



Inspire Multi Academy Trust

Educational Visits Policy

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Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

Inspire Multi Academy Trust adopts the guidance and procedures issued by the Educational Advisory Service based at Derwent Hill. This reflects the message contained in the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and DfE statements. This is to ensure consideration for the health and safety of all those involved and to maintain the educational quality of visits and value for money.

All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

Across our academies, we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender, medical needs or differences in ability. All children are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes.

The Board of Trustees recognises the right of participation of pupils with disabilities on school visits and makes special arrangements and puts procedures in place to support them as appropriate. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in school. Our schools recognise the value of learning outside the classroom and the contribution it makes to enhancing our curriculum.

Scope

This Policy applies to each academy within Inspire Multi Academy Trust where the trustees have adopted it as part of the services offered by Sunderland City Council's External Visits Advisory Service.

This Policy applies to all External Visits involving children and young people and, where relevant, vulnerable adults. It applies regardless of whether the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

External Visits are defined as events that involve children and young people (or vulnerable adults) being away from their normal school, centre or residential home premises, while in the care of the school or other service. This includes educational visits, outings, school trips and off-site activities such as: local visits to parks, museums, libraries and sports facilities; cultural, educational and recreational, exchange trips, outdoor activities, residential and field trips.

Inclusion

All children will be included on trips and educational visits regardless of their special needs, race, religion, culture, gender and gender orientation. Within the risk assessment the academy will identify children with disabilities, special educational or medical needs and address how their needs will be catered for. Wherever possible, reasonable adjustments to support inclusion will be made. All educational visits must have specific stated objectives that are appropriate for the participating pupils.

All children and young people should be given the opportunity of learning outside the classroom and benefiting from participation in a wide range of visits and activities, including learning outside of the classroom, local activities, day visits, residential, field studies and outdoor adventure activities (see Annex C). Whether their emphasis is adventurous, academic, sporting, cultural, spiritual or creative, off-site visits and outdoor learning provide first-hand experiences that inspire and enhance learning and development in ways which are powerful and lasting. They provide a foundation for life-long learning and healthy lifestyles, as well as complementing classroom learning and enriching the curriculum.

Procedures and Approval of Visits (See Annex A)

Each Academy must train nominated personnel in the capacity of Education Visits Co Ordinator (EVC) which should include, where possible, the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and School Business Manager who can guide the working practice of colleagues leading visits, training must be refreshed every 3 years.

Under the health and safety laws, schools are required to obtain appropriate approval for Educational visits.

For certain categories of visits (category 2 visits) schools must seek and obtain approval from the Authority via Derwent Hill.

The Academy should use the Evolve online system for notification, authorisation, approval and monitoring of visits. The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and the Headteacher can use Evolve to plan, authorise and monitor visits. Certain visits (those in Category 3 below) require approval from External Visits Advisory Service, on behalf of the academy's governing body. Key information about a visit is available through Evolve in the event of an emergency.

EVCs should normally be responsible for setting up access for Academy staff to use Evolve.

For the purposes of notification and approval, external visits are classified into three categories. These are based on the 'Radar' model described in the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP) National Guidance.

Category	Definition	Requirement for notification & approval
Category 1	Straightforward routine visits covered by: • a generic risk assessment, regularly reviewed • blanket informed parental consent (not necessary if visits take place during school hours) • school/service operating procedures	Evolve may be used but is not required.
Category 2	Medium risk visits requiring enhanced planning with event-specific risk assessment, including: • All residential visits not in Category 3 • Non-residential visits not in Categories 1 or 3	Must be authorised by the Headteacher / Manager and the Chief Executive Headteacher using Evolve at least 4-weeks prior to the visit.
Category 3	Higher risk visits, defined as: • Visits outside the UK • Visits which include adventure activities • Visits to remote or hazardous locations	The planning process for Category 3 must commence at least 8 weeks prior to the visit. Must be authorised by the Headteacher / Manager, Chief Executive Headteacher using Evolve at least four weeks before the visit, and then approved by the External Visits Advisory Service (see Annex C). Trustees will be informed by the CEHT of any visits outside of the UK or remote or hazardous locations.

