



POLICY FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OVERNIGHT STAYS AND SAFETY IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Last Update: May 2019

Upton-by-Chester High School greatly values the opportunities that educational visits and activities outside the classroom provide for youngsters and acknowledges their great value in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of students.

Educational Visits Coordinator

John Keegan 2ndDeputy Headteacher

- keeganj@uptonhigh.co.uk

- extension 22934

www.cwacvisits.org.uk

Contents

3	Key principles
4	Categories of visits
5-13	Key issues
	activities organised by school staff for groups of students
	involvement of students
	safety in outdoor activity centres
	competence to lead
	assessment of risk
	insurance
	venue
	monitoring the composition of school groups
	financial arrangements
	student exclusions – financial implications for school visits
	alcohol/tobacco/drugs
	accompanying staff and alcohol
	mobile telephones
	transport
	conveyance of students in private cars
	use of school mini bus
	Plan B
	first aid
	prior information to parents/participants
	information held in school
	during the visit
	evaluation
	reporting of accidents
	accident investigation reports
	procedures for responding to a major emergency
13-17	Checklists - Visits of one day or less in school time. Checklists for residential and overnight visits are available in the CWAC guidelines.
18	Summary of key points
19-20	Summary of CWAC guidance notes
21-24	Roles and responsibilities
25	Additional resources
26	Update notes

Key principles

1. The procedures adopted for the organisation, oversight, monitoring and evaluation of educational visits and overnight stays will be as those set out in the Cheshire West and Chester's Health and Safety Guidance Notes for Education Visits and Overnight Stays September 2010 (www.cwacvisits.org.uk). Any party leader designate will be directed to consult this document and ensure that its requirements are met in full.
2. John Keegan is the nominated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) from the SLT and is responsible for the oversight of educational visits and overnight stays.
3. **Party leaders must discuss the details of any proposed venture with the EVC and gain approval in principle before firm proposals are put to prospective parents/students. The EVC will discuss the proposal at the next SLT meeting before full approval is made.**

The EVC can approve day visits.
The EVC, after consultation with the Headteacher, can approve visits involving overnight stays in the UK.
Approval for visits abroad can only be given by the Headteacher.
If approval from the Headteacher /Governing Body or CWAC is required this will be obtained via the EVC.
Approval will be formalised through the issue of an 'Approval in Principle' letter.
4. It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims.
5. Protocol for schools events and school educational visits:

Before proceeding with the event / educational visit, the following needs to be done at the earliest opportunity and needs to include:

 - Consultation with SLT
 - Checking students' behaviour levels
 - Consultation with Heads of Year
 - Copy of letters to SLT before they are discussed with students and issued
 - Whilst we accept that youngsters will make a few mistakes during their school career, they cannot represent the school if behaviour levels are unacceptably high as they could then become unsafe during the event/visit as they have demonstrated that they cannot follow instructions.
6. In accordance with CWAC's policy, the school uses the EVOLVE system for planning and recording visits. The EVC will provide access to the system on a needs basis.
7. Visits must be staffed at an agreed appropriate ratio which will vary according to the type of visit. In general the agreed ratios are:
 - Overnight and foreign visits 1:10, male and female teachers required
 - Day visits ratio between 1:15 – 1:20, depending on age/level of maturity

Staffing ratios may also need to be varied having regard to the experience of the staff participating and the nature of the students i.e. their age and level of maturity.

8. Volunteers from outside of school staff must have a school based DBS. (The lead time for obtaining a DBS is approximately 2 weeks.)
9. In the case of hazardous activities the party leader must ensure that the correct ratio of supervisory staff have appropriate qualifications.
10. Visits should not be organised for students in examination years during the spring term so as to protect the preparation of all students for examinations.
11. Form C are completed electronically by parents and stored centrally on evolve.

12. School visits are now divided into three different categories, each of which makes increasingly rigorous demands upon the party leader(s):

<p>Category 1</p> <p>Local visits either in school time or as extra-curricular activity</p>	<p>Visits that typically fall within this category are visits to local churches, History field visits, sports matches, visits to the theatre, Alton Towers, the Conway Centre, etc.</p> <p>Parents/Carers complete a Regular Out-of-Hours permission document which gives the school authority to take children on these visits and avoid the need for parents to sign a permission slip for each activity.</p> <p>Visits must be staffed at the approved ratio and leaders must have sufficient experience to lead the visit.</p> <p>Parents must be notified by letter each time that that these visits take place.</p>	<p>Vetted at school level by EVC</p>
<p>Category 2</p> <p>Involves visits such as adventure activities, fieldwork carried out in areas designated as hazardous terrain, some visits abroad and any visit involving an overnight stay</p>	<p>The types of visit that will fall under this category are foreign exchanges, Geography field visits, skiing visits, dry slope skiing, camping trips, etc.</p> <p>Visits must be staffed at the approved ratio and leaders must hold appropriate qualifications.</p> <p>Parents must provide their written approval for each visit after being made fully aware of all the arrangements.</p> <p>Meetings with parents are required for visits abroad.</p>	<p>Vetted at school level by EVC.</p> <p>Approval by HT via EVC.</p> <p>LA keeps a watching brief over these visits.</p> <p>Insurance is necessary for these visits.</p> <p>We are now required to give the LA four weeks notice of our intention to undertake Category 2 visits.</p>
<p>Category 3</p> <p>Relates to extremely hazardous activities such as winter climbing, sea canoeing, underground exploration, visits to remote terrain outside the U.K. and visits to developing countries.</p>	<p>Visits must be staffed at the approved ratio and leaders must hold appropriate qualifications.</p> <p>Parents must provide their written approval for each visit after being made fully aware of all the arrangements.</p>	<p>Vetted at school level by EVC.</p> <p>Approval by HT via EVC.</p> <p>LA approval is needed at the outset of planning before proceeding any further with the planning process. This is obtained via the EVC and the HT.</p> <p>We are now required to give the LA four weeks notice of our intention to undertake Category 3 visits.</p>

