



# Educational School Trips Policy

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Approved by: Chair of Trustees

Principal: Neil Bain

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Learning is enriched by the provision of well-organised and well-led co-curricular and educational visits, both residential and non-residential. The Wemms Education Centre has a history of operating a successful and broad programme of such activities. Visits and trips can directly support and stimulate curriculum learning or be provided to help support co-curricular objectives and the general social, cultural and spiritual development of students. The Board of Trustees recognise the value of educational visits and are grateful for the energy, commitment and professional skills of the staff involved.

1.2 It is essential that the utmost care and attention is given to the planning and running of educational visits to ensure the safety of pupils and staff involved and that they are fully protected.

- Safety is the top priority for the school, and each visit leader understands that they have a duty to act as a responsible parent would in looking after the students in his / her care, under the particular circumstances of the visit.
- There is also a responsibility within the conditions of employment to maintain order and discipline and for safeguarding the health and safety of the students, whether on school premises or on authorised activities elsewhere.
- The Educational Visits Policy has been written with reference to Department for Education guidance: Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for School (Updated November 2018), Guidance on Health and Safety on Educational Visits (November 2018). The School also makes extensive use of National Guidance (for the management of outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside learning.)
- All staff organizing and running trips, particularly those which carry a higher-level of risk are encouraged to use the National Guidance website <http://www.oeapng.info>.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Board of Trustees have oversight of the Educational Visits Policy, procedures and implementation as part of their overview of Health and Safety.

- No residential or overseas educational visit can take place without the preliminary and final approval of the Board of Trustees.

2.2 The Principal

- The Principal delegates some of the responsibilities for educational visits to the Head of Department.
- For Day Visits, the Principal has preliminary and final approval.

The Principal's responsibilities are to:

- Ensure that arrangements are in place for informing the Board of Trustees about visits.
- Ensure that the Board of Trustees has approved the Educational Visits Policy and receives reports on visits as appropriate.
- Ensure that visit arrangements and outcomes are evaluated to inform future visits and staff training needs.
- Ensure all information is available to the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator).
- Arrange for the reporting of accidents and incidents as required. Records of these should be reviewed regularly, and the information used to inform future visits.
- Ensure that proper support systems are in place to cope with incidents, emergencies and critical incidents, including the means of contacting the relevant parties in the event of an emergency.
- Provide a rich and varied programme of opportunities for young people to learn outside the classroom. The programme of visits should be structured and progressive to gradually develop young people's confidence, independence and responsibility.

- Make sufficient time and resources available for the HOD to arrange induction and training of staff and volunteers. This should include opportunities for staff to develop competence in dynamic risk management by assisting more experienced colleagues on a range of educational visits and by attending relevant training courses.
- Check that the HOD has designated an appropriately competent visit leader who will meet the Trustee's criteria for ensuring the best interests of the students.
- The Principal should make a judgement on a member of staff's competence and suitability to lead a visit. It should be borne in mind that discipline on an educational visit may have to be stricter than in the School.
- Ensure that appropriate provider assurances are in place.
- Liaise with the Trustees over all matters relating to educational visits.
- Check that the visit leader or another leader is familiar with the location where the activity will take place.
- Ensure that the educational objectives of a visit are fully inclusive, are set out in the pre-visit documentation, and are made known to all relevant parties.
- Ensure that charging procedures for visits are implemented and comply with the establishment policy and legal requirements.
- Ensure that the visit emergency contacts are part of the activity team documents and that all staff are clear about their roles.
- Ensure GDPR compliance.
- Ensure that all staff have read and are familiar with the Critical Incident Policy and that an incident management contingency plan, called the Critical Incident Procedure is in place for each visit and that all responsible adults are fully conversant with its content.

### 2.3 Educational Visits Coordinator

The Educational Visits Coordinator has the following principal functions. To:

- Assess the value of visits and off-site activities to the learning, independence, resilience, and understanding of students.
- Help staff to complete the risk assessments.
- Ensure that health and safety requirements are met.
- Ensure legal requirements are met.
- Make sure that the roles and responsibilities are fulfilled.
- To advise and provides support for the Activity Team as a result of his training and experience in organising visits.

### 2.4 The Head of Department

The Head of Department has the following principal functions. To:

- Promote an understanding of how outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom can support a wide range of outcomes for students and raise achievement.
- Ensure that all staff have access to an appropriate level of training to ensure that educational visit procedures are properly understood.
- Support the Principal with approval of visits and other decisions.
- Support the Principal in ensuring that all members of Activity Leadership teams are competent.
- Monitor Visit Leaders' planning, and sample monitoring of visits.
- Organise the training of members of Activity Leadership teams.
- Ensure that where the Activity Leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a group member, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
- Ensure that DBS checks are in place as required.

