

Educational Off Site Visits Policy

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Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Values

1. Put children first

- a. We trust and value your professionalism
- b. We share the responsibility for the learning and welfare of all of our children
- c. Our purpose is to improve the lives of children

2. Be safe

- a. Don't assume that someone else will do it
- b. Look after yourself, your colleagues and all children
- c. We are all responsible for each other's safety and well being
- d. Discuss any concerns with an appropriate member of staff

3. Be kind & respect all

- a. People are allowed to be different as are you
- b. Kindness creates the positive environment we all need to flourish
- c. This kindness should extend to ourselves as well as to others

4. Be open

- a. If you can see a better way, suggest it
- b. If someone else suggests a better way to you, consider it
- c. We exist to nurture innovators and support those who take informed risks in the interests of children

5. Forgive

- a. We all make mistakes
- b. Admit them, learn from them and move on

6. Make a difference

- a. Making the world a better place starts with you
- b. Model the behaviour that you would like to see from others

Related Policies and Documents

- TEFAT Health and Safety local policy and [Trust-wide policy](#)
- TEFAT [First Aid Policy](#)
- TEFAT [Administering medicines policy](#)
- TEFAT [Charging and remissions policy](#)
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- DfE Guidance on [Off site visits](#)
- Outdoor Education Advisory Panel [guidance](#)
- [KCSIE](#)
- [EYFS Framework](#)

1. Policy aims and scope

- 1.1. To ensure the health and safety of all staff, pupils and visitors involved in off site educational activities
- 1.2. To ensure that appropriate checks and procedures are in place to support safe off site visits and activities
- 1.3. To provide a framework for risk assessing and applying appropriate mitigations for off site visits

2. Introduction

The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust (TEFAT) recognises that the participation of children in a wide range of visits, journeys and experiences is important in promoting learning and development. As part of their responsibilities, the Trust and Academy will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants while travelling to, and engaged in, activities away from the Academy, whether provided by a contracted provider or the Academy itself.

The Trust's Educational Visits Policy is to ensure that the safety of pupils, employees and others is managed, and to minimise risk as far as practicable and in developing its procedures, is guided by National Guidance issued by the DfE and the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel.

This guidance is specific to all situations where staff (or volunteers) acting in the course of their employment take responsibility for children taking part in activities off Academy premises. This includes outdoor learning, off site and residential activities. This policy does not cover overseas visits.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Trust

- To provide the framework within which offsite visits and residential experiences are successfully managed.
- All offsite residential visits and any proposed hazardous activities are to be approved by the Operations team, via the Senior Regional Director or Director of Estates and H&S. They will review submitted risk assessments and associated details of the trip.
- They will investigate any serious incidents or near misses arising from an off site visit.

3.2. The Principal

- Overall responsibility for all visits rests with the Principal. They will be responsible for ensuring that all visits and trips are planned, organised, controlled, monitored and

reviewed in a safe, compliant manner and should only authorise visits, or seek approval for residential visits, when everything is fully in place.

- Ensure that the academy has a suitably qualified Educational Visits Co-ordinator
- Ensure that staff are supported and trained to lead educational visits and are given sufficient time to plan and risk assess proposed trips
- Ensure that proposed visits are compliant, safe and financially viable, inclusive and align with the academy Charging and Remissions policy
- Set out the school rules applicable to the trip - eg pupil mobile phones, staff use of mobile phones, communications with parents during the trip etc

3.3. Educational Visits Co-ordinator/Administrator

- Each Academy is to have an assigned qualified Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).
- To ensure that all risk assessments relating to the trip are suitable and sufficient. This will include reviewing detailed risk assessments from host organisations / event organisers, ensuring that the location, operators and instructors meet required standards in respect of quality, compliance and competence
- In the event of a significant incident, near miss, unforeseen hazards, risks or general observations from other staff accompanying the visit, the EVC must undertake a thorough review and record and report back to the Senior Leader in charge of visits.

