

INCLUSIVE | MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

OFFSITE VISITS AND LEARNING OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM POLICY

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Introduction

The Inclusive Multi Academy Trust aims to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and are given opportunities to explore this in a more practical setting. Trustees acknowledge the immense value of offsite visits to our pupils and fully support those that are well planned and managed.

The Trust also takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and pupils very seriously. We take reasonable steps, as stated in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, to ensure the health and safety of our employees, as well as our pupils. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for pupils and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips. A copy of this guidance is made available to all staff and should be read before organising any offsite visit. It is also included within the staff induction process.

Legal Framework

This policy has been created with regard to the following legislation, including, but not limited to:

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

This policy has also been created with due regard to the following guidance:

- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'
- DfE (2013) 'Driving school minibuses'

Definitions

'In loco parentis' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over the pupils in place of a parent.

'School trip' means any educational visit, foreign exchange trip, away-day or residential holiday organised by the school which takes pupils and staff members off-site.

'Residential' means any school trip which includes an overnight stay.

Activities of an 'adventurous nature' include, but are not limited to trekking, caving, skiing, water sports, and climbing,

Key roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to: ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on pupils' lives, teaching them new life skills and experiences.
- Promoting good safeguarding practices to ensure the safety of pupils when partaking in extra-curricular trips and activities.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing an educational visits coordinator.
- Ensuring that all pupils are given an opportunity to participate in educational visits
- Liaising with the educational visits coordinator and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the educational visits coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education.
- Completing relevant paperwork, including risk assessments, for extra-curricular trips and activities and arranging for training to be undertaken as necessary.
- Ensuring suitable safety measures are in place prior to each trip or activity.
- Ensuring staff/pupil ratios are appropriate
- Overseeing the work of the educational visits coordinator, where required, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.
- Ensure that any issues or problems are raised in a meeting with the Trust Board
- Ensuring staff receive training on this policy as part of their induction as well as
- receiving regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) has overall responsibility for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties during planning and organisation of the extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Informing parents of any proposed extra-curricular trip or activity, which will incur a fee, six weeks in advance of the trip.
- Informing parents of any proposed extra-curricular trip or activity, which is free, two weeks in advance of the trip
- Ensuring we have parental permission prior to the trip.
- All visits planned are entered and checked on 'Evolve'. This is an internet system used by Hertfordshire County council to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits

The designated leader in charge of the trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all pupils on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Checking the school diary is free on the school calendar prior to planning an educational visit.
- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the headteacher.
- Communicating with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.
- Completing all essential documentation on Evolve for the trip including a risk assessment.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity **four weeks** in advance of the trip.

- Request permission from parents four weeks prior to the trip and chase up any outstanding permission requests that have not been returned **two weeks** prior to the trip.
- Understanding and operating safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.
- Delegating responsibilities to other staff members on the school trip.
- Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the DBS Policy.
- When travelling with a pupil with SEND, ensure an adult is with them at all times and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the pupil's needs

Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy at applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the safety of the pupils is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.
- Liaising with the designated leader to understand personal responsibilities and ensuring the smooth running of the school trip or activity.
- Ensuring that any visit to an outdoor space, e.g. parks and playing fields, are kept clean and free from litter during the trip.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Following instructions from staff while on school trips.
- Keeping pride in their presentation, understanding that they are representing the school whilst on an education trip.
- Ensuring that during visits to outdoor spaces, they keep the area tidy and free from litter.
- Behaving in a manner which matches the ethos of the school, and for following the behaviour rules set out in the school's Behaviour Policy with regards to this policy.

Risk Assessment process

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced fully. This school uses the Hertfordshire Internet-based system, 'Evolve', to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits use their own Evolve account. It is also used for notifying the Local Authority of level 3 visits which include self-led adventurous activities, fieldwork trips to open or "wild" country, and all trips overseas.

All visits can be planned on the system which takes users through a step-by-step process until all required stages are complete. The stages can be completed in whatever order suits the user and 'Evolve' allows the user to leave the process and log out of the system and then come back again to a particular visit, without losing any of their work.

Evolve records:

- General information regarding the visit

- Risk Assessments, both generic and personalised
- Participants' names
- Participants contact details
- Participants medical information

A summary of information about visit participants must be taken on the visit. Once the planning stages are complete, the visit is submitted to the EVC for checking and initial approval. The visit may then be initially approved or sent back to the appropriate member of staff for amendment or further work. The visit will be finally approved by the Headteacher. Once a visit has been formally approved, all material details become "locked" as an historic record and cannot be changed, although comments can still be added where required. Where applicable, the system will prompt the user that a visit needs to be submitted to the Local Authority for notification.

Vetting providers

When considering external providers for activities, the educational visits coordinator will check whether they hold the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge' to indicate they meet nationally recognised standards.

