

# The GORSE Academies Trust Educational Visits Policy

**Designated Person:** Principal  
**Reviewed by:** Policy Committee - V1  
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# THE GORSE ACADEMIES TRUST EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

## 1 Policy Aims.

### 1.1 To ensure:

- The GORSE Academies Trust recognises the value of off-site visits for students as an enrichment to their studies and to their personal and social development. Such visits can strengthen students' sense of belonging to the Trust establishment and help generate positive relationships with their teachers and peers
  - It is the responsibility of the Trust establishment and Local Governing Body to ensure that such visits conform to this policy. The principal of each Trust establishment is responsible for implementation of the policy on a day-to-day basis through the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)
- 1.2 Proposal for visit will state the educational purpose of the visit, its aims, and objectives and how it conforms to the aims of the Trust establishment curriculum.
- 1.3 The GORSE Academies Trust has adopted Leeds City Council's approved on-line 'EVOLVE+' system for the recording and notification of all visits.
- 1.4 Trips that have not been scheduled in the calendar must first receive approval from the principal prior to any firm bookings being made. A Visit Proposal Form must be completed preferably two months before the date of the proposed visit. The form should be returned to the principal of said Trust establishment for approval and to check against the calendar. Failure to obtain approval from the principal could result in the visit being cancelled.
- 1.5 EVOLVE+ must be completed in full for all visits using either the 'visit form' or 'local area visits' documents and submitted to the EVC for initial approval and authorisation.
- 1.6 Parents/carers must be given sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether their child should participate in the visit. They must sign the relevant consent forms, as issued via EVOLVE+, and provide emergency contact numbers and all relevant medical details.
- 1.7 Where coach or minibus travel is used it must be in accordance with the Trust's procedures.
- 1.8 For any visit, adequate cover must be in place and staff should check that this is the case (e.g. adventurous activities).
- 1.9 If places on trips are oversubscribed it will be for the Trust establishment to manage, in a fair and transparent way, how those places are allocated.
- 1.10 All staff should ensure any relevant qualifications pertaining to the trip for which they are participating are uploaded to EVOLVE+ during the planning stages of the trip.

## 2 Organisation

The purpose of this section is to highlight the general roles, responsibilities and accountabilities across the Trust and its establishments. It is not designed to be exhaustive; there may be other roles, responsibilities and accountabilities that apply to staff, pupils, and other functions that each person will need to make themselves aware of. These can typically be found in other areas, for example, the other policies, structures, systems, procedures, practices, risk assessments, safe systems of work, contracts of employment, job descriptions and service arrangements.

All visits external to the Trust establishment environment will be submitted to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and principal for review and approval via EVOLVE+ using either the 'visits form' or 'local area visit' submission documentation. Only with formal documented consent and approval from the principal can the visit proceed.

The 'visit form' should be completed where a comprehensive risk assessment is required for any proposed trip.

The 'local area visit' document should be completed where a trip is considered low risk and to a venue within the learning area.

Local area visit forms should be completed as per the guidance on EVOLVE+. Details of the proposed visit location, date and time of the visit, number of staff accompanying the visit should initially be entered onto the submission. Additional details can be added such as each pupil attending the visit – this will aid the registration process.

HSE guidance states:

"It is important that those running school trips act responsibly by:

- putting sensible precautions in place, and making sure these work in practice
- knowing when and how to apply contingency plans where they are necessary
- heeding advice and warning from others, for example those with local knowledge or specialist expertise (especially in respect of higher-risk activities)"

### **"Legal obligations and standards of care while in the UK.**

Staff involved in educational visits should be fully aware of the standards of care demanded of them by the law. Such standards are those which form an objective point of view can reasonably be expected from staff generally applying skill and awareness of children's problems, needs and susceptibilities. The law expects that a member of school staff will do that which a parent with care and concern for the safety and welfare of their child will do, bearing in mind that being responsible for up to twenty pupils can be very different from looking after a family. The legal duty of care expected of an individual is, therefore, that which a caring education profession would in any case expect of itself.

