

1 GREAT ACADEMIES STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Academy Trust believes that educational visits are an integral element of a pupil's education and that they play an important role in engaging children and young people in the curriculum, enhancing their cultural experiences and in preparing them for adulthood and the world of work. The Academies' visits programmes aim to improve pupils' motivation, build their self-esteem, help them to become effective learners and improve their achievement.

The aim of this policy is to clearly communicate to the Academies' communities, the manner in which educational visits will be arranged.

2 OUR AIMS

Educational visits should support and enhance delivery of the curriculum across a wide range of subjects. They should contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and to pupils' appreciation of the environment, arts, culture and sport.

3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of educational visits at our Academies are to:

- Provide a range of age-appropriate experiences beyond the classroom for pupils which are safe for pupils;
- Develop skills and independence in a wide range of environments.
- Develop active citizens and stewards of the environment.
- Nurture creativity.
- Develop the ability to deal with uncertainty.
- Provide challenge and the opportunity to take acceptable levels of risk.

4 IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE

4.1 This policy applies to all offsite visits involving students at GAET academies. This type of curriculum enrichment varies in duration from less than half a day to substantial residential trips both in UK and abroad. Offsite visits are defined as events that involve students being away from the normal school sites, whilst in the care of a GAET academy.

The following give an indication of the wide range typical of the schools' off-site provision: visits to environments local to the school, concerts; visits to art galleries, theatres, manufacturing and service industries, farms and historical sites; places of worship, sporting events; urban and rural field studies; adventure and outdoor pursuits; art and dance workshops; regional and national competitions, visits to the next phase of education

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4.2 The purpose of this document is to link the requirements of Great Academies Education Trust (GAET) with National Guidance and EVOLVE.

GAET acknowledges the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people, and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed.

GAET has adopted the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance': www.oeapng.info. Reference is made to National Guidance throughout this document and the associated GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities.

GAET academies use the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by their academy's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources, a link to the National Library www.national-library.info, staff records and visit history, on-line parental consent, etc.

4.3 Planning of visits

All local, low risk offsite visits taking place wholly within the school day should be planned within schemes of work, with reference to generic risk assessments and can be covered by blanket parental consent.

All higher risk offsite visits must be planned in accordance with the GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities

For all types of visit, due regard must be given by all involved in planning a visit to:

- Risk management
- Parental Consent
- Information about participants' medical conditions, special needs and conduct
- Emergencies
- Monitoring
- Evaluation

4.4 Approval of Visits

All local, low risk offsite visits taking place wholly within the school day can be covered by blanket consent and risk assessments. It is advisable that all such visits should be entered onto EVOLVE.

Approval for all other visits is sought using EVOLVE and requests must be submitted by the Visit Leader to the Principal and/or Education Visits Adviser (EVA) as outlined in GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities for approval within the following timescales:

- Overseas visits - a minimum of 7 weeks before a visit is due to take place
- Residential visits and/or adventurous activities - a minimum of 5 weeks before a visit is due to take place

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- Other visits - a minimum of 3 weeks before a visit is due to take place

If it appears these time frames are unlikely to be met for a particular visit, the visit leader must speak to the EVC at the earliest opportunity.

The EVC will liaise with the Principal and/or EVA in order to gain approval for the visit.

In approving visits the Principal and/or EVA should ensure that the visit leader has been appropriately inducted/trained, and is competent to lead the visit.

'Ad-hoc' activities: Where there are local activities that are a planned part of the curriculum but are dependant upon the right conditions on the day, then the visit leader should sign out before departure leaving relevant information with the base contact, for example using the 'Sign Out' sheet in EVOLVE resources. Such activities must be addressed in the school policy with a generic management plan in place. Following the activity, visit leaders are encouraged to record the event on the same day on EVOLVE.

All other visits: It is recommended that all other visits are entered onto EVOLVE, in order to aid planning and reduce bureaucracy.

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow for approval.

The following visit types are 'authorised' within the academy, and then 'approved' by the EVA via EVOLVE:

- overseas
- residential
- involving an adventurous activity as defined in Section 21 of GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities

Approval is delegated to the Principal for visits not in the above categories.

