

Bedford College Academies Trust

Educational Visits and Journeys Policy

Status: Statutory	Member of staff responsible: Principal	Implementation Date: September 2021
Issue No: 1A	Approved by: Wixams Academy Local Advisory Body	Next Review Date: September 2023

Our Vision

“The BCAT vision is to support students to achieve their absolute best whatever their ability or background. We aim to:

1. Work collaboratively to deliver an inclusive and outstanding education to all students, thereby driving up local standards.
2. Maximise social mobility and life chances, through the highest expectations of and aspirations for all students.
3. Encourage and support a range of high performing and distinctive educational establishments for local communities.”

Our Values

Student focus - We will seek to achieve a high quality learning experience for every student

High performance - We will strive for consistently high levels of performance in all aspects of our work

Respect, openness and honesty - We will treat everyone with respect, encourage openness and honesty, and recognise each other’s contribution and achievements.

Educational visits provide a variety of opportunities to enable pupils to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience and offers a valuable enhancement to the curriculum. We regard them as an essential element of good teaching practice. We recognise that thorough planning and risk assessments of educational visits are crucial to ensure their success and safeguard pupils, teachers and volunteers. Each visit is designed to provide a rich, learning experience for pupils in a safe, managed environment.

The following guidelines support Wixams Academy’s planning and implementation of educational visits.

The Principal and senior leadership team will endeavour to ensure that:

- a suitable visit leader is appointed
- all required actions have been completed before the visit begins
- risk assessment templates are completed and authorised prior to the visit taking place

- any identified training requirements, pertinent to the nature of the educational visit, have been met
- a named group leader will be assigned with overall responsibility for the organisation and monitoring of the visit together with liaising with school
- the group leader has experience in managing, supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and has the skills to organise the group effectively
- the visit leader and/or other supporting adults have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance. All supervisors/supporting adults accompanying pupils on residential visits will have DBS clearance
- the governing body has approved the visit if necessary (an essential requirement for residential visits)
- signed parental consent forms are completed for all pupils
- arrangements have been made for all known medical and special educational needs
- the mode of travel is appropriate, safe and risk assessed
- expected travel times, both departure and return are known and monitored
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- full details of the visit venue including the address, phone number and a contact name will be retained in school
- that a register of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents/carers and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin is taken on the visit with a copy retained in school.

Visit Leader

A nominated qualified teacher will be appointed by the Principal as Visit Leader. They will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit. The Visit Leader will:

- appoint a deputy leader who will be fully briefed in all aspects of the visit
- be able and experienced in working with pupils of the relevant age range
- be conversant in the good practice for that activity
- be suitably qualified if instructing an activity
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of supporting adults and parents/carers
- undertake and complete comprehensive risk assessments
- have regard to and monitor the health and safety of the group at all times
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities.

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit act as employees of BCAT. Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- undertake to fully familiarise themselves with all aspects of the visit to include educational outcomes and risk assessments

- ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- care for each individual pupil as would any reasonable parent/carer
- ensure they follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and help with control, discipline and attainment of learning outcomes. Non-teachers will not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal
- cease the visit or any activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge or adults is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

The Visit Leader will prepare pupils prior to the educational visit to ensure they understand that:

- they must follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and other supporting adults
- they dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- they know who to talk to/seek help from if they are worried or concerned
- they should not undertake any task/action that they may endanger themselves or the group.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group will not be permitted to attend the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils will be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents/Carers

The Visit Leader will ensure that parents are given full information about the purpose and details of the visit. Where appropriate, parents/carers will be invited to a briefing session prior to the visit. The Visit Leader will also inform parents/carers how they can help prepare their child for the visit.

Parents/carers must:

- sign the Visit consent forms
- provide the Visit Leader with two named emergency contacts and telephone numbers
- give the Visit Leader all known relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit
- Where there are known health requirements, parents must ensure school has the appropriate medication e.g. inhalers, Epipens. Where school does not have the required medication for a pupil with known health requirements, such pupils **will not** be allowed to participate in the planned visit.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will always be carried out prior to the visit and will include the following considerations:

- identification of known/possible risks
- detail safety measures needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level

- emergency procedures
- acceptable ratios of adults to children for this visit the Visit Leader and other visit supporters will continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action where required to ensure pupil/adult safety.

When assessing the risks consideration will be given to:

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- undertaken
- the location
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- the supporting adults competence
- pupils with special educational or medical needs
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing

Exploratory visit

The Visit Leader or nominated person will undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- assess potential areas and levels of risk
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- ensure that the Visit Leader and/or participating adult is familiar with the area/venue. In exceptional circumstances where it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, contact will be made with the venue to seek assurance about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. This may include obtaining the venue's risk assessments for review.

First Aid

First Aid provision will be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad one trained first-aider will accompany the group. All adults in the group will be advised how to contact emergency services and procedures for liaising with school should an emergency occur.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box to be taken
- a named person will be appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements
- an emergency contact protocol sheet will be included in the first-aid box. When signing consent to the educational visit, the Head Teacher will assess if the level of first-aid is adequate.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group
- special needs pupils
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in off-site supervision
- duration and nature of the journey
- type of any accommodation
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

As general guidelines, the following ratio of adults to children will be used:

Key Stage Three and above, visits off-site 1:15-20

Regardless of the suggested ratio, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits. These ratios do not include residential visits. Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents/carers/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They will be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group. All parents/carers/volunteers assisting residential visits will be vetted and have enhanced DBS clearance.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their specific roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times. For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil. All helpers will be subject to a vetting and barring check.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, e.g. canoeing, caving, the Principal must ensure that the Visit Leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. In such cases qualifications will be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Visit Leader should establish rendezvous points and ensure all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the party.

Preparing Pupils

Wherever possible, pupils will be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This may include considering health and safety issues.

Pupils must understand key safety information. This includes:

- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- background information about the place to be visited
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- why safety precautions are in place
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- who is responsible for the group
- what to do if approached by a stranger
- what to do if separated from the group
- emergency procedures
- rendezvous procedures.

Transport

All pupils will be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- arrive on time and to wait in a safe place; when crossing roads to get to the transport do so safely and listen to the adult's instructions
- not to rush towards the transport when it arrives
- seatbelts must be worn and pupils must stay seated while travelling on transport
- if pupils feel unwell while travelling they must tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group
- make sure their bags do not block aisles on the transport
- they should never attempt to get on or off the transport whilst in transit
- they must not throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows
- only exit the vehicle when directed by an adult (unless in the case of an emergency where adult direction cannot be made)
- never try to pass someone on steps or stairs
- never distract or disturb the driver
- stay clear of automatic doors/manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Principal will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures will be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents/Carers

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – 'in loco parentis' – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following

information on matters that might affect pupil's health and safety will be included in a letter to parents/guardians prior to each visit:

- dates of the visit
- times of departure and return
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
- visit's objectives
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
- insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
- clothing and equipment to be taken
- money to be taken
- the information to be supplied by parents and details of what they will be asked to consent to.

Whilst residential visits have been referred to in this document they require further procedures to be in place. Please see local authority guidance for further information.