

Educational visits policy

Why is this policy important?

Outdoor experiences provide young people with memorable learning opportunities that help develop independence, self-confidence, and responsibility.

The guidance contained within this document will provide organisers and leaders with the appropriate health and safety support to meet their responsibilities in organising and delivering educational and recreational visits.

Who this policy is for?

This procedure is applicable to all Schools where Ealing Council is the employer. It is also for other Schools where Ealing Council is not the employer, but where the school has committed educational visit support from Ealing Council. This procedure also applies to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) Scheme (Ealing).

Legal context

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, Ealing Council is required to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of its employees at work. The council owes the same duty to anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This includes participants in educational and recreational activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires an employer to:

- Assess the risks of activities
- Introduce measures to control those risks
- Tell their employees about these measures.

Also, under health and safety legislation employees must:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- Cooperate with their employers over safety matters
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- Inform their employers of any serious risks.

Schools need to strike the right balance between protecting pupils from risk and allowing them to learn from their trips.

The HSE has explained that striking the right balance means that:

- Schools and staff focus on real risks when planning trips
- Those running trips understand their roles, are supported, and are competent to lead or take part in them
- The real risks are managed during the trip
- Learning opportunities are experienced to the full

Striking the right balance does not mean that:

- every aspect is set out in copious paperwork that acts as a security blanket for those organising the trip
- detailed risk assessment and recording procedures aimed at higher-risk adventure activities are used when planning lower-risk school trips
- mistakes and accidents will not happen
- all risks must be eliminated

Approval process

- Educational visit idea and agreement by the head teacher in principal
- Information gathered about the various visit elements for example transport, trip activities, accommodation, etc
- Risk assessment completed and approved by the EVC
- Educational visit programme finalised (Itinerary, contacts lists, letters to parents, etc)
- Final approval by the head-teacher (overseas expeditions involving challenging adventures to be authorised by the local authority's Schools Health and Safety Team. *These include adventures to remote locations involving trekking, sailing, or kayaking, off-piste skiing, and glacier travel. They do not include European exchange visits, cultural visits or organised on-piste skiing with qualified instructors)
- School approval form and SV1 form for all educational visits completed
- Completed SV1 form sent to Schools Health and Safety for all residential and overseas expeditions
- School goes on their educational visit.

Key roles and responsibilities

Headteacher The headteacher has overall responsibility for educational visits. They should ensure that these activities comply with the procedures in this guidance document. The task of approving all educational and recreational visits is delegated to Headteachers and Managers with the exception of overseas expeditions. Headteachers and Managers should seek advice on any visits if the activity is new to the school.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) This is the person designated by the head teacher to coordinate all educational visits and to ensure that staff leading and accompanying visits are competent. The EVC will normally be a senior leader with teaching experience. All schools and children's establishments must have a designated EVC. EVC training can be booked via www.evccourses.co.uk (discount code specifically and only for Ealing schools 'EALING10'). Training should be refreshed within 5 years.

Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA) The local authority has an OEAP approved EOA who provides consultancy services on matters related to outdoor education.

Visit Leader The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit.

Schools Health and Safety Schools and the DofE Award Scheme (Ealing) can contact School Health and Safety for advice, training and support relating to all educational visits.

What to do in an emergency?

- Assess the nature and extent of the emergency
- Make sure all group members are accounted for, are safe from danger, well looked after and that mobile phones are not used by the young people until permission is given
- Make sure that there can be no recurrence of the dangers that created the emergency
- Give first aid and attend to the casualty(ies) if any
- Call the emergency services as required. The police will take statements. An adult in the group should accompany any casualties to hospital
- Arrange for the remainder of the group to return to the centre/venue. Inform the centre/venue too
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the accident site to assist or liaise with the search/rescue/emergency services
- Contact the Headteacher, Manager or designated contact person. They will arrange to contact parents as soon as possible and to establish all necessary links locally. They will want to know:
 - Your name
 - Nature, date and time of the incident
 - Location of the incident
 - Details of injuries
 - Names and telephone numbers of all involved
 - Actions taken so far
 - Telephone numbers for future communication.
- If the press is involved before you have time to contact base, make no comment and refer them to the Council Press Office on 0208 825 5000.
- The headteacher, manager or designated contact person should rapidly appraise the situation. Where the incident is clearly serious, he/she should immediately contact Steve Dunham from Ealing Council on 07940 546 263 or 07568 130 165
- At the incident site, record all relevant details in writing as soon as possible. Record names and addresses of witnesses and names of emergency service officers.
- Restrict telephone calls to the essential and keep emergency numbers as clear as possible.
- Legal liability should not be discussed.
- All incidents must be reported to the Schools Health and Safety using the [online reporting tool](#).

School led outdoor and adventurous activities including the Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Award Qualifications required

School staff supervising adventurous activities must hold the relevant governing body qualifications or be assessed by a technical expert. School leaders should meet the training requirements of the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). This also applies to all Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) expeditions that go into Wild Country Areas.

Appropriate qualifications can be found at the [AALA website](#) or [Sports England website](#)

The [Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance](#) should always be followed

Key documents

Log in to view documents:

- Appendix A: [Example risk assessment template](#)
- Appendix B: [Medical questionnaire](#)
- Appendix C: [School approval form](#)
- Appendix D: [Notify LA of school visit SV1 form](#)

Useful links

- [The Outdoor Education Advisers Panel National Guidance \(OEAPNG\)](#)
- [Health Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#)

Contact

Schools health and safety team email: schoolshealthandsafety@ealing.gov.uk

Contact:

- **Steve Dunham**, Projects delivery unit: dunhams@ealing.gov.uk 020 8825 7418 / Mob: 07940 546 263
- **Raj Chowdhury**, Children's, adults and public health: chowdhuryr@ealing.gov.uk 020 8825 7287 / Mob: 07568 130 165

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- [Neutral](#)
- [No](#)

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