This means in practise that a trip leader must:

- ensure supervision of the pupils throughout the journey or visit according to professional standards and common sense
- take reasonable steps to avoid exposing pupils to dangers which are foreseeable and beyond those with which the particular pupil can reasonably be expected to cope

This does not imply constant twenty-four-hour direct supervision. The need for direct supervision has to be judged by reference to the risks involved in activities being undertaken."

neu.org.uk

## **Legal obligations and standards of care whilst abroad.**

Where an educational visit is to involve travel abroad, it is the Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure contact is made with the Embassy or tourist office of the country or countries to be visited to check the laws and customs of those countries and to identify how these differ to the UK. Some countries may have expectations of adults supervising children and young persons which may differ from those in England and Wales. It is very important to build this consideration into the planning stages as this will identify key elements required within the risk assessment, and whether the event itself should be allowed to go ahead.

### **2.1 Principals**

Principals are responsible for implementing the Trust policy and procedures in their Trust establishment and should ensure that all parents/carers are aware of the policy.

The principal will ensure that the Visit Leader is competent and has the relevant and required skills to lead the proposed visit.

The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that trips are well and efficiently planned, organised, undertaken, controlled, monitored, and reviewed.

The Principal will ensure that all visits are authorised prior to leaving the Trust establishment.

### **2.2 EVC**

The EVC must ensure that all risk assessments used on submission conform to the current version issued by the Local Authority (LA) and found within the resources section of EVOLVE+.

The EVC must ensure that all documentation submitted to EVOLVE+ by the Visit Leader is accurately completed, covers all required elements of the visit, support documentation is password secured where relevant, and that all certification is valid.

The EVC and Visit Leader must ensure the trip has been authorised prior to the trip taking place. If the trip has not been authorised on EVOLVE+, the trip must not leave the Trust establishment until it has been authorised on the EVOLVE+ system by the principal.

The EVC is to ensure unsubmitted trips are removed from the system at the start of each term.

The EVC is to ensure all staff who leave the Trust establishment have their accounts disabled within one week of leaving work.

### **2.3 Visit Leader**

The Visit Leader will comply with the requirements outlined in the Local Education Authority Educational Visits Code of Practice.

The Visit Leader is responsible for planning the visit, completing all the required documentation, reviewing all support documentation and that all outside organisations have the appropriate safety standards and liability insurance prior to submitting the EVOLVE+ submission to the EVC for review.

The Visit Leader will comply with all EVOLVE+ guidance in relation to the submission and management of a proposed trip / visit. All information relating to the trip/visit will be entered into the event submission, all proposed attendees will be added under the participant's element.

The Visit Leader will agree potential participants with the pastoral team.

The Visit Leader will liaise with the EVC throughout the planning and preparation of their trip.

The Visit Leader will ensure that EVOLVE+ is completed and that any activities or events that may place staff at significant risk are assessed and that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place. Risk assessments should be completed based on the current year sample risk assessment provided in the resource section on EVOLVE+.

The Visit Leader will ensure a suitable Individual Pupil Risk Assessment (IPRA) is in place and linked to the EVOLVE+ submission for any pupil who has a condition which may require alternative management of control measures whilst away from the Trust establishment location. It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that all IPRA's are password protected prior to being linked to the EVOLVE+ submission. All Trust establishment persons supporting the trip should be granted access to this information for young persons within their care - access should NOT be given to volunteers.

The Visit Leader will ensure a suitable Wellbeing Action Support Plan (WASP) is in place for all Trust establishment colleagues and volunteers supporting with the visit who have a condition which may impact their ability to safely support the visit. The Visit Leader will seek permission from the WASP recipient and creator to become familiar with the content and to share said content with essential persons on the visit. The Visit Leader will ensure that the WASP is password secure prior to linking the document to the EVOLVE+ submission. Only those persons deemed essential and permitted by the individual to whom the WASP pertains should be granted access – access and details of its content should NOT be given to volunteers.

The Visit Leader will ensure that all parents/carers of students proposed to attend the trip are provided with full information about the visit so that an informed decision can be made when consenting to the arrangements, and any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place. Where overseas trips are being conducted a pre-visit briefing session should be conducted. The Visit Leader will ensure that a consent form is created within the EVOLVE+ visit/trip submission ensuring that data for all students proposed to attend the visit/trip is imported from the central Trust establishment database. Following creation, this form will be linked automatically to myEVOLVE for the electronic consent of parents/carers. Where parents/carers have opted not to use the myEVOLVE app, an email/paper consent form should be provided.