3.4. Visit Leaders

- The Visit Leader is appointed by the Principal in conjunction with the EVC and will have overall responsibility for the planning and supervision of the visit. This person must be sufficiently experienced and competent to run a visit to which they have been an assigned leader.
- The Visit Leader will, in liaison with the EVC, be responsible for the planning and preparation of their visit to ensure that any activities or events are appropriately risk assessed and any risks mitigated as far as possible, that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place and a protocol is agreed to ensure the school DSL is contactable at all times. Risk assessments will be reviewed by the EVC to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient.
- Where possible, undertake an exploratory visit to ensure suitability, assess risk and ensure viability of the trip
- Where a visit involves the use of staff from a third party organisation, eg a specialist educational visits centre, the Visit Leader will ensure that the organisation's staff are DBS cleared or are supervised at all times by the school's own staff
- The safeguarding of pupils remains paramount during off-site visits. The Visit Leader must ensure that:
 - The Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed of all visits in advance
 - DSL contact details (including our of hours) are included in the visit pack
 - All staff are suitably briefed on reporting procedures during the trip

- Any safeguarding concern, allegation, disclosure or incident occurring during the visit is reported immediately to the DSL/Deputy DSL in line with the school's policy
 - Where the DSL is accompanying the visit, an alternative DSL must be nominated to provide oversight and escalation support
- Visit Leaders should keep a full file of documentation relating to a visit they are leading as well as providing information for the EVC. The Visit Leader will ensure that all parents of children on their visit are provided with all the required information, which may include risk assessment information, and that any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place. The Visit Leader is required to obtain the requisite parental consents and medical information for each child attending. For any trip involving EYFS children, all residentials and "hazardous" activities must have a trip specific consent. Annual consents can be used for routine local off site visits for Yrs 1-6.
 - Visit Leaders should ensure that pupils are fully briefed on the rules of the trip and what they can / cannot bring with them - eg mobile phones, food types etc
 - The Visit Leader named for each visit will have overall responsibility for that visit whilst it is underway and will be fully aware of the emergency procedures and relevant contact numbers. They should assign a Deputy Visit Leader who is suitably knowledgeable to fill the role of Visit Leader if required.
 - Where the Visit Leader has been made aware of a significant incident, near miss, unforeseen hazards, risks or general observations from other staff accompanying the visit, the Visit Leader must report back fully to the EVC who will then undertake a thorough review and record and report to Director of Estates and H&S.

3.5. Responsibility of other supervisory staff on visits

- The Visit Leader will ensure that all staff assisting with supervision on any visit will be aware of the specific risk assessments for the event. All staff will ensure that the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed. All staff will ensure that once the visit has commenced, where any significant incident, near miss, unforeseen hazards or risks or observations are identified, they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader during the trip.
- All staff must remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns and maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Staff and volunteers must not post images, videos, live streams, or updates of pupils on social media during trips unless explicitly authorised by the school. Only approved school devices or platforms may be used to capture images or videos, in accordance with safeguarding and privacy policies.

4. Risk Assessment

- A comprehensive risk assessment should be completed in advance of the visit, taking account of all potential risks from departure from school to returning to school.

The risk assessment should follow the TEFAT model risk assessment ([Blank template](#) and [residential template](#))

- Risks may include : distance from school, mode of transport, chronological age of the children, nature of the activity, experience of the staff involved, experience of children being away from school / home, needs of the children, the current UK Threat Level etc
- Children with SEND, medical needs or any particular needs will have their own bespoke Risk Assessment
- The Risk Assessment should consider whether a member of staff should travel to the venue in their own vehicle in case of an emergency. This will depend upon the nature and location of the trip.
- The completed Risk Assessment should be shared and discussed with all trip staff and they should sign to confirm receipt and understanding.
- Visit leaders have the authority to amend or cancel activities mid-trip based on a dynamic risk assessment including factors such as - for example - changing weather conditions.

