



DROYLSDEN

Academy

Off-site and Residential Activities Guidelines

1 Introduction

- 1.1 These procedures cover instances where students and staff leave the Academy premises during the Academy day.
- 1.2 Droylsden Academy recognises that Academy trips and residential experiences are a valuable part of a young person's education. All students should be given the opportunity to participate in a trip or residential experience on at least an annual basis, although it is recognised that not all students will take such an opportunity.

2 Education Visits

- 2.1 The DCSF has published extensive guidance about health and safety on educational visits. The Academy has adopted that guidance rather than seeking to paraphrase it. The guidance is to be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits/. The guidance takes the form of a main guide entitled "Health & Safety of Students on Educational Visits" (reference HSPV2) (1998) and three supplements published in 2002:
 - Standards for LAs in Overseeing Educational Visits
 - Standards for Adventure
 - Handbook for Group Leaders
- 2.2 The Principal shall designate a member of staff (the Academy Business Manager) to act as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). It is the responsibility of the EVC to ensure that Governors and staff are advised of their responsibilities within the guidance. Compliance with the guidance is, however, a line management responsibility. It is the responsibility of the staff planning the trip to consider all aspects of student safeguarding and welfare. The Safeguarding and Student Welfare Policy sets out the details further.

Throughout this policy, the term "parents" means all those having parental responsibility for a child

3 Purpose:

- To extend students' learning experiences to educational resources beyond the Academy
- To experience different forms of teaching and learning
- To foster personal and social development
- To enhance peer and teacher/peer relationships
- To develop enthusiasm for exploration and discovery
- To broaden personal horizons and awareness of educational opportunities
- To enjoy the learning experience

4 Guidelines

- 4.1 Approval for any visit must be given by the Principal via the pro forma for educational visits.
- 4.2 Staff must ensure in advance of the visit that the venue and activity are fit for the learning purpose and that any external personnel are suitably competent. A preliminary visit should, wherever practicable, be undertaken.
- 4.3 All visits and journeys must be under the supervision of at least one qualified member of the teaching staff.
- 4.4 Staffing levels for educational visits must be approved by the Principal.
- 4.5 Residential visits of mixed gender groups must be accompanied by both male and female responsible adults. Whenever possible, this principle should also be applied to non-residential visits.
- 4.6 Visit organisers must ensure that adequate insurance cover exists for the intended activity in accordance with the Academy regulations. This should be done by checking with the Business Manager. The Business Manager will also advise on appropriate insurance.

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- 4.7 Visits to enhance National Curriculum learning should be equally accessible to students in accordance with the current legislation and the Academy's charging policy.
- 4.8 Staff are responsible for ensuring that suitable curriculum support materials, where appropriate, are available to maximise the learning opportunities.
- 4.9 Full details of the visit(s), outlining times, venue(s), mode of transport, costs, supervision arrangements, function of visit and domestic arrangements must be sent in writing to parents
- 4.10 Parental consent must be given in writing for any intended visit, together with emergency contact information. In the case of regular sporting fixtures general written consent is acceptable. However, full details of fixtures, i.e. venues, times and participating students must be lodged with the office upon departure.
- 4.11 Visit organisers must ensure that parental consent forms are taken on the visit in the event of an emergency. Where the party is divided into different groups, i.e. for travelling, group leaders should hold consent forms for their group.
- 4.12 Visit organisers are responsible for ensuring that the link member of staff at Academy has up to date, accurate and full details of the arrangements.
- 4.13 Staff leading educational visits are responsible for ensuring that details of financial transactions are recorded and that any monies collected are stored securely, even if the money is collected by admin staff. This should preferably be in the Academy safe, lodged with the Business Manager. Money should not be left in classrooms.
- 4.14 All financial transactions must be made through the Academy funds via the Business Manager.
- 4.15 On all journeys where the Academy minibus is used to transport students, the driver shall be a fully insured employee of the Academy. The driver is responsible for carrying out preliminary safety checks, as outlined in the minibus logbook, prior to commencing a journey.
- 4.16 Where long journeys are planned using the Academy minibus, a second driver should accompany the visit.

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- 4.17 On no account must the number of persons transported exceed the seating capacity of the vehicle.
- 4.18 The visit organiser must ensure that he/she takes a fully charged mobile telephone to use in the event of any emergency. The Academy's mobile telephone for use on educational visits is available for booking with the Business Manager.
- 4.19 Immediately prior to departure from Academy, a final accurate list of staff and students participating in the visit shall be handed to the Academy office to be stored in the educational visits file.
- 4.20 Staff leading educational visits must ensure that they have made the necessary arrangements according to the visits pro formal checklist and lodged a copy of the checklist with the Academy office.
- 4.21 Visit organisers should be aware that it may be necessary for any additional adults accompanying the visit to be police checked. Clarification from the Principal should be sought at an initial stage of planning.
- 4.22 Further copies for staff information should be displayed in the staffroom.

