



**Cheshire College  
South & West**

## Educational Visits Policy

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - EVP
ELT Post Responsible for Update and Monitoring	Vice Principal – Innovation, Curriculum and Quality
Published on Website	Yes
Date approved by ELT	21 November 2023
Date Approved by Governor's Committee (if applicable)	27 November 2023
Date of EIA Review	21 December 2023
Date of Next Policy Review	31 October 2026

## **1. Aim/Scope**

- 1.1 The College is committed to enriching the experiences of its learners through high-quality, inspirational and safe educational visits.
- 1.2 The College has high expectations for its learners. Their involvement in high-quality local, regional, national and international visits broadens their horizons, raises their aspirations and supports their development as citizens of their communities.
- 1.3 It is the aim of the policy to ensure that all educational visits are safely managed, well-planned, rigorously checked prior to approval and that accountability for each stage of the visit is clearly allocated and accepted.
- 1.4 The College uses EVOLVE software to manage the planning and approval of all trips. Separate procedures are available within EVOLVE.
- 1.5 This policy will not discriminate either directly or indirectly against any individual on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity or nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or belief, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other personal characteristic.

## **2. Key Principles**

- 2.1 All visits will have a clear educational purpose and be planned sufficiently well in advance, adhering to the timescales outlined herein.
- 2.2 Every educational visit will have a visit leader who will take overall responsibility for organising the visit, completing the appropriate documentation and will also have immediate responsibility for maintaining the health and safety of the party during the visit.
- 2.3 The primary responsibility for ensuring the successful management and organisation of the visit lies with the visit leader including completing records of attendance within EVOLVE.
- 2.4 Staff participating in any off-site visit must always act in accordance with the position of trust and conform to the College's Staff Code of Conduct and safeguarding policy, being mindful of any exposure to radicalisation or extremist views.
- 2.5 The visit leader must ensure the staffing ratio of 1:12 (day trips), 1:12 (residential & international) is adhered to as a minimum with two staff in attendance. This may need to be increased if:
  - 2.5.1 the learners are under 19;
  - 2.5.2 learners with additional needs are identified;
  - 2.5.3 hazardous activities are involved; or
  - 2.5.4 the visit is residential
- 2.6 Trips and visits are to be sanctioned by the appropriate staff. Consideration must be given to all assessments and exam dates including GCSE Maths and English, as well as learner attendance and disciplinary records. In addition staff must ensure learners not attending the trip are well supported and have meaningful work to complete in their absence.

## **3. Educational Visit Standards**

- 3.1 Inclusion
  - 3.1.1 All learners should have the opportunity to take part in educational visits and every reasonable step should be taken to ensure learners are not excluded on the grounds of economic background, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
  - 3.1.2 If a group-specific educational visit is planned, the visit should be able to accommodate all learners who choose to attend. If an educational visit has limited spaces the following expectations apply:
  - 3.1.3 No learner should be disadvantaged in applying for a place on the visit; and

3.1.4 the normal College experience should not be negatively affected for any learners not taking part in the visit.

## 3.2 Maths and English

3.2.1 All visit leaders should strive to arrange visits that do not clash with GCSE or Functional Skills maths and English classes. Ordinarily visits cannot take place on any GCSE exam day.

3.2.2 If a learner is taking part in a visit that does clash with Maths or English classes, formal approval in writing must be sought and gained from the Assistant Director for Foundation Maths and English.

3.2.3 Where approval is given to be absent from the timetabled Maths or English class, the learner should attend a different Maths or English class in the same week to ensure that no course content is missed.

## 4. Approval Process and Timelines

### 4.1 Approval Stages

4.1.1 All educational visits will require a two-stage sign off:

Approval Stages	Required Information
1. Approval in principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline Approval through EVOLVE</li></ul>
2. Final approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All learner/parent consent forms</li><li>• Individual learner risk assessments</li><li>• Confirmation of collection/payment</li><li>• Full and Final Approval on EVOLVE</li></ul>

### 4.2 Day Visits (UK)

4.2.1 Day visits (hazardous and non-hazardous) must be approved by the appropriate Assistant Director and Assistant Principal.

4.2.2 Day visits must secure approval **14 days prior** to the date of the visit and provide a list of learner names and contact details at least 7 days prior to the date of the visit.