Key issues for school visits

ACTIVITIES ORGANISED BY SCHOOL STAFF FOR GROUPS OF STUDENTS

All out of school activities organised by school staff which involve one or more students are deemed to be official school activities and, as such, must be approved through the EVC. Such activities must be run in accordance with the regulations set out by the School and the Authority.

INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS The expectation of students should not be raised before the feasibility of any proposed activity has been properly explored and approval has been obtained from the EVC. Visits will be discussed in SLT meetings. The EVC will need to gain the approval of the Head Teacher, the Chairman of Governors and, in some cases, the Local Authority. Formal approval will be given via a visits 'Approval in Principle' letter.

SAFETY IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITY CENTRES

Any member of staff who is considering utilising the services of any Outdoor Adventure Activity Provider must discuss this with the EVC before Approval in Principle is given. There are several publications from both the Authority and the DofE, which provide clear guidance about such activities. Visits will only be approved if those leading the party hold the relevant specialist certificates of competence and the proposed centre have been properly vetted.

COMPETENCE TO LEAD

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC in consultation with members of the SLT.

ASSESSMENT OF RISK

Risk assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor is deemed to be acceptable (ie low). In considering risk, there are three levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic risks – normal risks attached to any activity outside of school
- Event specific risks – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of generic risks
- Ongoing risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual risk as circumstances change.

Party leaders must undertake a risk/benefits assessment that reflects the potential difficulties that might arise during the proposed visit. This must be a formal process that may be reflected in communications provided for parents/guardians in the case of some visits of less than one day.

For all visits a formal risk/benefits assessment must be produced beforehand and discussed with the EVC. A copy of this must be lodged as an attachment on EVOLVE. A part of any risk assessment will be contingency planning to take account of any foreseeable curtailment or variation to the proposed. Risk/benefits assessment forms are available on EVOLVE.

The visit leader and other accompanying staff are expected to conduct dynamic, on-going risk assessments during the visit to respond to situations as they arise.

INSURANCE

All members of any group must be properly insured in a manner that takes account of potential risks. It is the responsibility of the party leader to ensure that such cover is provided for all staff, helpers and student participants. The LA Block Policy covers category 1 visits but additional insurance is required for category 2 and 3 visits. In the case of visits that are not insured by the LA under the terms of their block policy, that is, where separate cover has to be taken out, all those taking part must be provided with a copy of the policy. Participants or in the case of students their parent/guardian should be asked to certify that the proposed cover is adequate for their needs.

Key issues for school visits

VENUE

The party leader must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the venue is suitable for the target group and in some instances this may require a pre-visit to the proposed location.

MONITORING THE COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL GROUPS

We already take great care when organising visits of one day or less to ensure that anyone participating deserves to be given a place and is unlikely to bring discredit upon the group. **We have additional procedures which are to be followed when selecting students from a list of those expressing a desire to participate in any venture that involves an overnight stay.**

Overnight visits involve greater risks, especially when students are not under direct supervision. They may be sleeping in separate dormitories or, in the case of exchange visits, may be living with their host families. Some activities, quite properly, permit students a degree of freedom to operate in small, unsupervised groups in the secure knowledge that they will always have a point of reference should a difficulty arise. **It is for these reasons that staff must exercise great care when arriving at the final composition of any residential group.**

A proper risk assessment must be carried out and any student who may be placed at risk by the proposed activities should not be permitted to participate. This applies equally to any child whose established pattern of behaviour might place other members of the group at risk. The potential for misbehaviour by individuals within any group will have an influence on the enjoyment of the activity for other participants. Poor or uncooperative behaviour also makes the onerous task of supervision far more difficult and care should be taken to ensure selected students have a satisfactory record in this respect.

When students are invited to apply for places on any visit the offer is often open to all members of the school community. In a large school, for a variety of reasons, knowledge of the patterns of behaviour exhibited by individual students is often restricted to their year team or form tutor. We have a procedure in place that makes this knowledge available to all group organisers.

The following procedure is to be used when deriving groups from lists of prospective members:

- Distribute the information necessary to enable students and their parents to make a reasoned decision whether they wish to apply for membership of the group and will be able to meet any pre-conditions including those of finance. **Deposits should not be taken at this stage.**
- Receive response slips and draw up a long list without making comment to any student.
- Draw up year lists and submit one copy to the relevant Head of Year and one copy to the EVC.
- Each Head of Year will then be in a position to make comment about any student who may be a cause for concern.

