

Autumn 2025

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Owner/Reviewer: Director of Inclusion & Vulnerabilities

Educational Visits & Off-site Activities Guidance

For QUEST Schools

Company Number 09306360

Hindley Green Community Primary School

St. Peter's C. of E. Primary School

St. John's C. of E. Primary School Abram

St. John's C. of E. Primary School Hindley Green

University Collegiate School Bolton



EDUCATIONAL VISITS & OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES GUIDANCE

Aim

The aim of this document is to outline our approach to educational visits and offsite activity both within the curriculum day after school, evenings and weekends and during school holiday periods. This document outlines our requirements in the expectations of children/students staff and families.

The Purpose Of Educational And Off Site Visits:

- ✓ Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas and help raise attainment
- ✓ Experiential Learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas; for example relationships, emotional and spiritual, environmental, independence and teamwork
- ✓ Educational visits help to develop children/students investigative and social skills, and longer visits encourage greater independence
- ✓ All visits should serve an educational purpose that enhances and enriches our children and students' experiences.
- ✓ Outdoor learning which embraces the following outcomes:
 - enjoyment
 - confidence in character development
 - mental and physical health and well-being
 - agency and emotional awareness – executive functioning
 - environmental awareness
 - physical activity skills
 - personal qualities
 - skills for future employment
 - increase motivation for learning
 - broaden horizons and experiences

Introduction

QUEST trust believes that educational visits and trips enhance the curricular and extracurricular offer. It provides students with the opportunity to participate in a suitable range of school visits and is an entitlement for all. For the purposes of this policy the terms visits and trips are interchangeable and used to define all offsite activities.

In this document we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our offsite visits and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum for the safety, health and well-being of our children/students at all times. Within these limits we seek to make all visits available to all children/students and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities ensuring that all reasonable adjustments are made.

The range of visits and offsite activities covered by this policy includes (but is not limited to):-

- sporting fixtures involving travel to another school or venue e.g. local leisure or sports centre
- visits to local communities (e.g. sacred spaces, local schools, music, woodlands, towns and villages)
- whole or part day visits taking place further afield both within and beyond the school day
- residential visits within the UK
- overseas visits
- adventurous activities

Scope

QUEST Trust has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel's (OEAP's) 'National Guidance' as its own 'Employer Guidance' and as such is a principal source of guidance and information regarding practice for Learning Outside the Classroom, educational and offsite visits.

It is a legal expectation that all employees must work within the requirements of their employer guidance; therefore, Quest staff must follow the requirements of this policy in conjunction with the Local Authority guidance, Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance' (NG). This guidance can be found on the following website: <http://oeapng.info>.

Where an employee commissions learning outside the classroom activity on behalf of a school they must ensure that such commissioned agents and companies have systems and procedures in place where standards are not less than those required by OEAP National Guidance.

This policy shall apply to all employees whose work involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of children/students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of the school
- direct supervision of children/students undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of learning outside the classroom
- facilitating experiences for children/students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of the school
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for our children/students undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of the school site

This applies regardless of whether the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

Employer Requirements

As an employer, Quest trust is required to ensure that its employees are provided with:

- appropriate guidance/policy relating to educational visits and learning outside of the classroom
- training to support policy/guidance to ensure that it is understood
- suitable systems and process to ensure that those trained are kept updated
- access to advice support and further training from an Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) who has proven expertise and professional understanding of the policy/guidance the training expectations set by current good practice and legal requirements
- to define which type of visits should require approval from the local authority

Headteacher/Head of School

- To ensure that visits comply with statutory requirements and good practice
- To ensure that the EVC is competent to oversee the coordination of all off-site education
- To ensure that the EVC keeps them informed of the progress of visits and that information is relayed to Governors and parents as appropriate
- To ensure that the relevant central staff (DeCEO, Dir. I&V, Dir. EY, Head of SEND) are kept suitably informed of proposed trips and an overview of the risk management and planning process as appropriate
- To assign visit leaders and support staff ensuring competence
- To ensure that in the event of a critical incident or accident there is suitable support and that procedures are followed – contacting parents, staff, media, others etc. Help to ensure that critical incidents/accidents/near-accidents are investigated and findings acted upon
- Ensure that school level actions highlighted from reviewing and monitoring evaluations are completed in a timely manner

Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC):

- To act on behalf of the Headteacher to ensure visits comply with statutory requirements and good practice. The EVC should attend periodic SLT meetings to ensure educational visits are discussed as part of the school wide operational leadership.
- To ensure that the Headteacher and Governing Body are made aware of visits and that approval is given as appropriate
- To provide suitable documentation to support the planning of visits
- To ensure visits are appropriately planned using appropriate standardised QUEST documentation/systems
- To ensure staff are aware of school requirements to organise or lead a visit
- To ensure visits have appropriate staffing ratios and adequate cover for health and safety, children/student wellbeing including first aid and behavioural management
- To work with the visit leader to ensure full visit details are made available to parents and that parental consent has been provided/or not (as applicable)
- To organise emergency arrangements and ensure that there is an emergency contact for each visit
- To keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents/near accidents
- To ensure that visit evaluation is used to inform future visits and training needs (higher risk visits)
- To arrange training as appropriate
- Review of incidents/near accidents as required
- To assist in reviewing policy, systems, and procedures and on occasion monitor practice

Visit leader

- The person who has overall responsibility for managing the offsite visit, including the health and safety of the participants, the supervision, welfare, learning and development of the participants. For the avoidance of doubt – this individual must be present on the trip.
- To adhere to QUEST and school requirements with regard to policy, systems and processes
- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of a visit
- Identify the target group and likely staffing
- Identify resources including estimated costs
- The visit leader must ensure they complete all required documentation within timescales including cancellation dates that will impact finance
- Failure to adhere to timescales may result in the cancellation of the visit
- Ensure that risk assessments, where appropriate are completed and that contingency plans are in place. Information is shared with staff and children/students as appropriate
- Plan an itinerary to account for all times whilst on the visit including meals and 'downtime'
- Have prior knowledge of the venue, undertaking preliminary visits (as appropriate)
- Inform parents and seek consent, detailing the nature of the visit/activities (as appropriate)
- For residential visits, ensure that parents are provided with emergency numbers and contacts, kit lists, departure and arrival times and provisional itineraries. A parents information evening (a minimum of 4 school weeks prior to departure) should be held for residential and overseas visits a
- Allocate supervisory responsibilities to adults with named children/students . Ensure that adults know what their responsibilities are and that pupils/students know which adult is responsible for them
- To continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental well-being of the group and the suitability of prevailing conditions. If the activity is unsuitable or if weather conditions are considered to be unsuitable, to withdraw children/students from the activity

Training

Education Visits Coordinator (EVC): -

- There should be at least one nominated senior member of staff to act in the capacity of Education Visits Coordinator (EVC).
- The EVC should undertake formal OEAP revalidation on a minimum 3 year cycle.
- Consideration will be given to training other staff as EVCs (dependent upon needs).

EVCs should be specifically competent, with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits.

Visit Leaders:

- Leaders should be current in their knowledge and expectations regarding good practice.
- It is recognised as good practice for newly qualified staff, staff new to the school or staff involved with higher risk activities to work alongside experienced staff. OEAP make available their nationally recognised Visit Leader Training course to support competence.

Planning, Notification and Approval

The Education Visits Coordinator, Headteacher and Governing Body (usually level 2 higher risk or complex visits) shall consider and approve educational visits. The appointed EVC will also check and acknowledge arrangements for visits which are deemed more complex or 'higher risk'.

Visit leaders should seek initial approval by completing the relevant **Educational Visit Booking Form**. This task should not be delegated (it should be completed by the visit leader). This should be forwarded to the EVC for approval. Once signed and approved this is passed to the school office administration team to confirm the bookings with relevant provider and transport and financial cancellation dates.

For residential and overseas visits approval and planning should normally have been undertaken several months prior to the visit and submitted to the local authority for approval at least 4 weeks prior to departure.

Once approval has been given the visit leader must then follow all procedures in line with the policy and provide all required detail in the timeframe specified.

Categories of Risk and Approval Hierarchy - See appendix 1 for examples

EVOLVE is used to facilitate the planning, management, approval, and evaluation of educational visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by their establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). EVOLVE is a useful source of information and users can complete searches, run reports, and store documents

Level 1 – Simple low risk 'everyday' activity (usually but not exclusively within the school day). Visit details should be completed and submitted to the EVC normally no later than 3 weeks prior to the visit. These visits will be checked / approved by the EVC / Headteacher.