Category 2 Visits

Staff wishing to undertake a Category 2 visit must seek approval from Derwent Hill Advisory Service, and complete Form (RA2). After the forms have been checked and approved by the EVC or Headteacher and Chief Executive Headteacher, they must be submitted to the Authority **at least 4 weeks prior the visit taking place**. It is recommended that for Category 2 visits, applications are made online, via Evolve. Staff must make the EVC aware of the visit.

Category 3 Visits

The requirement of Category 3 visits to be authorised by the Headteacher, Chief Executive Headteacher and Trustees at least **eight weeks** prior to the visit, is to provide time for any issues arising to be dealt with to allow approval to be given by the External Visits Advisory Service. For more complex visits, more time should be allowed.

Academy employees should not sign contracts with providers or make commitments to participants or parents until they are sure that requirements for approval can be met, and are encouraged to ask the External Visits Advisory Service to comment on unsubmitted draft plans in Evolve for complex visits at an early stage, which could be a year or more before the visit.

Following **all** visits the Visit Leader should undertake a review. Any incidents, accidents should be reported in accordance with the reporting requirements.

Visits During a Pandemic

A full and thorough risk assessment should be undertaken for any visits planned during a pandemic. Public Health advice, such as hygiene and ventilation requirements, must be included as part of that risk assessment. School should seek from venues visited, a robust risk assessment in line with Public Health guidance.

The Trust will continue to follow Public Health and Government guidance and visits may be cancelled or rescheduled in the event of new guidance. Visits overseas will be suspended during the pandemic.

Parent / Carer Consent

It is a requirement that a signed parental consent form is obtained from the parents/carers of all pupils participating in Educational Visits. Letters should be submitted to the Headteacher prior to the visit. Proposed activities/aims of the educational visit should be outlined to parents/carers.

Details of departure/arrival should be explained to parents. Medical information, including known allergies and emergency contacts must also be obtained.

Payment for Visits

All education during school hours is free of charge. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some circumstances when the school can make a charge for certain activities. The Board of Trustees has a charging policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. A copy of this is available from the school office or the school or Trust website.

Our schools will subsidise visits wherever possible and invite parents to make a contribution towards the remaining cost. Parents who are unable to make a contribution may wish to speak confidentially to the Head Teacher. Some children receive pupil premium funding which helps towards their trips. This is outlined in the Pupil Premium Policy and statement, both of which can be obtained from the school office or on the school or Trust website.

Curriculum Links

All educational visits and activities support and enrich the work children carry out in school. They equip our children with the cultural capital and knowledge they need to succeed in life. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities, which includes visits by specialists. All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LA:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to Butterfly World, Zoolab visits, Hall Hill farm; scientist visits, planetarium company.
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment.
- History – study of local housing patterns, Beamish Museum, Hartlepool Historic Quay, Hylton Castle; Sunderland winter gardens.
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork; beach trips.
- Art and design – use of the locality; visits to local art exhibitions
- PE – extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches, after school PE clubs; Sunderland dance (Empire Theatre), Sunderland climbing wall
- Music – specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, concerts for parents to hear, visits to residential homes to perform;
- Computing – its use in local shops/libraries
- RE – visits to local centres of worship – local churches, visits by local clergy, Sikh temple etc.

In addition to the above, local religious leaders are invited to take assemblies in the course of the school year.

Duties and Responsibilities

- All staff have a duty of care for the welfare and safety of all children taking part in an educational visit.
- Every person has a duty to stop or curtail any activity when it is considered that unsafe practice has been observed.
- Every adult accompanying the visit must have a role.
- The Visit Leader should brief all adults as to their roles and responsibilities during the educational visit.

By signing the Risk Assessment, the Visit Leader confirms that all adults on the visit have read, understood and adopted the written Risk Assessment.

Leader Competence and Approval

A Visit Leader is the person responsible for planning and leading a visit, which may involve other members of staff and volunteers, including Group Leaders. A Group Leader is responsible for the supervision of a group of children or young people during a visit. This may be a Teacher, Teaching Assistant or volunteer.

The Headteacher / Managers must ensure that Visit Leaders and Group Leaders are competent to carry out their responsibilities. The External Visits Advisory Service provides Visit Leader and Group Leader training courses and can advise about competence requirements.

