



# Strood Academy

## Educational Trips & Visits Policy

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## Overview

The Academy acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of students.

This policy follows the guidance provided by the Local Authority in the publication “The Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities, 2017” and covers all educational visits that occur off the Academy premises and aboard.

Every student should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

Learning Beyond the Classroom is the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning. It is about getting students out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting and different experiences to help them learn.

Learning outside of the classroom looks at raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn. It is not an end in itself but rather a vehicle to develop the capacity to learn. Good quality learning outside the classroom adds much value to classroom learning.

The benefits are immense and make an invaluable contribution to the academic, personal and social development of students:

- ❖ broadening horizons
- ❖ fun
- ❖ self-esteem
- ❖ decision-making
- ❖ relationship building (staff and young people)
- ❖ risk taking
- ❖ understanding risk
- ❖ experiencing new cultures
- ❖ raising aspirations
- ❖ responsibility
- ❖ motivation
- ❖ inclusion
- ❖ a chance to share
- ❖ lifelong leisure activities
- ❖ creativity
- ❖ independence
- ❖ invaluable part of citizenship

- ❖ 'real' learning
- ❖ team building
- ❖ consequences related to actions
- ❖ allow success
- ❖ learning to cope with failure
- ❖ living and working with others
- ❖ bringing the curriculum alive
- ❖ magic moments – memories for life

All planned trips should try to meet these aims, and careful consideration should be given in the planning stages to look at the educational aims and desired outcomes of the trip. This policy aims to guide those planning a trip at Strood Academy and should be read in conjunction with the Medway Council requirements and DFCS health and safety handbook and HASPEV guidance.

### **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)**

All schools must by law have a designated Educational Visits Coordinator EVC whose role it is to oversee and coordinate the provision that the school offers to its students in terms of meeting all legislation and guidelines. The EVC should make relevant policy available to staff planning trips and keep records of all trips. The EVC should attend training and regularly update INSET on trips and have a general, practical experience of leading and managing the type of trips frequently run at Strood Academy.

<b>Principal</b>	<b>Mr Jon Richardson</b>
<b>EVC</b>	<b>Miss Samira Nasim</b>

### **Approval for Visits**

All matters regarding each visit outside the Academy – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the EVC and the Principal.

Approval of 'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC. However, visits that are either:

- ❖ Overseas
- ❖ Residential, or
- ❖ Involving an adventurous activity

will require the additional approval of the Governing Body as well as the Outdoor Education Unit, will provide oversight and assistance.

## **EVOLVE**

EVOLVE online system for trips and visits.

Levels of access are provided to enable staff to request a trip or visit that automatically notifies those staff with access to approve. Only an approved visit leader can organise/plan a visit through EVOLVE. When a visit is approved, all relevant staff are informed.

All visits must be approved by the Principal (or SLT EVC link where delegated or where required to support EVC) and Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) before a visit is advertised to pupils or parents/carers.

EVOLVE will provide the clear framework for academies to follow when implementing a trip or visit from the initial request, organisation/planning, review of planning including all relevant documentation, approval, and evaluation following.

### **Assessing venues and providers**

Wherever possible visit leaders will gain credible assurances of health and safety management systems and quality provision through a Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge.

The EVOLVE system contains a list of previously checked and approved providers.

Organisations which licence or accredit activities for schools such as the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority (AALA1: [www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/index.htm)) and the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC: [www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk)).

CLOtC also provides comprehensive guidance for planning and managing activities of all kinds which take place beyond the classroom walls - [www.lotc.org.uk](http://www.lotc.org.uk)

Where providers of teaching, instruction or accommodation do not hold this then assurances will be gained through a Provider Statement and appropriate additional accreditations.

In addition, adventurous activity providers will be checked for compliance with appropriate adventurous licensing requirements and any tour operators will be checked for compliance with relevant tour and travel operator licensing requirements. Pre visit may be necessary for some trips to ensure the accessibility of the venue has been monitored and relevant provisions are in place to ensure all students are able to experience the learning.

### **Competence to Lead (Visit Leader)**

The single most important factor in ensuring the safety of participants involved in an educational visit or activity is the competence of the Visit Leader. The EVC will therefore consider the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- Is the leader an employee of the school or local authority?
- Has the leader got a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of the subject to concern for the participants' well-being

- Does the leader possess the necessary organisation skills?
- Is the leader competent in risk-assessment and risk management?
- What experience has the leader got of the participating students he/she intends to take on the visit
- What experience has the leader in leading, or assisting in the leading of similar visits
- What experience has the leader of the location of the visit
- Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications?
- If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- If leading adventurous activities, has the leader been 'approved' by Medway Council on EVOLVE
- Is the leader aware of, and able to comply with all relevant guidelines?

