



The Sutton Academy

Educational Visits Policy

Status	Non-Statutory
Responsible Governors' Committee	Full Governing Body
Date last approved by GB	11/03/2025
Responsible Person	Mr K Harker
To Review Date	March 2027
Last Amended Date	March 2025

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT, 1974

GENERAL STATEMENT OF SAFETY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief Introduction

Following The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974, the academy accepts its duty to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of their employees and the health and safety of persons not employed but who may be affected by their work activities such as students and visitors.

1.2 General Statement

This is a statement for The Sutton Academy. The Governors accept its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974, for providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for all its employees, students, visitors and other persons who may be affected by its activities.

The Principal, Vice Principal and Governors will take all reasonable steps to ensure that The Educational Visits Policy is implemented and monitored throughout The Academy.

It is essential for the success of this Policy that employees recognise their responsibilities under Section 7 of the Act in co-operating with management and taking care of themselves and other persons whilst at work (including offsite visits). All staff will be notified of The Sutton Academy Education Visits Policy Statement location within the intranet.

1.3 The Role of Educational Visits

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every student to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes us a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to students of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Students are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.

- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts i.e. encouraging students to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

This policy will help us conduct educational visits in a safe and well-structured manner, giving our students and staff the best experience possible.

2. Application

Any visit that leaves The Academy grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during academy time, or outside the normal academy day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, we:

1. Adopt the Local Authority's (LA) document: (All staff have access to this via the intranet)
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses the EVOLVE online system for the planning, preparation, risk management/assessment and implementation for all off site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with The Academy Policy (this document), Local Authority Policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

3. Clarification of Roles

3.1 Visit Leaders

Visit Leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for the completion of any relevant paperwork required, including risk assessments. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Vice Principal prior to planning (using the EVOLVE system), and certainly before making any commitments. Visit Leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements. Our expectations are that Visit Leaders are both **competent** and **confident** in leading a visit as described in 3.4k visit or activity leader in National Guidance.

3.2 The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

The Educational Visits Coordinator is Mr Drew Johnson, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans before submitting them to the Vice Principal and Principal (if appropriate). The EVC sets up and manages the EV documents, EVOLVE and policies. The EVC's role is described in detail in 3.4j EVC role in National Guidance. If the EVC is offsite or unavailable, Visit Leaders should seek advice from the Vice Principal.

3.3 The Principal / Vice Principal

The Principal / Vice Principal has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the Governors for approval, the Principal / Vice Principals' is responsible for ensuring:

- The planning and risk management for this visit has been checked and approved according to the current Educational Visits Policy.
- That the visit complies with our current planning checklist for off-site activities.
- The visit leader and staff are competent to supervise the visit.
- The Risk management is fit for purpose.

The Principals' / Vice Principals' role is described fully in National Guidance 3.4g Head Teacher or Manager.

3.4 The Governors

The Governors role is that of a 'critical friend', see National Guidance 3.4f for additional information. Individual Governors may request access to paperwork if deemed appropriate.

3.5 The Educational Visits Advisor

To follow National Guidance, The Sutton Academy has an appointed independent Educational Visits Advisor. This is Mrs. Suzanne Holroyd who is an accredited EVC and VL trainer. The role of the Educational Visits Advisor is to advise on any issues and information that may be needed in the planning of an EV and to oversee, review and ultimately be the final sign off for any adventurous activities, residential or foreign residential EVs.

The Educational Visits Advisor's role is described fully in National Guidance 3.4d Outdoor Education Advisor.

4. Procedural Requirements

Visits can be categorised into three categories, these are:

4.1.1 Category A

These are activities that present no significant risks. They are within the usual school teaching hours or fall just outside (e.g. sporting events after school). They should be supervised by a teacher/s who has been assessed as competent by the EVC, where appropriate, to lead the activity. Examples include walking in parks, field studies in environments presenting no technical hazards or low risk sports competitions. These will be either immediately outside The Academy or within the area.

4.1.2 Category B

These comprise some higher-risk or higher-profile activities. The Vice Principal's approval is required for this category of activity. Safe supervision requires that the Group Leader should as a minimum, have undergone familiarisation specific to the activity and / or on the location. The Group Leader will have to be approved as suitably competent by the EVC, and hold any necessary qualification/award, proof of which will need to be provided. Examples include; trips travelling further than your local area, sports that need specialist equipment or trained staff and fieldwork in remote areas.