### 4.3 Residential Visits (UK overnight)

4.3.1 Residential visits (hazardous and non-hazardous) must be approved by the appropriate Assistant Director, Assistant Principal and Insurance Officer, before final sign-off from the Vice Principal.

4.3.2 Residential visits must secure approval in principle **90 days prior** to the date of the visit and final approval **30 days prior** to the date of the visit.

### 4.4 International Visits (Non-UK overnight)

4.4.1 International visits (hazardous and non-hazardous) must be approved by the appropriate Assistant Director, Assistant Principal and Insurance Officer, before final sign-off from the Deputy Principal.

4.4.2 Residential visits must secure approval in principle **90 days prior** to the date of the visit and final approval **30 days prior** to the date of the visit.

## 5. Code of Conduct

5.1 It is important that learners and parents are aware that accompanying staff take their responsibilities seriously on any visit or exchange and expect all learners to adhere to an agreed Code of Conduct.

5.2 The Code of Conduct is available within the EVOVLE software, for parents and students to view and is part of the electronic Consent Form sent to parents who sign on their own behalf and their child's.

## 6. Roles of Visit Leaders and Accompanying Staff

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of all accompanying staff to ensure the safety and well-being of learners at all times.
- 6.2 All College residential visits must be booked using the relevant bonding or licencing agency e.g. ABTA/ATOL. Tour operators used for coach tours must be ABTA bonded operators. By exception only (due to unusual circumstances) and at the discretion of the College, visit leaders may organise travel and accommodation for UK trips separately without the relevant bonding or licencing agency. This will only be possible with prior approval from the appropriate Assistant Principal and the Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum and Quality.
- 6.3 Additionally, learners and parents will be informed that a non-bonded company is being used. Any accompanying risks, such as these companies suffering bankruptcy or business interruption, should be clearly identified and communicated.
- 6.4 Visit leaders and all accompanying staff must be familiar with the College Health and Safety guidelines, including risk assessment:
- 6.5 An appropriate Risk Assessment (RA) (contained in each procedural trip request form) must be completed and approved by the Health & Safety Officer – any identified risks that are identified after Health & Safety have given their approval must be added to the RA and this should be re-submitted for the Health & Safety Office to review and approve before proceeding on the trip.
- 6.6 Where outside expertise is needed for risk assessments, any costs incurred must be included in the costs of the residential.
- 6.7 When using commercial providers/outdoor activity centres, where activities are booked directly with commercial providers, it is the responsibility of the visit leader to check that activities are safe and appropriate. Visit leaders should check that commercial provider's specified outdoor activities are licensed by Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA). Their website, [www.aala.org.uk](http://www.aala.org.uk) gives details of licensed centres and the activities they are accredited for. Any associated RA for specific activities lead by an external provider should also be attached to the relevant visit form to support the College's own RA.
- 6.8 College staff leading outdoor activities must have appropriate qualifications (e.g. mountain leaders' certificate and experience).
- 6.9 The visit leader must report all accidents or emergencies verbally as soon as possible to the appropriate member of the College Leadership Team.
- 6.10 Participation by non-members of College staff or non-College learners:
  - 6.10.1 Only College staff and learners will be able to participate in residential visits.
  - 6.10.2 However, a limited number of volunteer places may be allocated to learner family members or carers over the age of 21 in exceptional circumstances and where the College Designated Safeguarding Lead provides written approval.
- 6.11 Checklist - The visit leader is responsible for submitting all necessary documentation as outlined in the Educational Visits Policy and for completing all documentation by the deadlines given.
- 6.12 Group Membership – Trips are typically planned within one Department. Where learners from more than one department are able to attend then approval must be sought from all Assistant Directors affected as well as their Assistant Principal.
- 6.13 An information letter (invitation to participate) must be sent to parents / carers (or given to learners aged 19+) giving information about the trip, including its purpose, travel arrangements, costs and staffing. Parents/Guardians of learners under 19 and learners aged 19+ must provide consent for the learner to attend the trip. If air travel is to be used, parental consent must also be obtained.

## **7. Fee Collection for Trips and Residential Visits:**

- 7.1 Learner payments for trips and residential visits are taken via the online store.
- 7.2 All monies should be collected from learners before the College commits to expenditure. If necessary, separate deadlines should be in place for the collection of deposit and final balance where a deposit is needed sooner to

secure tickets etc. For visits taking place in September and October, where time restrictions may not allow for this, the College can pay in advance of monies being collected from learners. In order to limit the College's liability this should only happen in exceptional circumstances. All monies are required at least 4 weeks before trip departs.

