



RIDGEWAY ACADEMY

Educational Visit Policy

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Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Aims	3
3. Roles and responsibilities	3
4. Procedural Requirements.....	4
5. Volunteers	6
6. Insurance	6
7. Charging for school visits.....	6

1. Introduction

All visits, trips and off-site activities are planned, organised, conducted and reviewed in line with the Worcestershire LA Policy. Worcestershire County Council has formally adopted "OEAP Employer Guidance" as "Worcestershire Employer Guidance for the Management of Visits and Learning outside the Classroom". A copy of this Guidance can be found on the following website www.oeapng.info (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel).

2. Aims

It is the policy of our school to offer students a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. The Headteacher and Academy Representatives recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich curriculum and enhance the learning development of our students:

- To strengthen personal development and the process of self-discovery, enhancing self discipline and self-esteem.
- To develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment, as well as the ability to cooperate with others in a team context.
- To nurture an understanding, tolerance and respect for people from other countries and cultures.

3. Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher: will be in agreement with the Academy Representative for the approval of the high risk/overseas/residential visits. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4g. All educational visits planned using EVOLVE are given final approval by the Headteacher.

The Academy Representative: will be responsible for the approval of educational visits that are residential/overseas/high-risk/deemed requiring scrutiny. This approval will be in agreement with the Headteacher. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4f.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (Senior Leader): will be responsible for giving a first line approval for all visits and will have responsibility for giving final approval for visits that are not overseas/residential/or high risk. Approval will be given based on consideration of the educational value to the students involved as well as the plans and information including risk assessments submitted to them on Evolve. Approval is also given based on the competency of staff leading and attending the visit based on the type. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4j.

They will also communicate with staff who are planning educational visits, in order to ensure that paperwork and EVOLVE information is completed within the time frame detailed in the policy. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.4j. The EVC will also communicate with the EVC (Senior Leader) on all aspects of the trip/visits.

The School Business Manager: will collect and bank payments for visits where charges are permissible; provide trip leaders with accurate reports.

4. Procedural Requirements

Underpinning Legal framework Duty of Care: Visit leaders must have read and understood the Underpinning Legal framework and Duty of Care section from the OEAP e.g. section 3.2a.

Risk Assessments: A generic risk assessment is available from the Educational Visits Coordinator and should be completed for every offsite trip/visit. The process of a risk assessment should be to evaluate the students attending e.g. medical, special needs, safeguarding or behavioural issues, transport, location and the possible hazards and/or risks that may be encountered. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as Head of Key Stage/Designated Safeguarding Lead/Special Educational Needs register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of students attending. Staff should always be prepared to adapt as necessary according to unexpected conditions and always have a 'Plan B'. Risk assessment should be carried out by the Visit Leader in conjunction with the other staff on the visit and possibly students. Risk assessments should be shared with all parties on the visit. To assess the competence of a provider, Visit Leaders should sample their risk assessment to be aware of risks that may need to be managed prior to the visit. Please refer to OEAP e.g. section 4.3c.

Approval of staff to lead activities and visits: All staff that lead off-site activities/trips and visits will have undertaken the Worcestershire County Council Educational Visit leader training and will be deemed accountable, competent and confident by the Headteacher and/or the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (Senior Leader).

First Aider: It is school policy that, where possible, a qualified first aider should accompany students on trips/visits. However a qualified first aider must be present on all residential and overseas trips or where emergency services may take time to be summoned.

Mobile Phones: The Visit Leader needs to have mobile phone contact, live and accountable to the school, at all times of the visit, except in certain circumstances eg whilst driving, in areas of poor reception or at venues such as churches or theatres. However the Visit Leader, when it is safe to do so, should check for messages or missed calls on a regular basis. Visit Leaders should ensure that the mobile phone is fully charged and operational. This area of the policy must be read in conjunction with the school Minibus Policy.

A bank of school mobile phones are available for use.

Senior Leadership: It is school policy that one member from the Senior Leadership Team will be required to attend visits that are overseas.

