

	<b>Bernwode Schools Trust</b> <b><u>EDUCATIONAL VISITS / VOCATIONAL TRIPS POLICY</u></b>			<b><u>Written By:</u></b> <b>DHT (GFPS) and EVC</b>
	<b>Applicable to:</b>  <b>ALL STAFF &amp; PUPILS / STUDENTS</b>	<b>Accountable Officers:</b>  <b>Headteacher (TCS) Headteacher (GFPS)</b>	<b>Date Adopted:</b>  <b>Summer 2021</b>	<b>Date To Be Reviewed:</b>  <b>Spring 2024 (Every three years)</b>

Bernwode Schools Trust (BST) is a Multi Academy Trust. It is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered company number 09053713 and its registered address at Churchill Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 4RS.

### **Introduction**

It has long been acknowledged that children can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their academies. In particular, “they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom.” (Health and Safety of Students on Educational visits - DFES 1998).

An educational visit can therefore be defined as:

“Any occasion when a young person takes part in a structured and employee-led learning activity which is beyond the boundary of the normal operational base, with the exception of the following:

- Where establishments operate on a split site;
- Work experience as defined in the publication “work experience: a guide for secondary schools” (DfES 2002).

Examples are visits to such places such as parks, museums, swimming pools etc. as well as residential trips and visits abroad.

The nominated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) must have undergone appropriate training. This training will be updated in three- yearly cycles as recommended by Oxfordshire Outdoors. All other visits are to be managed by the EVC as nominated by the Headteacher.

Trip Leaders should be competent to lead activities/trips and the Oxfordshire visits/Employer Guidance clearly defines leader competence and recommends training on an Oxfordshire Visit Leader training module.

## **Guidance**

Bernwode Schools Trust (BST) has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel Guidance (OEAP) for the management of visits and learning outside the classroom. Guidance can be found on the 'Advisory Teacher for EVC information' section of the Oxfordshire Outdoor Learning Service website. Please refer to the following link:

<http://oeapng.info/>

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The role of the governors is to enable and ensure; otherwise described as being a critical friend. They should ensure that:

- They have an understanding of how Outdoor Learning, off-site activities and visits support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people;
- There is an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) in place and that they meet the employer requirements;
- The Headteacher and the EVC have adhered to guidelines;
- Measures exist to obtain parental consent;
- The EVC policy is reviewed as appropriate, including accident and emergency systems;
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements;
- The establishment visits policy supports the principles of inclusion;
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

### **Role of the Headteacher:**

- To ensure that visits comply with the guidelines and regulations provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, and the BST Health and Safety Policy;
- To ensure that the EVC is competent to oversee the co-ordination of all off site educational visits, and support the EVC/s in attending relevant training courses;
- To ensure that the EVC keeps them informed of the progress of the visit and that the information is relayed to the parents as necessary;
- To ensure that the activity/trip leader is competent (experience and training) to undertake the activity in consultation with the EVC;
- To read through trip risk assessments where the EVC is unable to and sign them off when appropriate;
- To ensure that in the event of a major incident or accident, the emergency guidelines are adhered to in terms of informing parents, staff and the media. To ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near-misses are investigated and recorded;
- To ensure 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 appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;
- Inclusion issues are addressed;
- To ensure serious incidents are reported and meet the requirements of RIDDOR.

### **Role of the EVC:**

It has been identified as good practice for each academy to have an Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC). The EVC's role is to support the Headteacher in ensuring that all visits follow regulations and guidance, and all of the academy's relevant policies and procedures.

The EVC is:-

- To ensure they have an understanding of how outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom can support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people, and raise achievement;
- To decide on a "Risk-Benefit" basis for Category A and B trips, if the benefit of the trip outweighs the potential risks incurred;
- To support, where appropriate, the planning of the trip and the completion of risk assessments;
- To provide essential documentation to support planning of all trips and visits (for example Risk Assessments, Risk-Benefit checklist and possible Risk Assessments received by the site providers e.g. outdoor activity centres);
- To approve educational visits based on an appropriate risk assessment for Category A and B trips;
- To ensure all staff are aware of the policy and guidelines through Good Practice of off-site Activities concerning their particular visit;
- To ensure visits have appropriate support ratios and adequate cover for health and safety, first aid, medication and behaviour management;
- To ensure trip letters are sent out in a suitable time frame for example Category C trips, Category B trips, Category A trips, and a risk assessment is completed in a suitable time frame. For example Category C visits – at least one month before, Category B visits – at least two weeks before, Category A visits – at least a week before;
- To organise the emergency arrangements and ensure that there is a school emergency contact for each visit (for example a member of the senior leadership team). These arrangements are to include; the consequences of a life threatening injury or fatality, missing persons, acute ill health etc;
- To keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and near-misses. These are to be kept as hard copies within the Educational Visits folder. This is to be kept **at all times**. Accident, incident and near-miss records should be reviewed after each trip and this information used to inform future visits
- To ensure that visit evaluation is used to inform future visits and training needs. Further staff training should be made available where a need is identified.