- The EVC will consult with the SLT to also consider group membership and will make comment if they have reservations about any person.
- Lists will be returned to the designated party leader to enable the final membership of the group to be agreed with the EVC
- Once a final group list has been agreed with the EVC, party membership may be confirmed to students and deposits collected.

Key issues for school visits

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The holding of informal accounts is not acceptable and teaching staff are not to make their own arrangements for collecting money; money must never be paid into the personal account of a member of staff. The financing of all visits must be a formal process in accordance with the school policy, details of which are available from the finance office. All monies collected to finance any visit must pass through school funds. A complete and accurate record of all payments must be kept and a final balance sheet must be produced. Cheques must be made payable to "Upton High School Fund".

Money must not be taken from students before a visit has received proper approval from the EVC.

All funds must be paid into an official school account.

Recent legislation prevents any student from being excluded from a compulsory, school time activity on financial grounds. Parents may be invited to contribute to the cost of events but cannot be charged. This may lead to the cancellation of an event if sufficient support is not forthcoming. It is very important that any letter to parents is properly constructed to comply with the relevant legislation. Where doubt exists the advice of the EVC or the Finance Manager should be sought. The wording should read:

'A voluntary contribution from parents/carers of £x is required, without which the visit may not be able to go ahead'.

Heads of Department will need to give careful thought to their budgeting arrangements if visits are an essential part of examination courses. Such potential problems should be discussed with the Finance Manager.

STUDENT EXCLUSIONS- FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL VISITS

On rare occasions in the past the exclusion of a student from school has resulted in them being prevented from participating in a previously arranged visit. This has, in turn, led to financial implications, which have impacted upon the school's budget. The Authority's Legal Department has been consulted and has suggested that, where such an outcome is possible, the following paragraph is to be included in any initial letter to parents.

"Your child's participation in this trip will be reviewed if he or she is involved in disciplinary misconduct during a school related activity, or in any incidents inside or outside school that might question his or her suitability. If the Headteacher decides, in view of the nature of the mis-conduct, that your child's participation would jeopardise the health, safety or enjoyment of other party members they may exclude him/her from the activity. In such an event all deposits and subsequent payments received will be refunded provided the contractual obligations with the tour company can be met or a

replacement found. However, if it is not possible to meet the contractual obligations or to find a replacement then no refund will be provided.”

ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/DRUGS

In view of changing attitudes on the part of some parents it has been decided to include the following paragraph in some letters that invite students to participate in school visits. Prospective leaders will need to consider, in conjunction with the EVC, whether the information delivered in the text is appropriate to their particular visit.

“The teachers leading school visits take great care in their preparations to ensure the health and safety of all those involved. It is important that all participants in any school visit, irrespective of their age, acknowledge that they must, at all times, behave in a sensible and responsible manner and comply fully with the advice and instructions of the teacher(s) in charge of the group. Students are expected to comply with the laws relating to the purchase and consumption of alcohol. Those over the age of 18 must also refrain if they wish to take part in a school visit. Students must not smoke or take illegal substances”

Key issues for school visits

ACCOMPANYING STAFF AND ALCOHOL

Please refer to ‘Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people’ published by Government Offices for the English Regions 2015. Teaching staff have been issued a copy of this and one is available from the School Office.

MOBILE TELEPHONES

The school has a mobile telephone which is available for use by staff undertaking visits away from the school site. It should be taken on long journeys in the school minibus and on field visits where appropriate. It may be more convenient for staff to use their own ‘phones. If this is the case then ensure that your number is known by colleagues and the Emergency Contact person(s). The school mobile telephone is kept and maintained by Mr. S Hancox (Business Manager) who is able to offer advice on its operation and use. **Staff mobile phone numbers must not be given to students or parents.**

TRANSPORT

The party leader must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the proposed method of transport is safe and reliable. Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all students and staff are to be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc. If travel is by coach or minibus all students must wear a seatbelt.

If you need to hire coaches for transporting students on trips / events and you are considering using the Recreation Centre car park as the pick-up and or/drop off point you **must** obtain formal permission from the Sports Club before doing so. The school has a contractual obligation to the Sports Club to request permission and all staff **must** adhere to this requirement, or it risks placing the school in a compromising position. These measures are designed to minimize the health & safety risks to our students, staff and other visitors to the Recreation Centre.

Requests for coach use of the Recreation Centre car park to the Sports Club **must** always be made well in advance. (see the contractual extract below).

“Picking up or dropping off pupils by coaches or buses will be by prior arrangement by the School with the Club which shall act reasonably subject to the availability of space and receipt by the Club of adequate prior notice from the School”

Permission needs to be requested via email to Andrew Chandler (Assistant Manager), whose email address is a.chandler@thecheshire.org specifying the date(s), drop-off / pick-up times and the numbers of coaches involved.

CONVEYANCE OF STUDENTS IN PRIVATE CARS

Staff should be aware that there are legal implications if they make arrangements for either parents or, in the case of Sixth Formers, students to convey others in their private cars. The Authority’s advice is clear about the need for employees to have ‘business use’ insurance. Appendix 11 of the document should be used. The advice provided places the onus upon any party organiser to ensure that neither a parent nor another student conveys other students unless they have the necessary insurance cover. This advice is quite specific and failure to follow it would place the organising teacher(s) in a very vulnerable position were there to be an accident which resulted in injury to a member of the group. It is also unwise for a teacher to make formal arrangements with students to convey their peers to and from off-site activities because of their relatively short driving experience.