4.1.3 Category C

This is the most demanding category. It includes all those activities that if not academy-led, would be in the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 or are residential (foreign or domestic). In the case of sports, where safe supervision requires the Leader to complete some prior test of his/her specific competence, such testing might include a recognised course of training, the recorded accumulation of relevant experience or an assessment of competence by an appropriate Trust Board. Approval is required for this category of activity from the Principal/Vice Principal and Governors.

4.2 Parental Consent

All visits which are category A visits are covered by the Annual Consent Form which is sent to parents at the start of each academic year. It is important that Visit Leaders check annual consent has been granted for individual students on the trip. If in any doubt, Visit Leaders should obtain specific parental consent.

It is essential that parents are sent letters with information regarding the visit which must include details, time of departure and return, location, any specific requirements and to remind parents to ensure medical information is up to date (this list is not exhaustive).

Category B and C visits must have specific consent and up to date medical Information from parents for students to participate. This can be acquired via Parent Pay or via an EVB form.

4.3 Approval

For **Category A** visits the Group Leader should request permission to lead from the Vice Principal via EVOLVE, no later than **72 hours** before the trip takes place.

For **Category B** visits, the Group Leader should request permission no later than **2 weeks** before the trips take place. Information should be provided via EVOLVE within this time frame and submitted for final approval no later than **1 week** prior to the visit. Visit specific risk assessments must be conducted for these visits.

For **Category C** visits, the Group Leader should request permission no later than **6 weeks** before the trips take place (for foreign and residential trips this will need to be extended due to Governor and Educational Visits Advisor approval needing to be acquired). Information should be provided via EVOLVE within this time frame and submitted for final approval no later than **3 weeks** prior to the visit. Visit specific risk assessments must be conducted for these visits.

The Vice Principal can use discretionary judgement on time frames required for individual visits.

4.4 Evaluation and Archiving

All trips must be evaluated, no later than **2 weeks** after return. This should be done via EVOLVE by the Group Leader. Any copies of paperwork relevant to the visit need to be returned to the EVC for correct archiving and disposal following GDPR and data protection guidelines.

5. Monitoring

In order to ensure safe, quality visits, we understand that National Guidance provides advice about monitoring in 3.2b monitoring.

The EVC has the responsibility of monitoring visits to ensure that:

- Visits and activities are carried out safely and effectively and in line with the Local Authority Policy and Procedures.
- Relevant policies and procedures are reviewed and updated to remain current and in line with good practice.
- Staff have easy access to The Academy Policy.
- Staff have access to relevant training that supports the implementation of this policy.
- The Academy appoints, trains and revalidates EVCs in accordance with the Local Authority policy.
- The Academy keeps proper records.
- Throughout the year a number of monitoring visits will take place for the EVC to carry out field observations and to determine the confidence and competence of Group Leaders.

6. Induction, Training, Apprenticeship, Succession Planning

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An Apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced Visit Leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff (including EVC) on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a Visit Leader, the EVC and the Principal will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the students, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.
- Any member of staff leading a residential or self-led adventurous activity must have attended Visit Leader Training.

Please note: The academy reserves the right to reject applications or delay/cancel educational visits if there is an area of concern.

7. Risk Management and Risk-Benefit Assessment

7.1 Risk Management Plans (RMP)

We understand that in order to deliver safe visits comprehensive risk management plans need to take place. At the Academy our risk management plans follow the STAGED approach. Focussing on the group and their interactions with the environments and situations that they will come into contact with. At the Academy we follow the OEAP Guidance which suggests the use of the STAGER approach (discussed in 7.2 Ratios). This is reflected in our Academy's RMP proforma.

7.2 Ratios

Only staff and students from The Sutton Academy can attend Educational Visits. This means parents and carers of students, staff family members and members of the public cannot attend trips unless as a volunteer. In the case of volunteers, please see section 9.

Activity and Visit Leaders must ensure that young people are supervised in accordance with the principles of "Effective Supervision", requiring them to take account of:

- The nature of the activity (including its duration).
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place.
- The age and gender (including developmental age) of the young people to be supervised.
- The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
- Staff competence.
- Distance.

