



FOUNDRY COLLEGE

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Document Control Information

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6	07/12/2021	Update logo Minor Amendments Add Deputy EVC's
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9	08/10/2024	Amendments to documentation and some of guidance updated in line with WBC policy and guidance.
10	10/05/2025	Clarification of expectations of pupils on visits.
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Responsibility	Lia Mexa
Committee	Q of P
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Signed	

Introduction

This policy sets out some standards for the management of off-site activities and the arrangements for planning and monitoring these activities. It also sets out the scheme by which the Local Authority will provide advice and training, and carry out appropriate monitoring and intervention to support schools in this aspect of their work.

The Headteacher has primary responsibility for assessing and approving visits on safety grounds. The Headteacher may delegate aspects of this role to another member of staff, commonly referred as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Foundry College's Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Iain Thomas. The Deputy EVC's are Richard Porter and Victoria Padgett

The Management Committee has a legal responsibility for pupil welfare. Safety on educational visits should be assured primarily by the College complying with the LA's policy advice, incorporating risk assessments, safety standards, monitoring arrangements, and by participation in appropriate training programmes. The main focus of their approval of visits will be in terms of College processes and educational objectives.

Common Law Duty of Care

In their responsibility for the care, custody and control of the children, schools are expected to take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances. In fact, the law prescribes a higher professional standard of care from school staff, to reflect their training and experience.

This policy is in accordance with the Schools Manual for Educational Visits as directed by Wokingham LA. The Offsite Manual, which details guidance and procedures, is kept electronically on the "S drive" and reflects DfE advice and good practice.

The reference to Educational Visits includes any journey that takes pupils off the College premises for all, or part of the day, or evening. It does not include Work Experience for which the Local Authority provides separate regulations.

Activities longer than 24 hours, or those involving an overnight stay or a journey by air, sea or channel tunnel must have the prior approval of the Management Committee recorded in the minutes. This includes short stay residential journeys, field studies out of College, cultural visits, foreign exchanges, sports tours and events, and music tours, in this country and abroad.

All visits should only be approved on evidence that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed. Risk assessment is an essential and integral part of the planning for all off-site activities, and must commence at an early stage of this process and underpin all stages of decision making. For straightforward local activities, it may be sufficient to rely on standard local protocols and generic risk assessments, modified to make them suitable and sufficient for the individual event.

Risk assessments are carried out or co-ordinated by the Party Leader. The Headteacher, or appointed EVC, is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place and appropriate. Risk assessments will need to be reviewed and re-assessed if circumstances change, whether before or during a visit. When proposed activities are submitted to the Headteacher, Management Committee or the LA, they should be accompanied by a copy of the risk assessments which will include the venue, the activities and the pupils. Approval will be informed by evidence, showing that effective planning has taken place. This is managed through the Evolve system.

All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose which is clearly related to the curriculum or a personal development objective, whether the College is in session or not. Any activities which cannot meet this requirement must not be undertaken and will not be approved. Objectives are expected to be in-line with the College aims of Nurture, Inspire, Achieve.

It is accepted that ventures that have a considerable element of pure recreation can be of benefit to pupils.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) It is for the LA to decide whether to approve higher risk trips, including hazardous activities, visits to high-risk areas (for example, London), overnight or overseas trips. In the case of residential trips, they must be planned and submitted no less than a month before the proposed date. All trips will be risk assessed and meet the standards in **Appendix 1**.
- b) The Headteacher decides whether to approve, and has responsibility, for other trips.
- c) Off-site activities as defined in (a) above must have the approval of the Management Committee, either directly or through Resources Committee or Teaching and Learning Committee, as timing permits.

It is the responsibility of the approving committee to:

- ensure that an activity is appropriate to the aims of the College as an educational establishment and to the needs of the pupils involved
- satisfy themselves that the College can be run efficiently in the absence of any staff from the site on the activity
- satisfy themselves that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the pupils involved and there are no concerns about safety

RESPONSIBILITIES of Accompanying Staff

Staff on all educational visits act as employees of Wokingham Borough Council. Staff on the visit must be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Staff must:

- protect the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances
- follow the instructions of the Party Leader and help with control and discipline
- consider stopping the visit or activity and notifying the Party Leader, if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable
- ensure that the parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions arranged for them (Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language)
- ensure that adequate arrangements are in place (particularly with regard to residential accommodation) with regard to the use of contractors or other organisations, and the use of volunteers to assisting with supervision
- make clear to the pupils that they must follow instructions and guidance from all staff leading or supporting on the visit as well as any contracted staff during activities

RESPONSIBILITIES of the Pupils

Pupils are expected to respond to instructions and advice from staff as if they were in College.
Pupils are expected to abide by College policies while they are offsite.