Prior to the trip students and support staff/volunteers must be reminded that they must bring any medication stated on their forms or on SIMS, on the day of the trip. Failure to bring medication which has been identified as necessary (on the E1) will result in the student(s) being withdrawn from the trip.

The Visit Leader will perform a register roll call prior to the departure of the trip using the roll call element on EVOLVEGo. This will link to the main Trust establishment attendance record. Where multiple coaches or modes of transport are being used for the visit/trip, students should be placed into subgroups as per their designated mode of transport.

It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that all persons present on the visit conduct themselves in a manner befitting to the values of The GORSE Academies Trust. Any behaviour deemed to not follow these values should be actioned swiftly and where necessary the pupil removed from the event.

The Visit Leader will ensure a completed Visit Leader Emergency Checklist is taken on the trip and a copy is held by the Trust establishment nominated emergency contact.

The Visit Leader will ensure that all relevant staff members supporting with the visit are synchronised with the visit activity via EVOLVE+ and have access to a fully charged authorised handheld device to support EVOLVEGo on which they can access data pertaining to the visit/trip, and relevant password secured medical documentation.

Where students are above the legal age to consume alcohol, this must be done so under the supervision and discretion of the Visit Leader/Responsible Officer.

Where students are above the legal age to smoke, this will be permitted in designated areas and at designated times with the supervision and discretion of the Visit Leader/Responsible Officer.

The Visit Leader should ensure that they have a fully charged authorised device suitable to support the requirements of EVOLVEGo for the duration of the event.

In the event of a serious incident, the Visit Leader will inform their emergency contact who will in turn recourse to the Crisis Support Procedures (on EVOLVE+).

The Visit Leader will ensure that should an incident occur that results in a delayed return to the home destination this will be communicated to parents/carers by the Visit Leader using the EVOLVEGo SMS communications function and myEVOLVE app.

The Visit Leader should comply with all guidance within EVOLVE+ and ensure that GDPR guidance is adhered to.

### **2.3.1 Approval of Visits**

Approval of all visits will be undertaken by the principal or the designated vice principal.

Approval of visits which include an overnight stay, or an adventurous activity (Category 3) will be forwarded via EVOLVE+ to the LEA Health and Safety Team for confirmation with current procedures for that activity/event.

The Visit Leader will submit a proposal to the principal within the following timescale for each category visit.

Category	Latest date for submission to Principal
1 – Regular curriculum	1 week
2 – One offs	2 weeks
3- Overnight, Overseas, Adventurous	4 weeks

### **2.4 Other Staff Participating in the Visit**

Where adult helpers are involved, necessary checks should be undertaken. Trust establishments are required to ensure that all persons volunteering with the visit apply for an Enhanced Disclosure Check from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS acts as a central access point to criminal records information held on the Police National Computer and to the DfE's List 99 which contains details of people considered unsuitable to work with children and young persons.

All staff assisting in supervising on any trip will be conversant with their responsibilities as stated in the Policy Handbook on Educational Visits. They should feel confident to challenge any unsafe practice observed.

All staff/volunteers assisting in the visits will be conversant in the visit specific risk assessment and ensure that the requirements of said risk assessment, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed. All staff/volunteers must read and sign to state they understand the risk assessment control measures for the trip.

All staff will ensure that once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified, they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader.

Staff and volunteers over the age of 65 must be declared to the insurance team at Zurich Municipal prior to the visit.

### **2.4.1 Staffing and Supervision**

Adequate levels of supervision and staffing must be established for the visit/trip based on such factors as the sex, age and ability of the child/young person, the presence of pupils with special educational needs, the nature/length of activities to be undertaken and the experience and competence of the staff involved.

Guidance issued by the Government in 1998 suggested the following 'starting point' for consideration of staffing ratios. These were intended as a general guide for visits to local historical sites and museums or for local walks.

1 adult for every 6 pupils in school year 1 to 3 (under 5s reception classes should have a higher ratio).

1 adult for every 10 – 15 pupils in school years 4 to 6.

1 adult for every 15 – 20 pupils in school year 7 onwards.

The above guidelines may require higher ratios dependent on the nature of the activity, such as for higher risk activities, foreign travel, and swimming activities.

