



## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

**January 2019**

**To be reviewed January 2022**

*Educational visit: an event in which schoolchildren journey to a separate location to their normal learning environment at any given time, under the authority of the staff of their school and with the purpose of learning by experience and reward.*

## **Rationale**

Educational visits play a significant part in the development of young people, adding many aspects of the curriculum, broadening their experiences, opportunities to develop and thrive. Cleeve Meadow School fully supports and encourages all visits that are correctly planned, managed and conducted. Cleeve Meadow offers a range of educational visits which are regarded as a useful part of the learning provision or considered a reward. Cleeve Meadow School also recognises the important learning opportunity for the development of life skills that can be provided through education outside the classroom, particularly for students from a disadvantaged background. Educational visits are considered an important component of our curriculum planning.

A wide range of day visits are arranged, enhancing both the learning and the social experiences of students. These experiences, involving students in all year groups, include sports, visits to shops, theatre, cinema, participation in competitions and many others. Other visits involve residential stays.

## **This policy aims to:**

- Provide high quality educational visits for as many students as possible.
- Ensure party leaders for educational visits are competent to lead.
- Ensure risk assessments are in place & the residual risk following any control measures is deemed acceptable.
- Ensure relevant aspects of the risk assessment process should be shared with all staff involved in the visit, as well as participants and where appropriate parents/carers.
- Ensure there is an appropriate supervision level at all times; this level of supervision has been approved by the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) and Head of school/Executive Head Teacher. Residential visits will require the approval of the governing body.
- Ensure parents and guardians are made fully aware of the likely risks so that consent or refusal is received on a fully informed basis.
- Ensure student medical needs are shared with staff on trip as required and systems are in place for storage and use of medication in line with student care plans
- Ensure parents/guardians/carers are aware of the intended form(s) of transport and their consent obtained.
- Ensure all staff involved in a visit are aware of the action to be taken in the event of an emergency.

## **Key roles**

### **Governors**

- Will monitor and evaluate this policy as part of the quality assurance process.
- Will sign to give approval for any overnight visit.

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- The Chair of Governors may take Chair's action but will report to the Governing Body as appropriate.
- The overall responsibility for all Health and Safety matters, including school visits, lies with the Governing Body.

### **Executive Head Teacher/Head of School**

- Will appoint an EVC.
- Will ensure all visit proposals have been submitted to the linked SLT member.
- Will formally approve all educational visits.
- Will delegate a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will act as a point of contact for each visit which involves overnight stay or takes place at weekends or during the school holidays.

### **EVC**

- Will be the principal contact over visits planned by the establishment.
- Will be involved in the planning and management of educational visits.
- Will ensure that an appropriate policy is in place for educational visits and that it is updated as necessary.
- Will ensure the policy is readily available and accessible by staff, parents, and guardians.
- Will be required to attend training and up-to-date training where appropriate.
- Will keep appropriate records of all educational visits and make these available when requested as part of the monitoring role.
- Will provide support and guidance to trip organisers.

### **Trip organiser**

- Will be expected to follow the teaching standards policy/document.
- Will organise the visit in accordance with the school's procedure and submit all the necessary forms to the EVC.
- Will obtain approval and authorisation by his/her line manager, the finance team, the EVC, the Head of School/Executive Head, and the Chair of the Governing Body (residential only) before any bookings can be arranged.
- Work with finance office to create a financial plan at the proposed stages of the trip/visit to ascertain a critical date when the trip/visit will be deemed financially unviable and, therefore, cancelled and produce and sign a financial summary of the trip/visit.
- Will follow up on payments/documentation requirements for the visit.
- Will ensure that all adults, including volunteers, are vetted and those with significant unsupervised access are subject to full DBS checks.
- Will ensure that there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times during the visit.
- Will carry out a comprehensive and specific risk assessment following the advice of their line manager and discuss with all members of the party, including students.
- Will ensure medical, first aid and inclusion issues have been addressed.
- Will ensure transportation insurance is included and readily available in case of emergencies.
- Will maintain contact with the EVC at various intervals during the visit.
- Will involve an approved professional travel agent when taking residential trips abroad. Appropriate insurance must also be taken out; further advice can be sought from the Business Manager.
- Involve relevant key staff, e.g. finance, attendance officer, examinations officer.
- Ensure that any staff training needs are identified and addressed.

