



TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

A policy designed to help teachers, governors, trustees and other interested parties to ensure that students stay safe and healthy whilst on school visits.

Committee Responsible	Policy Committee
Lead Staff Member	CEO
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Date Approved	28 March 2022
Version	3
Review Date	Spring 2024



CHELMSFORD LEARNING PARTNERSHIP – TRIPS AND VISITS POLICY

This policy is adopted by all schools in The Chelmsford Learning Partnership academy trust.

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1. Introduction:

Students can derive a great deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits. Educational visits play a major role in the education and development of all young people. They can contribute significantly to the development of classroom learning, cross curricular skills and to personal and social education through the use of problem solving methods and approaches and through encouraging responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance. This policy is designed to help teachers and other interested parties to ensure that students stay safe and healthy whilst on school visits. This policy draws on information contained in:

- Health and Safety Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (February 2014) www.education.gov.uk
- National Guidance (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel) www.oeap.info ([Essex LA Guidance](#))
- Council for Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC) www.lotc.org.uk/ □ [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) <http://www.hse.gov.uk>

2. Aims and Objectives of Chelmsford Learning Partnership Educational Visits:

- To give all children a wide range of high quality experiences outside the classroom, including the opportunity of at least one residential experience.
- To provide school staff with easily accessible advice, guidance and resources as well as good professional development opportunities.
- To encourage parents and carers to support school trips.
- To encourage partnerships between schools, local providers and other organisations over visits and out of school activities.

3. Approval for Trips and Visits:

In deciding if a visit application should gain approval and then, at a later stage, giving final authority for the visit, the following requirements must be satisfied:

- There are clear objectives for the visit.
- The visit leader is clearly identified and sufficiently responsible and capable of taking charge of the particular visit.
- Parental notification and consent has been undertaken where necessary.
- Participants are aware of the visit objectives and have been prepared, briefed or involved in the planning, as appropriate.
- All transport arrangements have been adequately assessed by a member of the Leadership team.
- The venue is either known or the visit leader has undertaken a pre-visit in order to assess the suitability of the site and to enable risk assessment(s) to be produced. Occasionally,

for a distant destination, this process may be replaced by information and advice received from other sources (eg school or independent person with local knowledge or web-site research). Where this is the case the risk assessments must take this into account and the leader must be sufficiently experienced.

- Written risk assessments and control measures to control the risks must be produced. These will be kept on EVOLVE and checked by the senior member of staff responsible for approving all trips and visits. In the case of residential trips or adventurous activities, these will also be checked by Essex County Council. Control measures must be understood and complied with by all persons staffing the visit.
- When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, the trip leader must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.
- Public Liability Insurance indemnifies the employer against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employment and for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer's staff. The indemnity should cover activities such as outdoor learning, offsite visits and Learning Outside the Classroom organised by the school and in all settings for which the school is responsible.
- Consideration must be given to deciding if contractual insurance (personal accident and travel insurance) is necessary for the participants and staff and for informing parents about any cover applying to the visit. Where the available cover seems inadequate, consideration should be given to taking out additional insurance, or extensions to the policy. Visit Leaders should be aware of the dangers of 'dual insurance', or having two policies cover the same risks.
- The financing of the trip must comply with the Chelmsford Learning Partnership's financial management regulations. The finance office has been notified and, if appropriate, a draft budget is produced. Letters to parents are clear in terms of instructions for voluntary payment and children eligible for subsidy have been considered.
- Letters to parents should identify exactly what is included in the costs and any additional costs that may be incurred by the students whilst on the trip.
- An emergency procedure is in place, which includes means by which the school and the group are able to contact each other.
- Teaching implications due to staff and pupil absence and if the proposal is at an appropriate time of year, should be considered. The timing of the visit fits with the school's calendar and can be managed with reference to staff and pupils absence.

A decision with regards to trip approval will be taken by the Head of School/Principal/Headteacher. Local Governing Bodies will be presented with an overview of trips taking place in the following academic year at their Full Board meeting in the summer term and make approval decisions. The decisions will be based on the above objectives and criteria. Support in planning and arranging visits is provided by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). It is recognised that some smaller trips will be organised after this timeframe and it is for the LGB and the Headteacher to approve these.

After the visit:

- Evaluation after the event is an important aid to planning future visits, especially for additional and high risk activities.
- An accident report form must be submitted to the Health and Safety Officer for any accident that resulted, or could have resulted, in serious injury.
- An incident report must be submitted to the school giving details of any incident 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.

4. Specific Considerations:

Trip leaders must undergo Trips and Visits Training provided by the school every two years in order to maintain up-to-date practice and ensure compliance with school procedures.

The following is aimed at tackling common questions from staff when planning visits and is designed to encourage 'good practice'. Some of these guidelines only apply to dangerous activities, longer and overseas visits but staff are advised to read through all these guidelines before planning any visit. The policy should be read in conjunction with the advice set out by National Guidance.

4.1 Planning Ahead:

The aim, when possible, should be to obtain EVC and finance approval a term in advance for short visits and for some longer visits. Some longer visits and all overseas visits should normally obtain EVC approval and finance approval a year in advance of the planned visit. Only when approval has been given in principle should the trip be promoted to parents and students. Wherever possible, the date should be entered into the school calendar.