The NEU's advice on this issue is set out below:

These ratios should be regarded as a minimum appropriate staffing ratio for school journeys. These ratios should preferably be interpreted as referring to the number of staff needed to supervise the party. Voluntary helpers may be involved in assisting staff with the organisation and supervision of visits, but staff will retain primary responsibility for supervising the party at all times.

A minimum of two members of staff should be involved in every school journey regardless of how many other adults are helping. Given the possibility of members of the group needing to be taken home or back to the Trust establishment or to hospital, at least two staff members are needed in order that one may remain in charge where another is called away.

With a mixed party it is desirable that there should be members of staff or other responsible adults of each sex accompanying the group:

- supervision arrangements for swimming activities should include provision for supervision by qualified lifesavers
- at least one member of staff should be a qualified first aider and aware of the special medical needs of any member of the party

- newly qualified teachers should not normally lead school parties in their first year of teaching

The Early Years and Foundation Stage Statutory Framework sets out specific legal requirements for minimum ratios in this age group, which apply both indoors and on outings. These are complex and include requirements about the qualifications of the staff. In summary, they require a minimum of 2 adults with a group, including at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate, with minimum ratios as follows:

Age under 2	1: 3
Age 2	1: 4
Age 3+	1: 8 or 2: 13 depending on setting, time of day and staff qualifications.

The framework states that, for each type of outing, providers must carry out a full risk assessment which includes an assessment of required adult: student ratios. This assessment must take account of the nature of the outing and consider whether it is necessary to exceed the minimum requirement. A ratio of 1: 1 may often be necessary on an outing. The assessment must be reviewed before embarking on each specific outing.

### **3 Undertaking the Visit**

#### **3.1 Preliminary Visits**

The National Education Union (NEU) recommend that where possible the group leader should make preliminary visits to become familiar with the places and activities to be encountered. Visits should be followed by reviews to identify problems, identifying matters arising which may be relevant on future visits, and to prepare reports to the EVC.

Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) guidance states:

“All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is vital dimensions of risk management... wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit.”

Once an approval notification has been received the visit will commence in accordance with the itinerary and activities planned. Any deviation from the itinerary or planned activities must be considered by the Visit Leader and a dynamic risk assessment made prior to the alteration taking place.

#### **3.2 Incidents**

A record must be kept of all such instances for evaluation and review purposes.

Any accident or near misses that occur during the visit will be reported to the Director of Health and Safety using the report form on EVERY accessed via the smart phone provided by the Trust establishment. If the incident involves the facility where the trip is taking place, the host location staff should be made aware of any incidents/near misses you have prior to leaving the location.

The Visit Lead will ensure that consideration has been given to all potential medical emergencies including those whilst in transit. The emergency response plan must incorporate steps to take should an individual require medical attention outside the capabilities of the designated first aider. The Visit Leader will ensure that the visit/trip emergency response plan incorporates the safe movement of said individual to medical facilities whilst limiting impact on the remainder of the group.

Any accident that results in a student or member of staff having to go to hospital must be telephoned to the Trust establishment contact immediately. Upon receipt of any such calls the Trust establishment contact will immediately inform the Director of Health and Safety.

### **3.3 Excluding Pupils from Educational Visits**

The Equality ACT 2010 and the Special Educational Need and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) have simplified and strengthened the discrimination laws which protect school pupils from unfair treatment. It is unlawful for a school or other education provider to treat a disabled student unfavourably. Such treatment could amount to:

- direct discrimination
- indirect discrimination
- harassment

Every effort should be made to make educational visits accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of disability. Staff should plan for inclusion from the outset and should make appropriate 'reasonable adjustments' to enable the participation of disabled pupils.

In some cases, however, particularly where poor behaviour is an issue, this may not be possible. Where the behaviour is a direct consequence of a child's disability, however, schools will need to demonstrate that they have considered such reasonable adjustments that could have been made, in order to comply with the law. Pupils should not, however, be permitted to participate in educational visits where their behaviour may be such that they present a danger to themselves or to others, until such time as their behaviour can be modified. Neu.org.uk

### **3.4 Adventure Activities**

Adventure activities: caving, climbing, trekking, and watersports.

These kinds of activities should be identified, and risk assessed as part of the visit beforehand. Staff managing or leading visits must not decide to add such activities during the trip.

Always consider the abilities of the children when assessing risk.

Organisations need a licence to provide some adventure activities. Organisations who hold the LOtC Quality Badge should hold a licence for the activity they provide.

