

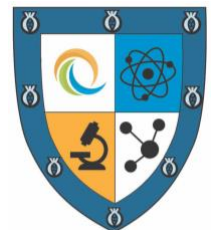


## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

### FOR SCHOOLS WITHIN

### QUEST

**St. Peter's C. of E. Primary School, Hindley  
Hindley Green Community Primary School  
St. John's C. of E. Primary School, Hindley Green  
St. John's C. of E. Primary School, Abram  
University Collegiate School, Bolton**



Autumn 2023  
Review date Autumn 2025

## **QUEST**

### **Educational Visits Policy**

At schools within QUEST we believe that the experiences gained by pupils through off-site Educational Visits should not be seen as isolated opportunities, but as a vital part of the progression of a child's education and essential to providing a relevant, creative curriculum. Whilst we believe that this philosophy is of vital importance, the safety of the pupils/students must remain paramount.

Therefore, this policy follows the guidelines laid down by the Local Authority's Educational Trips and Visits Policy and Procedures and ensures that all risk assessments, permissions and approvals are gained within the appropriate timespan. It is the responsibility of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the Principal to ensure that this is always the case and that ratios specified as good practice are adhered to at all times. See appendix one for the minimum procedures to be followed for ALL off-site visits.

#### **Responsibilities**

The Principal's responsibility will necessitate full compliance with any regulations and guidelines provided by the LA. The Headteacher will ensure that the activity leader is competent to undertake the activity and also understands the nature of the responsibilities related to that activity.

Where the Headteacher accompanies a visit and is not the activity leader then the Principal must follow the instructions of the activity leader.

The activity leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity. This includes ensuring that prior agreement to the activity taking place has been obtained, following guidance laid down and ensuring that all participants are aware of their roles, and submitting the necessary documentation to the Headteacher in advance of the visit. The use of the EVOLVE software is encouraged for trips and visits. The activity leader/class teacher is responsible for completing out of school activity forms and risk assessments, ensuring parents advised of visits, pupils/students briefed and put into groups etc. Timescales for each action required are listed below:

- Notification form completed at initial stage and signed off by Headteacher. At this point the trip will be confirmed and the office authorised to book coaches and arrange lunches etc.
- EVOLVE is then completed and includes letters to parents, risk assessments and all necessary information.
- Letters informing parents of the visit and/or requesting permission should be uploaded to Bromcom a minimum of two weeks before the trip.
- It is compulsory to record all residential visits on Evolve for local authority authorisation. All forms and letters must be presented to the Headteacher and uploaded on to Evolve a minimum of four weeks before the proposed visit.

Teachers, volunteers, pupils/students and parents/carers all have responsibilities during the course of the off-site activity in which they are participating. Smoking or

the drinking of alcohol by the designated responsible adults is NOT permitted on any school trip/visit.

A list of all children and adults involved must be carried by the activity leader and any other adult as the leader deems fit. A list of all participants must also be left in school.

### **Risk Assessment**

The underlying basis of health and safety care is to control risks. This is effectively achieved through risk assessment. When planning an off-site visit, all potential risks should be assessed and where it is “reasonably practicable” eliminated or alleviated. This should be undertaken prior to the visit. If it is considered necessary a pre-visit may be undertaken. School will request risk assessments from sites to be visited if any are available and will adopt/amend as necessary. All risk assessments are to be signed as read.

The Local Authority’s recommendations on off-site visits will be followed and EVOLVE Software used.

### **Ratio of adults to pupils**

The minimum ratios of adults to pupils are laid down in the guidelines (see below). These will be followed at all times or exceeded if the school determines that there is a group or individual need. All volunteer helpers who are responsible for a group of children should be DBS cleared and must have clear guidelines of what is expected of them, a schedule of events and a list of children in their care.

Ratios taken from Local Guidance,

- Nursery Class 1:2/3
- Reception Class 1:4
- School Year 1 – 3 1:6
- School Year 4 – 6 1:10/15
- School Year 7-13 1:15/20
- Residential/Out of Country 1:10

All ratios are dependent on the activity taking place. The greater the assessed risk, the higher the adult to child ratio.

### **First Aid**

It is appropriate to ensure that First Aid equipment is carried on all off-site visits and that all adults know who has the first aid resources.

### **Emergency Procedures**

The activity leader will carry a list of emergency contact numbers and information on any child with special medical needs, along with a staff copy of the School’s Emergency Management Plan which contains a checklist for educational visits. The Leader will also ensure a sufficient number of mobile phones are available.

### **Special Medical Needs**

The schools will always endeavour to include all children in off-site visits. However, if a pupil/student requiring special medical needs is to be included in off-site visits, then we will ensure that the parents are fully aware of the full circumstances of the visit and an individual risk assessment is completed. When at all possible children with special medical needs will be included.

If the school is ever taking a child where the parents/carers will forbid certain medical procedures, then a letter from the parent/carers stating exactly what is/is not allowed must accompany that child together with emergency contact numbers.

### **Discipline**

We expect all children to maintain the expected standards of behaviour on all off-site visits. Parents will be expected to collect children whose behaviour compromises the safety of the child or others on residential visits. On day visits the school will be contacted and a decision made.

For children displaying extreme/unacceptable behaviour, risk assessments will be undertaken prior to the visit taking place to support inclusion in the educational visit. However, if the risk assessment of behaviour is too high to ensure the safety of the pupil/student, or others, the pupil/student will not be allowed to participate in the off-site visit. Those children who would receive 1 to 1 supervision in school should continue to do so while on the educational visit.

### **Voluntary Contributions**

The schools accept Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 principles and reflects the advice in the DFE "Charging for School Activities" document (November 2013).

However, if ever a situation should occur where the amount of voluntary contributions means that the school will face financial problems, the whole trip may be cancelled.

No child will be barred from off-site visits because of inability/unwillingness to pay. Accounts of all off-site visits are kept by the Office staff.

Pupil premium funding will be used to subsidise 50% of the cost of trips/visits for children entitled to receive free school meals/every 6 children.

### **Transport**

When transport is needed for an off-site visit, the QUEST minibuses will be used where possible and the appropriate checks undertaken prior to use. Only trained staff will be allowed to drive the minibus and insurance will be in place at all times. If the minibus is unavailable or too small for the number of participants, then transport will always be provided by a reputable coach company who provides coaches with seatbelts. The ratio shall be one child per seat regardless of age or size.

The schools remain responsible for behaviour on the minibus and coaches.

The use of private cars is discouraged. However, relevant permission is sought when transporting children in small groups using staff and parents/carers vehicles and booster seats will be used when necessary

**Covid-19**

Schools will follow the guidance from the DfE and the Local Authority with regards to residential trips/visits and any relevant Covid restrictions necessary.

**Cancellation**

If any circumstances arise which cause any doubt whatsoever over the safety of the trip, it will be cancelled.

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This policy has been reviewed with due regard to the Equality Act 2010 during the Autumn Term 2023 and Trustees are aware of its contents.

Signed

*C. Pailing*

Chair of Trustees

## Appendix 1

### Minimum procedures to be followed for ALL off-site visits

- 1) Children should be placed in small groups with an allocated adult. Each adult should have their list of children and the class teacher should have an overall list. A copy of this list of groups and adults should be left at the school office.
- 2) On local, off-site walking trips – children should wear Hi-Vis vests.
- 3) The whole group must be together before leaving the school. School employed staff must lead the group and also be the last person out of the building – ensuring entire group is together. Supporting adults (volunteer helpers) should be placed along the line with their group.
- 4) First aid procedures must be followed:
  - Correct number of first aiders
  - Correct first aid equipment must be taken
  - Equipment in the event of travel sickness/vomiting must be taken
  - Children's individual medication must be taken, i.e. inhalers, epi-pens etc
  - A list of all children's medical conditions must be taken
  - A mobile phone to contact staff in school in the event of any illness/emergency
- 4) Children should be counted:
  - Before leaving the classroom
  - Before starting the walking journey or on the coach prior to departure
  - On arrival at the venue
  - On any other relevant occasion during the visit where a change to the whole group has taken place – for example after toilet breaks, group input sessions, change of rooms.

This counting is assisted in process if each group leader has a clear list of their group and, therefore, the number of children they are responsible for.

This procedure should also be undertaken in reverse for the return journey.

The class teacher is responsible at all times for the safety of the group when being educated off-site and must ensure the relevant forms and risk assessments are completed. Staff must also refer and adhere to other relevant QUEST policies, e.g. Health & Safety, Missing Child, Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, SEN&D etc. All policies are available from the Policy File in the staffroom or from QUEST website [www.questrust.org.uk](http://www.questrust.org.uk)

The Headteacher of the school is ultimately responsible for the health & safety of all within the school on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

## INFORMATION PAPER



# School and College Trips at a Time of Heightened Security

Every school and college will already have their own procedures and risk assessments, however, in the light of recent terrorist attacks, detailed planning of trips becomes more important.

In this paper, we have provided some additional sources of information, together with some suggestions for communicating with parents and carers.

## Planning a visit

These are unprecedented times, when extra thought will need to be given to 'what if?' scenarios.

- The National Counter Terrorism Office collects its guidance for crowded places here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office>
- We particularly welcome this detailed advice from Hampshire County Council:  
<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/education/outdoor-education-importantannouncement.htm>
- We recommend also this detailed set of frequently asked questions from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel:  
<http://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/6k-faqs-visits-and-the-threat-from-terrorism/>
- Review existing policies, documentation and insurance agreements relating to all school and college trips, both residential and non-residential, and for trips at home and abroad. Consider payment and cancellation terms and their impact on the budget, both for the trip and on the wider school or college budget, particularly if a student is withdrawn from a scheduled trip if full or part payment has already been made.

## Communicating with parents and carers


Following terrorist and other incidents, parents and carers will, understandably, be more worried about trips and visits, especially to urban venues. School and college leaders can play an important role in maintaining a calmly proportionate response to risks.

We recommend:

- when communicating with parents and carers, you give particular attention to the risk assessment process that underpins each trip at an early stage to reassure them that safety is the priority and has been carefully considered by the school





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- you consider providing links to the national advice and guidance that you have referred to (eg the links above), as a way of reassuring parents that special consideration has been given to the visit in the light of recent events. In respect of trips abroad, another source of information is from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>
  - you give particular attention to the team of staff who will be accompanying the trip – their names, their experience of accompanying trips, and the additional guidance they have received in case of any incident. NB Staff accompanying pupils on school trips should be aware of the school's crisis management plan/policy and what steps to take in the event of a security incident on visit

Ultimately, it will be the decision of parents or carers whether their children will go on the trip. If several decide not to, then many trips will become unviable. This, of course, is a source of considerable frustration, however, these are unprecedented times of collective nervousness.

We therefore strongly recommend that if some parents and carers choose to withdraw children from a trip, no questions are asked, no disappointment is expressed, and certainly nothing is said to the children themselves.

In doing all we can as school and college leaders to run trips and visits as normal (in times which can feel anything but normal), we are fulfilling an important and wider social function. We are demonstrating that the quality of our national life and the values that underpin it won't be undermined by those determined to wreak havoc.

The additional care in planning and the additional time spent communicating will help to reassert the sense that ordinary life must continue.

ASCL General Secretary Geoff Barton