Level 2 (Adventure/Residential/Overseas) – Higher risk activities. Visit details should be completed and submitted to the EVC (a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the visit to allow time to read). These visits will be checked / approved by the EVC / Headteacher and submitted to the local authority a minimum of 4 weeks before.

Where there is significant change to a Level 2 trip (for example a date change, location change, key itinerary change), the trip information should be returned to the EVC/Headteacher for reconsideration.

The Headteacher will have an overview of **all** educational visits.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question, **‘What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?’** It should focus on those issues that are individual to the specific event, considering the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the visit staff team, and the leader in the context of the event.

Planning should reflect the consideration of legal and good practice requirements ensuring: -

- The plan is based on QUEST procedures and employer guidance
- Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers (making full use of national schemes which accredit those assurances have already been obtained by credible inspection regimes)
- Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained. Looked after children may need permission from social care, please liaise with relevant pastoral staff
- All staff (including any adult volunteer helpers) and the children/students involved, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their role in the risk management process
- All visits involving residential, overseas activity or outdoor adventurous activity must be given to the EVC within the timescales, to then go to the headteacher for approval.

Refer to **Good Practice Residential Visits Guidance**

Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision/Ratios

Effective supervision should be determined by proper consideration of:

- Age (including the developmental age) of the group
- Gender matters
- Ability of the group (including SEND, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc)
- Nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions)
- Staff competence

Staff assigned to support the SEND needs of particular individuals should not be included in the overall staffing ratio. Consideration should be given to the implications of one member of staff effectively being removed from the intended supervision arrangements for a period of time e.g. to accompany a child/student to hospital.

Staffing ratios are a risk management issue and should be considered through the process of risk assessment. It is not always possible to set out definitive staff/ student ratios for a particular age group or activity. However, QUEST expects the following as normal minimum requirements, and any variation should be discussed with the Headteacher/Head of School/EVC in the first instance.

School Year	Level 1	Level 2
EYFS Nursery	1:4	N/A
Reception	1:6	N/A
Year 1 to Year 2	1:6/8	1:6
Year 3 to Year 4	1:10	1:8
Year 5 to Year 6	1:15	1:10
Year 7 to year 11	1:15/20	1:12
Year 12 to Year 13	1:15/20	1:15
<i>Please remember that 3rd party provider ‘free staff place’ ratios may not reflect those shown above and should be negotiated where applicable prior to signing agreements.</i>		Minimum of 2 staff for overseas visits

The use of parent volunteers

They must have been deemed suitable/sufficiently competent (by the Headteacher) to undertake the roles/responsibilities required of them. They should be briefed by the visit leader regarding their role and responsibilities, the programme/itinerary, intended aims/objectives and emergency procedures. A minimum of two staff members must be present on trips using parent volunteers.

It is expected that any parent volunteer:

- 1) will be under the supervision of a member of staff either directly or indirectly
- 2) they will not have direct responsibility for their own child in any sub-groups assigned to them
- 3) they have been made aware that their responsibility lies with the group/sub-group and not their own child

Where parent volunteers are required to accompany a visit to provide dedicated support to their child, arrangements/requirements will be agreed in advance, and they will not be part of the staffing ratio.

First Aid

First aid should form part of any risk assessment. Before undertaking a visit or off-site activities, the visit leader must assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit the visit leader and/or accompanying staff should have knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid kit is taken.

There are no statutory requirements regarding staff holding first aid qualifications. As part of schools' policy first aid requirements will be stated. **There are, however, statutory requirements for dealing with paediatrics (aged up to 5 years).**

Qualified first aiders attending visits are encouraged where possible. It is the visit leader's responsibility to be aware of pupils needs including ailments, injuries, allergies and medication.