### **Role of the Visit Leader:**

- To understand that the BST has in place a clear process to be followed when planning and organising a trip;
- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of the visit. In the first instance the trip leader is to seek provisional approval for the visit from the EVC who will liaise with the Headteacher. No visits/trips are to be booked before this consent is given;

- The Trip leader must ensure that they complete all school visit trip packs. This includes pre-trip planning forms, relevant consent forms (if necessary) and a blank risk assessment form;
- All trip leaders are responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is completed for the Educational Visits file at least one week before for a Category A, two weeks for a Category B trip, and at least one month before for a Category C trip. Failure to adhere to these deadlines may result in cancellation of the visit;
- Ensure that risk assessments, including emergency plans, are shared with all staff involved with the trip and with volunteers as appropriate;
- Plan the itinerary in such a way as to account for all times on the trip including meals and 'down times' particularly on residential trips;
- Have prior knowledge of the venue, making a preliminary visit as appropriate;
- If visiting a venue, ensuring there is public liability insurance cover;
- Inform parents and seek permission/consent, detailing the nature of the related activities in the visit;
- For residential trips, ensure that parents are provided with information detailing all emergency numbers and contacts, kit lists, key departure and arrival timings and provisional itineraries. An information evening should also be held for all residential trips;
- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named students and ensure that each adult knows what their responsibility is. To ensure that each student knows which adult is responsible for them and that all adults know that they are responsible to the visit leader for the supervision of the students assigned to them;
- To continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and ability of the group members and the suitability of prevailing conditions and, if conditions are considered to be unsuitable, to withdraw from the activity;
- All those staff involved in a trip will be required to have a means of communication (e.g. mobile phone or two-way radio). This will be used solely for emergency situations. Mobile phones are not to be used for taking photographs of children/students due to safeguarding issues. This is to be made clear in the risk assessment prior to the trip. Photographs are to be taken on a school-issued camera;
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all participants and staff;
- Ensure that all serious incidents, accident and near misses are reported and are addressed as appropriate.

### **Role of the Children:**

- To know who their designated adult is at any given time and how to contact him/her;
- To understand the need to have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are if they become separated;
- To know and understand the standards of acceptable behaviour.

## **Procedural requirements**

### **Approval of staff to lead activities and visits**

The Headteacher and the EVC will look at the suitability of each visit leader for each trip and will ensure that the appropriate child-to-staff ratios are used.

### **Parental communication and consent**

All pupils must have signed parental consent to leave the school site.

### **Information about participants' medical conditions, special needs, behaviour etc**

Visit leaders need to be aware of all medical conditions, special educational needs and those with behavioural needs on the trip. These pupils need to be highlighted on the Risk Assessment form and what is in place to keep them safe during the visit. It is essential to ensure that specific adults on the trip are aware of the needs of the pupils and how to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

### **Planning and prior notification of visits (see also role of the Visit leader):**

- Following authorisation, liaise with office admin and finance team to collect student replies, medical details and organise finance, costing, transport, insurance and booking. No student will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission. This is to be strictly enforced;
- Authorisation for the leader to act for a child in a medical emergency should be implicit within the permission;
- Wherever possible, a qualified first-aider should accompany each visit off-site and this is a requirement for any residential trip. There should always be a first aid kit available. The risk assessment should identify where specific medical needs within the risk assessment;
- Visit leaders should also have a clear knowledge and understanding of the risk assessment;
- All visits involving a residential (overnight stay) and/or adventurous activities must be approved by the Headteacher/EVC before booking the trip;
- Planning of trips, the amount of time needed to give notice and the time frame for risk assessment completion should be in line with the category of the visit (see below).

### **Categories of Visits**

- The EVC co-ordinator will categorise school trips according to the following categorisation (high risk to low risk).

#### **Category C Trips (highest risk)**

Required prior to booking a school trip when schools are undertaking:

- residential visits;
- overseas visits;
- visits involving the use of water;
- other visits which include a hazardous/adventurous activity.

## **Category B Trips (medium risk)**

Higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and/or location.

- Camping - not in remote locations;
- Cycling - on roads or off road terrain not in remote locations;
- Farm visits;
- Low level initiative challenges;
- Orienteering;
- Swimming lessons in off-site swimming pools;
- Zoo visits

## **Category A (low risk)**

Includes visits, journeys and environmental studies for which the element of risk is similar to those encountered in daily life.

- Environmental and country walks;
- Field studies - non technical;
- Local sports tours;
- Sites of commercial interest;
- Walking - not in remote locations

### **Review including monitoring and evaluation:**

- All visits must be evaluated on return and recorded highlighting any “near misses” or key events e.g. logistical, medical or discipline issues;
- All visits are to be evaluated including recording recommendations for future trips to the same provider/event.

### **‘Checking out’ and ‘checking in’ before, during and after a visit**

Visit leaders, and those supporting the visit, should ensure that they can account for all pupils throughout the visit. At regular intervals throughout the day, there should be checks to ensure no pupil is unaccounted for. Where possible, pupils should be registered before the visit and upon return.