Watersports

When planning watersports, consider the need for:

Instructors  
Lifeguards

Schools should take particular care when using hotel swimming pools and other water leisure activities which may not have a trained lifeguard. Although there are no swimming pool specific health and safety laws, the Outdoor Education Adviser's Panel (OEAP) provides advice when undertaking adventure specialist activities, including swimming.

### **3.5 Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE)**

DofE programmes are delivered under licence by over 400 'Operating Authorities' throughout the UK (e.g. local authorities, uninformed organisations, charities and businesses). They are responsible for

the administration of the DofE in their area and for authorisation of awards. Each operating authority has a number of DofE centres, managed by a centre coordinator. In each DofE centre there can be one more DofE group, each run by a DofE leader.

All DofE centres must be authorised by a licensed Operating Authority to ensure they meet specific standards of safety, child protection, training etc.

The Visit Leader should ensure that where DofE is to be undertaken, this is a DofE accredited course and follows all guidance.

Comprehensive guidance on running DofE award activities can be found on the DofE website.

### **3.6 Farm Visits**

Risk assessments on taking students to farms should include hazards associated with E. coli and other infections, as well as those arising from the misuse of farm equipment. Precautionary measures include:

- making sure that students wear appropriate footwear and clothing
- covering cuts and grazes on hands with waterproof dressing
- not allowing students to eat, drink or chew anything (including sweets) outside of designated areas
- reminding students not to suck fingers or put hands / pens / pencils / crayons etc. in their mouths
- never allowing students to kiss animals or place their faces against them
- ensuring students wash their hands thoroughly before and after eating and before leaving the farm – alcohol gel and wet wipes are not sufficient substitutes
- making sure students do not use or pick up tools unless permitted to do so by farm staff and that they do not ride/climb on to tractors or other machinery
- ensure that the risk assessment incorporates all elements of farm activities, including contact with animals, farm machinery, foodstuffs and harvesting activities

The Visit Leader should ensure that all safety guidance as highlighted on the hse.gov.uk website is adhered to during any visit to a farm or area holding livestock.

### **3.7 Travel**

#### **3.7.1 Coaches / Minibuses**

“Educational visits, especially those which include overseas travel, are likely to require coach travel. When using hired coaches, the key safety factors to consider are: the driver, the coach and equipment, the company and the route or itinerary.

Considerations when choosing a coach provider should include:

- check that the coaches have appropriate seat belts for the age of the pupils
- ensure that the chosen coach company will not subcontract to another company, as the subcontractor may have different standards
- ask for copies of the operator’s vehicle, public liability, and employer’s liability insurances
- confirmation that the coach company has a specific risk assessment for group travel with children and young people
- confirmation that vehicles undergo four weekly safety checks
- if travelling abroad, check that the driver has experience in driving the coach in the expected conditions, e.g. mountain roads and in snowy conditions
- ask if the coach company has any external accreditation or audit such as the BUSK Benchmark, CoachMarque or Guild of British Coach Operators [neu.org.uk](http://neu.org.uk)

It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that all vehicles are checked internally prior to departure to highlight the location of all emergency exits (including rear doors, windows, and roof hatches). Ensuing that these and any emergency related equipment are clearly signposted (e.g. first aid box, Fire Fighting Equipment (FFE)). Staff members should be positioned strategically around the vehicle, specifically adjacent to emergency exits to aid evacuation should an emergency occur.

### **3.7.2 Private Cars**

NO member of staff should be compelled to transport pupils in their personal vehicles. Where staff members volunteer to transport pupils in this way, it is their responsibility to ensure that they have the correct type of motor insurance and should never agree to drive alone with a child/young person due to the risk of unfounded allegations (unless it is an emergency).

### **3.7.3 Seat Belts and Child Restraints**

When transport for school trips is arranged, the Visit Leader should consider when and where seatbelts and child restraints should be used.

The law requires the use of seat belts and child restraint systems dependent on the age and height of the person and the type of vehicle being used. Child restraint systems (including booster cushions) must be suitable for the vehicle, suitable for the child (determined by their weight, as well as their age and height), and in good condition.