- Ensure that the School’s policy provides sufficient guidance to visit leaders about information for parents and parental consent.
- Check that there are 24/7 School emergency contacts for each and every visit and that emergency procedures are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include Emergency Contact access to all relevant records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party, including staff.
- Ensure that individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with Employer requirements and Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. A review should follow any serious incident or systems failure. Risk management documentation must be updated if necessary.
- Ensure that there is a School procedure for recording “near accidents/near misses”, including any resulting learning points and action.
- Keep a record of all educational visits.
- Ensure ‘Final Paperwork for Educational Visits’ is available to the Principal.
- Ensure GDPR compliance.
- Ensure that an Critical Incident Procedure contingency plan is in place for each visit.

#### 2.4 The Visit Leader

The Visit Leader has the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of each visit. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, there is a single visit leader for each visit. The visit leader’s primary responsibilities are as follows. To

- Liaise with the Head of Department.
- Be formally approved to carry out the visit.
- Be specifically competent.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) 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 supporting staff, including about the nature and location of the visit and about 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 students and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate.
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level.
- Ensure the activity/visit is effectively supervised. Ensure that all staff and any third-party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event.
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses.
- When working with third-party activity providers it is imperative to avoid ‘grey areas’, so there should be a clear handover before and after any activity led by a provider. Should a provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention should be done with sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.
- Ensure GDPR compliance.
- Ensure the DSL is consulted on safeguarding matters.

### 3. Procedural Requirements

A Final Visit Risk Assessment, which includes all relevant paperwork pertaining to the trip is maintained and details all the key procedures relating to the running of educational visits. This is available to staff in Evolve, is available in hard copy in the Admin.

The Visit Risk Assessment covers the following areas:

- Preliminary Approval
- Parental Consent
- Ratios
- Information for Parents
- Information for the EVC
- Risk Assessments
- Medical Issues
- Hazardous Activities
- Safeguarding
- Transport
- Researching Providers, Facilities and Venues (by the Trip Organiser and supervised by the EVC)
- Further Guidance for Residential Trips (Evolve in the Evolve National Library)
- Critical Incidents
- Insurance and Finance
- Data Protection
- Evaluation
- Sources of Advice

After the visit is over, the paperwork is kept securely for two years. It is available to everyone.

### 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

The school understands the need to monitor all aspects of the educational visits process, in order to:

- Enable the school to celebrate success and share good practice.
- Help identify areas to improve and CPD requirements.
- Help to ensure high quality learning experiences.
- Help to keep young people safe. The HOD has the primary responsibility for the monitoring of educational visits and reviews the arrangements for all visits. This supports the role of the Principal in facilitating Educational Visits within the school.
- A record is kept of the relevant paperwork for all educational visits in Evolve (and any non-Evolve versions by the Principal).
- Evaluation after an educational visit is an important aid to planning future visits and should be completed by the Activity Leader as prompted in Evolve. This should include a record of any incident that occurred that could have had severe consequences to the welfare of any

participant or staff member, and any failure of the services offered by a provider. On return to School, any accident should be reported via the Health and Safety Reporting Helpline Number: 0300 003 1642. Further information on Accident Reporting may be found in the Health and Safety Policy.

## 5. Training and Competence

- The HOD must have an appropriate level of experience and training to discharge the principal functions of the role.
- The key requirements for Activity Leaders are that they must be accountable, confident and competent to lead the visit/activity, not that they hold a particular post, title or job description.
- For all staff, regular updates are provided for staff on educational visits procedures.
- Further information for staff is available on the online school system Evolve which has a very comprehensive Evolve National Library. This is arranged alphabetically and covers guidance and information on many trips and associated elements e.g. travel safety. It is possible to access information on a wide range of activities, visits, museums, sports, field trips etc. and gives information that is helpful for Team Leaders. Evolve is available to all staff and can be accessed at <https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco10/docs.asp>.
- An appropriate level of training is required for those leading or participating in visits involving potentially hazardous activities.