All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services and the school's emergency 'base' contact.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid kit
- Person / persons appointed to oversee first-aid arrangements

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be
- Duty of Care requirements
- Distance to the nearest hospital
- Venue/providers first aid availability
- The potential requirement of Qualified Paediatric First Aiders

Children/Student Responsibilities (age/ability dependent)

They are responsible for: -

- Being aware of risk assessments and any contingency plans
- Not taking any unnecessary risks
- Following the instructions of the visit leader and other staff, including adults at the venue
- Dressing and behaving appropriately and responsibly
- Standards of behaviour
- Being respectful to local codes and customs
- Taking care of their belongings and possessions
- Being punctual
- Adhering to QUEST/school behaviour policies and statements

A child/student's participation in educational and other off-site activities is at the school's discretion. If behaviour leading up to, before or during a trip/off-site activity falls short of the expected standards, sanctions may be applied in accordance with requirements.

Where it is considered a risk to include a particular child/student because of serious doubt as to their behaviour or it is felt they present a significant risk to themselves or others, the Headteacher or their representative will make the final decision regarding participation in the visit.

During a visit, in exceptional circumstances, parents may be required to collect their child before the end of the visit.

Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and any third party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for the effective supervision of children/students. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, preliminary visits will be undertaken. If visits to particular providers or venues are regular or frequent it is acceptable after an initial visit for no further pre-visits to be undertaken. Staff should still ensure that there have been no changes regarding significant hazards.

Risk Management

As an employer, QUEST has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level. Suitable and sufficient risk management systems are in place.

All QUEST schools should adopt a "Risk-Benefit Assessment" approach whereby the starting point for any risk assessment is the consideration of the benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participation provides objectivity to a decision that any risk remaining after control measures have been put in place is "acceptable". The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) endorse this approach through their "Principles of Sensible Risk Management" and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

The school takes a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools, risk assessment and risk management processes are tools to enable children/students to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether.

Each school should ensure that exemplar generic risk assessments are available. Staff should review and adapt these generic risk assessments for medium and higher risk activities to ensure that they are appropriate to specific events, activities and children/students.

Where the establishment is purchasing the services of a reputable external provider, rather than the activity being self-led, then it is reasonable to expect the provider to conform to relevant legislation and accepted good practice although it is accepted that staff cannot delegate Duty of Care responsibilities to a provider.

In these circumstances the visit leader and accompanying staff should focus on completing risk assessments for the areas of their own responsibilities not covered by the providers risk assessment for the management for medium and higher risk activities.

This will usually be travel to and from the location, pastoral and welfare issues, how any 'down-time' will be safeguarded and contact arrangements for the emergency 'base' contact person.

Individual risk assessments/plans may be required for children/students with differing or special needs.

- All risk assessments should be agreed with the EVC
- Risk assessments should be shared with accompanying staff and with children/students and their parents, as appropriate. This includes contingency plans.
- Visit leaders remain in charge throughout the visit. Duty of Care cannot be delegated to 3rd parties.
- Leaders should challenge provider staff if they feel that an activity is too hazardous, not delivered at an appropriate level etc. Actions may include amending the activity or ceasing it.

Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support

A critical incident is an incident where any member of the group undertaking an offsite activity: -

- Has suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality or is at serious risk
- Has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period
- Is any incident that is beyond the normal coping mechanisms of the Visit Leader and staff team

QUEST is committed to ensuring that schools have emergency planning procedures in place to support managers and staff in the event of a serious/critical incident. Visit leaders and support staff should be familiar with the emergency planning procedures.

Refer to QUEST/school emergency planning and procedure documents.

During the normal school day

To activate support the visit leader should immediately contact the school reception as the first point of contact. The EVC /Headteacher/SLT should be informed.

Beyond the school day

The out of hours School Emergency 'Base' contact number(s) should be used. The Headteacher /SLT will be informed.

A member of the School Leadership Team should always be available as an Emergency 'Base' contact whilst groups are away from site.

Relevant school/out of hours emergency contact telephone numbers should always be carried by leaders during an offsite visit.

Current threat of terrorist attacks

The current global situation means that the possibilities of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk faced by us all. Like all risks this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way. As part of the response to staying vigilant and carrying on as normal, it is important to decide about each visit on its merit.

It is sensible to:

- Be aware of the latest news relating to your destination
- In the UK know the current threat level (available at: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>.)
- When travelling abroad check the FCO website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice> in the early stages of visit planning, at regular intervals and immediately prior to leaving.

Planning Considerations

- If a Tour provider is being used liaise with them if you are unsure of the safety/security of the visit in the lead up to departure.
- Consider the threat of terrorism as part of visit risk management and include it within visit emergency plans.