The OEAP National Guidance includes documents on “Assessment of Competence” and “Good Practice Basics”. Visit Leaders, Group Leaders and other staff who require guidance or support should contact their Academy’s EVC.

Academy staff who wish to lead adventure activities must have approval to do so by the Headteacher and External Visits Advisory Service on behalf of the Academy. Approval will be based upon evidence of competence, which may include evidence of relevant qualifications, training and experience.

Leader approval is managed through Evolve:

- For a category 2 or 3 visit, evidence of the leader's competence is required by the Activity Leader Form (ALF) which is part of the normal Evolve visit planning process.
- If a leader wishes to apply for generic approval to lead a specific adventure activity, then they should complete a Leader Approval Request (LAR) in Evolve for endorsement by their Headteacher/Manager who submits it to the External Visits Advisory Service for approval. When this approval is given, it may be attached to future ALFs as evidence.

Accident/incident reporting - Emergency Procedures

Procedure in the event of an incident, accident or emergency – **This is the responsibility of the Visit Leader.**

- First instance contact the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher
- For minor accidents/incidents follow the risk assessment
- For serious accidents/incidents Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher to advise following the Critical Incident Plan
- Ensure that an appropriate adult is accessible by phone

The Academy's incident reporting procedures (see the Critical Incident Plan) must be followed. After any major incident, schools/services should undertake a review of the incident, their risk assessments and emergency procedures, and should share the findings with the External Visits Advisory Service. (It is also good practice to record and learn from previous experiences). The Academy should establish a system for doing this and should consider how best to share the learning outcomes of such incidents.

Staffing Ratios

The staffing required to run the visit safely needs to be identified and should take the following factors into account:

- Gender, age and ability of group.
- Pupils with special education needs or medical needs.
- Nature and location of activities.
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision.
- Duration and nature of journey.
- Type of any accommodation.
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited.
- Competence and behaviour of pupils.
- First aid cover, first aid equipment, and spare Adrenaline Auto Injector pens.
- Environment and seasonal factors

Staffing ratios are a risk management issue and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/participant ratios for a particular age group or activity. However as starting points for consideration staff should look towards:

- Nursery 1:2/1:4 (depending on level of risks associated with the visit)
- Reception 1:4

- Years 1 - 2 1:6
- Years 3 - 6 1:15 (1:6 for high risk)

For overnight residential visits, a minimum of three staff members will be present, which will ensure suitable levels of adult supervision are maintained, in the event one member of staff is removed from the ratios following an unplanned incident or emergency e.g. accompanying a pupil to hospital for treatment.

Volunteers

Role of the Volunteer Helper:

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure, all of the children in your group.
- To stay with your allocated group of children, ensuring that their wellbeing and safety is maintained for the total duration of the school trip.
- To promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the public. We all go as ambassadors of our school!
- To ensure that your group keep up with the body of the school visit party, be it walking, entering or exiting from transportation or following speakers for the trip.

Working alongside school staff School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- Comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct line management of school staff.
- Show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage children to think about the task and help to explain areas of interest.
- Follow guidance from the school staff.

What is not permitted:

- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to bring additional siblings on the school trip.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to re-organise school visit groups.
- Volunteer helpers are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices.
- Volunteer helpers are not permitted to take photographs of children.
- Volunteers are not allowed to take children to the toilet without a member of staff.
- Volunteers are not allowed to take their group of children off on their own.

Bus / Coach Hire

Visit Leaders must liaise with the School Office to book an operator who holds a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) licence (appropriate to the type of vehicle and/or nature of the journey being undertaken), MOT, tax and insurance. All drivers must have a DBS check. Every passenger must have their own seat. All coach seats must be fitted with seat belts.

First Aid

Qualified paediatric First Aiders will be present on every visit.

Staff and volunteers will be informed if any child in their group has medication needs, including allergies. If medication needs to be administered, a trained member of staff will complete this, in line with the Trust's Managing Medication Policy.

All medicines and First Aid bags will be carried by appointed staff.