## 6. Risk Management

The School recognises that risk management in the context of educational 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.
- Most human activity involves benefits and risks. It is impossible to have all the benefits without the risks. Risk can only be eliminated by stopping the activity, but then all the benefits are lost. This is recognised by both the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Department for Education (DfE). It is a requirement that the visit leader carries out a Risk Assessment for every educational visit. Further information on risk assessments can be found at: <https://oeapng.info> (National Guidance 4.3 c/f/g) 6.4 The following principles underpin all risk assessments:
  - Risk assessment documentation considers the nature of the specific group and the particular venue(s) to which they will be taken.
  - All those involved in the visit understand the risk assessment as much as they need to, particularly their role and responsibilities within it and what they need to do.
  - What is recorded happens in practice.
  - There must also be on-going risk assessment by Activity Leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require.
  - On expeditions and visits which involve any hazardous activity, visit leaders and staff should always have and be prepared to revert to a 'Plan B'.
  - Certain visits to areas of high risk e.g. Geography trips, that may involve natural hazards unfamiliar to the students, must have a daily itinerary logged with service providers, hotels etc. and there must be no deviation so that in the event of a critical incident, emergency services will know where to find the students. In the event of 'Plan B' being implemented, staff must inform service providers, hotels etc.



- Generic risk assessments are available in Evolve, although they must be adapted to the specific visit and signed by the Activity Leader.
- The implementation of a plan to best realise these benefits, using professional judgements to ensure that the level of risk does not exceed that which can be justified by the benefits.
- Risk Assessments **must** be signed off and approved by the Principal for day visits in the UK and by Trustees for all overseas trips. A record of approval must be kept on file.

## 7. Assessing Venues and Providers

Activity Leaders have a responsibility to thoroughly research the suitability of venues and check that facilities and third-party provision meet the group's needs and expectations.

When researching providers, Activity Leaders are encouraged to take advantage of nationally accredited provider assurance schemes. Examples of such schemes include:

- Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge (covers both quality and safety of all activities offered – consider due diligence completed).
- Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA) licence (this statutory scheme covers only safety management).
- Adventuremark (covers only safety).
- National Governing Body Centre Approval Schemes (applicable where the only provision is a single, specialist activity).
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Approved Activity Providers 7.3

If an organisation does not hold a LOtC Quality badge, the following will be considered in making a judgement if they are an appropriate organisation to use. These include requesting the organisation complete a Provider Form and considering:

- their insurance.
- that they meet legal requirements.
- their health and safety and emergency policies control measures and risk assessments.
- their use of vehicles.
- staff competence.
- safeguarding.
- accommodation.
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have.
- that they have a licence where needed. Further guidance on assessing the suitability of a Provider is in the Educational Visits Handbook.
- If any staff have used them previously and are satisfied by their competence and educational value.
- The HOD will require a copy of the Provider Form and a preliminary risk assessment before authorising the trip.

## 8. Researching Facilities or Venues

Where reasonably practical visit leaders should carry out a preliminary visit to any unfamiliar facility or venue, including those used by a provider. The cost of this can be built into the pricing of the visit. Where a preliminary visit is not reasonably practicable, the visit leader should consider how they can gather sufficient information to make an adequate assessment of the venue, facilities or provider. In the absence of first-hand observations and credible assurances as set out above, they should seek information from reliable sources such as:

- The EVC
- The HOD



- Colleagues
- Similar groups that have recently visited the venue or used the facility/provider
- Reputable organisations such as tourist boards
- Expedition Providers Association (EPA)

## 9. Inclusion

The Equality Act 2010 states that the responsible body of a school or, for other provision, the service provider, must not discriminate against, harass or victimise a student or young person because of one of the protected characteristics (disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) in the way that it provides (or not) a benefit, facility or service. There is a duty to make reasonable adjustments. Activities should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics.

- The School undertakes, when a visit or activity is being planned, to take all reasonably practicable measures which must be taken to include all young people.
- Every reasonable effort is made to find a venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

## 10. Safeguarding

All staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students during educational visits. Further guidance regarding safeguarding is in the Safeguarding Policy.

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Every educational visit must operate within the statutory protocols detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019).
- The DSL should be consulted prior to the visit.

## 11. Vetting Suitability

The suitability of all volunteers (including parents) must be vetted following all the relevant procedures required by the School and stipulated in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023).

- Anyone on an educational visit who engages in regulated activity with students must have undergone an enhanced DBS check, with barred list check.
- What is known about volunteers from teacher's personal experience including formal or informal information from staff, parents, volunteer organisations and other volunteers.
- If appropriate can the volunteer offer references from the employers or previous volunteer works.
- Activity leaders must always consult with the Business Manager about the need for an enhanced DBS check for volunteers. The visit leader must provide specific information to the Business Manager regarding the roles and detailed responsibilities of volunteers.

## 12. Medical Issues

On all trips the visit leader and staff carry a copy of relevant medical details.

- For ALL trips the visit leader is expected to collate medical information from the shared area and, when necessary, to liaise with parents and/carers.