USE OF SCHOOL MINIBUS

Where the school minibus is employed as a means of transport, it must be driven by an approved driver. A back-up driver should be present for journeys over 20 miles. The eligibility criteria for driving the school minibus are:

- Drivers must have a D1 on their licence. You will only have automatic entitlement to this if you passed your test prior to the 1st January 1997.
- Drivers must be 21 years old and over, with at least 2 years regular driving experience as a qualified driver.
- Drivers must not suffer from any condition or infirmity making it inadvisable to drive a motor vehicle.
- Shall not have been convicted of any serious moving traffic offences, occurring the preceding three years.
- Have been assessed as competent to handle the minibus by the Council, or an accredited agency recognised by the Council Transport Co-ordination Office, and hold its current accreditation.

Members of staff who passed their test after the 1st January 1997 are no longer eligible to drive the mini bus until they have applied for, and undertaken a medical test, theory test and driving assessment to obtain a D1 qualification

Charges may not be made for fares but voluntary contributions can be requested.

Key issues for school visits

PLAN B

Despite the most detailed planning things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of Plan B.

FIRST AID

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment and should feature in the risk assessment. On all visits there should be a named member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

First aid kits are available from the first aider, Ann McFadden. If the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

PRIOR INFORMATION TO PARENTS/PARTICIPANTS

In the period leading up to any visit all members of any group must be provided with complete details of the proposed activity, both adult helpers and student participants must be properly prepared to play their part in the activity. For some visits this information may consist of a single printed page but for longer visits or visits to hazardous locations it may be necessary to hold a briefing or a series of briefings. It is most important that party leaders have the written consent of parents/carers before any activity takes place. This consent should also certify that the parent/carers have been provided with full information about the activity and that they are satisfied with all the arrangements that have been made.

INFORMATION HELD IN SCHOOL

Whenever a group of students is off site a detailed record of its composition and itinerary will be lodged in advance with the EVC via the EVOLVE system. In the case of overnight stays the information lodged must include copies of the personal information relating to all participants that is required by the Authority. Additional insurance may need to be taken out (see Finance Manager). There must be a nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team available continuously throughout any visit with whom the Party Leader can make immediate contact in case of emergency.

DURING THE VISIT

When groups assemble for any visit the party leader must ensure that each person is properly equipped and prepared. Any student who does not comply with the pre-agreed conditions for the visit must not be allowed to participate. Visits must not proceed unless correct staffing ratios can be provided. Due attention must be paid to the welfare and supervision of any student during "free" time when they may be engaged in self-directed activities and active steps must be taken to plan for the safety and well-being of participants during such periods. These considerations must be reflected in the risk assessments. The party leader will closely monitor the progress of all visits and will take appropriate action to secure the health and safety of all participants. A report, usually verbal, will be made to the EVC at the end of any visit to confirm its success or to make recommendations regarding future ventures. Party dispersal is an important part of any visit and party leaders will ensure that all students have a safe and appropriate means of returning home at its conclusion.

EVALUATION

The party leader must submit an evaluation of the event to the EVC within 14 days of returning to school following the visit on Evolve. The importance of an appropriate review cannot be over-emphasised. Its main purpose is to identify strengths and weaknesses of arrangements to improve the efficiency of future visits.

Key issues for school visits

PHOTOGRAPHY

Under normal circumstances only school equipment should be used for taking photographs/videos. Under some circumstances equipment not owned by the school may be used but this must be authorised in advance by the Safeguarding Lead – Mr John Keegan – 2nd Deputy Head. Images taken must be downloaded only to the school network.

ELECTRONIC FORM C

No youngster is to be allowed on a school visit unless their parent/carer have completed and electronic form C. The Form C's – these stored on Evolve electronically. A paper summary of the Form C must be left with main reception before the visit goes ahead. This can be generated on Evolve, downloaded and printed off.

REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS

Schools have a duty to report all accidents to their personnel. For this purpose the LA Accident Form should be completed for all accidents on visits. The responsibility for ensuring this takes place lies with the Visit Leader. There are additional responsibilities in respect of serious accidents and the EVC should seek advice, if necessary, from the H&S Manager 01244 972391

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS

Notes made at the time of the accident will be invaluable in any formal report or investigation. The focus on any accident investigation should be on reviewing whether there is more that could reasonably be done in future to enhance the duty of care – not on apportioning blame.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO A MAJOR EMERGENCY

As detailed in CWAC's guidance notes.

Visits of one day or less in school time

-
- Discuss proposed visit with Subject Leader / Head of Year
 - Discuss basic proposals with EVC to gain agreement in principle. EVC to discuss – if necessary – with SLT / HT / Governors / LA
 - Discuss proposed date with Cover Manager – *if date is unavailable then refer back to EVC*
 - Discuss detailed proposals with EVC to gain formal approval
 - Educational aims of the proposed visit
 - Proposed date and duration of visit
 - Target group
 - Staffing ratios
 - Nominated staffing – including deputy leader, and competence, experience and suitability of leaders and supervisors. Capabilities and suitability of accompanying staff and helpers.
 - Nominated emergency contact back at school
 - Venue. Leader's knowledge of local circumstances to be experienced during the visit
 - Event timetabling
 - Risk assessment
 - Child protection issues
 - Medical needs of the party and first aid provision
 - Foreseeable emergency action and contingency plans which may be necessary
 - Transport arrangements – including minibus driver check
 - Letter to parents informing them of the risks and safeguards and obtaining their approval
 - Cost per capita and financial arrangements
 - Insurance cover
 - Method of informing colleagues of the visit

Do not make any commitments whatsoever until this meeting has taken place and you have received an 'Approval in Principle' letter.