5 Daily procedures for students

- 5.1 This procedure is to be followed when parents request leave from the premises for their child:
 - i If any parent wishes to take their child out of the Academy during the day, they must write a letter of their intention to do so explaining the reason for the request. The letter should be dated and signed by the parent and submitted, as far as is practicable, at least 24 hours in advance to the child's Personal Tutor. An appointments card should accompany medical appointments from the medical practice where the appointment has been made.
 - ii The Personal Tutor should sign and date the letter and return it to the student. If the Personal Tutor does not think that permission should be granted or wishes to qualify any aspect of the written request, the Personal Tutor should contact the parent. Further discussion may also be required with the appropriate Vice Principal.

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- iii The student should show the signed letter to the teacher whose teaching session they will be leaving. The teacher concerned should counter-sign the letter, granting permission to leave the lesson.
 - iv The student should then report to the reception with the letter, hand it in to the receptionist where the letter will be filed. The receptionist will then sign the student out and give a permission slip to the student. The student should then only leave the premises when the parent collects them in person from reception.
- 5.2 In cases of emergency, a parent may contact the Academy by telephone to arrange to take their child out. The appropriate Senior member of Staff and the Student's Personal Tutor must be informed. The student must then follow the signing-out procedure.
- 5.3 When students arrive or return to the Academy during the day, they should be accompanied by a parent who should report to reception and sign their child in. The receptionist will complete a Signing-In slip to notify the student's Personal Tutor. The student should then proceed immediately to their lesson.

6 Daily procedures for staff

- 6.1 Staff wishing to leave the Academy during the day must sign the Signing-Out book in reception on departure.
- 6.2 On return or arrival during the day, staff must sign the Signing-In book.

7 Risk Assessment and potential hazards

7.1 The Nature of Risk Assessment

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements under health and safety legislation. For educational visits, this involves a careful examination of any potential causes of harm in relation to the visit (*assessment* of risk) and what precautions should be put in place to minimise these (*management* of risk). The overall aim is to make sure that no-one gets hurt or becomes ill during the course of the visit.

Risk assessments should explicitly cover issues arising from any additional needs of Students taking part in the visit, including

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medical needs. If the visit involves lengthy periods of time spent outdoors, a contingency plan should be in place in case bad weather means that the planned activities are not possible.

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **Generic risk assessments** for particular activities - these relate to the nature of the activity and are likely to apply wherever and whenever the activity takes place;
- **Specific risk assessments** for particular visits - these relate to the venue for the visit and the age of the Students taking part, and will vary from place to place and group to group;
- **On-going risk assessments** once a visit has commenced - these relate to changing conditions which may arise during the course of the visit, such as deterioration in the weather conditions or the illness of a student or member of staff.

7.2 Carrying Out Risk Assessments

In one sense, any school visit has potential hazards, such as supervising children across a busy road. However, some activities are generally regarded as more hazardous than others - ski-ing, rock climbing, water sports etc - and particular care needs to be exercised in arranging school visits of this type.

General advice on the carrying out of risk assessments can be found in a booklet produced by the Health and Safety Executive, entitled "Five Steps to Risk Assessment" (Tel: 01787 881165). The important things are to decide whether a hazard is significant, and whether sufficient precautions have been put in place so that any risk from the hazard is small.

The five steps recommended by the HSE - which apply to any activity, not just an educational visit - are as follows:

- STEP 1:** Identify any significant hazards which could result in serious harm
- STEP 2:** Identify who might be harmed - and how - for each of these hazards
- STEP 3:** Evaluate the risk that somebody will be harmed by the hazard, and identify what precautions are needed to make the risk small

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STEP 4: Record your findings by writing down the significant hazards identified and the steps you have taken to minimise any risk

STEP 5: Review your risk assessment in the light of experience and revise it, if necessary

Evaluation of the level of risk at Step 3 is very much a matter of professional judgement and common sense. Rating scales are frequently used in risk assessment procedures, although these are not essential. For those who find such a system helpful, the following guidelines are recommended. Taking each hazard under consideration separately:

- Consider the **likelihood** of harm taking place in terms of a 5-point scale:

0 = Zero/Very Low

3 = Likely

1 = Very Unlikely

4 = Very Likely

2 = Unlikely

5 = Almost Certain

- Consider the **severity** of any harm caused in terms of a 5-point scale:

0 = No injury or illness

3 = Significant injury or illness

1 = First aid injury or illness

4 = Major injury or illness

2 = Minor injury or illness

5 = Disabling or fatal injury or

illness

- Multiply together the two numbers to give an **overall risk rating** on a 1 - 25 scale:

0-5 INSIGNIFICANT RISK

6-12 LOW RISK

13-18 MEDIUM RISK

19-25 HIGH RISK

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For any activities which are rated as “Medium Risk” or “High Risk”, visit leaders should consider carefully whether suitable precautions can be put in place to reduce the level of risk. If not, careful consideration should be given to abandoning that particular activity on the visit.

