Educational visits
City of London Academy Islington

Approved by:	COLAI Full Local Board
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1. Aims and scope

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the principal.

Educational visits are a valuable way to enhance students' personal development and provide enriching social and cultural experiences. They teach life skills, promote independence and provide a foundation for lifelong learning.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

This policy also complies with our funding agreement, as part of the City of London Academy Trust.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit.
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training.

1.2 The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC)

Chris McLean, Assistant Principal, is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and a designate suitable trip lead for each visit
- Assess outside activity providers
- Advise the Principal and governing board when they're approving trips
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements
- The EVC will regularly review all policy and procedures for trips and visits.

3.2 Trip lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers
- Carry out a comprehensive risk assessment
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments/Event Specific Plans
- Consider the needs of everyone taking part, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Provide parents and carers with accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others

3.3 Staff (attending the trip who are not the trip lead)

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Adhere to the published risk assessment and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Be aware of emerging health and safety concerns of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns, safeguarding or other, with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

3.4 Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip
- Reiterate the importance of good behaviour to their child.

3.5 Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

3.6 Pupils

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip

- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times. Please find the Academy's behaviour policy here: https://www.colai.org.uk/ckfinder/userfiles/files/COLAIBehaviourPolicy2021-22(1).pdf

4. Planning and preparation

The final decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Principal, with support from the EVC, and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school
- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-pupil ratio

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteer, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance details, where needed
- Risk assessment plans/Event Specific Plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks
- Suitable staffing for the trip (to be agreed with the Principal and EVC)
- A parental letter, where suitable (to be approved by the Principal)

See **appendix 1** for our trip information form for the planning and approval of a visit.

In all cases, the principal will give overall approval for trips and visits.

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the principal, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

4.1. Evaluation of visits

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

All evaluations will take place using Evolve's evaluation form, which can be done on the online portal for Evolve.

Staff are also expected, where suitable, to write an article for the school newsletter to promote the success of the trip or visit.

4.2. Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability, statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

5. Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template, which can be found on Evolve, under 'Resources'. Existing risk assessments have been provided on Evolve as examples of good practice.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit (Pre-visit) to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the EVC and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the Principal/EVC, and a copy taken on the visit. All risk assessments are available on the Evolve app.

5.1 Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed pupil groups).
- At least 1 member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips. If not, there will be a first aider at the trip venue.
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls

5.2 Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

5.3 Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance. This can be done using the Evolve app.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on health and safety on educational visits to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

6. Volunteers

Where appropriate, volunteers may attend to supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. When selecting volunteers, the following should be taken into account:

- The needs of the pupils going on the trip
- The setting and circumstances of the trip
- Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

See **appendix 3** for our volunteer code of conduct for educational visits.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

7. Communication and consent

Where possible, we will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 2 weeks before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via email and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending. A letter template is available in the 'resources' section of the Evolve app.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school/provider
- Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by e-signing the email request from Evolve.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits that is not a 'Local Area Visit', and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached. This can be completed on the consent form to be returned to school.

In the case of overseas trips, they will be asked to provide passport information and European Health Insurance Card or UK Global Health Insurance information, if available.

8. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office, who will also inform the EVC. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) where appropriate.

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by speaking to parents/carers and informing the EVC to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There is also a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This can be done using the 'Evaluation' section of Evolve. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

9. Charging and insurance

We will follow the Academy's charging and remissions policy at all times.

Parents/carers won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place inside or outside of school hours **if** it is part of the National Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, or religious education.

Where necessary, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the trip.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

10. Residential visits

The principal will approve all residential trips.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- Staff have received any necessary training
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils – this will include relevant DBS checks

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 6 weeks before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school
- The full address and contact details of the destination
- Planned activities and options
- Meal provision
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations
- Accommodation options and arrangements

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities hold the LOtC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance and foreign travel advice when organising these visits.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by EVC. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full local board.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Charging and remissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) policy
- Equality information and objectives

Appendix 1: proposed visit planning information

Staff should consider the following when planning an educational visit.