'Approval in principle' letter issued by EVC and visit set up on EVOLVE

Access rights to EVOLVE issued to visit leader by EVC

Agreed meeting date

Visits of one day or less in school time

Preparation

- Put details of visit onto briefing
- Book transport + driver in the case of the minibus
- Book venue
- Enter the following data onto EVOLVE
 - Visit type Purpose of visit
 - Visit dates
 - Destination
 - Travel arrangements
 - Transport company
 - Staffing
 - Student attendees
 - Deputy leader
 - Date of last visit
 - Emergency contacts back at school
 - Financial arrangements
 - Planning/risk assessment
- Draw up letter to parents – EVC to check letter – attach copy onto EVOLVE
- Create Form 'C' DAY VISIT on EVOLVE
- Issue Form 'C' Day visit + letter to parents electronically
- Ensure system for collecting and filing replies is in place
 - Enter attendee names on EVOLVE
 - Draw up attendee list together with medical conditions and other special arrangements for individual students
 - Detail requirements for students with 'special needs'
- Set up account with finance office
- Discuss attendees list with appropriate Head of Year
- Ensure Attendance Officer is aware of potential attendees

- A mobile phone is recommended for all visits. Book use of mobile phone with finance office. Are you aware of the reception in the area you will be visiting?
- Draw up detailed itinerary
- Draw up Plan B
- Will the group need waterproof clothing, boots or other equipment? If so put procedures in place for checking the suitability of equipment?
- Check that any specialist equipment conforms to the standards recommended by responsible agencies?
- Ensure attending staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Who is the first aider in attendance? Add this to staff attendees list
- Is additional insurance cover needed?
- Ask attendees to alert their teachers of their intended absence

Final planning

- Check venue
- Check transport
- Brief attending staff
- Brief students

48 hour deadline for:

- Copy to emergency contact:
 - Summary Form C's
 - staffing list
 - student list
 - itinerary
- Copy relevant details to deputy visit leader

Inform main reception desk of visit and Emergency Contact. Provide copy of letter to parents, for information.

List of students involved on school bulletin

Visits of one day or less in school time

checklist Page 3 of 3
visit

Meeting before the

Immediately before the visit

- Copies of register to accompanying staff, together with medical and special needs information on individual children.
- Check accompanying staff have relevant literature, work sheets, clipboards, etc
- First aid kit/s, sick bags, litter sacks etc. if needed
- Arrangements for registering students and subsequent head counts
- Information re: attendance update to the attendance officer before leaving the site.
Direct Dial No. 01244 981240
- Arrangements for lining up and boarding coach
- Have students been instructed to wear seat belts on the coach/bus?
- Are the accompanying staff to be seated in the appropriate locations on the coach? Having all staff at the front of the coach is not necessarily the best arrangement.
- Have the group been warned of potential hazards in advance? If necessary, have specific arrangements been made to supervise these areas particularly carefully?
- Are pupils aware of the procedure in areas where there is traffic? (eg. if walking, is it pairs, crocodile, groups? - may pupils run? - are pupils aware of the procedure at road crossings? etc.)
- Has a clear recall system been arranged if the group is working away from you? Do pupils understand this and will they be able to respond effectively?
- If a rendezvous for the group has been arranged after a period of time,

does each pupil and member of staff know exactly where and when to meet?

- Do pupils know what action they should take if they become separated from the group?
- What on-going risk assessment is planned and if necessary is the programme adaptable to suit changed or changing circumstances?
- What are the rules for children using mobile phones during the visit?

During the visit

- Are regular head counts in place
- Who will deal with first aid?

At the end of the visit

- Are appropriate arrangements in force for the dismissal of pupils?

After the visit

- Has the Visit Leader reported back to the Educational Visits Coordinator?
- Has the group been debriefed and any relevant follow-up work completed?
- Have all loose ends been tied up, eg. paperwork, finance, thank you letters, etc?
- Has the visit been evaluated, and if appropriate have notes been made of points to be considered for future visits? This should be entered onto EVOLVE
- Have all staff and helpers involved in the visit been thanked for their input
- Collection and shredding of information on students provided for accompanying staff

Educational Visits Policy – summary of key points

Our policy for Educational Visits and Overnight Stays and Safety in Outdoor Education is available on the school web site. Below is a summary of key points staff need to consider before discussing plans for any proposed visit. This summary does not replace the policy document but provides a reference before discussion about the proposed visit.