The Department of Transport – Seat Belts and Child Restraints guide states:

Seat belts: the law

- You must wear a seat belt where one is fitted
- The driver is liable to prosecution if a child aged under 14 years does not wear an appropriate seat belt which, for children aged under 12 years and shorter than 135 centimeters in height means the correct child restraint
- A child may wear an adult seat belt when they reach 135 centimeters in height or the age of 12 years old (whichever is reached first)

Exceptions for passengers in buses, coaches, and minibuses

A bus or coach has more than 8 seats in addition to the driver's seat, and a maximum laden weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes.

A minibus has more than 8 seats in addition to the driver's seat, and a maximum laden weight not exceeding 3.5 tonnes.

- Passengers in buses, coaches, and minibuses in which standing is permitted or which are being used to provide a 'local service,' are not required to wear seatbelts
- Children aged under 14 years in the rear seats of buses and coaches are not required to wear seat belts or child restraints
- In the front seats of buses and coaches – children from 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday up to 135 centimeters in height or 12<sup>th</sup> birthday (whichever is reached first), may travel wearing an adult seat belt, if an appropriate child restraint is not available in the front of the vehicle

Minibuses

- Children aged 3 to 13 must use a child car restraint if there is one available anywhere in a minibus. Children must use an adult seat belt in the front or rear if child restraints are not fitted or are unsuitable. May travel unrestrained in the rear if no adult seat belts are fitted in the rear of the minibus

- Children aged under 3 must use a child car seat if there is one available anywhere in a minibus or may travel unrestrained in the rear of the minibus if no child restraint is available
- No child under the age of 14 may travel unrestrained in the front of a minibus
- However, where a minibus is used to take groups of 3 or more children aged 3 – 16 on a trip, it must have enough forward-facing seats fitted with seat belts for every child on the trip. All the children must therefore be wearing a seat belt

### **3.8 Using tour Operators**

Many educational visits, particularly residential visits either abroad or in the UK, are arranged through tour operators. When selecting a tour operator, it is important to choose a reputable company with externally verified safety management systems. The NEU supports the School Travel Forum (STF), a group of tour operators who have developed a rigorous Code of Practice to which all its member companies must adhere. STF member companies must undergo an annual external verification of their safety systems and suppliers, including spot checks on all key components of the arrangements they offer to schools.

Choosing an STF member tour operator does not mean that Trust establishments do not have to undertake risk assessments. It does mean, however, that teachers can be confident that the main components of a school package, for example travel arrangements. Food, accommodation, and fire safety have been organised with health and safety as their chief concern. Choosing an STF member should reduce the workload involved in organising visits/trips as well as providing a large degree of protection for all attendees. It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that a reputable, suitable accredited travel provider is used for all residential visits.

### **3.9 Overseas Travel**

Where trips are being organised to take place outside of the UK additional research and consideration should be given to accommodation/activity providers, the laws/customs/languages of the destination of travel and an increased level of risk assessment should be undertaken by the Visit Leader. Where there are no foreign language speakers on the visit it is essential that key phrases in the local language are learnt.

The HSE does not cover incidents overseas. However, it can investigate work done in Britain to support the trip, like risk assessments. Trust establishment staff could also be liable under civil law for any injuries to students due to negligence.

It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that all Passports and Visas for all persons, both children/young persons and support staff within the group are in date and valid for travel prior to leaving the home destination. The Visit Leader should ensure that at least two photocopies of all passports, visas and other important travel documentation are obtained – one set retained by the home base emergency contact, and the second copy kept with the group, separate from the original documents. All photocopies must be safely discarded on return to the home establishment following the Trust GDPR guidance and confidential waste disposal.

Border officials in the UK and other countries monitor departing children due to concerns about child sexual exploitation and abduction. The Visit Leader should be able to readily access consent documentation for all participants using EVOLVE+ and EVOLVEGo. A student should not be taken overseas without formal consent from a parent/carer.

In some countries, it may be necessary for Visit Leaders to provide evidence of their responsibility for children/young persons in their party. Proof of parental consent may be required by medical professionals overseas prior to carrying out treatment. The age at which someone is considered a child

is different in different countries, this research should be carried out during the initial planning stages of the visit.

It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to check the national citizenship status of all members of the group. If a group member is not British, or is a British Overseas Territories Citizen, British Overseas Citizen, British Subject, British National Overseas or British Protected Person, they may need a visa that is not required by British Citizens. These may also be relevant to countries throughout which the group passes in transit. The Visit Leader should identify the nearest British Embassy/Consulate is to all locations of prolonged stay during the trip.

