



Educational Visits Policy

This policy for educational visits will be reviewed biennially by the strategic development committee of the governing body.

Date of last review: Summer 2017

Date of next review: Summer 2019

Introduction

All trips and visits need final approval from the headteacher.

However, before this stage, trip leaders must adhere strictly to the procedure outlined in this educational visits policy, follow the procedure for applying for leave of absence given in the staff handbook and also take account of the information detailed in the Nottinghamshire County Council's guidance booklet and available on the online visit planning and approval system (Evolve).

Policy statement

The governors and headteacher of Carlton le Willows Academy accept their responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subordinate health and safety legislation and acknowledge the requirement to ensure that participants are kept safe whilst on visits and journeys away from their normal place of attendance.

Statement of safety policy

The governors recognise that the participation of children and young people in a wide range of visits, journeys and experiences is important in promoting learning and development. As part of their responsibilities the governors and headteacher will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants while travelling to, and engaged in, activities away from the Academy whether provided by the Academy or a contracted provider.

Statement of safety organisation

Organisation and responsibilities

Responsibility for all visits rests with the governing body and headteacher. The respective roles of each are outlined within Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance for Children and Young People (available in Evolve).

Governing body

Governors must ensure that all visits are properly planned and the necessary approval obtained before a visit takes place.

Governors have delegated this responsibility to the Headteacher.

Headteacher

The headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that all visits and trips are planned, organised, controlled, monitored and reviewed in accordance to Nottinghamshire County Council guidance documents and relevant regulations.

The headteacher must authorise all visits and where appropriate seek guidance from the governing body and the local authority for category C events.

The headteacher will confirm the qualifications, training records and experience of the group leader who will lead the specific visit and the supervisory personnel, and will approve these people as suitable to lead/supervise the visit/s.

The headteacher will agree, with a named educational visit coordinator (EVC), the duties delegated to the EVC, or in absence of a EVC, fulfil this function themselves.

Educational Visit coordinator (EVC)

The educational visits coordinator (EVC) is Mr Roy Fender.

The EVC will undertake duties as agreed between themselves and the headteacher.

The EVC will be conversant with Nottinghamshire County Council's Visits Guidance as well as existing good practice, issued by government departments, national governing bodies and national interest groups (available as downloadable documents or hyperlinks within Nottinghamshire County Council's EVOLVE system).

Visit leader

The visit leader should be conversant with Nottinghamshire County Council's visits guidance, the Academy's educational visits policy and will comply with these requirements.

The visit leader will liaise with the EVC throughout the planning and preparation of their trip to ensure that any activities or events that may place staff or other participants at significant risk are assessed and that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place.

The visit leader will ensure that all parents of children on their trip are provided with all required information, which may include risk assessment information, and that any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place.

The visit leader named for each visit will have overall responsibility for that visit whilst it is underway.

The visit leader will be fully familiar with emergency procedures and emergency contact numbers.

Supervisory staff

All staff assisting with supervision on any trip will be conversant with the Nottinghamshire County Council's visits guidance and the specific risk assessment/s for that event.

All staff will ensure that the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed.

All staff will ensure that once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified; they are brought to the attention of the visit leader.

Staff will feed back information to the visit leader to enable a full review of the trip to be completed.

Arrangements

It is especially important that staff use the most up to date guidance when planning and executing visits away from their normal place of work. Evolve has been developed to facilitate this and is regularly updated.

The Academy identifies three categories of visits, which require differing levels of approval:

Category A visits (recorded in house and approved by EVC)

Category A visits are visits undertaken during the school day and may not require specific parental consent. These are visits and activities that are generally perceived as being routine events presenting low levels of risk. These events can be adequately managed through the use of generic risk assessment and establishment operating procedures, such as parental letters with 'tear-off' permissions slips.

However, staff should note that parents/carers must be advised of any trip/visit, when their child will be taken out of school during the school day.

Examples of category A visits:

- Local events that occur as part of your work programme and within your normal operating hours (such as core operating hours or the school day).
- Sporting activities within your locality or those that take place immediately after hours, including trips to swimming pools, leisure centres or local sports fixtures
- Local enrichment opportunities on site, or a short journey from it, such as to a café, village hall, library, local shops etc.
- Work placements.

Parental consent for these activities can be obtained annually or on a termly basis if information is provided to parents and carers outlining the visits and activities planned for that period. It is stressed that classification as category A, does not remove the requirement of the visit leader to undertake a risk assessment of the activity and the attendees. It may be that after this, it is felt a full Evolve should be completed.

The EVC must approve all such activities.

Category B visits (approved by VC but also recorded on EVOLVE)

These are events and activities that do not normally form part of a local or regular input. They may extend beyond normal operating hours, necessitating a late return, but do not involve an overnight stay.

Examples of Category B visits:

- All day visits to neighbouring cities or locations of interest.
- Theme park trips.
- All day low level walks or activities.
- Sporting fixtures that involve considerable travel.

Approval for these trips must be obtained from the EVC/headteacher. A record of these visits must be entered onto the EVOLVE system. This will provide a suitable record of trip details and approval provided.

Parents/carers must be informed of such activities and specific parental consent will be required in writing.

Because these trips are likely to be more complex, existing risk assessments will need reviewing/modifying and a specific risk assessment produced identifying safety management procedures for the event.

All such events will be processed via the Evolve system, approved by the headteacher and managed by adherence to Nottinghamshire County Council visits guidance and school-specific operating procedures.

