

Educational Visits

Birchwood Community Academy Trust

Policy owner (Name):	Alan O'Reilly
Policy owner (Job Title):	School Business Manager
Governing body oversight:	Full Governing Body
Date of approval:	July 2022
Date of next review:	July 2023

Guidance

1. The sources below have been used to develop this policy:
 - [Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel](#)
 - The Department for Education guidance on [educational visits](#)
 - [Council for Learning Outside the Classroom](#)
 - [The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents](#)
 - [The Health and Safety Executive](#)

Legal Framework and Health and Safety

2. This policy provides a framework within which all educational visits at the school will be managed. The policy supports the school to meet its statutory responsibilities in respect of educational visits which includes the legislation and associated regulations below:
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Activity Centres (Young Person's Safety) Act 1995
 - Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004
3. The Health and Safety Executive have a section on their website for education which includes guidance on school trips. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/index.htm>

Where sensible and proportionate steps have been taken by a school and its staff it is highly unlikely that there would be a breach of health and safety law involved or that it would be in the public interest for HSE to bring a prosecution.

Prosecutions taken by HSE invariably involve a fatality (or near fatality) where there was recklessness or a clear failure to adopt sensible precautions. The fact that an accident occurs does not mean there was a breach of health and safety law if sensible proportionate and appropriate precautions have been taken. Fears of prosecution by schools and their staff have been grossly inflated and are unwarranted. Such fears should not be a barrier to school trips taking place.

Responsibilities

Trustees/Governors

4. The trustees have a general responsibility as employers in health and safety law which covers employees while on trips with school.
 - Review and approval of this policy.
 - Review and approval of the code of conduct for both staff and students (Appendix one).
 - Ensuring procedures for visits comply with safeguarding and health and safety policies.
 - Ensuring there is a process in place to approval of school trips and visits.
 - Ensuring leaders carry out risk assessments to make sure appropriate safety measures are in place for trips.

Headteacher

5. The headteacher has the following responsibilities:
 - Ensuring this policy is implemented and operates as it should, and that all visits and trips comply with the policy.
 - Ensuring that visits and trips are properly planned and supervised and that the staff and student safety is paramount.
 - Ensuring that only competent staff are allocated responsibility for leading trips and visits, and arranging suitable training for said staff.
 - Approval of all overseas and residential trips, and any other trips which involve have a higher-than-normal level of risk (often referred to as “adventure activities”).

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

6. The school has appointed Alan O’Reilly, School Business Manager, as EVC.
 - Support the Headteacher in discharging their responsibilities above.
 - Attend an OEAP EVC training day, at least once every 3 years.
 - Ensure competent staff are appointed as trip leaders.
 - Provide training for trip leaders as and when required.
 - Approve educational visits with the exception of those reserved for the head teacher.
 - Keep the Educational Visits policy up to date and available for staff.

Trip leaders

7. All educational visits will have a trip leader who has overall responsibility for the trip. This role **cannot** be shared between two members of staff. Trip leaders must have suitable and sufficient training before leading a trip. Training for trip leaders is provided by the EVC.
 - Have a common law duty to act as a “reasonably careful parent”.
 - Must ensure that the careful planning and preparation of the school trip includes and assessment of the risks and benefits of all activities.
 - Must take an operational lead on activities throughout the trip.

Other staff on trips

8. All other staff on school trips have the following responsibilities:
 - Have a common law duty to act as a “reasonably careful parent”.
 - Must follow the staff code of conduct at all times on school trips.
 - Are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all pupils in their care throughout the entire trip.

- Must take all reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of students both on the school premises and in authorised activities elsewhere.
- Must maintain good order and discipline at all times.

Approval of trips and visits

9. The school uses an online process to manage the approval of trips through Office365. The Headteacher or EVC must approve all educational visits in advance. The headteacher must approve all educational visits which are overseas, residential or involve adventure activities.

Parental consent

10. Parental consent must be received by prior to all educational visits. Consent can be written or electronic, but it **cannot** be verbal. In most cases the school will use ClassCharts to obtain parental consent for trips.
11. The PE department may ask for parental consent for sports fixtures at the start of the school year to cover all fixtures for the year.

Planning

1. The trip leader is responsible for preparing an appropriate **risk assessment**. Not all trips will require a risk assessment. Those that involve no more than an everyday level of risk, such as slips, trips and falls are covered by the school's other policies and procedures. However, most trips will need a written risk assessment alongside some extra planning.
2. Risk assessments should be proportionate and sensible, focusing on how to manage genuine risks. The trips SharePoint site includes a number of template risk assessments which trip leaders can use as a starting point to help with their planning.
3. All trips will require a **letter to parents and carers** to outline what is involved in the trip. Template letters are available on the trips SharePoint site for trip leaders to use as a starting point.
4. There are no set staffing **ratios** for trips. The staffing ratio should be determined by planning the trip and preparing a risk assessment. Some of the factors to be considered are:
 - The experience of staff going on the trip,
 - The activities being undertaken,
 - The role of the any instructors,
 - The students going,
 - First aid requirements,
 - A gender mix of staff,
 - Whether any students going need one to one support,
 - The age of the students, and
 - The transport risk assessment.
5. Trip leaders often ask for a rule of thumb which can be taken as one adult to every 10-15 students, adjusted up or downwards based on risks involved in the trip.
6. For most trips, the trip leader should identify and confirm a **base contact** in school who will be a member of SLT. The base contact must ensure they are familiar with the school's critical incident plan.