Name of staff member proposing the visit:

Date of request:

Response required by (date):

Proposed trip information

	TRIP INFORMATION	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Destination		
Trip date		
Travel distance		
Length of stay		
Purpose of visit / educational benefits		
Number and age of pupils		
Transportation options		
Cost breakdown, including multiple options where available		
Resources required, including: › Staffing (who) › Volunteers (who) › Physical supplies › Transportation		
Accommodation options, where applicable		
Insurance needed, where applicable		
Risk assessment plans and first aid provision		
Any other information		

Appendix 2: risk assessment template

Risk assessment for Educational Visits - Template

Company name: City of London Academy Islington

Trip Venue:

Date of trip:

Assessment carried out by:

Date assessment was carried out:

Date of next review:

Assessor signature:

Please complete the remainder of the form below, considering individual hazards:

What are the main hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Control measures?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
Slips, trips, falls		Appropriate footwear to be worn – Group Leader to check prior to leaving school. First Aid kit to be carried by Group Leader or Supervisor. Group Leader to 'lead' group and advise of any potential trip hazards.			
Crossing roads (traffic)		Students to be informed of expectations whilst walking. Walking route to be pre-planned to ensure safest route is taken.			

What are the main hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Control measures?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
		Group Leader to give strict instructions to group. Group Leader to 'lead' group, Supervisor to bring up the rear and other responsible adults to be throughout the group, subject to group size.			
Students getting lost		Clear instructions as to expectations of behaviour and responsibilities to themselves and to one another. Group Leader to have list of group names and register before leaving site. Periodic check of numbers. Educate pupils on what to do in the event that they become separated from the group.			
Members of the public		Supervision ratios to be acceptable – 1 adult to 10 -15 pupils (unless adventurous activity has additional requirements). Clear instructions as to expectations of behaviour and responsibilities to themselves, to one another and to members of the public. Group Leader to have mobile telephone for use in emergencies. Group Leader to have the authority to 'abort' the trip if safety is compromised.			
Poor weather conditions		Ensure children are wearing adequate clothing for prevalent weather conditions. Check weather prior to trip – ensure suncream and extra water is taken if hot. Cancel trip if weather conditions are particularly unfavourable – discuss this with EVC.			
Injury or illness		Designated first aider to check on student.			

What are the main hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	Control measures?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is the action needed by?	Done
		If necessary, call parent to inform. If more serious, call parent to collect. If student is required to travel by ambulance immediately, trip leader to travel with, inform parents and additional member of staff to support with getting students back to Academy site. Liase with EVC on this.			
Method of travel					
Insert other risks					

Risk Assessments must be shared with all adults involved in activity, including parents, and should be discussed with children prior to the visit.

More information on managing risk: www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/

Appendix 3: volunteer behaviour and code of conduct

This code of conduct sets out the expected behaviour for volunteers attending school trips. Volunteers should read and sign this form, showing that they understand and agree to follow this code while acting on behalf of the school. If you feel you cannot agree with this code, please speak to the trip leader at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from the trip.

A copy of this form will be kept in the school office, and you may ask for a photocopy to keep for yourself.

This volunteer code of conduct will be used alongside the school's parental code of conduct.

Volunteers agree to:

- Remain professional and respectful with staff and pupils at all times
- Listen to and act on instructions from staff
- Dress appropriately for the trip
- Arrive at the agreed time and remain until the trip is concluded and they are told they may leave by staff
- Pay attention to potential dangers and raise concerns with staff
- Act responsibly and demonstrate good behaviour to pupils
- Report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a pupil to staff as soon as possible

Volunteers agree **not** to:

- Exchange contact details with pupils unless told to by a member of staff
- Engage in physical contact with pupils unless appropriate or required
- Share inappropriate personal information (i.e. personal beliefs, religious views, relationship status)
- Use demeaning, offensive, abusive or insensitive language
- Smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) for the duration of the visit
- Allow themselves to be left alone with a pupil unless previously agreed with staff
- Take photographs or record pupils.

As a volunteer, I have read and agree to this code of conduct, and will follow the rules set out above.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 4: template letter for parents/carers and consent form (can also be accessed on Evolve)

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: [TITLE OF TRIP, ADDRESS]

I am delighted to inform you that your child will have the opportunity to [INSERT TRIP DETAILS].