School Lunches

The school kitchen will provide packed lunches as required for children receiving Free School Meals. Lunches must be ordered with the kitchen 2 weeks prior to the visit. In line with the Allergy Policy, food taken on the trip should not contain any of the following high-risk items:

- Packaged nuts
- Cereal, granola or chocolate bars containing nuts
- Peanut butter or chocolate spreads containing nuts
- Peanut-based sauces, such as satay
- Sesame seeds and foods containing sesame seeds

Further Information

Academy	EV Co-ordinators
Burnside Academy	• Leona Kelly, Headteacher • Jenna Downey, Deputy Headteacher • Lesley Dodds, School Business Manager
Farringdon Academy	• Claire McDermott, Headteacher • Susan Matthews Deputy, Headteacher • Susan Connelly, School Business Manager
Fatfield Academy	• Nicky Dowdle, Headteacher, • Jodie Lloyd, Administration Assistant
New Penshaw Academy	• Stephanie Johnson, Headteacher • Hannah Brown, School Business Manager
Plains Farm Academy	• Lesley Cassidy, Headteacher • Andy Hunter, Deputy Headteacher • Michelle Barrass, School Business Manager

For any further information regarding Educational Visits please consult the EVC's or:

- Sunderland City Council's External Visits Policy and Guidance – Code of Practice
- the Evolve site
- discuss with the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher.

Copies of Educational Visits booking forms are available from the school staffroom.

Monitoring

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy and for the monitoring of visits organised by the Academy. The EVC is often best placed to carry out routine monitoring. The OEAP National Guidance includes a document on monitoring. In case of doubt or concern, advice may be obtained from the External Visits Advisory Service.

Assessing Venues and Providers

The OEAP National Guidance includes guidance on Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances (<https://oeapng.info/>).

Visit leaders can use the OEAP National Guidance provider statements to capture all relevant health and safety information from the provider (<https://oeapng.info/download/3926/?tmstv=1780894862>).

The Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (LOtC) Standard held by activity providers provides sufficient reassurance that a provider meets nationally required minimum standards of safety and quality. Details of a provider's status can be checked on the LOtC website www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk.

If a provider of activities does not hold the Quality Badge, then detailed checks should be made to ensure that it meets required standards. The most straightforward way of doing this is to use a Provider Statement Form (PSF)– the External Visits Advisory Service can provide a template. The Provider Statement Form will enable Headteachers to evidence that assurances have been sought in the areas of: insurance, legal and health and safety requirements, robust risk assessments, control measures, staff competence, safeguarding, accommodation, sub-contracting arrangements and appropriate licences are held where needed.

Policy developed in conjunction with Derwent Hill Advisory Service and reviewed annually by EVC Co-ordinators and approved by Trustees.

Evaluation

Following an educational trip and/or visit (other than Local Learning Area (LLA), the Educational Visit Co-ordinator will meet with any staff members present on the trip to assess the success of the trip in respect of both educational value and safeguarding effectiveness. Based on this assessment, recommendations will be made to improve future trips and visits.

Monitoring and Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually by Inspire Multi Academy Trust, or sooner, in response to changes in legislation or DfE Guidance.

The Trust will monitor the application and outcomes of the policy throughout the year, to ensure it is working effectively.

Procedural requirements – see visits procedure below and booking form at Annex B.

- Approval of visit and activities by Headteacher
- Approval of staff to lead activities and visits by Headteacher
- Risk assessments – examples on Evolve, form located on the shared drive Office Share M drive, 6. Linked documents, Admin folder, Education Visits.
- Evaluation of external providers – risk assessment for venue, transport, activities as required.
- Evolve - notification of visit and authorisation of visit
- Parental communication and consent
- Information about participants' medical conditions (including allergies), special needs behaviour etc.
- Any type of visit that should be approved only after consultation with an external adviser
- 'Checking out' and 'checking in' before, during and after a visit
- Emergencies – full pack for visit left in school with mobile contact number for lead member of staff
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

Educational Visits Procedure

Four week notice for category 1 & 2 visits, Eight week notice for category 3 visits must be given for a trip to be booked.

First you must obtain verbal permission, from Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher, for the trip **before** organising the trip. You will need to explain reasons for the trip and what the learning objectives and success criteria will be for children. You will also need to work out an approximate cost for the trip.

