



Off-Site Policy

Adopted: Spring 2024
Review: Spring 2027

The Eveleigh LINK Academy Trust

Off-Site Policy (including Residential Visits)

1 Introduction

- 1.1** Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The MAT and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2** In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

2 Aims

- 2.1** The aims of our off-site visits are to:
- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
 - provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
 - promote the independence of our pupils as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2

3 Residential activities

- 3.1** Pupils may have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum. We do make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.

- 3.2** The residential visit may enable children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the agreement of the MAT and the local authority's risk assessment team. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

4 How visits may be authorised

- 4.1** The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.
- 4.2** The school's trained educational visits coordinator, who may be the SLT, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. They will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- support the SLT and governing body in their decisions on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a walk in the local area.).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA (and available from the school office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

- 4.3** Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive risk assessment form must be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.
- 4.4** Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the SLT will seek the approval of the governing body, the MAT and the Local Authority before permitting the activity to take place.
- 4.5** It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make

any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

5 Risk assessment

5.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

5.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. Venues that do not have LOTC status should complete a Provider Form and staff should allow enough time in their risk assessment calendar to allow for this.

The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

5.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

5.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Early Years.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may *not* provide adequate supervision in all cases.

5.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue.

5.6 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the SLT, , the LA for overseas or residential trips, our educational visits coordinator, and all adults supervising the trip.

6 Transport

6.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

6.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

7 Communication with parents

7.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

7.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy which may come from the parent teacher associations, for example for coaches. . This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

- 7.3** No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Residential visits are the exception to this and a charge is placed on each residential visit.
- 7.4** The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the SLT to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

8 Further health and safety considerations

- 8.1** All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.
- 8.2** Before a party leaves school the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party.
- 8.3** The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 8.4** Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the SLT the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.
- 8.5** All trips will take a first aid kit

9 Group leaders' planning

- 9.1** Group leaders must refer to their off-site training and read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities. A detailed risk assessment must be carried out using the Essex Evolve website.

10 Monitoring and review

- 10.1** This policy is monitored by the MAT and will be reviewed every three years or before if necessary.