RESPONSIBILITIES of Parents

Offsite activities may only take place on receipt of parental agreement in writing. Parents should be able to make an informed decision whether their child should go on the visit. Parents should be advised how they can help prepare their child for the visit by:

- reinforcing behaviour expectations
- providing the Party Leader with emergency contact numbers
- signing the parental consent and medical forms
- giving the Party Leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit
- agreeing to any arrangements for sending a pupil home and any decisions on who will meet the cost
- agreeing that during a trip or off-site activity the accompanying staff have a duty to act in loco parentis

Local Authority Role

The LA sets a level at which approval must be sought. The Evolve system will automatically identify trips requiring LA approval. The EVC and Headteacher must be competent to approve most other trips, but can seek advice through the Wokingham Borough Council Outdoor Education team.

The Local Authority will retain an overview of off-site activities, provide regular training, and use the Evolve system to identify areas for audit or improvement.

Minibuses and Other Vehicles

The Off-site Manual includes detailed guidance on the transport requirements for off-site activities. As the employer, the Council is deemed to be the operator of vehicles driven by its staff on official business. College staff are required to follow the Council's fleet management guidance and driver requirements, including for vehicles that are owned or leased by the College. On occasions, it is appropriate for staff to use their own cars and in all such cases insurance for business use must be in place and evidenced.

All other procedures for Educational Visit arrangements will conform to the Wokingham LA guidelines:

PROCEDURE

Research and Planning

Planning and preparation must be done sufficiently far ahead to enable considered approval at the appropriate level. Visits to venues will normally form part of the early planning. The venue should not involve more cost, greater travel distance, or greater hazard, than is necessary and appropriate.

The Headteacher, Management Committee and Local Authority have a responsibility for activities run by any third party on the College's behalf. Therefore, due care must be taken in commissioning such

activities. Organisations should be approached directly to ascertain that the qualifications and experience of the staff, risk assessments and the company's safety management systems fulfil the requirements of this document.

Outdoor activity centres in the United Kingdom must be licensed by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). This scheme is in the process of being replaced by a voluntary code of practice. The authority will require College staff to only use centres which can evidence compliance with the prevailing standards, voluntary or otherwise.

The following do not require a submission for each visit as block permission and risk assessments can be undertaken.

- Regular visits by the same group to the same location for the same reason.
- PE fixtures/practices.

Checklist of actions by Party Leader:

- identify the venue/provider
- research and risk assess the offsite activity
- visit venue to enable familiarity and risk assess
- risk assess the individual pupils
- cost the activity
- meet with the Key Stage 3 & 4 Leader for timetabling arrangements
- check transport availability
- seek approval from line manager
- draft letter and parental consent forms to parents
- complete EV2/3/6
- agree out of hours / emergency contact with SLT and enter in Evolve
- fill in attendee information sheet – if done electronically, this can be attached to Evolve.
- ensure that arrangement for lunch provision is made for FSM pupils.
- ensure pupils with medical conditions have their medication (epipen, inhaler etc) and that a suitably first-aid trained staff member accompanies the trip
- ensure that if the visit will be near open water an appropriately trained (throw line) member of staff accompanies the trip
- submit Evolve once approval has been obtained and before the deadline date of submission
- within 10 working days the Evolve will be approved or denied
- once approved, booking of venue and sending of letters can be actioned

Copies of paperwork templates and guides can be found on the college network in:

<S:\Evolve\#Evolves\#Templates>

This applies to all Educational Visits.

- A briefing meeting should be held with all staff attending and information distributed, including the risk assessments.
- Prior to departure, the attendee information sheet should be checked and updated as necessary – copy admin office on site, emergency contact and other supervising staff as required.
- Party Leader takes visit form, risk assessments, list of pupils and parental consent forms on the visit.
- After the trip, the Party Leader evaluates the success and value of the trip.
- Feedback is given on pupil behaviours.

Once all paperwork has been received by EVC for checking and is deemed complete, it will be passed to the Headteacher for approval. The Evolve platform is used to submit, approve and evaluate education visits.

The Local Authority and Foundry College’s timescale for submission for approval is 10 working days, or 4 weeks for residential/adventurous/overseas.

On completion of the visit, the paperwork should be destroyed and the electronic copy will be kept on the Evolve system and managed in line with GDPR.

Following a trip or visit, an evaluation must take place and lessons learned recorded in Evolve. If first aid or other interventions have been required, these must be recorded in line with College policies.

The Management Committee should be satisfied that the College has systems in place to robustly cover this ground in its planning and preparation for visits. To obtain EVC and Headteacher approval, the following prompts might be useful.

