



**CASTLE MEAD**  
**ACADEMY**

**EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

## Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Academy Council will review the policy annually, unless there are significant legislative changes in the interim period.

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2.0	01.09.22	THA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Guidance updated</li><li>• Additional of 'Trips Protocol' as appendix</li></ul>

## 1. Aims and purpose

### At Castle Mead Academy we believe that:

Far from simply being an excuse to escape from school surroundings, well-planned and organised school trips or visits are an excellent way to expand on educational opportunities by taking learning beyond the classroom. They provide a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our scholars enabling them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience.

***'Pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their school. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits help to develop a pupil's investigative skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.'***

(Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits, DfE, 1998)

In conjunction with LA and DfE advice and guidelines on visits, Castle Mead Academy adheres to the following procedures for all educational visits.

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the scholars.

***'No amount of planning can guarantee that a visit will be totally incident free, but good planning and attention to safety measures can reduce the number of accidents and lessen the seriousness of those that do happen nonetheless.'***

(Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits, DfE, 1998)

## 2. Guidelines

**The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at Castle Mead Academy.**

- Health and Safety on Educational Visits, November 2018
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP)
- Safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas, Foreign and Commonwealth Office

## 3. Responsibilities

**In relation to all educational trips and visits the Principal will endeavour to ensure that:**

- All visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the academy's Health and Safety policy.
- A competent group leader has been appointed, who is able to monitor the risks throughout the visit.
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins.
- Risk assessments are complete and appropriate safety measures are in place.
- Supervisors on the visit are capable people trained to supervise pupils and have appropriate clearance.
- Families have signed consent forms.
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the scholars.
- The mode of travel is appropriate.
- Travel times including departure and arrival back at school are known to parents/carers.
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- The address and phone number of the visit's venue as well as contact details are left in the office prior to departing school.
- Office staff have the names of all the adults and scholars in the travelling group, and the contact details of families and the staff and volunteers' next of kin.

**In relation to an educational trip the group leader is responsible for the overall organisation, supervision and conduct of the visit and should ensure that:**

- The Principal's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place has been obtained.
- A deputy has been appointed in case of illness or incident requiring hospital treatment.
- The planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and families has been completed.
- Comprehensive risk assessments have been completed and countersigned by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and Principal.
- The ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group and adheres to DfE guidelines.
- They have regard for the health and safety of the group at all times and consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the scholars becomes unacceptable.
- All supervisors have details of the group leaders and school contact.
- In a briefing meeting prior to the visit the group leader should identify and discuss with the scholars' expectations in relation to their behaviour and their responsibilities.

**Scholars on the visit should:**

- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might hurt anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it.

Any scholars whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. **The curricular aims of the visit for these scholars should be fulfilled in other ways.**

The group leader should ensure that **families** are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for residential visits.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents/carers for whom English is a second language.

**The role and responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator at Castle Mead Academy include:**

- To keep up to date with all relevant national policy and best practice, through necessary training.
- To ensure all trips have the necessary Evolve process completed in a timely manner, including comprehensive risk assessments, and submitted to the LA as appropriate i.e. residential or dangerous pursuits.
- To approve visits, alongside Principal, and upload relevant copies to the LA using EVOLVE if approval is required.
- To ensure the 'Trips Protocol' procedure is kept up to date, shared with staff and readily available for ongoing reference (see appendix 1).
- To ensure that group leaders and staff helping on trips are competent.
- To liaise with group leaders over completion of risk assessments.
- Ensure Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are in place.
- Ensure the issues identified on any preliminary visit have been resolved within the risk assessment.
- Ensure accreditation / verification of providers has been checked.
- Ensure correct ratio of adults to scholars and first aid supervision in place.
- Ensure transport and accommodation arrangements meet standards required by the LA.
- To keep copies of accident or incident reports.
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor and evaluate practise.
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## 4. Planning off-site visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful and rigorous planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties, which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

### Exploratory visit

**Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit in order to:**

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and scholars in the group.
- Ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of scholars.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group, and to gather generic risk assessments.