Revised May 2019 JKE

What constitutes a visit?	All out of school activities organised by school staff which involve one or more students are deemed to be official school activities and, as such, must be approved through the EVC. Such activities must be run in accordance with the regulations set out by the School and the Authority.
Approval for visits	Party Leaders must discuss proposed visits with the EVC, John Keegan, before any commitment is made. Visits are not to be organised without this discussion taking place first and a letter of approval being issued.
Planning	Planning for visits is to be completed using the EVOLVE IT system. A risk/benefits assessment must be completed for all visits To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced planning is done to cater for foreseeable eventualities. Plan B should be incorporated into the initial planning for the visit.
Staffing	Visits must be staffed at an agreed appropriate ratio which will vary according to the type of visit. Volunteers from outside of school staff must have a school based CRB. On all visits there should be a named member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.
Composition of groups	The composition of groups for overnight and foreign visits has to be approved by the SLT through the EVC.
Insurance	CWAC's Public Liability Insurance covers day visits. Additional insurance for overnight and foreign visits has to be organised by the Party Leader
Transport	Mini bus drivers must be on the approved list held by the Premises Manager Students are not to transport fellow students in their own cars. There are legal implications if staff make arrangements for parents to convey others in their private cars.
Financial	The holding of informal accounts is not acceptable. The financing of all visits must be a formal process in accordance with the school policy. All monies collected to finance any visit must pass through school funds.
Photography	Under normal circumstances only school equipment should be used for taking photographs/videos. Under some circumstances equipment not owned by the school may be used but this must be authorised in advance by the Safeguarding Lead – Mr John Keegan. Images taken must be downloaded only to the school network.
School contact	There must be a nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team available continuously throughout any visit with whom the Party Leader can make immediate contact in case of emergency. Summaries of electronic form C to be taken and the visit and left with the front desk at reception in school.
During a visit	When groups assemble for any visit the party leader must ensure that each person is properly equipped and prepared. Visits must not proceed unless correct staffing ratios can be provided. Due attention must be paid to the welfare and supervision of any student during “downtime” when they may be engaged in self-directed activities and active steps must be taken to plan for the safety and well-being of participants during such periods.
Accidents	Schools have a duty to report all accidents to their personnel. For this purpose the LA Accident Form should be completed for all accidents on visits. Completed forms are to be given to be completed on Evolve.
Evaluation	The party leader must submit an evaluation of the event to the EVC through Evolve.

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO ALL STAFF ANNUALLY AT START OF ACADEMIC YEAR

Summary CWAC guidance notes

The advice that CWAC provides and the regulations it seeks to enforce have been reviewed and a revised policy document (Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Note) has been issued and can be accessed through www.cwacvisits.org.uk The advice provided is, to a

great extent, in line with the very thorough precautions party leaders have always taken but there are some important differences that must be taken into account for future visits.

It is very important that all party leaders consult the CWAC Guidance Note before beginning to involve others in the planning of any activity to ensure that they are able to meet all the requirements set out by the local authority.

Chapters 1 & 2 contain a policy statement that sets out the LA's requirements of schools. Visits are now divided into one of three categories – please refer to page 4

Chapter 3 of the document sets out the responsibilities of all those involved in the planning process. **All visits are to have a clear and appropriate educational purpose and must be properly authorised by the EVC/ headteacher before the planning process begins.** This authorisation is conditional upon adequate attention having been given to:

- planning, organisation and event timetabling
- competence, experience and suitability of leaders and supervisors
- capabilities and suitability of accompanying staff and helpers
- leaders' knowledge of local circumstances to be experienced during the visit
- party size, age, aptitude and experience of students
- child protection issues
- medical needs of the party and first aid provision
- supervisory ratios
- assessment of health and safety risks inherent in the project
- foreseeable emergency action and contingency plans which may be necessary
- insurance
- financial and travel arrangements
- informing parents of the risks and safeguards and obtaining their approval
- effective communication with school base, especially in the event of a critical incident

Chapter 4 is concerned with the planning, risk assessment and review process. **Appendix 2 takes the party leader through a systematic planning checklist that should limit the risks associated with any venture.** Whilst not all the sections are relevant to every visit it will also form a useful basis when writing a risk assessment scheme. **Appendix 12 provides a risk assessment form that must be completed by the party leader.** The remainder of the chapter is concerned with assessing, limit and managing risk.

Chapter 5 is concerned with staffing issues. Reference is made to adults accompanying school visits i.e. that **adults must submit themselves to a police check (DBS) through the LA if they are likely to have unsupervised access to students.**

Chapter 6 is concerned with charges for school activities.

Chapter 7. One reason that has motivated the LA to revise its guidance is the increasing trend for individuals to hold schools liable for injury to their offspring both whilst on site and especially off site when the risks are often significantly increased. **This chapter deals with insurance matters and it is most important that party leaders ensure that all members of their group, both adults and students are properly covered.** Whilst county insurance is in place **we still need to have separate insurance for overnight stays** – see the EVC. For details.

Summary of CWAC guidance notes (continued)

Chapter 8 concerns parental information, student details and consent. **It lists the information that must be provided to parents and also refers to students with special needs.** The preparation of students is mentioned, as are medical arrangements, communication procedures and the provision of proper clothing and equipment.

Chapter 9 contains notes about the actual conduct of the visit from the time of departure until the group returns. **Amongst other things it makes reference to the risks involved in ancillary activities and the need to supervise “free” time (more correctly called downtime) properly**

Chapter 10 gives clear guidance to assist party leaders in distinguishing between the different categories of visit.