When visiting crowded places such as a major city, iconic venue or event, where the risk of attack may be greater, consider:

- Possible safe areas or venues, near where you intend to be, that you could use as an emergency shelter
- How to minimise waiting time at busy venues. Where to wait and gather for head counts and register checks
- How to minimise queuing times (such as not carrying unnecessary items) to speed up search and entry
- Are staff phones charged and numbers shared?
- Do all leaders have all group information? Will they be spaced apart?
- Is there a contact card for all participants giving a number to call if separated from the group, and the name and telephone number of the establishment?
- How you would get away in an emergency, bearing in mind that the direct route and planned transport might no longer be an option. Are you aware of alternatives and can you access emergency funds to pay for them?
- Do you need to leave the site immediately with the crowd at the end of the visit event?
- The possibility of an enforced overnight stay and what this might entail – for example do you need a reserve of any critical medication?
- How the visit leader and staff team might manage an enforced group split.

During the visit:

- Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings – know where the exits are and where you would run to.
- Be aware of the possibility of suspicious items (*See point 5 the 4Cs - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/national-counter-terrorism-security-office>).*
- When staying at any place for more than 30 minutes, identify emergency meeting points in case the group is forced to move and becomes split.
- Avoid congregating too long around entrances to major public sites.
- At ports and airports don't linger unnecessarily on the public side of security screening.
- Be aware of the 'Stay Safe' principles: 'Run, Hide, Tell' and know what to expect if you encounter armed response officers <https://act.campaign.gov.uk/>
- The website of the National Counter-Terrorism Security Office: <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/>

Evaluating/Reviewing visits

To allow schools to assess the benefits of trips and visits staff are requested to complete a visit evaluation form on EVOLVE. The EVC will review visits with visit leaders each term. Any 'near misses' or accidents must be recorded and reported.

Charging for Visits

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions. Should those 'voluntary' contributions not cover the full cost of the planned visit then QUEST/school reserves the right to cancel.

Staff should discuss with the Headteacher in the first instance.

QUEST's charging policy follows the legal framework for charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act 1996.

No pupil may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution.

The costing of visits/off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- Transport
- Entrance fees
- Insurance
- Provision of any special resources or equipment
- Costs related to adult helpers
- Any refreshments QUEST/school has opted to pay for

The visit leader after consultation with the EVC/Headteacher may charge parents for board and lodging on residential visits as well as full costs when a visit is deemed an 'optional extra'.

An 'optional extra' is defined as:

- Falling wholly or mainly outside normal hours, i.e. a ski visit during holiday periods
- An activity which does not form part of the National Curriculum or the statutory requirements for religious education
- Is not part of the syllabus towards a Prescribed Public Examination

On residential visits which take place during school hours, some parents may have the costs of board and lodgings remitted. These are parents in receipt of: - Universal Credit, Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit and Income related employment and support allowance.

No payment/contract will be entered into with any trip provider until it has been approved by the Headteacher

Safeguarding and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

It is the responsibility of the visit leader and accompanying staff to safeguard and promote the wellbeing and welfare of pupils whilst undertaking educational visits. QUEST/School safeguarding policy and procedures must be followed.

Employees and volunteers who are working in Regulated Activity either with young people or carrying out certain activities for adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process. Follow guidance on volunteers from national guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

For the purposes of this guidance, "activities" are to: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, provide advice/guidance on well-being, provide relevant personal care, e.g. washing or dressing, or drive a vehicle only for children.

It is normal practice that all staff (employees/volunteers) having access to pupils will be DBS and barred-list check.

- The use of volunteers should only be permitted in consultation with the Headteacher/EVC / Head of School. Permission will be based on knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and/or training.
- All regular volunteers will require a current DBS check
- Volunteers have responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

Staff are required to follow QUEST/schools Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures, and all elements from national guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

PE and Sports Fixtures

For PE and Sporting events away from the school site the staff member responsible should ensure the following:

- 1) Parental consent has been provided. This may be through an annual 'blanket consent' for simple low risk visits
- 2) Parents have been notified that their child is participating
- 3) The Visit Leader has home contact details in case of emergency
- 4) Staff are familiar with managing any risks and that these have been documented as applicable
- 5) For out of school hours activity a member of SLT has provided emergency 'base' contact details. For events taking place away from the local area or involving residential stays then the visit requirements in this policy should be followed.