If a child/young person has dual nationality and is a citizen of a country to or through which you are travelling, it is the Visit Leaders responsibility to contact the country's Embassy, High Commission or Consulate to identify any restrictions or requirements, including about parental consent, that might affect them in or when leaving the country.

Before booking a visit, the Visit Leader should obtain written/documented assurance that providers such as tour operators have assessed the risks themselves and have appropriate safety measures in place.

It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to maintain regular communication with the home destination.

No one can guarantee safety, especially in unfamiliar and unpredictable environments, but choosing travel organisations that take good preparation and planning seriously is a good start.

### **3.9.1 Adventure Travel**

Trust establishments should consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's detailed guidance on safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas when organising adventure visits abroad.

If the trip includes significant risks, such as challenging terrain, going to remote places or extreme climate, the guidance set out in the British Standard for Adventure Activities outside the United Kingdom should be followed as the basis for planning and risk assessment writing.

Trust establishments should ensure that any organisation that is providing activities hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge or similar local accreditation.

Additional attention is required with regards foreign laws on hazardous activities. Dangerous skiing, for example, can attract heavy legal penalties both for the skier and for the adult supervisor. It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to obtain advice on the safety approval regimes governing any activity centres the group intend to visit abroad and the regulations governing safety of accommodation. Only centres and residential facilities satisfying these standards should be used.

### **3.9.2 Health**

The UK has reciprocal health agreements with several countries, including the Isle of Man and Jersey (but not the other Channel Islands), and the EU. The provision varies from country to country. The Visit Leader should ensure that all party members who are eligible for a European Health Insurance Card (UK EHIC) or UK Global Health Insurance Card (UK GHIC) obtain a card and bring it with them. Many insurance policies include a condition that an EHIC (Or UK GHIC) is used when possible.

The Visit Leader should ensure that all party members are covered by sufficient health insurance for the country or counties being visited, and the activities being undertaken. This is important even for

countries where there is a reciprocal agreement, to cover costs not covered by the agreement and to cover party members (such as non-UK nationals) who may not be included in the agreement. Copies of all WASPS and IPRAS for members of the group should be reviewed and shared with all relevant support personnel prior to the visit. The password secured information should be included with the EVOLVE+ submission and allocated for reading on EVOLVE.

Although primarily the responsibility of the parent/carer it is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that all medication is legal in the host country. Inhalers and other common prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines are banned in some countries. Where prescription medications are needed, it is advised that a copy of the prescription or a note from the doctor accompanies the individual. Medicines should always be carried in their original packaging. It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that any medication that accompanies the trip is stored in a secure manner as per the manufacturer's guidance.

### **3.9.3 Emergency Procedures**

The Visit Leader, EVC and Principal must ensure that a suitable emergency or critical incident plan is in place. These plans should outline actions to be taken and include the following:

- 24/7 emergency contacts at the Trust establishments, including overnight, holiday periods and at weekends
- whole group evacuation / repatriation
- contingency funding arrangements
- getting support out to the group

An emergency plan for an Overseas Visit should consider actions in case a member of staff/support personnel or a child/young person becomes incapacitated or must leave the visit, including the need for a backup member of staff to meet any visa requirements.

Groups can be particularly vulnerable when arriving in a foreign country, especially at night or following a tiresome journey. Criminals often target busy airports, railway stations and bus stations. Pick pocketing and luggage theft are common, and more serious crimes such as sexual assault and kidnapping may also occur.

The Visit Lead and the Principal should help reduce this risk by:

- having leaders who are familiar with the location and speak the local language – if this is not the case, local support should be sought from a trusted local source to facilitate arrival of the group at the airport/station
- delegating specific leaders to concentrate on group supervision while other deal with other tasks
- preparing participants to keep valuables secure and out of sight, to be alert and vigilant, to stay together and to know what to do if they feel threatened
- ensure that participants' clothing and behaviour minimise unwelcome attention
- having a clear plan, so that the group moves purposefully
- having pre-arranged transport to the first night's accommodation
- ensuring that the first night's accommodation is secure and in a safe area, so that it provides refuge for rest and orientation

### **3.9.4 Discrimination**

Discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religion, skin colour grounds could occur whilst on foreign trips.