7.3 Involving Students in Risk Assessment

Students who are involved in a visit’s planning and organisation, and who have been well prepared by their teacher(s), are more likely to take informed decisions during the course of a visit and therefore be less at risk. Any type of educational visit can provide an important medium for Students to learn about the nature of risk, and how particular risks can be minimised.

There are some examples set out in Annex A of ways in which schools might cover the National Curriculum statements relating to hazards, risks and risk control. Although involving Students in risk assessment, both before and during an educational visit, is good practice, it is important to remember that the final responsibility for assessment and control of risk remains with the visit leader and other supervisory staff.

7.4 Visits to the Coast or Tidal Waters

There can be a degree of risk in any activity where Students are close to the coast or tidal waters, such as the danger of individuals or groups being swept from rocks or cut off by unusual tidal conditions.

Risks of this type can be minimised by seeking the advice of the local Coastguard about the state of the tides and the prevailing weather conditions before embarking on a visit to the coast. Schools should ensure that the Coastguard is contacted if there is any possibility of the visit being affected by tidal or weather conditions, and the visit should only go ahead if the visit leader is fully satisfied that the prevailing conditions pose no threat to Students or staff. The potential for danger always exists in visits to the coast or tidal waters and every effort must be taken to minimise such danger.

Schools may wish to consider providing training in water safety issues, both to Students and teachers. Various programmes - ranging from basic water safety and rescue skills to a professional Lifeguard

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Qualification - are available from Lifesavers, The Royal Life Saving Society UK (Tel: 01789 773994).

7.5 Field Trips

Field trips, which are arranged as an integral part of the curriculum, must be treated just as rigorously in terms of safety considerations as would any other school visit. They may also include their own specific hazards, for example a geology field trip involving the collection of rock specimens and requiring the use of protective equipment such as goggles and hard hats. Visit Leaders must carry out a thorough risk assessment and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise any identified risks before embarking on the visit or carrying out any fieldwork.

7.6 Farm Visits

Farms can be dangerous places - even for the people who work on them - and any visit to a farm should be carefully planned. In general, it is important to check that the farm is well-managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare, and that it maintains good washing facilities for use by Students and clean grounds and public areas.

Some specific guidance on farm visits is given in the DCFS booklet (page 33). Further advice can be found in the booklet "Stay Safe - Farm Safety" available from the Health and Safety Executive (Tel: 01787 881165). An accompanying video entitled "Safe! Helping Children to Stay Safe on the Farm" is also available from the HSE at a reasonable cost.

Schools should be aware of the danger of children being infected by the E-coli bacterium (leading to possible brain damage) by visiting farms. The bacterium is usually transmitted by young children sucking their fingers and thumbs after touching animals or farm property such as a fence. Visits to farms are therefore not recommended for children under the age of five. In general, primary schools should consider very carefully the potential hazards of taking children on a farm visit, but the HSE is keen to put such hazards into perspective: a student is still more likely to be injured in a road accident or in the playground than on a farm.

As always, the key to a safe and successful visit is a thorough risk assessment carried out in advance, with the risks being explained and discussed with Students. In this way, Students can be made aware of

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the potential dangers before a visit to a farm, and the importance of washing hands after touching or feeding animals can be stressed. Some of the HSE material is very useful in this respect.

8 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- 8.1 The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

Educational / Off Site Visits
This form is for internal use only

The following sheet should be completed by the member of staff proposing the visit, for consideration by the Principal and the Governing Body where appropriate.

Class/Group:..... Teacher:.....

Date(s)

Purpose

Place(s) to be Visited:

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.....

.....

Details of any Preparatory Work:

.....

Details of any Follow-up Work:.....

.....

Travel Arrangements:

.....

Time of Departure:

Time of Return:

Meal Arrangements:.....

Contact Arrangements in Case of Emergency:.....

If students will return from the visit after school hours, what arrangements are proposed for them to return home/be collected by parents ?

.....

.....

Number of Students:

Number of Adults:

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Name and Status of All Adults (*Teacher, Non-teaching Member of Staff, Parent, Governor, Volunteer Helper etc.*):

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.....

Name of Person Responsible for First Aid

Details of Hazards/Risk Assessment:.....

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Overall Cost of Visit (including estimated insurance costs):.....

Suggested Voluntary Parental Contribution (if visit is during the school day):

Estimated Cost to the Academy:.....

Signature of Visit Leader:..... Date:

Authorisation by Principal: Date:

Once permission has been granted for the visit to take place, the Visit Leader must ensure that the following have been attended to:

1. *A letter has been sent to parents, and a parental consent form has been returned.*
2. *Appropriate school visits insurance has been arranged.*
3. *Provision has been made for students with medical conditions or other special needs.*
4. *All students taking part in the visit have been briefed.*
5. *All supervising adults have been briefed.*

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