### **Assessment of Risk**

'Risk Assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to students, 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).

Visit Leaders are responsible for carrying out and recording risk assessments. They will use the recommended template to ensure consistency. Additional risk assessment should be attached from the venue/activity organisation.

For local and regular visits and activities standard generic risk assessments should consider staff, activity, group, environment, transportation and distance as the key factors in implementing sensible and suitable control measures.

Risk assessments must be uploaded onto the Evolve trip system. A selection of pre-prepared Risk Assessments will be available for use of guidance from the outdoor education unit.

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of the academy. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'.
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of generic risks. These should be recorded on ESRA Form.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Further detail on risk assessment will take account of the factors stated in Section 5.3b of the National Guidance publication and will be found in Section 12 of the publication "Educational Visits – Health and safety on educational visits, 2018".

When planning an activity that will involve caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports, schools must currently check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities

Licensing Regulations 2016. These regulations apply to adventure activities that take place in England, Scotland and Wales but these arrangements may be subject to change in the future.

### **Contingency plan**

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg. a member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum has 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 a contingency **plan**.

### **Inclusion**

Every effort should be made to ensure that trips and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, or protected characteristic, in line with the Equality Act 2010. If a visit needs to cater for students with special 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.

Establishments should take all reasonably practicable measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits for students, ensuring an aspiration towards: an entitlement to participate; accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification; and integration through participation with peers.

When planning a trip, the visit leader should check the exclusions communications to ensure all students are offered the opportunity.

### **Staffing Ratios**

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Principal and EVC as to the appropriate ratio for each visit.

This will be determined by:

- ❖ Type, duration and level of activity
- ❖ Needs of individuals within the group (SEN)
- ❖ Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- ❖ Nature of the venue
- ❖ Weather conditions at the time of year
- ❖ Nature of transport involved

## **Supervision**

Students must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- ❖ Prior experience of students
- ❖ Age of students
- ❖ Individual student needs
- ❖ Responsibility of students
- ❖ Competence/experience of staff
- ❖ Environment/venue

## **First Aid**

The level of first aid provision should be included on risk assessment. On all visits, there should be at least one member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is a recommendation for residential visits. For residential/overseas trips there should be a member of staff trained to Appointed Person First Aid Certificate standard.

First Aid kits are available from Student Services; if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to take adequate first aid kit to ensure that all medical needs are met with the correct level of provision.

## **Transport**

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all students and supervisors must 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 seat belt. Staff must ensure that students comply with this rule; students may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour.

If any students are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year. The use of private cars is to be used only in exceptional circumstances. There must always be two staff with a student.



## **Pupils with Additional Needs**

Every effort should be made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to everyone in the school community. All young people should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible. When choosing a venue, this should be taken into consideration, whilst maintaining the safety of and enjoyment of everyone in the group. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios, and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage, to include students with AEN fully in the visit. For example, hearing impaired students will need a specialist TA to accompany them on the trip to ensure their safety. Specific Individual Risk Assessments for key students have been developed by the SEND department to help staff plan trips including students with additional needs to participate safely.

## **Medicine**

If a student has prescribed or non-prescription medicine eg insulin, asthma inhaler, antibiotics, paracetamol, etc, these need to be passed to the trip leader and parents sign to say that the medication has been handed to staff. It should remain in its original box where possible with student's name and prescribed dosage clearly labelled. When the trip leader administers any of these medications, they should make a record of the time, date and details.

## **Water 'Margin' Activities**

Where students might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit.

<https://oeapng.info/3288-group-safety-at-water-margins/>

The staff at the Outdoor Education Unit can provide advice and will oversee any dangerous activity risk assessments.

## **Charging**

Staff wishing to run academy visits should give due regard to the Academy Charging Policy - refer to Appendix 1, [Charging & Remissions Policy](#) when seeking funds from parents to finance the visits.

## Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk').

Trip letters are sent via parentmail and consent is submitted electronically via a google form.

The letter to parents should therefore give full detail of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities is included, together with a contingency plan if appropriate. The letter should also stage the cost of the visit per child.

The reply slip should read:-

*I agree to (student name) \_\_\_\_\_ Form \_\_\_\_\_ taking part in the visit and I have read and understood the information provided.*

*I agree to (student name) \_\_\_\_\_'s participation in the activities described and acknowledge the need for them to behave responsibly.*

In the case of sports fixtures, the reply slip should read:-

*I agree to (student name) \_\_\_\_\_ Form \_\_\_\_\_ is able to play in the \_\_\_\_\_ match (at \_\_\_\_\_) on \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I have read and understand the information in the letter, and give permission for my child to take part".*

## Before the Visit

1a) Fill in the Academy Trip Proposal Form (located in the shared Drive Strood Enrichment) with as much advance notice as possible (minimum 4 weeks). All proposed trips must be discussed with the subject line manager. Copy must go to the EVC. Ensure that the trip is staffed before submitting a proposal whenever possible. The proposal should be accompanied by a draft of the Risk Assessment.