7.3 The College uses external travel agents, who are ABTA and ATOL registered, when booking residential visits. The College abides by their terms and conditions regarding payments and refunds, full details of which will be given upon request. The College does not always use the same company as it always strives to get the best deal for its learners. Refunds for trips and visits will be reviewed on an individual basis.

7.4 Bursary Payment: Learners may be eligible for part or full cost of the trip. Overseas and residential visits are subject to strict payment deadlines set by external travel agencies. Any cancellation after these deadlines may result in the learner being liable for the full cost of the trip, either through the bursary balance or cash reimbursement

## **8. Staffing**

8.1 It is the duty of the Assistant Principal to ensure sufficient staffing is provided on College trips to meet the needs of the learners concerned. Particular consideration must be given to learners with special needs.

8.1.1 The staff to learner ratio of 1:12 (day trips), 1:12 (residential & international) but may vary up or down according to a number of criteria. These include the:

8.1.2 age of the learners and any special needs;

8.1.3 abilities of the learners;

8.1.4 nature of the residential or trip;

8.1.5 staffing provision already at a residential centre;

8.1.6 activities to be undertaken; and

8.1.7 a staff member who is attending as 1-2-1 support for a learner cannot be included within the staff ratio number.

8.2 The visit leader must be a member of staff with suitable experience and training relevant to the location and activities being undertaken.

8.3 There must be an appropriate level of College staff accompanying any group where there are learners under 19, unless the centre at which they are staying provides its own trained and qualified staff to undertake activities with the learners.

8.4 It is expected that staff will stay in the same accommodation as the learners. Where this is not the case, details and reasons must be stated at the planning stage and approved by the College Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8.5 In the case of a mixed gender group, the group should be accompanied by both a male and female lecturer but may be adjusted subject to agreement with the Assistant Principal where all participants are over 19.

8.6 One accompanying member of staff must be acquainted with the learners and any special requirements they may have.

8.7 The visit leader, or at least one other accompanying member of staff, must possess appropriate first aid qualifications, where the trip is residential the College will provide training to the required level where necessary (minimum requirement HASAWA). For day trips, where possible visit leaders should seek to ensure at least one accompanying member of staff is first aid trained however instances where this is not possible the visit leader should ensure that the trip destination has a trained first aider on site.

8.8 Visit leaders of trips involving hazardous activities or outdoor pursuits where an external provider is leading the activity should ensure the external provider is suitably qualified or should hold themselves, the appropriate leadership qualification in the specific activity; for example, British Mountaineering Council accredited courses and qualifications.

8.9 Visit activities should be within a 45-minute walk from a serviceable road (for activities taking place under 600 ft) unless the Centre through which the activity is taking place provides its own staff qualified to such a level to supervise the activity.

- 8.10 The visit leader and the accompanying staff should hold pre-visit briefings for the learners where essential information should be discussed. This is likely to include the Learner Code of Conduct, group responsibilities towards each other, travel arrangements, minimum standards of behaviour, dress code, any curfews, assignment responsibilities, free time, additional languages spoken (overseas trips) and any other matters applicable to the individual trip.
- 8.11 Where the trip is organised as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards or other approved schemes (*e.g. an expedition for Silver or Gold Award*), the conditions of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme or other approved schemes will apply.

## **9. College Insurance Policy**

- 9.1 Full details of the College Insurance Policy are held by the Chief Financial Officer.
- 9.2 Only persons authorised by the College as identified under the insurance policy are covered under the College Insurance Policy.
- 9.3 Learners under 19 must use the transport arrangements provided by the College. In exceptional circumstances learners can make alternative arrangements when a written parental request must be made in advance and consent must be provided for alternative arrangements. This must be approved by the Assistant Principal and these arrangements discussed with the learner beforehand to ensure full understanding of arrangements.
- 9.4 The College will not be responsible for any loss, damage or injury of any kind sustained by learners or other family members because of failing to comply with instructions issued by any member of staff or while making use of transport or other arrangements not provided by the College.