All planning for residential visits should include a parental meeting.

Allocation of places based on a first come, first served basis will not take place. In the event of a trip being oversubscribed, a ballot will take place.

4.2 Parental Consent:

No pupil may go on a visit out of school time without parents having given their written consent. Parents/guardians must give this consent on the basis of having been fully informed of the arrangements for the visit. When parents give their consent they should be aware of the following as applicable to the specific visit:

- The full itinerary, including travel arrangements.
- Any hazardous activities, the supervision provided and the risk assessment.
- Details of any period of 'remote supervision' and the control measures in place.
- Insurance arrangements including insurance for hazardous activities. (Longer and overseas visits Policy schedules must be provided as appropriate.)

- Medical arrangements.
- Full contact details of the hotel/place of residence (longer and overseas visits) and group leader.
- The Code of Conduct for the visit (longer and overseas visits).

The signed consent forms should be retained by the Group Leader throughout the visit. A copy of the set of consent forms must be given to the EVC (and 24/7 emergency staff contact) before departure.

All staff should be given and retain throughout the trip a list of staff and students on the visit, along with their mobile contact numbers (for staff), their emergency home contact numbers and the contact numbers for the hotel or equivalent if a longer or overseas visit.

4.3 Staffing:

Staffing ratios and requirements must be visit-specific according to the number, composition, age range of students, and appropriate to the venue and the activities planned for the visit.

All groups on visits must have a nominated group leader and nominated deputy leader (except on visits led by one member of staff).

Activity and Visit Leaders must ensure that young people are supervised in accordance with the principles of 'Effective Supervision', requiring them to take account of:

- The nature of the activity (including its duration).
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place.
- The age and gender (including developmental age) of the young people to be supervised.
- The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
- Staff competence.

This means that arrangements for supervision, including staff/student ratios, must take into account the nature of a group and the individuals in it. It is therefore important that, when planning a repeat visit or a series of activities, the previous plan (no matter how well it worked in the past) is reviewed to ensure it meets current group needs.

Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity and staff should follow guidelines for the age and level of risk in the activity

Attention should be paid to the experience and gender balance of staff accompanying the visit. All staff must be appropriately enhanced DBS checked and undergone Safeguarding training.

4.4 Parents/Carers and other volunteers on off-site visits:

Short Visits (non-residential). Parents/carers and volunteers may be invited to accompany a group on a day visit but at no time must a parent be left in charge of a pupil(s). Parents/carers and volunteers may be asked to assist in managing a group but only under the overall supervision of a teacher. In planning a visit group leaders must ensure that there is adequate staffing from the outset. Parents/carers should not count as part of the ratio.

There may be some exceptions to guidance on using volunteers if they have specialist expertise, eg Duke of Edinburgh helpers in terms of group supervision. Appropriate risk assessments and safeguarding checks will be used to minimise risks.

4.5 Longer visits (residential home and overseas):

Parents/carers or volunteers accompanying the group must be enhanced DBS checked. This must be budgeted for when the financial proposals are forwarded to the Finance Department. If a group leader plans to invite parents or other adults or non-Trust students on a trip they must declare this in the trip planning.

4.6 Tour Companies and External Providers:

Only licensed providers (eg Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority AALA) should be used. It is also advisable to obtain recommendations from other schools that have used the provider if the company is otherwise unknown.

4.7 Insurance:

The insurance policy for the Trust provides group cover for all members of parties involved in non- hazardous or adventurous trips.

Hazardous and adventurous activities may require additional separate insurance and must be discussed with the EVC and Finance Manager. If you are using a licensed provider obtain details of their insurance arrangements and parents should be given a copy of the policy schedule.

4.8 Pre-visit inspection:

Where possible it is good practice to inspect a location prior to planning a visit, in order to check its suitability.

4.9 Travel Arrangements:

The Trust regularly uses approved coach operators. The use of existing transport contacts is advised; the Finance Department can offer you advice. It is important that coach bookings are made well in advance of your proposed visit. If you are using a coach supplied by a tour operator, you must check to ensure that coaches meet minimum safety requirements by asking the tour operator to supply details and the coach company's risk assessments.

When using a school minibus you must be on the list of approved drivers. This is maintained by the school. For visits involving travel over some distance, the driving should be shared and therefore the party should include at least two approved drivers per vehicle.

If using a private vehicle on necessary school business to transport students you must have a valid driving licence. You should check that your insurance policy covers you for business use.

When using more than one mode of transport it is good practice for party group lists to travel on each vehicle with attention to suitability of staff accompanying each coach/bus. (This includes duplicate of multiple copies of party medical records.)

Students must be required to wear safety belts in all vehicles. It is group leaders and staff who are responsible for ensuring that this requirement is enforced on all journeys.

For travel by train and underground, particular care needs to be given to the risk of some students being separated from the rest of the group and this must be set out in the Risk Assessment.

When travelling abroad parents and students need to be briefed on matters such as securing passports and visas, global health insurance cards if appropriate, baggage security and airport security checks.