Chapter 11 concerns trips abroad. Paperwork is considerable with these trips and party leaders should have regular contact with the EVC.

Chapter 12 makes reference to the vetting or suitability of accommodation during exchange visits (see 12.3, 12.4, 12.5).

Chapter 13 concerns preparation of young people, parents and staff for exchange visits.

Chapter 14 explains the steps to be taken in emergencies. **It provides important guidance and whilst the likelihood of a serious incident is remote it is most important that party and group leaders know how to deal with such situations.**

Chapter 15 deals with transport arrangements.

The remainder of the guidance contains the following appendices:

- Advice to Governing Bodies. Council involvement. Special points regarding
 - Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996
 - Procedures for responding to a major emergency
 - Links with other policies
- Planning Checklist
- Unexpected/unplanned events & contingency arrangements
- Form “A” - Application for approval of Educational visits by Headteacher, Governing Body or LA
- Form “B” - Confirmation by EVC / Headteacher / Governing Body / LA for visit to go ahead
- Form “C” - Parental Consent for an Educational Visit
- Emergency contact information
- Form “D” – blanket permission for regular out of school visits eg matches after school
- Checklist for External Providers
- CWAC Staff/student ratios
- Suggested letter to drivers willing to transporting students
- Child car restraints
- Safety measures when using public transport
- Risk Benefit Assessment pro-forma – to be completed for every visit.
- Generic risk assessment for exchange visits

- Educational visits register
- Educational visits leaders' qualifications
- Checklist for exchange visits
- Host family stay information form

The full document can be accessed via the [EVOLVE website](#).

Roles and responsibilities (i)

taken from CWAC Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Note

Governing Bodies/Establishments Management Committee

Governing Bodies, under their articles of government and Establishment Management Committee, have a responsibility for the general direction of the conduct and curriculum in their establishment. This extends to visits and journeys. Accordingly the Governing Body should approve and keep under review a local policy for educational visits.

Where the Governing Body is also the employer, it must assume the employer duties otherwise held by the Council. Governing Bodies may wish to adopt the Council guidance and policy and resolve accordingly. (See Appendix I of CWAC Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Note).

The policy should provide for:

- Adequate assessment and control of risks, and a procedure for authorising visits which includes verifying the competence of leaders and helpers.
- A review of safeguards used on educational visits to be undertaken each year and salient features presented to the Governing Body/Establishment Management Committee either separately or as part of the Headteacher's annual report on health and safety. This review will help to ensure that the highest levels of care and safety are maintained.
- Checks to ensure that links with other policies are consistent. This is particularly important in respect of Critical Incident and Charging and Remissions policies and Child Protection procedures.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher/Manager should develop and maintain the policy for educational visits on behalf of the Governing Body/Establishment Management Committee. The policy should require that all educational visits have a clear and appropriate educational purpose, and are properly authorised. It should also specify those categories of visit which will need to be reported at the planning stage to the Governing Body and/or the Council.

Authorisation for visits should be conditional upon adequate attention having been given to:

planning, organisation and event timetabling
 competence, experience and suitability of leaders and supervisors
 capabilities and suitability of accompanying staff and other helpers
 leaders' knowledge of local circumstances to be experienced during the visit
 party size, age, aptitude and experience of pupils
 child protection issues
 medical needs of members of the party and first aid provision
 supervisory ratios
 assessment of health or safety risks inherent in the project
 foreseeable emergency action and contingency plans which may be necessary

insurance
financial and travel arrangements
informing parents of risks and safeguards and obtaining their approval
effective communication arrangements with establishment base, especially in the event of a critical incident
careful consideration of the visit by the establishment EVC

The Headteacher/Manager should review operating arrangements at least annually with staff who directly implement the policy or undertake visits. This review should provide the basis for a report to the Governing Body or other committee.

Roles and responsibilities (ii)

Educational Visits Coordinator

In view of the detail and the number of activities involved, Headteachers or Managers may choose to nominate a member of staff as Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). This person would be a focus for necessary information and advice for visit leaders and keep everyone up to date with relevant requirements. The visits coordinator would be the routine contact for dialogue with the Council and receive any circulars it might issue. Unless explicitly delegated to an EVC, responsibility would rest with the Headteacher/Manager. Information for EVC's is available on the <http://lotcvisits.co.uk>

General functions of the EVC

- Liaise with the employer to ensure that educational visits meet the employer's requirements including those of risk assessment;
- Support the Headteacher, Manager, Governors and Establishment Committee with approval and other decisions;
- Assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit;
- Assess the competence of leaders and others proposed for a visit. This will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body. It may include practical observation or verification of experience;
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness etc;
- Organise thorough induction of leaders and other adults taking pupils on a specific visit;
- Make sure that Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary (see Part A section 4 of Personnel Handbook for schools).
- Work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis;
- Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit;
- Keep records of all visits (Appendix 16) and appropriate training records (see Appendix 17)
- Oversee the EVOLVE IT visits recording system
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.