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- A copy of the itinerary, travel routes and approximate timings, flight details, accommodation details and contact details for the travel agent are given to the SLT emergency contact
- Will report accidents / near misses and incidents to the Head teacher and Business Manager.
- Will complete an evaluation form to feedback on all visits undertaken.

In the event of an emergency during school office hours (8am-4pm), it is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser (or delegated person) to contact the school. Outside school hours the Trip Organiser (or delegated person) must contact the delegated member of the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Students**

- Will be members of Cleeve Meadow School (or in full time education, separate approval required)
- Will act and behave in every way as if they were still on school site.
- Will give full cooperation with staff at all times.
- Will follow instructions and guidelines without delay.
- Behave in line with school's code of conduct at all times.

A student with specific medical or other needs will be included in the risk assessment and must adhere carefully to support measures in place to ensure his/her safety. Healthcare plan must be in place and shared with the trip organiser prior to the trip taking place.

**The school reserves the right, at any given time, to cancel a student's participation in trips/visits/events if behaviour/attendance does not reach the school's expected high standards. This includes social events – for example, the End of Year Prom.**

- The school will take all reasonable care in planning a trip for students with SEND. The needs of students who may struggle with a change of routine and venue will be considered from the outset when planning a trip. Consideration will be given to the nature of the venue and activity, travel arrangements and staffing in order to make sure that the trip is as accessible as possible to all students.
- The school's attendance target is 95%. Should a child fall below the school's attendance target, it could jeopardise a student's place on a trip/attendance to an event.
- If a child has paid to attend a trip/event, but in the interim has not behaved/attended school to our expected standards, or is problematic during the trip/event, the school may decide to ban the child with no guarantee of reimbursement for money paid.
- Poor behaviour will not be tolerated on trips.
- A student who behaves in an unacceptable manner will be disciplined by staff and may be withdrawn from the activity and possibly banned from subsequent activities/visits while on the trip. Serious misbehaviour may result in suspension or permanent exclusion in accordance with school policy.
- In the event of the student's withdrawal from a trip/visit, to avoid financial loss, every attempt should be made by staff to find a substitute (who will pay for the trip) to attend.
- Unless impractical or otherwise directed, students will be expected to wear a full school uniform on trips classified as a day trip. Agreement with SLT (senior leadership team) is required for students not to be in full school uniform and a valid reason given. For example, field trip, sporting fixture. Students taking part in residential trips are not expected to wear school uniform.

Other policies / documents: Behaviour Policy

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## **Parents/Carers**

- Will give consent on an informed basis and complete any relevant documentation required for the visit, written consent will always be required before a child is permitted to participate.
- Will forward any queries to the trip organiser prior to the day of the visit.
- Ensure payment plans are adhered to as listed by the trip organiser.
- Be responsible for providing appropriate and valid identification document (i.e. passport)
- Accept that no risk assessment can completely eliminate risks.
- Support school staff in their decision-making in a spirit of trust and mutual respect.
- Attend the pre-trip briefing for residential/overseas visits.
- Provide up-to-date contact information so that the school is able to reach them and ensure that all other emergency contact information is kept at all times.

## **Risk Assessment**

No visit or activity can be entirely risk free. For each visit the school will take in to account extra vigilance and reinforced security measures recommendations. For each visit the significant hazards must be listed and, for each hazard, there must be an assessment of the risk (likelihood and extent of harm) to those involved. Sufficient control must be in place to reduce the risk posed by each hazard to an acceptably low level.

Risk assessment can never eliminate risk, but it can reduce the likelihood of harm by careful planning of each aspect of the visit. All participants in the visit have a responsibility to behave in such a manner as to maintain a low level risk for all involved. The trip organiser continuously reassesses the risks in anticipation of the visit progresses and successful management may necessitate the imposition of different control measures to those originally planned during the visit. All participants should be involved in the risk assessment process and, in the case of an overnight visit, by including a summary and answering any queries at the pre-trip briefing, the Trip Leader will have included parent/carers in this process. This gives the additional advantage of parent/carer input.

## **Residential Risk assessment**

For each residential visit, the school will take into account extra vigilance and reinforced security measures and recommendations. Advice must be sought from the UK foreign travel advice website. Further advice from the government of the destination country should also be included in the decision process. A trip specific risk assessment must be completed prior to seeking agreement for a visit. This may necessitate a site visit and liaison with the residential host and to use risk assessment documentation relevant to the site.

