



# Off-site and Residential Activities Guidelines

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Review Cycle: Two Years  
Next Review Date: June 2024  
Person Responsible: Student Services Manager  
Approving Body: Local Governing Body

## 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 Department for Education has published extensive guidance about health and safety on educational visits. The guidance is to be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) by typing 'health and safety in schools' into Search. The guidance takes the form of a main guide entitled 'Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers'.
- 2.2 The Headteacher has designated Bob Wakefield from Student Services 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 and that all documentation for any visit is completed accordingly. 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.

## 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 staff 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 Headteacher via the procedure for educational visits. Procedural information, guidance and documentation for day visits, residential visits in the UK and residential visits abroad can be found on the staff shared area. It is expected that the trip organiser will discuss all aspects of any proposed visit with the EVC before completing and submitting any documentation to the Headteacher.
- 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. Where appropriate, a risk assessment should be carried out.

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- 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 Headteacher and will always be in line with national guidance and recommendations.
- 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 EVC.
- 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/carers.
- 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 All staff accompanying any visit will have details of contact numbers and any medical or additional needs for all students on the visit.
- 4.12 The EVC will ensure that the link member of staff at the Academy has up to date, accurate and full details of the arrangements.
- 4.13 Monies for any visits will be paid through 'Schoolcomms' or through Student Services as cash or as a cheque. The EVC will ensure that all payments are recorded and that any monies collected are stored securely before they are deposited with Finance. Staff should not collect any monies themselves unless prior arrangements have been made with the EVC to do so.
- 4.14 All financial transactions in relation to any visit must be made through the Academy funds via the Finance & Buildings 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 must be MIDAS accredited and is responsible for carrying out preliminary safety checks, as outlined in the minibus logbook, prior to commencing a journey.

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- 4.16 Where long journeys are planned using the Academy minibus, a second driver should accompany the visit.
- 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 through the Finance Team.
- 4.19 Immediately prior to departure from the Academy, a final accurate list of staff and students participating in the visit shall be handed in at Reception and left with the EVC.
- 4.20 The EVC and trip organiser will ensure that all the necessary documentation is in order prior to departure.
- 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 Headteacher should be sought at an initial stage of planning.
- 4.22 Comprehensive guidance and procedural information and documentation for day visits, residential visits in the UK and residential visits abroad can be found on the staff shared area.

## **5 Daily procedures for students**

- 5.1 This procedure is to be followed when parent/carers request leave of absence from the premises for their child:
- i If any parent/carer wishes to take their child out of the Academy during the day, they must contact the Attendance Team by letter, email or phone detailing their intention to do so and explaining the reason for the request. Contact should be made, as far as is practicable, at least 24 hours in advance. If the initial contact is made with another member of staff, such as a member of the Student Services or Pastoral Teams, then the request should be forwarded to Attendance. Any request for absence for medical or dental treatment should be accompanied, or followed up by, an appointments card.
  - ii On receipt of a request, the Attendance Team will inform parents/carers whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised and the register on SIMS will be marked accordingly. Where there is a concern about a child's attendance, the Attendance Team will discuss this with the parents/carers.
  - iii On, or before, the day of absence, a note should be put in the child's planner by the parent/carer or a member of the Attendance Team, detailing the time that the student will be leaving. The child should show this note to the member of staff whose lesson they are leaving and to Student Services when they sign out. If there is any concern as to the authenticity of the note then Student Services will contact the

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Attendance Team and/or home to confirm that the child should be leaving school. Unless alternative arrangements have been made, the student would normally only leave the premises when the parent/carer collects them in person from reception.

- 5.2 In cases of emergency, a parent/carer may contact the Academy by telephone to arrange to take their child out. The appropriate Year Manager or Head of Year or a member of SLT must be informed. The student must then follow the signing-out procedure and an appropriate comment will be entered on SIMS.
- 5.3 When students arrive or return to the Academy during the day, they should, preferably, be accompanied by a parent/carer who should report to reception and sign their child in. Having signed in, 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. On return, 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 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 -

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skiing, 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" [www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm) . 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
- 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 harm taking place 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 the Health and Safety advice on legal duties and powers 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 First Aid**

First aid should form part of the risk assessment. Before undertaking any off-site activities the group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for a least one of the group’s teachers to be fully-trained first aider. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box;
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- The numbers in the group and the nature of the activity;
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be;
- The distance of the nearest hospital.

First aid should be available and accessible at all times. The Health and Safety Executive recommends the following minimum contents for a travelling first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- A leaflet giving general advice on first aid;
- 6 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings,
- 1 large sterile unmedicated wound dressing approximately 18cm by 18cm;

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- 2 triangular bandages;
- 2 safety pins
- Individually wrapped moist cleaning wipes;
- 1 pair of disposable gloves;
- A resuscitator (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation) would also be useful.

All minibuses are required by law to carry a first-aid kit.

## 7.5 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 Qualification are available from Lifesavers, The Royal Life Saving Society UK -[www.lifesavers.org.uk](http://www.lifesavers.org.uk)

## 7.6 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 Geography 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.

## 7.7 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 <http://books.hse.gov.uk> (enter "Farm Safety" in keywords).

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Schools should be aware of the danger of children being infected by the E-coli bacterium (leading to possible brain damage) by visiting farms. 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 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 Charging, Remissions, Insurance and Voluntary Contributions**

### **Charging**

8.1 The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following Circumstances for activities organised by the Academy:

- School trips and residential in school time.
- Activities outside school hours.

### **8.2 Remissions**

The Academy will subsidise up to 50% of the cost of visits which contribute to an essential element of any GCSE course, so reducing any costs for all students taking part. Parents/carers will be asked to meet any remaining costs.

Parents/carers will be asked to meet the full cost of any non-essential visits.

Letters for all visits, essential or non-essential, will include the following paragraph inviting parents/carers to apply for financial assistance should they need to:

*'Looked after children and students who are eligible for, or who have at some point in the past been eligible for, free school meals can apply for a contribution/further contribution towards the cost of the trip; parents/carers wishing to apply should complete the 'Student Support Fund' Form which can be found by scrolling down the page accessed via the 'Pupil Premium' link on the Academy Website.'*

Any subsidy would normally be limited to a maximum of £125 per student.

### **8.3 Insurance**

Any insurance costs will be included in charges made for trips or activities.

### **8.4 Debts**

Students will not normally be allowed to take part in any future visits that incur a cost should monies owing from previous visits remain unpaid.

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## **9 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

9.1 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.

### **Other Relevant Policies:**

- Charging and Remissions
- Health and Safety
- Child Protection
- Race Equality
- PHSE
- Positive Behaviour for Learning and Teaching
- Equality and Diversity

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