1b) In the case of residential, overseas, or adventurous activities, complete the Academy Residential Trip Proposal Form and give to EVC. Please follow attached checklist

The EVC will pass on Form to the Principal and Governors for approval.

Note: As of 2017, the EVOLVE system must be used for the creation of all trips and further training will be given to staff.

If approved:-

2) Book Visit

3) Book Transport

4) Send letter home

5) Any payment is made via the budget holder's signature on the Trip Proposal Form (via the Finance Office) or/and Parentpay or a PayPoint station

6) Arrange a meeting for parents and students for a residential or overseas visit, informing all parties of relevant information and giving an opportunity for parents and students to ask any questions

7) Arrange for canteen to provide packed lunches for FSM students

### **On the day of the Visit**

Be sure to:-

- ❖ Collect first aid kit(s)
- ❖ Collect bucket if appropriate
- ❖ Students should be carrying their medication if needed unless agreed on their medical plan (refer to reply slips)
- ❖ Collect Academy mobile phone for trip from Main office
- ❖ Check students against reply slips
- ❖ Collect packed lunches for FSM students
- ❖ Collect Academy camera and list of those with photo consent
- ❖ Trip register
- ❖ Student list with emergency contact numbers
- ❖ Student list of how they will be getting home

During the course of the visit, students should be checked and counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Always 'double check and count'.

The mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire trip.

### **Dismissal of students after evening activities**

Parental consent is obtained for students to make their way home after evening activities.

### **Insurance**

Students participating in visits and activities will be covered by the annual travel insurance provided under Zurich Municipal Insurance Policy. Any differences to this will be notified to parents/carers as appropriate before any consent or payment is made, if applicable.

## **Behaviour**

Appropriate behaviour is essential for the smooth running of educational visits and adventurous activities and ensures that effective memorable learning can take place. Students, parents and carers will be made aware of the code of behaviour, expectations of students and sanctions which may be invoked should the code be breached. In addition, parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities for removing students in prescribed circumstances. Behaviour expectations should be high just as they are in school. Students are expected to be well mannered, considerate, respectful and follow instructions. Any behaviour incident that happens during a trip should be logged and investigated in the usual way when at the earliest opportunity (not waiting until return). Statements should be taken and the incident investigated thoroughly, and the school and parents informed. In the case of any safeguarding issues, action should be taken straight away and the school and parents informed. On return to the school the incident will be treated in the usual way and appropriate sanctions put in place.

Student must:

- ❖ Not take any unnecessary risks
- ❖ Follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
- ❖ Dress and behave appropriately and responsibly
- ❖ If abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs
- ❖ Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten himself or herself or anyone in the group and inform the group leader or supervisor

Students who have been suspended will not be permitted on school trips due to the risk to other learners and staff.

**NO ALCOHOL or ILLEGAL DRUGS (including ILLEGAL HIGHS) SHOULD BE CONSUMED BY STAFF DURING ANY VISIT.**

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The Academy's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the main office). Out of academy hours, this will be EVC or nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team. The Principal will be kept updated. From March 2017, the Outdoor Education Unit will provide assistance and guidance in this regard.
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team/EVC will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.

4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team/EVC and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.

5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.

The Academy has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit. All staff on visits must be familiar with this plan.

The teacher takes charge:

- ❖ Assess the situation
- ❖ Safeguard the non-injured
- ❖ Attend to the casualty
- ❖ Inform the emergency services
- ❖ Ensure that a staff member accompanies casualties to hospital
- ❖ Ensure rest of group are adequately supervised
- ❖ Notify police if necessary
- ❖ Inform the school contact
- ❖ Academy contact to get details and inform parents
- ❖ As soon as possible record what happened
- ❖ Complete accident report form
- ❖ Do not speak to media or discuss legal liability

If a student gets lost:

- ❖ Gather the group together
- ❖ Check that you have your students
- ❖ Ensure group is safe and adequately supervised
- ❖ Organise 'search' using people that know the child
- ❖ Contact emergency services if necessary
- ❖ Contact Academy

If a serious incident occurs, the school contact should liaise with the designated media contact as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency all media enquiries should be referred to the media contact. The name or names of any casualties should not be given to the media.

**After the Visit**

It is important that after each visit a full and detailed debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents. Some student comments should be included in the debrief. The purpose of the debrief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better in order to inform future planning. This is completed on EVOLVE.