### Risk Assessment

**A comprehensive risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit. This should include the following considerations:**

- What are the risks?
- Who will be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to pupils for this visit?

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if scholars are in danger.

**The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:**

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location.
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff.
- Scholars with special educational needs and disabilities, or medical needs.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions such as weather.

### First Aid

A qualified first-aider should be available and accessible at all times on an educational visit.

### Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to scholars for any off-site visit.

**The factors to take into consideration include:**

- Gender, age and ability of the group.
- Scholars with special educational needs and disabilities, or medical needs.
- Nature of activities.
- Type of any accommodation.

**There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency.** Where a high adult: scholar ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Family members with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the scholar group.

**For the protection of both adults and scholars, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a scholar.**

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of scholars should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell scholars what to do if they become separated from the party.

#### **Transport and scholars:**

**Scholars using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:**

- Wear seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport.
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows.
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport.
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road.

#### **Scholars with special educational needs and disabilities and medical needs:**

The Principal will not exclude scholars with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures that need to be addressed at the planning stage.

#### **Communicating with Families:**

**The following information on matters that might affect scholar's health and safety is useful to families and should be included in letter to families prior to a visit:**

- Dates of the visit.
- Times of departure and return.
- Mode(s) of travel.
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- Visit's objectives.
- Details of the activities planned.
- Money to be taken.
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.

#### **Parental consent:**

**Castle Mead Academy will seek consent for all educational visits.** If parents/carers withhold consent absolutely the scholar will not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the scholar in some other way, wherever possible.

#### **Residential visits:**

Approval and guidance for all residential visits must be obtained from the LA.

**In relation to hostels and hotels the following needs to be considered:**

- The group leader should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the scholars' - staff will endeavour to obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group.
- Access by staff to scholar rooms must be always available.
- Separate male and female sleeping areas for scholars and adults.
- Ensure that the whole party are aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations, and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements - where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Ensure that locks/shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group.
- Storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting - it is advisable to take torches.
- Provision for sick, disabled scholars or those with special needs.
- Safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies).

#### **Coastal visits:**

**There are many dangers on the coast and the group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:**

- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked.
- Ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags.
- Look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows.
- Some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds.
- The group should keep to designated path ways all times.

**Paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. Advice should be sort from the LA about any such activity.**

#### **Farm visits:**

Taking pupils to a farm should be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with e-coli, food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm needs to be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

**The basic rules for a farm visit indicate that scholars should not:**

- Place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them.
- Sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities)
- Ride on tractors or other machines.
- Play in the farm area.

## **5. Trips Protocol**

Refer to appendix 1, for the Trips Protocol, which should be adhered to fully for all educational visits.

## 6. Emergency Procedures

### Introduction

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergencies, which will require on the spot response by the group leaders. Adequate provision for minor first aid must be available when the party is 'in the field' and the leader should ensure that the levels of supervision are sufficient to allow the group to be split where necessary. A mobile phone is to be used for communication amongst members of staff and for contacting school.

Activity centres should have their own emergency procedures. If there is any doubt about the safety of the arrangements the trip should not take place.

### Procedures

Castle Mead Academy will appoint a member of the senior leadership team as the emergency contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to the school office, the office will then relay the problem to the senior leadership team, and especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention. For trips which go beyond the time of the school day, it is necessary for an out of hours mobile phone number for the senior leadership team member to be shared.

The group leader will leave full details of all scholars and accompanying adults on the visit with the office staff prior to leaving school premises, including the home contact details of families and next-of-kin. The group leader will also keep this list with them at all times during the trip.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school's reporting systems.