Category C visits (require Nottinghamshire County Council approval via EVOLVE)

This is the most complex and demanding activity level, where participants and staff may be involved in residential visits, adventurous activities, activities with higher than normal risks and trips to higher risk environments.

Examples of category C visits:

- Residential visits or activities that require an overnight stay.
- Travel outside the United Kingdom, exchange visits, expeditions and study tours.
- Outdoor and adventurous activities including – canoeing, caving, high ropes courses, moor land and mountain walking, rock climbing, stream scrambling, sailing activities, mountain biking, wild country camping, pony trekking and open water swimming.
- Hazardous activities and or locations e.g., motorised sports, cliff edge walks, coastal walking, planned entry into water in the environment such as river study.

Where a visit involves a new venture to the establishment, visiting a developing country or remote area, an expedition, skiing or adventure activities using a new provider/company, the Academy should take initial advice from the Nottinghamshire County Council outdoor education adviser before making any financial commitment.

The EVC must give approval for category C events and may take guidance from Nottinghamshire County Council.

Specific consent must be obtained for all such events and specific information provided to parents and carers. This is usually facilitated by attendance at planning meetings or information sharing events with participants and parents.

Specific competency may be required to lead such events and a higher level of familiarisation will be required of staff who work on these trips. This may be through a familiarisation process, induction specific to the activity/location or evidencable competency.

Outside providers may be employed to deliver part or all of the visit or activities. These will require any necessary checks being made to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient to do so. A provider assurance checklist will need completing (available to download from Evolve).

Approval must be recorded on the Evolve system. These trips will automatically be submitted to Nottinghamshire County Council for review.

First aid

Qualified first aiders may not be necessary for all visits and activities, for example where activities occur in close proximity to the Academy and staff have ready access to first aid support. First aid issues should be considered as part of the risk management process and be determined by the availability of an appropriate level of first aid support.

At least one person, with a current first aid certificate, trained to an appropriate level based on the risk assessment, should accompany each visit where a time delay could occur in obtaining suitable assistance or as appropriate to the activity planned or needs within the group. First aiders need to be up-to-date with student medical conditions and first aid requirements.

Procedure

The Academy expects requests for approval to be submitted at least 6 weeks in advance for most visits and at least 10 weeks in advance for trips abroad.

If you intend to undertake an expedition based journey, either self-directed or utilising an adventure travel company, consultation at the planning stage prior to making any financial commitment is necessary.

Step 1 – Initial visit request

The trip leader to email the cover supervisor and EVC the following details:

1. Visit description and venue
2. Visit date(s)
3. Mode of transport
4. Number of students attending (approx. if not known) and year group
5. Number of staff attending (names/departments if known)
6. Objective of visit

Step 2 – Draft approval

- The cover supervisor will check the visit details against the Academy calendar and any existing scheduled cover/staff arrangements for the proposed visit date(s).
- The cover supervisor will respond to the email (copied to the EVC) with the outcome of the checks.
- The EVC to confirm draft approval or rejection.
- If draft approval given – the trip leader must identify the category of visit (A, B or C) and enter visit on Evolve for formal approval (some category A visits may not have to be entered on Evolve).

Step 3 – Final approval

Complete the trip details on Evolve and submit for final approval.

Trip leaders should consider whether or not they need to complete the following tasks. Not all may be necessary, depending on the category of visit. However, in certain circumstances additional details may be required.

- Letter to parents (this can be uploaded into Evolve)
- General risk assessments (templates available in Evolve)
- Specific risk assessments (template available in Evolve)
- Provider risk assessments (these can be uploaded into Evolve)
- Parental consent forms (template available in Evolve)
- Provider assurance checklist (template available in Evolve)
- Itinerary (this can be uploaded into Evolve)
- Pupil list (this can be generated in Evolve)
- Student emergency contacts (this can be uploaded into Evolve)

Final approval will be given by EVC/headteacher via the Evolve system.

The Nottinghamshire County Council's visits guidance booklet and Academy's policy on educational visits (both available in Evolve) are useful in answering many questions.

Trip leaders are also responsible for providing the attendance officer and student support with a list of pupils involved in a trip or activity. The trip leader must also post details of the trip, indicating which pupils are involved, on the weekly bulletin.

Trip leaders are required to confirm with the attendance officer the names of absentees prior to departure of the trip or visit.

School mobile phones are also available which should be booked in advance with the head's PA and then taken on trips. After the trip staff should complete a school events record and email it to the head's PA.

Financial arrangements

All trips must be self-financing. Please ensure all costs are accounted for when calculating the cost per pupil.

A payment book for approved trips and visits must be collected from the finance office.

The trip leader must provide the finance team with further details relating to the trip, including a list of pupils, how much they have to pay and when payments are due. This will allow the finance team to set up an online payment facility for parents.

When sending details to parents, please request that payments are completed online or sent into school in an envelope with details of the trip and the name of the child on it.

All money collected from pupils for trips and outings must be paid into the finance office. Cash should not be used to purchase items for the trip. Under no circumstances should money be left on the school premises or taken home. All monies not ready for banking should be placed in a marked envelope and passed on to the finance team who will place it in the safe until it is ready to be banked

Trip leaders must ensure that any invoices are passed to the finance department before they become due.

Trip leaders must make sure that all receipts are kept.

The trip leader will need to sign the balance sheet at the back of the payment book once the trip is completed.

If colleagues require further clarification about the requirements for organising a school trip they should speak to the EVC. EV guidance and relevant documentation can be downloaded from Evolve.