In the event of a national state of emergency being announced, during the planning process of a visit, the school reserves the right to review the viability of the trip and decide to amend or cancel a trip altogether. This may result in a financial loss. The school will keep parents/guardians informed of the decision process.

## **Cover Manager**

- Oversees the initial feasibility of a possible trip/visit going ahead, with regard to whether the school can balance its everyday operational staffing needs. The cover manager will discuss the feasibility with the SLT member with responsibility for cover.

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- Ensures that the emergency designated mobile phone for trips/visits is fit for purpose and has the trips contacts.
- Maintains the school trip emergency file, keeping it readily available in the school office.
- Scrutinises the school calendar of events and discusses timings to avoid operational clashes.
- Ensures the trips/visits are placed on the school website calendar via Head Teacher's P.A.

### **Non-staff members on school trips / visits**

If the Trip Organiser requires a non-staff member to accompany the trip / visit, details must be presented to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration, a minimum of 8 working weeks in advance, for approval by the EVC and Head teacher.

There may be fully valid reasons for a non-staff member to accompany a trip – e.g. as a carer for a disabled student. Any non-staff member will not count in the staff / student ratio. Any attending non-staff member must be under the overall supervision of the party leader and **must** provide proof of a full DBS check (which may not be paid for by Cleeve Meadow School).

On no account would it be appropriate for relatives of Cleeve Meadow staff to accompany a school trip/visit unless they are Cleeve Meadow students in the year/group concerned. Children of Cleeve Meadow staff may be eligible for taking part in a visit if in full time education. Additional documentation may be required from the finance team (declaration of non-pecuniary interest)

For short visits / trips (non-residential), parents/carers may be invited to accompany a group on a day visit, but at no time must a parent be left in charge of students unless in extreme circumstances where there is no other option. Parents/carers may be asked to assist in managing a group, but only under the overall supervision of a teacher.

***The Trip Organiser must brief any non-staff, supporters on the purpose of the trip/visit and the code of conduct (Teaching Standards/Behaviour Policy) for students / staff.***

***Non-staff members accompanying trips/visit is the exception rather than the rule and must be fully justified for audit trail purposes.***

### **Remote supervision and 'Down Time'**

**There is no such thing as unsupervised time on an activity or visit. The school expects all members of staff in leading and supporting trips/visits to maintain a sense of professional propriety at all times.**

However, the school does recognize that time with their peers, away from direct adult supervision, is an important feature, particularly of residential visits, and brings many additional learning opportunities for young people. This is also the time where potential accidents tend to happen so it needs to be appropriately managed. **Such time is best referred to as 'down time' and appropriate opportunities should be built into the visit plan, included in information to parents (and their consent), and be covered by the risk-benefit assessment.**

'Down time', or recreation time, is that period before, between or after more structured activities. Visit leaders should ensure that students continue to be appropriately supervised during down time and such supervision could be direct or remote.

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**It is essential practice to:**

- Avoid using the term 'free time' and ensure that all staff and students understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities;
- Ensure that a staff duty system operates so that groups continue to be appropriately supervised at all times.
- Ensure that at any time all students know/be aware of how and where to contact the Trip Organiser and/or his/her accompanying staff.

**Standard techniques for remote supervision in this context could include:**

- Setting geographical boundaries within a suitable area'
- Always identify an agreed location as the meeting point, manned at all times.
- Setting a time limit by which all are to be back at an agreed location and interim 'check-ins'
- Ensuring students are in small 'buddy' groups and know to stay together
- Not allowing any student to go unaccompanied to any location whilst on the trip /visit.
- Briefing students as to the location of staff during the 'down time' period.

**Some staff could be in a fixed position and others roaming the agreed area:**

- If students get lost, they know not to wander aimlessly but to stay together and wait for the staff to find them.
- If abroad, ensuring students carry some form of identification where possible and safe to do so.
- Ensure students know the location of the hotel or hostel they are staying at (carrying a hotel card from reception is a simple and effective idea).
- The age, maturity and competence of the students will affect how this is put into practice.

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**Policy review date: January 2022**

**To be reviewed by: Educational Visits Co-ordinator/SLT**