5. Staff : Pupil ratios

- There is no legislation covering numbers of adults to pupils; the intention being that academies should risk assess the activity and assign staff accordingly. The trust policy sets out a MINIMUM staff pupil ratio per age group. However, the trip specific risk assessment is expected to review these **minimum baselines** and staff numbers according to the risks identified.
- The risk assessment may identify that a higher ratio of adults may be appropriate. For example, visit leaders should consider the chronological age of the group, the nature of the activity, location, mode of transport, experience of the staff involved, experience of the children and any particular needs of the individual children. However, under Equality Act 2010 it is unlawful to discriminate against a pupil with SEND and refuse to allow them the opportunity to participate in an off site visit.
- **TEFAT MINIMUM standards**
 - **2 year olds : 1:5**
 - **3-4 year olds : 1:6**
 - **Reception : 1:6**
 - **KS1 : 1:8**
 - **KS2 : 1:10**
- **There must always be at least 2 staff members on any off site trip, one of whom must be a qualified teacher, HLTA or UQT subject to:**
- **Adults providing 1-1 support should not be counted in the ratio.**
- **Volunteers**

It is recognised that releasing staff to attend off site trips can be challenging and trips often rely upon the use of volunteers. Where the use of volunteers is essential, maybe for larger trips, it will need to be planned in advance and volunteers should be risk assessed and fully trained in respect of their role and what is expected of them.

Volunteers should be paired/grouped with members of school staff in order that the staff member can provide some supervision/oversight of the volunteer and be on hand to accompany children on toilet visits etc, not the volunteer.

- **Off site after school matches**

Where the school has sports coaches (qualified and DBS cleared) they may be responsible for small groups of pupils involved in a match if they travel to the venue with another staff member or alternatively they meet pupils at the venue, where parents have already delivered their children.

6. 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)

7. Coastal visits

- 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

8. Swimming

- When arranging curriculum related swimming lessons, the risk assessment and mitigations should consider
 - Transport to and from the swimming pool
 - Supervision during changing before and after the session (potential cross over with public use of the pool or other schools)
 - Competence of swimming instructors at the facility
 - Management of children who may be water phobic or have particular needs

9. First Aid

- First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit or off site activity. All trips should have at least one fully qualified first aider and **with groups aged 0-8 yrs, a qualified paediatric first aider is required**. However, the risk assessment could indicate more specifically trained staff eg where there are severe allergies, diabetes, epilepsy or complex medical needs.
- Minimum first aid provision includes:
 - Suitability stocked first aid box (taking account of planned activities)
 - A person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements
 - A method of recording any accident or medical aid given
 - A protocol for storage and administering medicines that may be required
 - A protocol for contacting parents in the case of an emergency
- Numbers of first aiders will be decided on a risk basis taking account of size of group, complexities of group, venue/location, proximity to medical centre etc

10. Financial planning for a visit

- All visits require a financial plan to be completed and handed to the EVC before any authorisation of a visit can be made. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, EVC and Principal to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place for the educational visit, in liaison with their school business/finance manager and Principal.

11. Insurance

- Academies should refer to the risk protection arrangement (RPA) for school's guidance and make suitable enquiries with the RPA insurers as to insurance provision.

12. Emergency planning

- Emergency information must be issued to all staff taking part in a visit with the appropriate guidance and contact numbers, a copy of this plan must be left with the designated Senior Leader at the academy prior to any visit departing
- A log of significant accidents, incidents and near misses must be kept by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator; this must be shared with the TEFAT Director of Health & Safety immediately after the visit.

Visit plan checklist:-

- risk assessments : whole trip, particular children, medical needs
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- Centre staff DBS checks
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- Communication plan - at destination and with school / parents (school mobile numbers)
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures (parents, SLT, TEFAT);
- general communications information;
- School DSL contact details (during and outside of school day)
- guidance for all visit leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and Principal;
- medical questionnaire returns and consent forms;
- first-aid boxes.
- First aiders
- Drivers' licences checked (if applicable)