Only after verbal permission has been given the following procedure should be carried out:

1. Complete a booking form (see Annex B, electronic copy located in the Office Share drive, Linked documents, Admin folder, Education Visits, ensuring that you have enough helpers for the trip to meet correct adult/child ratios remembering that all helpers must be DBS checked and where ever possible parents should be used. Names of helpers including staff to be written on the reverse of the booking form.
2. Complete risk assessments for the trip including travel to and from the venue, the venue, any activities, medical needs, accommodation etc.
3. Obtain a risk assessment for venues to be visited.
4. Booking form and risk assessments need to be authorised by Head/Deputy Headteacher (if the Head/Deputy Headteacher identify any additions or amendments to the risk assessments the amendments need to be made before the forms are authorised by Head or Deputy Headteacher). Category 2 visits must be authorised by the Chief Executive Headteacher.
5. Trip to be uploaded onto the Evolve site where necessary.
6. Completed, authorised forms can then be given to the office to book buses and venue and inform the kitchen of date of your trip (dinners will not be required for your class for the day of trip).
7. Letter to be sent to parents informing them of the trip and costs involved.

8. Date of trip to added to main school diary.

Before the date of the trip a meeting should be held with all staff and helpers who are going on the trip each member of staff should be given a copy of the risk assessments, all risks should be clearly identified and controls required to mitigate the risks should be discussed. This also gives staff the opportunity to ask questions and discuss any concerns that they may have before the trip takes place.

On the day of the trip the office will need to be informed of the:

- number of children and adults who are attending the trip
- mobile telephone numbers for the leader and deputy leader of the trip in case of emergencies



Educational Visits Booking Form

Leader Name:		Year Group:	
Deputy Leader Name:		Class:	
Venue/Location:		Visit Date(s):	

Objectives of Visit:

No. of children on visit:		No. of adults on visit:	
Outward journey pick up time from school:		Return journey pick up time from venue:	
Arrival time back at school:			

EDUCATIONAL VISITS CO-ORDINATOR DECISION

Decision:	Approved Declined
Authorised By:	
Position:	
Signed:	
Date:	

SCHOOL OFFICE USE

Venue Name:		Telephone No:	
Contact Name:			
Venue Cost:			

Bus Company Name:		Telephone No:	
Contact Name:			
No. of Buses			
Bus Cost			

Total Cost of Trip:		Total Cost Per Child:	
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Annex C Adventure Activities

Adventure activities are defined as including:

- Abseiling
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Camping (except 'official' campsites)
- Caving, potholing, mine exploration
- Climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Coasteering, coastal scrambling, sea-level traversing
- Fishing in hazardous environments (e.g. sea, fast rivers, on deep water)
- High level ropes activities
- Horse riding & equestrian sports
- Motor sport – all forms
- Mountain Biking
- River/gorge/ghyll walking or scrambling, canyoning
- Shooting, Archery, Paintballing
- Skiing (including Indoor or Dry Slope)
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Snowboarding (including Indoor or Dry Slope)
- Swimming (all forms, excluding UK public pools with lifeguards)
- Walking (hills, mountains, open country)
- Water sports - powered craft, waterskiing (excluding commercial transport)
- Water sports - Canoeing/Kayaking
- Water sports - Rafting or improvised rafting
- Water sports - Rowing
- Water sports - Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
- Water sports – Surfing

Remote or hazardous locations include:

- areas more than 30 minute walk from a road or refuge
- coastal areas with significant tidal hazards
- hazardous quarries
- steep terrain

These lists are not exhaustive: if in doubt, advice should be obtained from the External Visits Advisory Service.

If the Academy organises adventure activities routinely and finds the requirement for External Visits Advisory Service approval on each occasion to be a disproportionate barrier, there are two possible options.

1. The Academy may apply to the External Visits Advisory Service to delegate the authority to approve visits involving adventure activities to the:
 - Headteacher/Manager (thus in effect defining them as Category 2). It would need to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and systems in place to make the required decisions. External verification, such as an AALA licence or Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, may be appropriate. Such delegation should be subject to regular review.
2. The Academy may choose to define a specific type of visit as Category 1 in a written policy. If this includes adventure activities, then approval from the External Visits Advisory Service is required, which will be based on an assessment of:

- The definition of the type of visit
- The generic risk assessment
- The operating procedures
- Leader Approval for specific school/service staff if they are to lead the adventure activities.

Normally this approval will be given for a limited time, subject to review.