### **Emergencies**

Emergency procedures are to be listed on all risk assessments with clear instructions on who to contact in an emergency. This is normally the Headteacher and Deputy/Assistant Headteachers. It is essential to have contact numbers for those available on the risk assessment form. Staff also need to carry the Emergency Card with essential contact telephone numbers on. This will be issued by the EVC for the relevant school.

### **Risk Assessments:**

- Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements;
- For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could do harm and identify measures to control these;
- As good practice, completed risk assessments should be filed in the EVC trip folder; A copy of the risk assessment is to be taken on the activity/trip;
- Specialist advice can and should be sought for specific and one-off visits;
- All risk assessments should be agreed by the EVC/Headteacher ahead of the activity/trip;
- All risk assessments should be shared with all accompanying staff. This may include any contingency plans;
- Trip leaders are always in charge. They should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the visit leader's knowledge of the group is superior, including stopping an activity if they feel uncomfortable or believe that it has become too hazardous;
- Where it is considered a particular risk to include a particular student because there is serious doubt concerning their behaviour or it is felt they present a significant risk to the well-being of others, the Headteacher will make the final decision on whether the student should attend the trip;
- Risk Assessments must cover what is "effective" supervision and this is to be determined by factors such as age, gender, ability of the group, nature and location of the activity, staff competence etc.

### **Transport:**

- Vetting of transport is a requirement as part of the trip process;
- Hired transport - The Academy should ensure appropriate levels of supervision to ensure the safety and welfare of all students. The driver has no responsibility for student behaviour. A company risk assessment must be provided;
- When on public transport, it is the responsibility of the staff in charge of the trip to ensure that all children are supervised and behave in an appropriate manner;
- Staff should adhere to the driving at work risk assessment – see Driving at Work Policy
- Staff are recommended not to use their own car. If using their own car, they must have business insurance cover in place and all Academy regulations must be followed regarding the checking of documents before this can take place. At no point is there to be a ratio of 1 adult to 1 child in a car.

### **Monitoring**

National Guidance provides advice about monitoring.

The EVC and Headteacher need to approve educational visits and ensure that suitable monitoring arrangements are in place. They should ensure that:

- Relevant policies and procedures are reviewed and updated to remain current and in line with good practice;
- Employees have easy access to the policy;
- Establishments appoint, train and revalidate EVCs in accordance with the policy and guidance;
- Establishment practices, including notification and approval procedures, comply with the employer's policy and follow this guidance;
- Establishments keep proper records;

### **Induction, training, apprenticeship, succession planning**

Staff will be given the appropriate support when planning a school trip by experienced teachers and the EVC. Where appropriate, training sessions and updates on changes with policies will be given to staff.

### **Vetting of providers:**

- When a residential trip or visit, which includes adventurous activities is being considered, the providers of such a service will be vetted by the visit lead/EVC/Headteacher. It is important that the check is made even if the Academy has used the same provider before;
- Most providers who offer adventurous activities require an Adventurous Activities Licence (AALS). The status of the provider will be confirmed during the checking process;
- There are now nationally accredited provider assurance schemes, which can be checked e.g.

The LOtC Quality Badge;  
AALS Licencing  
Adventuremark  
NGB centre approved schemes

- You should not ask for copies of providers' risk assessments, but should seek any information specifically aimed at helping Visit Leaders to manage their visit.

### **Voluntary Help:**

- The use of volunteer helpers should only be permitted by the trip leaders, Headteacher or EVC. This permission will be based on knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and training. The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved;
- All volunteers require a current DBS check unless they are always working alongside a member of staff;
- All volunteers and helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the group leader.

## **Behaviour**

See BST, The Cooper School and Glory Farm Primary School Positive Behaviour Policy.

## **Inclusion**

As BST we endorse the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate;
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- Integration through participation with peers.

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**.

## **Trip insurance:**

- All trips will require adequate insurance. Zurich Municipal Ltd provide trip insurance for the Academy school trips.
- When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal Academy curriculum, even though it is conducted off Academy premises, the insurance arrangements for the Academy will prevail.
- The visit leader must check the need for additional travel insurance depending upon the nature of the activity being undertaken.
- When a tour operator is used, the type and extent of the cover in place should be reviewed and checked. All providers must hold a minimum of £5 million public liability insurance.
- It is the responsibility of the trip leader in liaison with the finance office and EVC, to check the level of insurance in place is suitable and sufficient.

## **Finance**

See BST Charging Policy.

## **Review**

An EVC is required to revalidate their training every three years, so as a minimum, the policy needs to be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation or guidelines change.

<b>Policy/Procedure Title</b>	<b>Educational Trips Policy</b>
<b>Issue Date to Trust Board</b>	<b>Summer Term 2021</b>
<b>Author (Name/Department)</b>	<b>F Buglass – DHT (GFPS) &amp; EVC</b>
<b>Approved by Trustees</b>	<b>Summer Term 2021</b>
<b>Review Date – Every 3 years</b>	<b>Spring Term 2024</b>