Parents/carers must be clear about the travel arrangements when they sign the consent form.

4.10 First Aid:

It is desirable for at least one member of staff on residential visits to be qualified in administering First Aid. In the event that a qualified member of first aid staff is not available the risk assessment must identify that appropriate provision is available.

4.11 Accommodation:

Where overnight accommodation is involved, fire exits and emergency evacuation procedures should be checked by the group leader on arrival. The group should then be given a briefing/fire drill.

Students should know where staff rooms are located and these should be in the vicinity of pupil accommodation. Group accommodation should be located in one area rather than scattered in different parts of a residential complex. It is important to have full details of the accommodation that is being provided before the visit, even if a pre-visit is not possible. The group leader should have a room list. Accommodation by gender split will comply with the schools trips and visits code of conduct.

4.12 Risk Assessment:

A full written Risk Assessment is required for all visits (Pro-forma on the Staff Shared Area). The Risk Assessment must (a) identify specific hazards/risks, (b) state who is at risk, (c) set out

measures to control/minimise the risk, (d) estimate the risk, (e) set out the emergency procedure to be followed. These should be shared with all staff accompanying the visit and submitted no less than two weeks prior to a residential trip or hazardous activity and 48 hours prior to a day trip.

All Risk Assessments must be visit specific and must cover the full itinerary. Risk Assessments should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits/expeditions that occur regularly.

If the organisation does not hold a LOTC or AALA kitemark, you are advised to ask for a copy of their Risk Assessment and to refer to and include this as part of your own.

There must be on-going risk assessment by group leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require. Students must not be made to undertake or to continue with an activity if they are expressing serious concerns about their health, well-being and overall safety. Any pupil who is deemed to be a risk to the safety of other students should not be allowed on a visit. (In such circumstances you must discuss the matter with the EVC in the first instance.)

An accident report form must be submitted to the Health and Safety Executive if a pupil is killed, or taken to hospital for treatment of an injury and the accident was caused by defective equipment or failings in the organisation and management of the trip or visit.

Generic risk assessments are available from the EVC and may be helpful (though they must be adapted to the specific visit).

It is important that students going on a visit are properly briefed before departure and given clear instructions as the visit progresses.

The trip leader should be clear about the procedure to follow in the event of an emergency/incident.

4.13 Code of Conduct and Behaviour:

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.

For visits involving overnight stays and overseas visits students and parents should agree to carry out the instructions of the group leader and staff at all times. (See the Chelmsford Learning Partnership Code of Conduct.)

On all trips and visits, normal school regulations apply in matters such as consumption of alcohol and smoking. Any breach of these regulation will be taken very seriously with the trip leader empowered, if appropriate, to send the student home or to request a parent/carer to collect. If a trip leader wants to waive these regulations under any circumstances (eg for an older student) this should be discussed with and receive the consent of the before expectations for the trip are published to students and their parents.

Staff must not smoke or vape in front of students at any time. Alcohol must not be consumed by any member of staff on a trip or a visit at any time. Failure to adhere to the non-consumption of alcohol on a trip or visit may constitute gross misconduct.

4.14 Student returning home or repatriation:

For residential visits parents should be told that in the unlikely event of a gross breach of the code of conduct, a pupil might be returned home/repatriated. This would be the decision of the group leader and in consultation with the School 24/7 emergency contact. Repatriation would be at the expense of the parent/carer and this would be made clear in the parental briefing.

4.15 Remote Supervision:

At all times group leaders and staff are responsible for students. Any period of 'remote supervision' for older students must be covered by the drawing of clear boundaries for students, emergency procedures and how contact with staff can be made. It is good practice to issue students with a card giving **school** mobile phone contact numbers of staff and the address and contact numbers of the place of residence if an overnight stay is involved. The associated hazards should be considered in the overall risk assessment. On expeditions students should normally be in groups of at least four and briefed on how to respond to an emergency. Parents must be fully briefed on the arrangements for any periods of 'remote supervision'

4.16 Passports, Visas and Global Health Insurance Cards:

Group Leaders should make a copy of all passports, visas and global health insurance cards, and retain a copy throughout the visit. A second copy should be given to the EVC (and 24/7 School Contact member of staff) before departure. For trips in Europe all students should have an GHIC.

4.17 Exchange Visits:

It is good practice to draw up a protocol with the host school in order to ensure that an agreed health and safety policy is adhered to by host families and that all the families involved are aware of the content of the protocol.

It is good practice to invite parents of students going on a visit, accompanied by the students themselves, to a briefing meeting at the School, in order for arrangements to be explained and questions answered. This applies to many longer visits and especially to overseas visits.

5 Reporting incidents/near misses:

It is a requirement that any accident or 'near miss' on a visit should be reported immediately on return to the EVC and also through the procedure set out in the School Policy for reporting accidents. Any area of health and safety concern must be reported to the EVC immediately on return. Please be aware that a claim of negligence can be made up to seven years after an event. It is imperative that accurate records are kept.

6 Visit Report:

Staff are asked to give feedback on visits (particularly expeditions, longer and overseas visits) to the EVC, to enable good practice to be maintained.