Detailed approval procedures in GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities must be followed.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 places overall responsibility for health and safety on educational visits with the employer: For GAET academies, the employer is the proprietor, GAET.

All persons involved in a visit have a specific responsibility which they should be clear about prior to the visit taking place.

Refer to: 'Planning Basics' and 'Checklists' in National Guidance www.oeapng.info

GAET Board

The GAET Board must ensure that a policy is in place for educational and off-site visits, and that this is updated as necessary. This should be readily available to staff via their academy's own EVOLVE Resources section.

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Education Visits Adviser (EVA)

The Trust has appointed an appropriately qualified and experienced EVA who provides the following services

- Liaises with and provides advice to the Trust and its academies on all matters relating to Educational Visits and Outdoor Education, including technical advice.
- Recommends and provides the EVOLVE system and procedures to ensure suitable management of Educational Visit responsibilities at all levels.
- Reviews and updates guidance if requested, ensuring that it remains in line with DfE recommendations, National Guidance, any Trust-specific requirements, and current good practice.
- Provides advice directly to the Trust, Principals, EVCs, or other persons where requested by the Trust.
- Liaises with Trust personnel to ensure the suitability of the training programme for Educational Visits Coordinators.
- Represent the interests of the Trust at the twice yearly Outdoor Education Advisers Panel conference, regional groups, and other organisations, and provides feedback to the Trust where indicated.
- Investigates as necessary and provide immediate feedback to the Trust on any national issues relating to safety on Educational Visits and Outdoor Education, and make recommendations if indicated.
- Delivery of training as required by the Trust e.g. EVC Training, Leader Training
- Responds to the Trust’s specific requests to monitor or inspect visits.

Principal:

The principal is responsible for:

- Ensuring approval for visits is given, including liaising with the EVA where appropriate;
- Ensuring that the governing body is made aware of visits;
- Ensuring that arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be achieved and are inclusive;
- Ensuring that all accreditation or verification of providers has been met;
- Ensuring that visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits;
- Ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent Visit Leader;
- Ensuring that all academy staff are aware of the GAET Educational Visits policy and GAET Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities
- Ensuring that the school has an emergency procedure in case of a major incident, which has been shared with all staff.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC):

To help fulfil their health and safety obligations for visits, academies are required to appoint an EVC who will support the Principal. In small academies the EVC may also be the Principal.

The EVC should be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the academy. Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the senior management team of the academy.

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The EVC should attend initial EVC training as soon as possible after appointment. Subsequent update training or a repeat full course is particularly recommended for those who are involved in the role infrequently.

The EVC should support the principal in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits, and with approval and other decisions.

Academies are advised to adapt the sample 'Educational Visits Checklist' (Word version in EVOLVE Resources) to suit their own particular circumstances, and upload this to their academy's own EVOLVE Resources section.

Refer to: 'Educational Visits Coordinator' in National Guidance www.oeapng.info

- Ensuring educational visits meet the employer's and school's requirements;
- Supporting the governors with approval and other decisions;
- Assessing the competence of prospective leaders and staff;
- Ensuring that risk assessment procedures meet requirements;
- Organising training and induction;
- Keeping records of visits, accidents or incident reports;
- Reviewing systems and monitoring practice.

The **Group Leader** is responsible for overseeing the supervision of the visit, including direct responsibility for pupils' and staff's health, safety and welfare and must:

- Be approved to carry out the visit, suitably competent and knowledgeable about the Trust and school's policies and procedures;
- Plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks;
- Complete the risk assessment process;
- Apply for approval for the visit;
- Ensure parents are informed and have given consent;
- Ensure emergency and communication arrangements are in place;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do.
- Ensure the assistant group leader is fully aware of all the arrangements for the visit and is able to step up to become group leader if necessary.

6 EQUALITY

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. You are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Refer to: 'Inclusion' in National Guidance www.oeapng.info

7 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy should be read in conjunction with;

- Charging and remissions policy
- Equal opportunities policy

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- Health and Safety policy
- Staff Disciplinary policy
- Driving at Work policy

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