Your child is required to bring the following for the trip: [INSERT ANY EQUIPMENT REQUIRED]. If your child receives free school meals, please indicate this on the reply slip below [YOU MAY DELETE THIS SENTENCE IF THE TRIP DOES NOT REQUIRE STUDENTS TO BRING A LUNCH WITH THEM].

[OR] [Your child should attend the trip in full Academy uniform]

The trip date: [INSERT DATE]

Time of departure: [INSERT TIME]

Time of return to the Academy: [INSERT DATE]

Mode of transport: [INSERT MODE OF TRANSPORT]

Please sign and return the permission slip below by [INSERT DATE]. Students will be dismissed from the Academy Site following the trip at [INSERT TIME].

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Academy.

Yours faithfully,

[INSERT FULL NAME]
[INSERT ROLE AT THE ACADEMY – EG TEACHER OF SCIENCE]

Permission slip

Please hand into [INSERT NAME OF TEACHER/RECEPTION]

Re: [TITLE OF TRIP, ADDRESS]

I give permission for my child to attend [INSERT TRIP TITLE] on [INSERT DATE].

Name of Student: _____

Name of Parent: _____

Emergency contact number: _____

Any relevant medical details: _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

Please tick as appropriate:

☐ I agree to make arrangements for my child to get home from the Academy site when they return from [INSERT TRIP TITLE] at [INSERT TIME OF RETURN].

☐ I give permission for my child to be photographed as part of newsletter articles that will be published on the Academy website and posted home.

☐ My child receives free school meals and would like one provided for this trip. [DELETE THIS SENTENCE IF NOT NECESSARY].

Appendix 5: Checklist for trip leader prior to educational visit

Checklist for Educational Visits

Name of Teacher:		Year group:	
Venue of visit:		Date of visit:	

Prior to the visit (At least 4 weeks before the visit where possible):

Gather details of costing and facilities for the visit	
Check a potential date in the Academy calendar that doesn't clash with the visit	
Discuss the prospect of the visit with SLT line manager/Curriculum Leader and arrange a date	
Once approval has been given for trip, arrange transport (if necessary)	

Pre-visit (At least 3 weeks prior to the visit):

Complete Evolve Visit Form fully	
Complete Event Specific Plan on Evolve	
Attach parental letter to Evolve Visit Form – there is a template available for this on the Home page of Evolve	
Ensure you have arranged cover, by submitting a pink slip – this should be submitted at the same time as the Evolve form. You should ensure that you have 2 members of staff attending a trip (at least 1 teaching member of staff, and should have a male and female member of staff if students attending are boys and girls)	
Select students to attend the trip/visit	

Pre-visit (At least 2 weeks prior to the visit, where possible):

Hand out letters to students selected to attend and get return slips	
Letter should include permission form, leaving and returning times, purpose of visit, what the children should wear, lunch arrangements, transport and cost	
Arrange for packed lunches for students who receive free school meals (if needed)	
Double check with transport providers and facilities that everything is in place	

3 days prior to visit:

Check that you have all reply slips – chase any that haven't been returned	
If trip is during the school day, send email to relevant staff informing them of students who are out for the day	
Check all attendees medical records and ensure you have suitable medication (eg asthma) and that you know how to administer	
Arrange to have first aid kit on trip/visit	
Share Event Specific Plan (risk assessment) with all staff attending trip	

On day of visit:

Make sure that you have all reply slips, first aid kit and a mobile phone	
Make sure that you have any emergency medication required	
Ensure that you collect the free school meals you ordered and that students all have lunch with them (if relevant)	

Ensure that all students have suitable clothing	
Before leaving, a copy of the register should be left at reception	
Regular head counts should take place	
If there is going to be a delay, contact the school and parents to inform them	
Any incidents should be reported on return to the Academy	

Following the visit:

Complete an evaluation of the trip on Evolve	
Complete a write up for the trip and send to Andrew Whyte for the newsletter	
Make sure that you have put the register onto Evolve, so that attendance is monitored	