Evaluation of external providers: It is good practice that Visit Leaders have prior knowledge of the location they are visiting. This will assist with risk benefit management. If a visit prior to the arranged date is not permissible, then full research on the location should be carried out. Evaluation of competence can be carried out by researching websites or brochures, by using a provider with a quality badge (LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) or adventure mark), by looking at visitor risk assessments or by sampling the risk assessments, by accessing data on past visits or by consulting other schools (evolve), preliminary visits or Governing Bodies for the activity. The WCC Offsite Visit Adviser must always be consulted.

Parental Consent: No student will be allowed off the school premises for any off-site activity, visit or trip without full parental consent. It is the responsibility of the Parents/Carers to inform the school of any changes e.g. medical needs, contact numbers and address.

Residential Visits: A Parental Information Meeting must be held before any residential visit takes place. This should be included in the visit planning process of that particular visit.

Information about participants, medical conditions special needs etc: Students should be identified

and the appropriate measures put in place to deal with emergencies and/or incidents. An appropriate staff- to-student ratio should exist on every trip to include cover, should a member of the trip/visit team be drawn away to deal with a specific situation. Visit leaders should consult with relevant staff and refer to documents such as HOKS/DSL/SEN register, medical consent forms in order to complete a risk assessment that takes into account individual needs of students attending. This information should be shared with all staff in attendance.

Prior notification and approval of visit plans: All visits should be entered onto Evolve and no visit is allowed to proceed unless the visit has been approved by the appropriate person(s).

The PE department is not required to complete an application for each fixture or activity that takes place off site. It is acceptable for them to submit an application for all normal activities, including training for Duke of Edinburgh expeditions for the entirety of the academic year.

Registers: A register of students must be taken prior to departure, during and after all visits, trips and off-site activities. A copy of this register should be left in the school office of which pupils and staff have attended the trip.

Emergencies: Visit leaders should take with them at all times the designated emergency contact numbers for the school and Worcestershire County Council. This information must be shared with all sub leaders. A first aid kit must be taken on all off-site activities, visits and trips. A First Aider must be present on all overseas travel and residential trips. Staff are to be made aware that the emergency number 112 called from a mobile phone acts as a GPS location signal for emergency services in the UK. All incidents are to be reported immediately upon return to school. For critical incidents please refer to the school's Critical Incident Policy which can be found on the School network and is available from the Education Visits Co-ordinator/SBM.

Levels of supervision: Effective levels of supervision should be in place throughout the visit. For effective levels of supervision to be put in place the visit leader and other staff in attendance should consider SAGED:

- STAFF Competent? Trained? Experienced? Ratio of staff to students?
- ACTIVITY Simple? Complex? Training required? Consent? Insurance? Licensable?
- GROUP Prior experience? Age? Behaviour? Medical and/or Special Needs?
- ENVIRONMENT Location and familiarity? Same as previous times? Weather Forecast? Water Levels?
- DISTANCE How Far? Transport Required? Residential? Distance from base?

It is the expectation that staff in attendance should get involved with activities or observe activities so that they know what is happening and can stop them if unhappy. Pupils should never feel unsupervised (including on coaches being driven there and back) they should know where a member of staff is located and available at all times. Staff should be visible and patrolling.

Where female/male students are in attendance on a trip/visit, there must be the corresponding gender of staff where practicable. Any implications arising from this will be reported on the Visit Risk Assessment if necessary.

Expectations of Students and Behavior: The schools Behavior Policy applies on all trips and educational visits and where necessary students and parents may be asked to sign an additional code of conduct in conjunction with certain trips and visits. Alcohol, drugs, psychoactive substances and any other illegal substances are not permitted on any trips or visits by students or staff. Appropriate sanctions will be applied on the visit or on the return should any issues occur. Parents will be informed, as soon as possible, of any significant issues. Poor behaviour on or prior to any trip or visit may result in students being excluded from future trips or visits.