Mobile phone and digital technology

Ideally school issued mobile phones will be available for trips and visits. Where they are available, the visit leader should take with them and if deemed necessary provide children/students with the telephone number.

A mobile phone should always be available in case of emergency.

The use of mobile phones, smart phones and social media services can be very useful in organising visits. For example, they can be used for keeping parents informed about the progress of a residential visit, about changes in arrangements such as travel times, or in the event of an emergency.

They can also present some challenges and risks, of which staff should be aware.

Staff should: -

- Ensure that photographic consent has been supplied by parents
- make sure they keep confidential their personal information, phone numbers or social media details
- Not normally contact a child/student or group using their personal device
- Not use their own personal social media accounts to share information regarding school, the visit or pupils. This includes uploading photographic images QUEST schools have social media channels

It is recommended that:

- Any visit behaviour agreement, particularly for residential visits, addresses the issue of children/student access to phones and social media use by laying down basic ground rules. **No child/student mobile phones are permitted on any primary school visits.**
- In the event of any incident or accident children/students must not take photos, text, or call friends or family without the express permission of staff.
- Children/students should be made aware of risks in an age-appropriate way.
- Photographs of children/students or staff taken during visits should not be displayed on social networking sites without prior agreement.

Staff must follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures.

Insurance for Educational Visits and Off-site Activities

QUEST ensures that cover is provided to meet its statutory obligations. This includes Employers liability and Third-Party liability.

The visit leader should satisfy themselves that suitable Insurance arrangements are in place for the nature of the visit (personal belongings/medical cover/repatriation/accidental injury/cancellations) etc.

QUEST purchases insurance cover via the risk protection arrangement (RPA) for schools. Details of the cover can be found via the RPA website or by contacting QUEST Finance Department.

Visit leaders must check that a provider holds appropriate public liability insurance. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure adequate insurance is in place to cover all activities associated with the trip. It may be necessary for some trips that additional insurance is purchased.

Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children/students with SEND needs, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Schools will take all **reasonably practicable** measures to include all children/students. The principles of inclusion will be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflect QUEST/school policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards: -

- An entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to: -

- Treat a young person to whom one of the protected characteristics applies less favourably
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that such persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Transport

Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it and staff must follow the statutory and good practice requirements. National and local regulatory requirements must be followed. The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey, fully considering issues of driver-distracted/child/student behaviour.

The visit leader should ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company.

Minibuses – self drive

Staff should consider risks associated with transporting children/students, their likely behaviour and individual needs. This will indicate if it is safe for a driver to accompany children/students by themselves, without a supervisor.

Considerations should include –

- The length of the journey and time of day when it takes place
- The nature of the group (age/maturity/SEND/behavioural issues) and the level of behaviour management or support they are likely to require during the journey
- The overall workload of the driver during the day (other responsibilities and duties undertaken or planned by drivers)
- Safeguarding Issues
- Only approved/certified drivers may drive school minibuses, including specific licence requirements

Based on an assessment of these factors, it may prove satisfactory to have only a driver present in the vehicle (no supervisors). It may however also demonstrate the need for additional staff to share driving duties or to act as supervisors.

Any driver/supervisor should have access to a mobile phone and have school contact details available.

Where more than one minibus is being used to provide transport to the same destination vehicles should normally travel in convoy/close proximity.

School procedures should be followed for the booking of a QUEST minibus.

Staff including volunteers using Private Cars

Overall, QUEST does not recommend staff or volunteers using their own vehicles to transport children/students to organised visits or offsite activities. If there is no alternative, this must be agreed with the headteacher and a risk assessment must be completed prior to the use of a private car. The staff member must add their details to QUEST Business Insurance, share their own up to date insurance certificate, driving licence, confirmation of MOT and that their vehicle is in a good working order.

If parents/carers are requested to make their own transport arrangements for their child (and/or others) to an offsite event, responsibility for the arrangements and the activity of transport lies with them. In such circumstances, QUEST only accepts responsibility for pupils once they have met with staff at the allotted time/place. Pupils will be handed back to those parents/carers providing transport at the end of the visit/activity in line with any pre-arrangements.