If a provider does not hold the badge, the educational visits coordinator will check the following to ensure they are a suitable organisation to work with:

- Their insurance arrangements
- Their adherence to legal requirements
- Their control measures
- Their use of vehicles
- Staff competency levels
- Safeguarding policies
- The suitability of their accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements in place
- The presence of necessary licences

If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

Safe Use of the minibus and seatbelts

The site manager is responsible for arranging the annual maintenance of the minibuses, including MOTs and road tax.

The driver will have a current driving licence, be aged 25 years or over, hold a full licence in at least a category D PCV and have completed specific training which allows them to drive the school minibus. Drivers will complete the relevant Trust paperwork and supply a photocopy of their driving licence. The site manager will maintain a log of school qualified drivers and ensure licenses are checked annually and training undertaken regularly.

Before driving abroad, the educational visits coordinator will seek guidance on which licence is required.

Internal damage to the minibus is the responsibility of the individual or organisation using the minibus. The school will decide who is responsible for covering the cost of any repairs.

The minibus will carry strictly one person per seat and seatbelts must be worn at all times. At least one responsible adult must ride in the back of the vehicle with the pupils.

Fines incurred will be paid by whoever was driving the minibus at the time the offence was committed.

Start and finish mileage, along with any potential risks, defects or damage identified, will be recorded in the minibus vehicle log upon return to the school.

Accidents and incidents

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy.

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip abroad:

- Prior to departure, the headteacher will brief staff on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur
- Organisers will cooperate fully with the emergency services at the location and understand that any injury or death of a member of staff or pupil outside of Great Britain may be subject to the law of the land where the accident occurred.
- The first point of contact within the UK will be the headteacher who will contact the family of the injured person.
- Pupils will be asked not to contact friends or parents in the UK until the family of the injured person can be contacted.
- The British Embassy/Consulate will be informed.
- The insurer will be notified.
- The headteacher will keep written records of any incident, accidents and near misses
- Media enquiries will be referred to the headteacher or, if they are not available, the Trust CEO or COO.
- Pupils and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Missing Person procedure

The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips, either domestically or abroad. Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with this policy.

- Everyone on the trip will be provided with a contact sheet for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group.
- All staff members will be required to carry mobile phones with them always
- Upon arriving at every venue, the trip leader will identify a rendezvous point, where pupils and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group.
- Regular head counts of all pupils and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times.

In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip domestically or abroad:

- The trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining pupils and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
- The trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person and another adult to contact them via phone, these people will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
- Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
- If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities, e.g. British Embassy, should be contacted.

- If the police are called, the trip leader should contact the headteacher, or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.
- The headteacher will then contact the family of the missing person.
- In any event, parents will be informed upon the return to school.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.
- If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.
- If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school; if this is not possible, e.g. when a trip is taking place abroad, the educational visits coordinator will make arrangements to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits.

Insurance

The Trust is a member of the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangement which ensures adequate protection and medical cover

Finance Administration

The school will act in accordance with the DfE's guidance document 'Charging for school activities' (2018). All trips are initially approved by the Headteacher. Costings are prepared and recorded on an audit sheet and a letter is sent to parents asking for a voluntary contribution. The school office monitors contributions as per audits requirements. When the visit has taken place, a reconciliation of the finance is undertaken by the Finance Assistant and checked by the Headteacher or School Business Officer. The school reserves the right to cancel any visit if insufficient funds are received to cover the costs however, no pupil will be denied participation in the visit on the grounds that no contribution has been made on their behalf.

In the event that the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will take into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

In the event that a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher take into account the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else.

The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all pupils are treated equally.

Any charge made in respect of pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £2 per pupil.

Foreign trips

When planning school trips abroad, the school will consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's guidance 'Safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas' (2015) and, where an activity poses significant risks, the school will also consult the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the UK.

When planning a school trip abroad the school will consider the language skills required of supervising staff to mitigate any risk to an acceptable level.

Validity of passports and visa requirements will be dealt with within three months of the initial notification of the trip, to avoid problems when the trip is due to take place.

Staff and pupils will be taught about the culture and values of the country they are visiting, to ensure they understand and respect the values of the citizens.

Before the trip, staff are trained in spotting suspicious behaviour and remaining vigilant whilst abroad.

Before the trip, pupils will be taught how to remain vigilant in the country they are visiting, particularly about advances from strangers.

Registers will be taken at the start and end of each day, as well as before, during, and after events, and at regular intervals whilst on days out to ensure the whereabouts of pupils are known at all times.

Staff will check the town/city's local news at the start of each day of the trip, to ensure their planned activities are safe to go ahead.

At the start of the trip, all pupils and staff are provided with an emergency contact sheet, this includes the trip leader's mobile phone number, as well as emergency numbers and phrases for the country they are visiting.

When using external providers abroad, the school will check whether the provider holds an equivalent of the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge'. If no such equivalent can be ascertained, the school will make checks in the same manner as paragraph 7.2 prior to agreeing to use the provider.

Training of staff

- Staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction.
- Staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD.