



Educational Visits Policy

Approved by	C. Snowden		
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Summary of Changes

Version	Date	Summary of Changes	Approved By
1	September 2025	Policy written	
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Section 1: Introduction

Off-site educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of Western House Academy (WHA), and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site educational activities enrich the curriculum offered by providing experiences, which would otherwise not be possible.

All off-site activities serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences. In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site educational visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. Each trip has a bespoke risk assessment. The visits usually take place within the school day.

Section 2: Aims

The aims of our off-site educational visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

WHA has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. WHA believes that Educational Visits contribute positively to the quality of teaching and learning that we can offer our pupils.

Section 3: Responsibilities

Academy Council

Academy Council (AC) members will receive advice on planned Educational Visits from the Principal. They should ensure that this policy is reviewed regularly and in line with any changes in government/Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Trust guidance. They will formally approve residential trips and foreign trips. Approval will be reflected in the AC minutes of meetings.

Key Tasks

- Ensure a policy is in place with regard to off-site activities;

- Ensure that visits have specific educational objectives;
- Be satisfied that risk assessments are carried out and that appropriate safety measures are in place;
- Formally approve residential visits;
- Ensure that all arrangements comply with WHA's Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies;
- Ensure that funding and costs do not exclude any pupil from taking part;
- Review any codes of conduct for both leaders and pupils.

Principal

The Principal (or her deputy in her absence) will ensure that off-site activities comply with the procedures in this policy. She will sign the approval for visits (except residential visits and overnight stays) on behalf of the Academy Council.

Key Tasks

- Support staff development of leadership competence through continuous professional development;
- Appoint party leaders who are sufficiently experienced and competent to assess and manage the risks with regard to the planned activity;
- Ensure that risks have been assessed, more significant risks recorded and appropriate safety measures are in place and that all parties are aware of the assessments and ensure that all staff understand and comply.
- Formally approve (sign and date) each journey or visit;
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

Every establishment should have a designated Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). This may be the Principal or another employee who in the view of the Principal is competent to undertake this type of delegated task. The EVC for WHA is **Kyla Parmley (Vice Principal)**.

Key Tasks

- Oversee the academy's approach to visits;
- in consultation with the Principal, assign competent people to lead or supervise a visit;
- support the party leader with advice and guidance on generic or specific risk assessments;
- review and approve the risk assessment produced by the party leader and team for each visit;
- organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit;
- keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near- accidents' and follow up with these when as necessary;
- liaise with the Principal and Chief Operating Officer to ensure that separate insurance is in place for foreign visits;
- seek any advice from external providers as necessary.

The Party Leader

The party leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity and should be approved by the Principal.

Key Tasks

- obtain the approval of the Principal and EVC before any off-site visit or activity takes place;
- assess the reasonably foreseeable risks involved and draw up, or amend as appropriate, any previously recorded risk assessment;
- oversee the safe conduct of each visit, paying particular attention to on-going risk assessments and changing circumstances;
- ensure that all other members of staff and voluntary helpers are aware of their responsibilities and have the appropriate training and experience to undertake their assigned roles (this includes providing a copy of the risk assessment which may be adapted to ensure that sensitive data is not shared with volunteers).;
- consider the planning checklist to ensure that all procedures have been followed;
- inform parents about the visit and gain their consent, when applicable. Each trip will have a letter written that is bespoke to that trip. The letter will include emergency contact detail and medical declaration;
- brief persons taking the trip and ensure that all adults are aware of the conduct of visits (adults and children).

Additional members of staff and volunteers

Members of staff and volunteers make up the team for each visit and they must be given instructions to ensure that they are familiar with procedures/protocols. Parents/volunteers will be invited into school to meet with the Party Leader to go through guidance and to ensure that they understand their role on the trip.

Key Tasks

- assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all the young people on the visit;
- be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in the visit or activity;
- inform the party leader of any significant hazards.

Pupils/Students/Young Persons

Whilst taking part in off-site activities young people also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff;

- behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct and adhering to the school behaviour policy;
- inform members of staff of any significant hazards.

Parents

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child. Parents should:

- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit via the consent forms;
- provide emergency contact numbers;
- provide the party leader with arrangements to resume care of their child should this be necessary;
- sign the consent form, if applicable.

Section 4: Risk Assessments

Generic Risk Assessments

Generic Risk Assessments identifying control measures to reduce the risk of harm from generic hazards. These assessments do not have to be written out in full but should be referred to on the risk assessment for the visit.

Important Note: It is important that generic risk assessments, associated checklists and protocols are used carefully. There must be evidence that those undertaking the visit have read them and applied them appropriately to the visit. Whenever they are used, the Educational Visit Coordinator should check and sign to this effect.

Individual Risk Assessments

Individual Risks Assessments will be carried out for children who have additional needs in order to keep everyone safe and to assess risk that is individual to that child.

Event or Site Specific Risk Assessment

The Party Leader must complete these assessments along with the staff team. The assessments relate to the hazards associated with the event or site and the nature of the children and young people in the party. This may require a site visit in order to fully appreciate how to write the risk assessment.

On-going Risk Assessment

On-Going Risk Assessment is the dynamic process of identifying new levels of risk in response to changes in level of hazard and the behaviour of the party. It is not practicable to record these assessments in writing as they happen. However, it is possible to identify the significant potential risks on a risk assessment.

Risk Assessments and Third-Party Providers

Other people and organisations provide many aspects of educational visits for

schools. Examples include outdoor centres, transport providers, voluntary organisations and museums. It is the responsibility of these organisations to assess the risks of their provision.

Important note: It is not necessary to copy or scrutinise all providers' risk assessments, just a verification that they do exist for the agreed visit. This, at its simplest, will be a written confirmation: *"Can you confirm that you have assessed the risks for our programme?"* and *"How can you verify this?"* The answer to the latter could be *"they are published on our website "*; *"they are available to you in the visitors' handbook"*. They must be accessible to the academy and read by the party leader prior to the trip. These will be added to the school's risk assessment and be familiar to all adults who are supporting on the trip.

Section 5: Parental consent for educational visits

Parents and carers should be informed of any educational visit in advance. Parental consent might be obtained each time a pupil takes part in a visit – this is trip dependent; local trips and trips linked with the curriculum will not require permission but notice will be provided to parents. If consent is required, every effort will be made by the school to contact the parent or carer so that the child may go on the trip. Children who do not go on a visit should still attend school that day and be placed in another class.