Our starting point for minimum ratios are as follows:

Category A (minimum of 2 staff, first aider may be required dependent upon activity):

Y7 – Y11	1:20
Y12 – Y13	1:20

Category B (minimum of 2 staff, with at least one first aider, level of which dependent upon activity):

Y7 – Y11	1:15
Y12 – Y13	1:20

Category C (minimum of 3 staff, with at least one 3-day first aid at work certified leader):

Y7 – Y11	1:10
Y12 – Y13	1:10

In order to determine the actual number of staff needed we will use the framework described through SAGER.

- **Staffing:** who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.
- **Activities to be undertaken:** what do you want the group to do and what is possible?
- **Group characteristics:** prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.
- **Environment:** indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance; and the ease of communications between the group and base. Do not overlook environments to be passed through between venues. For residential visits consider the accommodation and surrounding area. For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions.
- **Remoteness:** how far is the activity away from the academy or home base.

Correct gender splits for staffing is preferable for all categories of visits.

Please note: discretion will be applied to staffing, genders and ratios depending upon the individual nature and make up of every trip.

7.3 Transport

Students should not enter and be transported via any vehicle without at least 2 members of staff present. Students should not sit in the front seat of any moving vehicle (minibus, car, coach) unless in an emergency. If travelling by coach, trip leaders should make sure that staff are equally spaced out throughout a coach in order to gauge behaviour of pupils including the front, back and middle.

Staff may use their own personal cars in extreme circumstances and with the permission of the EVC and the Vice Principal. Permission must also be sought from parents or carers of the student. Business Insurance must be in place for this to go ahead and a relevant document as evidence needs to be provided to the EVC and included in any paperwork submitted.

8. Assessing Venues and Providers

We accept and acknowledge the LOTC quality badge. This ensures that the provider we are using has the correct risk assessments and insurance in place and are suitable to use. In all other cases further information must be sought from the provider to prove that they are up to a satisfactory standard.

9. Volunteers

Volunteers can be considered for educational visits in extreme circumstances. They may be considered due to the nature of the group, activity or specific needs of the students attending.

If volunteers are considered, they must comply with our Academy Safeguarding Policy. Responsibility will be delegated to them by the Visit Leader. They must be sufficiently competent and confident to carry out their responsibilities. The level of competence and the thoroughness of the engagement process depends upon the role that the volunteer is to take, and the degree to which they will be working independently or under supervision. Where they are working independently it should be to the same standard as would be expected of an employee or contractor taking on the role.

10. Emergency Procedures and Incident Reporting

For all trips taking place outside of The Academy, two emergency contacts must be provided on relevant paperwork.

Visit Leaders and Deputy Leaders must have access to the emergency contact details, parents contact details and student's medical/behavioural details. This must be either through the EVOLVE go website via a mobile device or via a paper copy held by trip leaders.

In the event of a critical incident, staff need to contact the Vice Principal immediately for advice and guidance. If the Vice Principal is uncontactable, the Principal should be contacted. Both these emergency contact numbers should be taken by the trip leader on the visit.

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit Leadership Team.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Local Authority.

In the event of an emergency, where the emergency services need to be contacted, the Trip Leader should firstly dial 999, then ring the Principal/Vice Principal who will then contact parents and other stakeholders.

11. Behaviour

As an Academy we expect all students to meet the Academy standards and expectations. Students who fail to meet the Academy standards and expectations can be removed prior or during a trip.

Educational visits form an extension of the normal school day. The rules and expectations regarding behaviour and standards also apply during these times. Academy rules regarding

mobile phones are still enforced throughout any offsite visit. The rule of “Never used, seen or heard” applies unless it is deemed appropriate by staff for students to use their mobile devices. In this case, clear boundaries will be given to students for how, where and for how long they can be used.

12. Inclusion

We are a fully inclusive Academy and believe in the following principles:

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

We follow the standards set out in National Guidance 3.2e Inclusion.

13. Insurance

We are covered by the Local Authority Blanket Insurance for visits and trips.

14. Finance

For Academy visits we use Parent Pay to collect all finance for the visit. All charging and voluntary contributions requested for the visits are in line with National Guidance 3.2c.