weather Forecast? Water Levels?

- o DISTANCE How Far? Transport Required? Residential? Distance from base?

It is the expectation that staff in attendance should get involved with activities or observe activities so that they know what is happening and can stop them if unhappy. Pupils should never feel unsupervised (including on coaches being driven there and back) they should know where a member of staff is located and available at all times. Staff should be visible and patrolling.

Where female/male pupils are in attendance on a trip/visit, there must be the corresponding gender of staff where practicable. Any implications arising from this will be reported on the Visit Risk Assessment if necessary.

- **Expectations of Pupils and Behaviour:** The schools Behaviour Policy applies on all trips and educational visits and where necessary pupils and parents may be asked to sign an additional code of conduct in conjunction with certain trips and visits.

Alcohol, drugs, psychoactive substances and any other illegal substances are not permitted on any trips or visits by pupils or staff. Appropriate sanctions will be applied on the visit or on the return should any issues occur. Parents will be informed, as soon as possible, of any significant issues. Poor behaviour on or prior to any trip or visit may result in pupils being excluded from future trips or visits.

- **Inclusion:** The school will endeavour to include all pupils in trips and educational visits where reasonably possible (venue access, behaviour, all medical needs etc.). Each case will be assessed for each trip/visit. The experience of a Visit Leader will also be taken into consideration. Where there are specific behaviour or medical needs, which may have deemed to be problematic, a preliminary conversation will take place with parents/carers and, where applicable, medical consent will be sought from doctors/consultants (the cost of this will need to be met by the Parent/Carer if required). A separate risk assessment may be necessary for medical/safeguarding

reasons. If a pupil is deemed to be too high risk to themselves and/or other pupils the school may decide to withdraw that pupil from the trip. When this is the case Academy Representatives and parents will be involved in the decision making process.

- **Monitoring:** It is the responsibility of the EVC (Senior Leader) to ensure that all staff are adequately trained to lead and organise a trip; training will be revalidated where necessary and kept on record. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.2b.

Volunteers

It is school policy that volunteers are to be over the age of 25 years old and will hold a relevant DBS. Volunteers are, under no circumstances, to assume the positions of Visit Leader or Assistant Visit Leader. Volunteers can be Academy Representatives, members of the PTFA, Staff from partnership schools or any other person deemed responsible at the Head of School's discretion. Under no circumstance is a member of staff allowed to be accompanied by their own dependants to participate on any off-site activity, visit or trip.

Charging for School Visits

It is the policy of the school's Academy Representative Body to:

- Ask for contributions from parents for school trips and visits, for which compulsory charges cannot be made, but which are not viable otherwise. Pupils will not be excluded from such activities because of inability to make a contribution.
- Apply a charge for all board and lodging costs on residential visits except where pupils are entitled to free school meals.

Procedure for staff Organising an Educational Visit

Please follow the procedure below to ensure that:

- you are supported in planning the visit
- you receive information to enable you to plan a safe and effective visit
- risks are minimised or eliminated
- communication between all interested parties (office, Principal, LA, parents, Academy Representatives, children) is effective and efficient.

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:

- Head of School
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

Procedures

1. Complete Risk Assessments and other documentation (e.g. itinerary) should be completed.
2. Complete finance form and submit to Finance for checking.
3. Arrange for affordable payments to be made and collected in at the Pupil Finance Office. Deadlines for payments must be set in place and adhered to.
4. Book relevant transport, tickets and accommodation if required. For good practice it is advisable to follow the OEAPeg guidance Visit Leader Checklist section 3.3e.
5. Ensure that draft letters to parents are authorised by the Head teacher before distribution to pupils.
6. Communicate with Finance with regards to numbers and payments made.
7. Collect the medical consents for pupils attending the visit prior to departure and familiarise themselves with medical needs, plus ensure all other pupil needs have been taken into consideration such as special needs, behaviour and safeguarding.

On the day of the Visit

- Refer to the checklist
- Collect first aid kit(s)
- Take asthma pumps and Epipens as necessary
- Brief supervising adults
- Ensure mobile phones and tablets/e-readers are working and charged, that the office has the number(s) and that they are switched on during the whole visit
- Count number of pupils regularly, and always when changing locations

- VAT receipts must be obtained for all spending or purchases which use school funds or are expected to be claimed back from school funds. It is the expectation of the Visit Leader to ensure this procedure is followed by him/her and any other team member on the visit.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader and accompanying staff. The purpose of the de-brief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.

If the Head of School and EVC have not agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**