Inclusion: The school will endeavor to include all students in trips and educational visits where reasonably possible (venue access, behaviour, all medical needs etc.). Each case will be assessed for

each trip/visit. The experience of a Visit Leader will also be taken into consideration. Where there are specific behaviour or medical needs, which may be deemed to be problematic, a preliminary conversation will take place with parents/carers and, where applicable, medical consent will be sought from doctors/consultants (the cost of this will need to be met by the Parent/Carer if required). A separate risk assessment may be necessary for medical/safeguarding reasons. If a student is deemed to be too high risk to themselves and/or other students the school may decide to withdraw that student from the trip. When this is the case Academy Representatives and parents will be involved in the decision making process.

Monitoring: It is the responsibility of the EVC (Senior Leader) to ensure that all staff are adequately trained to lead and organise a trip; training will be revalidated where necessary and kept on record. For further guidance please refer to OEAP e.g. section 3.2b.

Evaluation: Must be completed on Evolve within 28 days (Evolve locks the form after 28 days).

5. Volunteers

It is school policy that volunteers are to be over the age of 25 years old and will hold a relevant DBS. Volunteers are, under no circumstances, to assume the positions of Visit Leader or Assistant Visit Leader. Volunteers can be Academy Representatives, members of the Governors, Staff from partnership schools or any other person deemed responsible at the Headteachers discretion. Under no circumstance is a member of staff allowed to be accompanied by their own dependants to participate on any off-site activity, visit or trip.

6. Insurance

The school is covered by a Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) as arranged by the trust. Employer's liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and Ridgeway Academy Trust holds a policy that indemnifies it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. Ridgeway Academy also holds public liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer, acting within the course of their employment) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of staff. The indemnity covers activities such as offsite activities and visits organised by all establishments and settings for which the employer is responsible.

7. Charging for school visits

It is the policy of the school's Academy Representative Body to:

- Ask for contributions from parents for school trips and visits, for which compulsory charges cannot be made, but which are not viable otherwise. Students will not be excluded from such activities because of inability to make a contribution.
- Apply a charge for all board and lodging costs on residential visits except where students are entitled to free school meals.

NB

The following statement must be used in all correspondence relating to charging of activities to students

"If you are in receipt of Benefit and feel you may require some assistance with the cost of this activity, please let us know on the return slip together with evidence of the type of Benefit you receive (eg Photocopy of front page of Benefit book or letter)"

For further guidance please refer to the OEAPeg section 3.2c Charges for outdoor learning.

Procedure for staff Organising an Educational Visit Checklist

Please follow the procedure below to ensure that:	✓
you are supported in planning the visit	
you receive information to enable you to plan a safe and effective visit	
risks are minimised or eliminated	
communication between all interested parties (office, Headteacher, LA, parents, Academy Representatives, children) is effective and efficient	

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:	✓
Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)	
SSO Records & Leadership Support for payment options to be created in ParentPay	

Procedures:	✓
Complete the online booking form on Evolve. Risk Assessments and other documentation (e.g. itinerary) should be completed and attached to the online booking form.	
Complete finance form and submit to the SBM for checking.	
Arrange for affordable payments to be made and collected in at the school office. Deadlines for payments must be set in place and adhered to. This will be done in conjunction with payment made via ParentPay.	
Book relevant transport, tickets and accommodation if required. For good practice it is advisable to follow the OEAPeg guidance Visit Leader Checklist section 3.3e.	
Ensure that draft letters to parents are authorised by the SBM before distribution to students.	
Communicate with SSO Records & Leadership and SBM with regards to numbers and payments made.	
Collect the medical consents for students attending the visit prior to departure and familiarise themselves with medical needs, plus ensure all other student needs have been taken into consideration such as special needs, behaviour and safeguarding.	

On the day of the visit:	✓
Refer to the checklist	
• Collect first aid kit(s)	
• Take asthma pumps and Epipens as necessary	
• Brief supervising adults	
• Ensure mobile phones and tablets/e-readers are working and charged, that the office has the number(s) and that they are switched on during the whole visit	
• Count number of students regularly, and always when changing locations	
• VAT receipts must be obtained for all spending or purchases which use school funds or are expected to be claimed back from school funds. It is the expectation of the Visit Leader to ensure this procedure is followed by him/her and any other team member on the visit	

After the Visit It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader and accompanying staff. Complete the visit evaluation on Evolve. The purpose of the de-brief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.

If the Headteacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**