

# Educational Visits

## Document Control

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## Related policies and documents

- Health and safety: responsibilities and duties for schools 2019
- Locally Owned Academy Health & Safety

## Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' is used in this document it refers to The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust.
- Where the word 'Governing Body' is used it refers to the Local Governing Body of an individual academy within the Trust.
- Where appropriate the Local Governing Bodies of individual academies will publish details of the procedures and practices to implement Trust policies.

## Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Vision and Values

### Vision

The Elliot Foundation was created as a safe place for children and teachers where all are nurtured to achieve beyond even their own expectations. Our motto, "Where children believe they can because teachers know they can" reflects our conviction that raising expectations for all children and teachers is at the heart of a successful and inclusive society.

### Values

#### For children

We help children to discover themselves and aspire beyond any limitations that their context might appear to place upon them. We help them understand that they can be, 'Heroes of their own lives' building the foundations for healthy and successful lives.

#### For schools

In addition to the essential functional skills of reading, writing and mathematics, children need to learn how to learn and to believe that they can continue to do so. They must also possess the critical thinking skills to sift fact from fiction to be able to think for themselves, freely and creatively.

#### For success

To thrive, whatever their chosen path, children need confidence, curiosity and commitment. We will nurture these attitudes across all their learning experiences.

#### For communities

Children at Elliot schools will be raised with an awareness of the world around them and their role in shaping a better future through volunteering and contributing in their communities.

## 1. Aim

- 1.1. Well planned and executed educational visits provide pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school and beyond. Provision of 'real-life' opportunities enables pupils to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them.
- 1.2. The Trust encourages academies to maximise opportunities for children to engage with valuable learning experiences outside the school site while ensuring they are well planned and safe.

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1. The Principal

The Principal is responsible for the wellbeing and safety of children and staff at all times whilst they are on academy organised trips and visits.

The Principal will ensure that:

- The Education Visits Coordinator has suitable training and experience to make sound professional judgements in relation to trips and visits
- Ensure that the Trip Leader has suitable training and experience to manage an educational visit successfully and safety
- Approve all trips and visits and check that they comply with current policy, current H&S requirements and ensure that all trips are budgeted for and financially viable
- Consider all requests for reductions in charges for non curricular visits in line with the Charging and Remissions Policy

### 2.2. Education Visit Coordinator

The Education Visit Coordinator will ensure that:

- Principal and Local Governing Body have approved the visit
- Appropriate insurance cover is in place and that a comprehensive risk assessment has been completed
- Trip leaders are suitably qualified/experienced if acting as an instructor
- All supervisors have sufficient expertise to carry out their role effectively and have appropriate DBS clearance
- Arrangements have been made to meet the medical

needs and special educational needs of identified pupils

- Signed consent forms are in place for all pupils
- Travel arrangements are confirmed and advised appropriately
- The address and phone number of the visit's venue and contact name(s) are distributed to parents/carers and key staff
- The names of all adults and pupils in the traveling group, the contact details of parents and next of kin, staff and volunteers are circulated appropriately

### 2.3. Trip Leader

The Trip Leader will ensure that:

- Inform the Educational Visits coordinator of the intended trip and complete all relevant documents
- Nominate and obtain authorisation for suitable members of staff to assist on the trip
- Be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parent/ carers
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- Consider the health and safety of the group at all times
- Check suitability of all pupils proposed for the visit
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see below)
- Arrange a parents' information event
- Ensure all information and documentation has been authorised by the Principal

### 2.4. Other teachers and adults

Teachers and other adults will ensure that:

- Teachers continue to act as employees of the Trust outside normal working hours
- Care for each individual child as any reasonable parent would.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable

## 2.5. Responsibilities of pupils

Pupils must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- Dress for the conditions and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the Trip Leader accordingly
- Not undertake any task that they think will be dangerous

## 3. Exploratory visits

3.1. Wherever possible the Trip Leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the visits
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. It is essential to see and inspect copies of the venue's health and safety status, relevant policies and insurance documentation.

## 4. Risk Assessment

4.1. A comprehensive risk assessment should always be completed in advance of a visit using an appropriate form. The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks?
- Who may be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit?