Roles and responsibilities (iii)

Visit Leader

The Visit Leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and hence for the health and safety of the group. In this regard, the visit leader will be representing the Headteacher/Manager during the visit. In particular the visit leader will:

- Be an employee of the Council/School
- Set out a plan showing the educational benefits of the visit and seek authorisation
- Include in the plan an initial risk assessment, preferably based on a visit to site, or at least up-to-date site information. Apart from health and safety, this assessment should take account of child protection, financial risks, conduct and behaviour
- Ensure that the plan complies with regulations and Council guidance
- Identify the adult staff and helpers needed, ensure that the ratio of young people to supervisors is appropriate and appoint a deputy
- Ensure that all accompanying adults, whether employees or volunteers, will be able to carry out allotted roles competently and are appropriately briefed
- Make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies (see Chapter 14) and ensure that all accompanying leaders are familiar with these procedures
- Arrange for routine contingencies, including first aid, and arrange for clearly understood delegation in his/her absence and appropriate supervision when the group is sub-divided
- During the visit:
 - Meet the objectives of the visit
 - Ensure the overall maintenance of order and discipline
 - Make adequate arrangements for the safety and well-being of all young people at all times
 - Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the young people is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
 - Ensure the group leaders have details of the school/establishment contacts and the young people in their care
 - Ensure the young people are aware of whom to tell if they have concerns about their personal safety.
 - The Visit leader should make sure that they are familiar with Cheshire LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children's Board) procedures and to be aware of referral processes and contact numbers if young person's welfare become apparent on the trip.
 - Review the visit and advise the Headteacher/Manager when adjustments must be made

Accompanying Adults

It is essential that all accompanying adults are made aware of and agree to the expectations of them. In particular they must:

- Understand their relationship to other group members and the part they are to play during the visit
- Appreciate the limits and levels of their responsibilities if acting in any supervisory capacity and appreciate the principle of 'in loco parentis' will apply, though it is likely that courts would expect a greater level of care from teachers/youth workers than from voluntary helpers
- Should be aware of the Council Code of Conduct for volunteers
- Submit themselves to a check through the CRB if they are likely to have regular contact/access to young people. Forms and advice are available from the Personnel Department at County Hall.

Roles and responsibilities (iv)

Parents and Young People

Parents have rights to information in connection with visits but they also have responsibilities. Written information has the additional advantage that it can be used by the school as proof of action taken in the event of a claim. The school should provide a summary of the hazards which may be experienced and how it proposes to counter them as part of the briefing for parents. Young people could be put at risk if parents fail to cooperate.

Accordingly, parents must:

- Disclose information about a young people's emotional, psychological and physical health. This must be made as easy and confidential as possible so that parents are encouraged to give, rather than withhold information.
- Provide appropriate clothing, food, etc, in line with pre-arranged briefings.
- Provide details of where they can be contacted in an emergency or if a party has to return earlier than planned. Arrangements for pick up and set down are just as important as rendezvous points during the visit.

Young people should themselves take part in the assessment of risks and deciding appropriate precautions for the visit. Part of the national curriculum and the personal, social and health education programme is aimed at teaching young people how to cope with risks in life.

A key factor which could endanger a party is a failing in the anticipated level of reliability, common sense, trustworthiness and concentration of young people.

Contingency plans are necessary for young people who turn up without specified kit or whose behaviour endangers other group members, or who are not collected at the end of the visit.

Home based contacts

Comprehensive information should be left with a responsible person at the home base together with agreed procedures to be followed by that person. In the event of schedules not being met within an appropriate time span. Contingency Plans prepared should have been discussed with this person prior to the visit.

Additional resources-available on EVOLVE home page

1. 1999 DfES Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational visits – Good Practice Guide available free of charge from DfES 0808 1005060
2. Health & Safety of Pupils on Education Visits – DfES – (HASPEV)
3. Supplements to HASPEV July 2002 available from www.dfes.gov.uk
4. Standards For LEAs – DfES - (HASPEV supplement 1)
5. Standards for Adventure – DfES - (HASPEV supplement 2)
6. Handbook for Group Leaders – DfES - (HASPEV supplement 3)
7. Group Safety at Water Margins – DfES
8. Young People's Exchange visits - OEAP Guidance

9. Guidance for Overseas Expeditions – Edition 2
10. Minibus Safety – Code of Practice 2008 (RoSPA,DfT,cta,LARSOA,AIRSO)
11. Child seat restraints
12. Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work With Children – issued to all staff but also available from Mrs Sharon Hitchen – Deputy Headteacher

Update Notes

1. [Travel to USA](#)

SBE – travel to Michigan with two students February 2011.

Advises that each Form C is endorsed with school stamp and ideally signed in blue by parents.

Take letter from Headteacher

Take school identity badge to show you work at the school.

2. [Visits abroad requiring specialist clothing/shoes etc.](#) – *note from Jim Potter April 2011*

It is recommended that 1 set of functional kit (eg boots), medicines etc are kept in hand luggage as these are hard to replace quickly if bags are lost in transit.

3. [PE fixtures.](#)

At the above meeting it was suggested that regular PE fixtures could be covered by a single Form C issued and collected at the start of each academic year.

It should clearly state on the form that the onus is on the parent/carer to keep the school informed of any changes to contact details.

The onus is on the school to inform parents/carers of details of fixtures.

PE events outside the scope of regular fixtures would require discussion with the EVC to determine whether or not an EVOLVE document should be completed, along with an the issue of an additional Form C.