#### **The group leader should complete the following:**

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency.
- Make sure all other members of the party are accounted for and safe.
- If there are injuries immediately establish the names of the injured and their extent, so far as possible, and ring 999. Also inform on-site first aiders.
- Advise other party staff of the incident and that the emergency procedures are in operation.
- Ensure that an adult from the party accompanies the injured pupil/pupils to hospital.
- Ensure that the remainder of the party are adequately supervised throughout and arrange for their early return to school.
- Arrange for one adult to remain at the incident site to liaise with emergency services until the incident is over and all pupils and staff are accounted for.
- Control access to phones until contact is made with the Principal emergency contact point or designated senior member of Senior Leadership Team, and they had time to contact those directly involved.

#### **Incident details:**

#### **Details of the incident to be given to the Principal or designated member of senior leadership team include:**

- Name.
- Nature, date and time of incident.
- Location of incident.
- Details of injuries.
- Names and telephone numbers of those involved.
- Action taken so far.
- Telephone number for further contact.



## Serious Incidents:

- For serious incidents where the media may be involved, the group leader or other party members must not discuss matters with the media. Under no circumstances should the name of any casualty be divulged to the media.
- The Principal or designated senior member of the leadership team should arrange to contact families of those involved.
- **The group leader should write down, as soon as practicable, all relevant details while they are still fresh in the memory. Other staff members might also be asked to do so.**
- A record should be kept of the names and addresses of any witnesses.
- Any associated equipment should be kept in its original condition.
- Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted.
- All accident forms should be completed as soon as possible and Insurers, the TMET Executive team should be informed as appropriate.

## Appendix 1: Trips Protocol

### Trips protocol

Trips and experiences are important aspects of our curriculum and co-curriculum offer. At Castle Mead, we want to ensure a protocol for organising such trips and experiences is not onerous, yet allows due measures to be taken to mitigate risk and also communication is timely and clear. With this in mind, the following five stages for organisation must be consistently adhered to, ensuring each stage is completed before moving to the next:

1. Trip Leader to liaise with Kajal Patel, to consider the school calendar.
2. Trip Leader to take request to SLT line manager.
3. SLT line manager to seek consensus from SLT.
4. Trip Leader to make Curriculum Leaders, SENDCo and relevant Year Teams aware of the approved trip by email, including dates/times and scholars involved. Curriculum Leaders then to cascade to teachers as relevant.
5. Trip Leader to liaise with Kirsty Gunn (EVC) for Evolve process and arrangements. Trip Leader to discuss staffing arrangements with either Tom Hague or Nik Murphy. Once staffing agreed, Trip Leader to approach accompanying staff and their line manager. Evolve Form to be submitted at least one week in advance of the date of the trip. EVC will complete the Evolve form, with assistance from Trip Leader. Trip Leader to submit the following information to EVC in order for the trip to be placed on evolve within the deadline:
  - a. Date and timings of the trip / or external speaker **IF** it impacts on other curriculum time.
  - b. Curriculum Links / Intended outcomes
  - c. Location and Risk Assessments from the location.
  - d. Travel arrangements – include name of hire company, if applicable (EVC can advise on this for e.g. coach hire).
  - e. Staff members attending the trip, which should include a first aider unless approved otherwise by SLT
  - f. Scholars attending the trip
  - g. Letter sent to parents and any documents relating to the trip. Trip Leader to provide content, to be approved by Tom Hague. EVC to then distribute letter and collect replies.
6. On the day of the trip, collect First Aid Kits, Trip Folder including Risk Assessments and Trip Mobile from the Main Office and packed lunches from the kitchen (if applicable). Also check medication requirements for all scholars on the trip. Return register to Main Office before departure.  
Upon return, Trip Leader to return trip folder and feedback on the trip and inform EVC Kirsty Gunn of any accidents/incidents and ensure they are recorded.

**Should you have any queries regarding this protocol, please speak to your SLT Line Manager in the first instance.**

- Financial support for individual scholars from the 'Hardship Fund' should be directed to Nik Murphy.
- Financial support in the form of a subsidy (either in full or part) for the event should be directed to Tom Hague.
- If the trip will mean scholars miss lunch, you must consider implications for scholars who are FSM. Consider which scholars are FSM, find out how many would like a packed lunch, and inform the kitchen ([catering@castle-tmet.uk](mailto:catering@castle-tmet.uk))