- If required, the visit leader must ensure appropriate emergency medication is taken on the trip. Students cannot attend a visit of any kind without the appropriate emergency medication which must be carried at all times and in the appropriate manner (i.e. in a cool box if the medication must be stored below a certain temperature).
- For all visits, at least one of the group's members should be a fully qualified first aider.
- In giving consent for their child to take part in Residential trips, parents declare that the medical information they have supplied is accurate and up-to date and the teachers leading the trip may take a copy of this information with them. This does not apply to day trips.

### 13. Emergency Procedure

Critical incidents on educational visits are rare but they do happen. Minor incidents, whether accidents or other emergencies, are more common. Effective planning means that the likelihood of any of these is reduced, and that, when they do happen, their impact and consequences are minimised.

- Deciding what to do in the event of an accident or emergency should form part of the planning and preparation of every educational visit. Detailed instructions of what to do if an incident, serious accident, or a fatality should occur during a visit forms part of the School's Critical Incident Plan.
- All members of the Activity Team carry a copy of the Emergency Procedures. These are contained in each First Aid Kit with emergency contact numbers. The Activity Team carry contact numbers for the parents. Reception and Admin Officer are the point of contact for the activity team and have all key information, including contact phone numbers, should anything go wrong and contact information is lost. All information can be accessed in Evolve.
- For day trips, Reception is the point of contact if needed and has copies of trip paperwork in the event the paperwork is lost. In line with guidance, this information is not kept in only one place or only electronically. As most of the students are collected by taxis, on a day trip they must return to school by the end of the school day. If the trip has not returned by their expected time, admin staff will not leave until the trip returns and children are collected safely.

### 14. Code of Conduct

On all visits, students should be reminded of the basic requirements of safeguarding the safety of each other, courtesy and consideration towards members of the public and conduct that enhances the reputation of the school. As far as possible, normal school rules apply.

- All students participating in visits should be aware of the Positive Behaviour Policy, which includes the code of conduct for students. The Wemms Education Centre always expects exemplary behaviour from its students, whether in school or out on a school trip.
- Generic and specific consent forms require parents to acknowledge that they have read and understood the Positive Behaviour Policy.
- For foreign visits parents are aware that in the unlikely event of a gross breach of the Positive Behaviour Policy, a student might be repatriated. This would be the decision of the Trustees and the Principal and would be at the parent's expense.

### 15. Insurance

The School's insurance policy provides group cover for all members of parties involved in trips. Details can be obtained from the Business Manager.

- Trips involving hazardous activities may require separate insurance and this should be discussed by the visit leader with the Business Manager.

## 16. Finance

Parents/Carers must consent to educational visits.

- Unless the School is notified to the contrary, consent to the child participating in a variety of educational visits is part of the agreement made when a place is offered at Wemms Education Centre.
- Students will be expected to follow the behaviour, outlined in the Positive Behavioural Policy during all educational visits. A failure to behave well when off-site, may result in the student being returned to school early or collected by the parents if necessary. The decision on how to deal with the transgressions will be made by the Activity Leader following a consultation with the Principal and/or the Trustees.
- Educational visits which cost in excess of £50 will be subject to written consent in order to participate, which must, unless otherwise agreed, be signed by all of those with parental responsibility.
- Activity Leaders should liaise carefully with the EVC, HOD and Business Manager regarding the financing of all educational visits. All educational visits that require extra funding will be carefully costed and the financing will be agreed by the Trustees.
- For residential and overseas trips, the budget will be prepared by the Business Manager and approved by the Trustees.
- Where parents are required to make a payment for a visit, every effort is made to keep the cost reasonable. However, it is expected that the cost of the trip should reflect the requirement for it to run safely and for there to be a contingency fund.
- For residential and overseas trips contingency and other funds not spent will be returned to parents. Voluntary contributions will be requested at the first instance and costings will be discussed fully with parents at the first available opportunity.

## 17. Data Protection

- The Wemms Education Privacy Policy, which includes data protection applies to all aspects relating to educational visits.
- In light of the new GDPR legislation, which came into effect on 25 May 2018, staff are required, as part of the standard risk assessment process for educational visits, to evaluate the risks associated with the handling and sharing of data.
- The generic risk assessment should be used.
- Visit leaders and staff are required to be familiar with the guidelines provided in the generic risk assessment and appropriate school policies.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that all paperwork is safely taken to admin for secure storage following a trip.
- Visit leaders are not required to complete an additional GDPR risk assessment for each individual trip. However, if the data / information requirement for a trip exceeds simple contact/medical information, then a separate Date Protection Risk Assessment is likely; e.g. if there is a contract with a third-party who processes data on the School's behalf, sharing passport information with a travel agent, etc.

## 18. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Privacy Policy