7. It may be necessary to carry out a **site visit** prior to a trip in order to prepare a risk assessment. The trip leader should consider whether this is appropriate.
8. A **transport** risk assessments is usually an integral part of the planning for a trip. Template risk assessments for the main types of transport are saved on the trips sharepoint site for trip leaders to use a starting point in their planning.
9. Trip leaders will need to consider what food for the staff and students on the trip. On a day trip from school, the kitchen will be able to provide packed lunches for students entitled to free school meals. On overseas or residential trips, leaders will need to consider and communicate with parents and carers as to whether spending money is required to cover the cost of meals while abroad.
10. The trip leader will be issued with a school **mobile phone** to bring on the trip for communications and emergency purposes. Staff going on a trip should not provide their personal mobile number to parent and carers.
11. The trip leader will want to consider the use of social media while on the trip and check whether the students attending have appropriate **consent** for their photos to be used on school social media.
12. The school will always seek to include all students on trips and make any **reasonable adjustments** necessary for this to happen. Trip leaders should consider these factors when planning their trip.
13. For trips involving **external providers** (see next section), the trip leader should seek assistance from the EVC as to how school can engage an external provider.
14. The trip leader will collect **medical and other sensitive information** about students (and sometimes staff) prior to going on most trips. The trip leader is responsible for storing this information securely during the trip and securely destroying it afterwards.
15. On the day of the trip, a trip leader should ensure a final list of those attending is provided to the school office. For trips that leave outside of school hours the trip leader should inform the base contact of any students who were expected to attend that have not left with the rest of the party.
16. The trip leader should set clear **behaviour** expectations for students going on the trip. This is often best achieved at a parent's information evening prior to the departure. The trip leader may wish to consider providing a written document to parents and carers about behaviour expectations.
17. The school buys into the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangements which include comprehensive **insurance** cover for school trips. There may occasionally be a school trip which falls outside this cover which requires additional insurance. Trips leaders should speak to the EVC about insurance arrangements as a part of their planning.
18. The trip leader may wish to meet with the group of staff going on the trip prior to departure to discuss the risk assessment, delegate specific responsibilities, remind staff about the **staff code of conduct**, and discuss any other concerns raised by staff.
19. For overseas or residential trips, the trip leader must have a **communications plan** that covers how routine communications should be handled. This should include regular check-ins and calls to reassure parents and carers, perhaps using social media or free time to allow students to contact home. The communication plan should also include emergency communication procedures.

Use of external providers

20. For some trips, the school will use an external provider to carry out an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding the trip. This can include:
 - Activity Centre,
 - Ski Company,

- Educational Tour Operator,
- Overseas Expedition Provider,
- Climbing wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff, or
- Freelance instructor of adventurous activities.

21. For the avoidance of doubt, an external provider is NOT a:

- Youth Hostel, Hotel, B&B, Campsite (where only accommodation is provided),
- Museums or galleries,
- Tourist attractions or theme parks,
- Farms,
- Coach, train, or airline companies,
- Swimming pools operators, or
- Climbing wall operators (where instruction is provided by a member of school staff with an approved Activity Leader Form (ALF))

22. The school will check external providers have appropriate safety standards. The Council for **Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)** awards the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge to organisations who meet nationally recognised standards. External providers who hold an LOtC badge will not require any further check.

23. If an organisation does not hold the LOtC badge, the school will check that they are an appropriate organisation to use. The check may include some of the following:

- Insurance arrangements,
- that they meet legal requirements,
- their health and safety and emergency policies,
- their risk assessments, and other control measures,
- their use of vehicles,
- staff competence,
- safeguarding arrangements,
- any sub-contracting arrangements they may have, and/or
- that they hold any appropriate licences.

24. The school will ensure a written agreement is in place with external providers making it clear what both parties are responsible for.

Emergency procedures

25. The school has a Critical Incident Plan in place, which includes an emergency response to an incident away from school. The trip leader will have a communications plan in place for overseas and residential trips. For other trips, contact with the base contact in school will be required.

26. The trip leader must bring a copy of the school's critical incident plan on the trip as a reference in case of emergencies.

Charging

27. All charges made for school trips must be made in accordance with the school's charging policy.

Appendix One – Trip Request Form (Electronic Form)

Trips and Visits

This form must be completed by the trip leader before any trip is approved. For guidance on completing this form, speak to Alan O'Reilly.

1. Your name (Trip leader)

2. Name of trip

3. Please describe your trip in one sentence

4. About your trip (Please select all that apply)

Overseas or residential

A day trip that takes place within school hours

A day trip that takes place outside normal school hours

High risk activity (Use the comment at the end of this form to add detail)

5. What date does your trip leave school?

6. What date does your trip return to school?

7. For day trips please give departure and return time for trip and any periods of cover required inc form time

8. What year groups are on the trip?

Y7 Y8 Y9 Y10 Y11 Y12 Y13

9. Estimated number of students on trip?

10. Please confirm you have checked the school calendar for any clashes with the dates you have requested?

Yes No

11. Please confirm you have spoken to Jane Calderbank about any cover you may require?

Yes No

12. Which staff would you like to go on the trip?

13. Please use this section to include any other comments or relevant information.