<p>Aims and Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Be clear about what is needed; that should drive the choice of venue, not the reverse; <input type="checkbox"/> Beware the opportunity which is appealing but of limited value; <input type="checkbox"/> Where objectives are inappropriate or unclear, then the risk of accident is greater. 	<p>Travel Arrangements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Are these reasonably priced, comfortable? <input type="checkbox"/> As free from delay as possible? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the travel operator/carrier have its own rules on supervision, etc? <p>Are the supervision arrangements for the journey itself a problem – eg sea crossings?</p>
<p>Location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How far away is it? Is the cost of travel in time, money and stress worth the educational benefit? <input type="checkbox"/> Is the environment appropriate? It can be challenging, but not involve unnecessary risk; <input type="checkbox"/> Could it be found more easily or more cheaply elsewhere? Is the cost a barrier to participation? <p>What risks relate to climate, disease, altitude, etc.?</p>	<p>Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Beware the glossy brochure. Information should be clear, unambiguous and comprehensive. <input type="checkbox"/> General statements need to be explored further. Phrases such as "staff are all highly qualified" require amplification. Well-founded operations should have no hesitation or difficulty in providing more detail. <input type="checkbox"/> Are claims realistic? “Educational” claims need exploration, if the company is primarily a commercial holiday provider.
<p>Staff Qualifications and Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask about the qualifications and experience of the staff who will be looking after your pupils; do the qualifications for hazardous activities meet Wokingham Council requirements? <input type="checkbox"/> Where staff are only employed for the season, check what qualification standards will be guaranteed. <p>Beware impressive, but inappropriate, qualifications. Seek advice if necessary</p>	<p>Programme Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Providers should be ready to discuss your requirements before you are committed. They should be concerned to help you in meeting educational and safety objectives; <input type="checkbox"/> Providers should be able to demonstrate that effective risk assessment, followed by appropriate precautions where necessary, is an integral part of the way they work; <input type="checkbox"/> Are you confident that you are going to get what you asked for?
<p>Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Find out as much as possible about the equipment to be used. Age, manufacturer and model are all useful indicators. How well is it maintained? 	<p>Buildings and Other Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fire precautions (if abroad, do they meet the standard expected in this country?) and emergency procedures <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid, Medical Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicles, Drivers <input type="checkbox"/> Food hygiene <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy and security

Appendix 1

Residential Visits Guidance

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment for all residential visits needs to cover all hazards that may cause harm to all.

Parental Consent

Written parental consent is required for all trips involving an overnight or longer residential stay and any adventurous activities. For adventurous activities, parents must be briefed carefully and thoroughly and asked to sign in advance that they accept such activities. On residential trips, parents should be asked to give their consent for emergency medical treatment.

Staff-Pupil Ratios

The recommended ratio for one-day academic field trips is at least one adult for every four pupils, with a minimum of two staff. Ratios may need to be higher under certain circumstances and staffing levels needed should be identified as part of the risk assessment process.

Factors to take into consideration are:

- age, gender and ability of the group
- pupils with special educational or medical needs
- experience and competence of staff
- nature of activities
- duration and nature of journey
- type of accommodation
- first aid cover

There must be enough staff to cope effectively with an emergency. On all trips away overnight there must always be at least three members of staff and on mixed trips away overnight at least one member of staff of each sex.

Staffing and Supervision

There must be a designated group leader and a deputy should also be nominated. The group leader is responsible for:

- planning and preparation, including all risk assessments
- the briefing of parents, pupils and staff
- supervision and conduct of the visit/trip
- the welfare and safety of pupils and staff
- operating emergency procedures where necessary
- establishing a line of responsibility, ensuring that all adults and pupils on the trip know and accept who is the leader, deputy and so on

Staff must be suitably experienced, competent (e.g. with the age of the group) and, where relevant to the activity, qualified. Group leaders should be aware of their own levels of competence, take advice

from experts if necessary, and identify the skills and experience of other members of staff and plan to accommodate these.

Expert staff (at outdoor centres, for example), may be of great assistance, and may, indeed, be essential, but remember that the ultimate responsibility for the welfare of your pupils is yours.

Whatever is planned must be within the capability of the pupils and, where physical activity is involved, training may need to be part of the preparation. Forethought, care, and a prudent concern for the safety and welfare of all involved will ensure both success and peace of mind.

Preparing Pupils

Pupils should be carefully briefed before a visit, especially in matters of conduct and safety.

Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- the background information about the place to be visited
- safety precautions and how to avoid specific dangers
- the standards of behaviour expected, including rules about ringing home
- any items banned from being brought on the trip
- staff roles
- emergency procedures

Medical and First Aid

The group leader must know of all the medical conditions of the pupils and follow up by discussing the child's needs with the parents. Members of staff responsible for leading expeditions in this country and abroad, which involve an overnight stay of one or more nights, **MUST** hold all records and share the medical needs of pupils with all staff.

On every trip, a staff member should be appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements. They will have a good working knowledge of first aid and have an adequate first aid kit. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits, the staff member should be a fully-trained first aider. The designated staff member must record the administration of any medicines, date, time, name of medicine and dose.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, contact the designated emergency contact at once. If not the Headteacher, the emergency contact should relay the emergency to the Headteacher as soon as possible and the Foundry College Rainbow Plan will be followed. If an emergency happens on a visit, the main factors to establish are:

- the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- that all the group are safe and looked after
- the names of casualties and get immediate medical attention for them
- that a member of staff accompanies casualties to hospital and the rest of the group are kept together and adequately supervised
- the police are notified if necessary
- legal liability should not be discussed with other parties
- no-one should talk to the media under any circumstances
- who will deal directly with parents

Details to be passed to the school:

- nature, date and time and location of incident

- names of casualties, details of injuries and names of others involved
- action taken so far
- action yet to be taken
- details of staff deployment