- 4.2. The Trip Leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if appropriate. The Trip Leader should consider the following when assessing the risks:

The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken

The location:

- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Suitable conditions for the activity eg weather and timing

## 5. Residential visits

### 5.1. Hostels and Hotels

- The accommodation should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the pupils. The academy should endeavour to obtain a room plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group
- Access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times and separate male and female sleeping areas must be used for pupils and adults
- The whole party is aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel
- Where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- Locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group
- There is adequate storage for clothes, luggage, equipment etc particularly safekeeping of valuables
- There is provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs



- There is adequate lighting and safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)

## 6. Coastal visits

- 6.1. Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting pupils have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming.

The Trip Leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit will not be allowed.
- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags
- Establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc
- Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- Cliff tops and the base of cliffs can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times.
- Consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths

## 7. Swimming

- 7.1. Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. In-water activities should take place only following completion of an appropriate risk assessment and measures have been put in place to control identified risks. Any activities in water must be supervised by a qualified lifeguard.

## 8. First Aid

- 8.1. First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight

stays or travel abroad it is essential to have a least one trained first-aider in the group.

- 8.2. The Trip Leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services and the distance to the nearest hospital.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements
- A method of recording any accident and/or medical aid given

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The contents of a first-aid kit may depend on what activities are planned.

## 9. Supervision

- 9.1. It is important to have an adequate ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The following should be considered:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Special needs pupils
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation

- 9.2. As a general guideline, the following ratio of adults to pupils should be followed, but each visit should be assessed on an individual basis through the risk assessment process.

- |                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| ● EYFS          | 1:4  |
| ● Key Stage One | 1:5  |
| ● Key Stage Two | 1:10 |

- 9.3. Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required or external trainers are required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. All adult supervisors, including school staff, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times, particularly pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with SEN. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

- 9.4. The academy's Education Visits Coordinator and/or the Principal is responsible for checking any external trainers/supervisors have the appropriate clearance including valid DBS certification.
- 9.5. For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.
- 9.6. If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the Principal must ensure that the Trip Leader is suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity.
- 9.7. Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Trip Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

## 10. Preparing pupils

- 10.1. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and others' safety.
- 10.2. Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include consideration of health and safety issues.

## 11. Participation

- 11.1. Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. Pupils should be encouraged to have a go during the visit but they should not be coerced into activities they fear.
- 11.2. Should the behaviour of pupils cause concern for their safety and others, then consideration should be given for the withdrawal from an activity. On residential visits the Trip Leader may consider the early return home of a pupil dependent on the circumstances.

## 12. Information to pupils

12.1. The Trip Leader will determine how information is detailed to pupils

Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity
- Background information about the place to be visited
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- What standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- Who is responsible for the group
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures
- Rendezvous procedures

## 13. Transport and pupils

13.1. Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules:

- All pupils and staff must wear seat belts
- Pupils should be aware of safe crossing procedures
- Adequate supervision at all times when traveling

## 14. Pupils with special education and medical needs

14.1. Every effort will be made to accommodate children with special needs and disabilities whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit.

14.2. When assessing the suitability of a venue, the trip leader should specifically check whether there are appropriate adaptations to meet the children's needs e.g. access for those using wheelchairs, or facilities to address personal care needs.

14.3. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures that may be need to be addressed at the planning stage. Where necessary individual risk assessments should be carried out.

## 15. Communicating with Parents/Carers

- 15.1. Parents should be aware that staff will be exercising the same care that a reasonable parent would. The following information should be advised in writing as well as through a meeting to parents/ carers prior to a visit:
- Dates of the visit
  - Times of departure and return
  - Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
  - Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
  - Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
  - The visit's objectives and details of the activities planned
  - An explanation as to how the assessed risks will be managed
  - Insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
  - Clothing, equipment and money to be taken by pupils
  - The information to be given by parents with any request for consent clearly identified
  - Standards of behaviour expected including identifying that should the behaviour of any pupil cause concern for their safety and others, then consideration will be given for their withdrawal from an activity. On residential visits the Trip Leader may consider the early return home of a pupil dependent on the circumstances.

## 16. Parental consent

- 16.1. The Academy must seek a separate parental consent form for:
- Adventure activities
  - Visits abroad

Such visits carry an additional layer of risk and must be approved by the Regional Director and the Finance Director.

If parents withhold consent the pupil must not be taken on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupils in some other way, wherever possible. The academy's parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

If there is a pre-trip meeting, the academy may wish to provide an interpreter to assist parents who do not speak English fluently. Forms should be translated to ensure that parents are fully aware of what they are being asked to sign.