Sixth Formers using Own Vehicles

QUEST does not support Sixth Formers using their own vehicles to transport themselves or other children/students to organised visits or offsite activities.

Consent

Employers and employees need to take account of the legalities regarding a requirement for formal consent (parental permission).

Low risk simple everyday activity – Level 1

Parents should complete, sign and return an annual 'blanket' consent form for visits at the start of the academic year that gives permission for simple low risk everyday activities to be undertaken within the normal curriculum day and music and local sports fixtures after school. No additional consent will usually be sought. It is still a requirement to inform parents that their child will be undertaking an off-site visit. This will allow parents the opportunity to withdraw their child if they wish to do so. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to their child's health/medical conditions and medicines.

Level 1 (same day return) and Level 2

Specific consent should be sought. It is important that sufficient detail is provided about intended arrangements as to allow informed consent to be given. Parents should complete the consent form which provides emergency contact details, medical and dietary information. The visit leader, accompanying staff and emergency contacts should have access to these during the visit.

In the event of an accident

Accident reporting for school trips should be carried out in conjunction with QUEST Health and safety Policy and accident reporting procedures.

Links to other policies

This Educational Visits Policy should be used in conjunction with other relevant QUEST/school policy and procedure documents, such as the Health and Safety Policy, accident and incident reporting procedures and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Appendix 1

Categories of Risk – Educational Visits

Level 1

local and same day return visits

- Sports Fixtures (not involving longer travel distances / residential activity)
- Swimming in Indoor pools (with lifeguard / swimming coach)
- Theatre and Museum's
- Village / Town / Shopping areas
- Church / Sacred Spaces
- Parkland including simple water margins activity
- Country Parks
- Study / Visitor Centres
- Countryside Walking (simple lowland rural terrain)
- Visits to local schools / business
- Music events and concerts
- Low level initiative and team building activity (simple activity)
- Larger Town / City visits (easy to manage environments / managed public interaction) including Theatres, Museums and Music Events
- Forest Schools and Bushcraft (away from site but not in remote locations)
- Orienteering / Navigation in local parkland / small woodland areas (good geographical boundaries)
- Larger conference and exhibition venues or similar environments
- Lower level / non-wild terrain field studies

Level 2 – More complex activities in or outside school day

- All UK residential visits (non-adventurous activity)
- All Outdoor Adventurous Activity (OAA) including DofE Expeditions
- All Overseas visits including residential
- Field Studies undertaken in wild / remote terrain
- Higher Level Ropes Courses / Aerial Runways
- Wild /mountainous areas, seaside locations and anywhere close to / in water
- Other complex visits

*** The following are usually defined as Outdoor Adventurous Activities (OAA)**

- Remote, Higher level Hill / Mountain walking
- Cave / Mine exploration (not guided show caves)
- Rock climbing / Abseiling (indoor / man-made / natural rock)
- Mountain / All Terrain Biking
- Orienteering and Navigation (forests / wild or mountainous terrain)
- Skiing / Snowboarding / Tobogganing (indoors / outdoors)
- Gorge scrambling / Sea level traversing / Canyoning
- Improvised Rafting / Canoe / Kayaking / White-Water Rafting
- Sailing / Windsurfing / Paddle boarding
- Open Water Swimming (lakes / rivers / sea)
- Pony Trekking in remote / wild / mountainous terrain
- Higher Level Ropes Courses / Aerial Runways

This list is not designed to be exhaustive.

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.

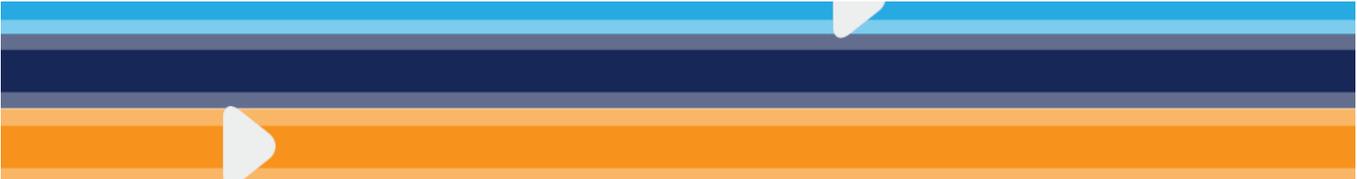
Communicating with parents and carers

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



- 
- 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