## **10. Insurance**

- 10.1 Additional information is required for visits lasting more than 24 hours and for any day trip overseas. Visit Leaders must complete a CTI-1 Form which must be submitted to the Chief Insurance Officer for sign off prior to the trip commencing.
- 10.2 No trips of more than 24 hours' duration may take place without submission of the additional information, even if a travel package also includes insurance. Details of insurance included in a travel package must be forwarded to the Insurance Officer for checking that cover is adequate. Visit Leaders must complete a CTI-1 Form which must be submitted to the Chief Insurance Officer for sign off prior to the trip commencing.
- 10.3 Further additional information is required for trips involving hazardous activities and/or outdoor pursuits (including ski trips). Visit Leaders must complete a both a CTI-1 (*Appendix 9*) and CTI-2 Form (*Appendix 9a*) which must be submitted to the Chief Insurance Office for sign off prior to the trip commencing.
- 10.4 All additional information is stored within EVOVLE and will be attached to the relevant Visit Form.

## **11. Staff Car Insurance**

- 11.1 In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a member of staff to convey learners in their own car. In this case authorisation must be given in writing by the appropriate Assistant Principal and parents/guardians of all learners under the age of 19 must be made aware of the travel arrangements.
- 11.2 Staff authorised by an Assistant Principal to use their own cars to convey learners on College trips must ensure their insurance policies include business insurance.
- 11.3 Visit leaders must ensure that they continually assess risks whilst on a trip and amend the Trip Risk Assessment accordingly. Any exceptional eventuality which occurs whilst on a trip which requires immediate action must be reported to a member of the Executive Leadership Team and the Health & Safety Team as soon as is practicable.

## **12. Insurance Claims**

- 12.1 Damage or loss attributable to a travel company, airline, hotel etc should be reported immediately to the body responsible and thefts reported to the local police within 24 hours of discovery. A copy of the police report and reference number must be provided to the Chief Financial Officer.

## **13. Passports, Visas and Vaccination Certificates**

- 13.1 The visit leader must check that all passports are valid and arrange for visas, if appropriate. If a group passport is used for learners, it is recommended that at least 2 g are made in case of accident. Visit leaders must ensure all passports have at least 6-months validity from visit leave date.
- 13.2 The visit leader must make a note of the passport numbers and place of issue for the group and ensure that this list is kept with other trip information during the stay overseas.

## **14. Self-Declaration Health Form – Learners and Staff**

- 14.1 The visit leader must ensure that learners or parents (in the case of learners under 19) and accompanying members of staff agree and submit the Self-Declaration Health Form at **least 30 days before** departure. The visit leader must check the forms and discuss with the learners/parents/guardians if any health problems or physical disabilities are indicated.
- 14.2 The Parents/ Guardians and learners' attention must be drawn to the section on the consent form mentioning possible implications of any non-disclosure of a health condition that could jeopardise the health and safety of others on the trip.

## **15. Itinerary**

- 15.1 Copies of the itinerary, including the name, address and telephone number(s) of the accommodation (for use in emergency only) should be sent to the learners and parent / guardian. Copies must be available within EVOLVE.

## **16. Contingency Fund**

- 16.1 Visit leaders must make arrangements with the Finance Office to have access to funds that can be used in the event of an emergency e.g. medical treatment, telephone calls etc. Receipts for expenditure must be returned to Finance Office.

## **17. Reporting of Accidents, Emergencies or Delays**

- 17.1 The visit leader is responsible for reporting all accidents or emergencies verbally as soon as possible to the Assistant Principal or member of the ELT, followed by a written report immediately on return. Details of contact numbers and what to do in an emergency are included in *Appendix 5,6,7* which should be attached to the relevant visit form. Staff should be familiar with the College's Critical Incident Policy. If appropriate, a copy should be placed in the College Accident book, together with the names and addresses of witnesses.
- 17.2 Visit leaders must be familiar with the guidelines for reporting accidents or loss and have access to them whilst on the visit.
- 17.3 It is recommended that visit leaders agree before departure that parents or next of kin will only be contacted if a learner has a serious accident or is seriously ill. Parents will be contacted by the Assistant Principal when requested by the visit leader. Parents must be informed of any special arrangements including meetings arising from an injury or illness.
- 17.4 In the case of travel delays, the visit leader and Assistant Principal should ensure that there is a means of contacting the parent or next of kin to inform them of the delay and the new Estimated Time of Arrival.