In some countries, homosexuality and/or homosexual relations are illegal and can be subject to severe penalties. In countries where homosexual relations are legal, levels of tolerance and acceptance within society may still vary hugely. In some places, it may be best for all couples to avoid overt public displays of affection so as not to attract unwanted attention.

Even in LGBTQ+ friendly countries, the same precautions should be taken as those taken elsewhere.

#### **3.9.4.1 Transgender**

Transgender and non-binary travellers may face additional scrutiny when travelling abroad with many facing difficulties and delays at border crossings. Delays can occur when a person presents as a different gender to that identified on their passport.

Transgender persons face additional scrutiny when going through the advance imaging technology (AIT) body scanners. This can raise additional concerns/questions from the border controller and stress and anxiety in the individual especially where the individual is not fully transitioned and where the body can appear as both male and female (a person does not need to undergo gender reassignment in order to identify as a gender different from that prescribed at birth, or as gender neutral).

If a member of the party has undertaken or is in the process of undertaking facial feminisation or masculinisation, post passport issuing, facial recognition may not correspond. Under these circumstances it is advised that a letter from the medical team explaining the reason for the change in appearance should be held alongside the individual's passport.

Transgender persons/those in the process of transitioning will travel with prescription hormone medications (especially injection supplies) which may require being kept within certain temperature ranges. These medications may not be legal in all countries.

The Visit Leader and the Principal should support individuals in identifying potential risks that the medication that they have been prescribed and their ongoing medical treatment may pose to their safety during the trip. No person should ever be stopped from participating in a trip/activity, alternatively Trust establishment staff should work together with the individual and their parents/carers to identify steps to maintain their personal safety whilst still participating fully in all elements of the trip.

The Visit Leader must ensure that any person identifying as transgender or non-binary participating in the trip have all relevant medical documentation prior to leaving the home location. Where issues/concerns/negativity is faced the Visit Leader and members of the support team should handle them with discretion, delicacy, and compassion.

#### **3.10 Monitoring**

The Trust will monitor the implementation of this policy by ensuring that the documentation required has been produced to a satisfactory standard.

On occasion the Principal, EVC, Director of Health and Safety or a member of the Governing Body will accompany a group.

#### **3.11 Evaluation and Review**

Every visit will be reviewed by the Visit Leader within 28 days of the visit taking place.

These reviews will be recorded on EVOLVE+ and linked to the original event submission.

The results of the Evaluation and Review will be available to the principal via EVOLVE+

The Visit Leader will report any significant safety issues to the Director of Health and Safety.

### **3.12 Financial Arrangements**

The Visit Leader should check costings for the visit with the Trust establishment finance assistant once the visit has been approved.

When requesting any form of payment staff are to follow the Trust's money handling guidelines.

All trips should be entered on Parent Pay prior to letters being sent out.

Parents/carers who indicate they have financial hardship and cannot afford trips should be referred to the Principal.

Non-payment of trip monies will be at the discretion of the Principal as to whether the student is still able to participate.

### 3.13 Amendments to the Policy

Any amendment for submission are to be raised on the appropriate Policy Amendment Form. This form should be passed via the Principal or line Manager where appropriate for consideration, who will then arrange for the amendment to be presented to the Policy Owner and Policy Committee at the next meeting for their review, rejection, or inclusion within the Policy.

### 3.14 Further Information

[EVOLVE \(edufocus.co.uk\)](http://edufocus.co.uk)

[EVOLVE+ Learning Centre](#)

[EVOLVE Help Centre \(edufocus.co.uk\)](http://edufocus.co.uk)

### 3.15 Useful Contacts and Information

- Safer Adventures: Managing the risk of Adventure travel  
<https://www.bsigroup.com/localfiles/en-gb/consumer-guides/resources/bsi-consumer-brochure-adventurous-activities-uk-en.pdf>
- Health and Safety Executive – School trips and outdoor learning activities  
<https://hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>
- National Guidance OEAPNG.info 7r Overseas Visits
- [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-parties-visiting-the-uk-by-coach](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-parties-visiting-the-uk-by-coach)
- [www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad](http://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad)
- <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA)
- Educational Visits – National Education Union – [www.neu.org.uk](http://www.neu.org.uk)