



# Clacton County High School

Walton Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 6DZ  
Tel: 01255 424266 e-mail: admin@countyhigh.org.uk

Principal: Neil Gallagher

## Educational Visits Policy

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**Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations**

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# EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

## **1. Introductory Statement**

Clacton County High School, recognises that all members of its community are of equal value and invaluable worth. Students can derive a great deal of educational, social and life experience benefits from taking part in school trips and visits and as such we are committed to providing opportunities for all our students. These trips and visits are encouraged but the school policies must be adhered to in order to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of all involved are safeguarded.

## **2. General Aims**

The school must ensure that:

- The aims and objectives of every visit conform to the school's wider curriculum aims.
- The students benefit fully from the visit and that their experiences, as far as can be controlled by the school, are positive.
- The students are well supervised and the visit well planned so that students are kept free from harm and give others a favourable impression of the school.

Where it is appropriate, practical, and possible, trip organisers are expected to liaise with the school Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), to avail themselves of any help and advice that is available, and to keep them informed.

## **3. Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of:

- The governors, through this and other policies, to ensure the Health and Safety of staff, students, and others visiting and helping at the school. Governors will approve trips overseas and/or involving an overnight stay.
- The Principal, either separately or together with the school EVC, to ensure that those leading the trip are competent to do so, the risks have been assessed and controlled, and arrangements are fit and appropriate. The Principal will give permission for the visit to proceed or will recommend to governors whether the visit should proceed.
- The Assistant Principal, either separately or with the appropriate Faculty Leader, and, where necessary the school Leadership Team and the EVC, assess the impact of the trip across the whole school.
- The trip organiser to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out, and that charges, where appropriate, have been made and collected. The EVC can advise with, but never carry out, this process.
- The trip organiser to ensure that all those involved in the trip are kept informed and that appropriate permissions and guidance are both sought and given to the staff, parents, students and volunteers involved.

#### 4. Procedures

Organising trips can involve a lot of work, and attempting to organise them at short notice will increase the likelihood that permission cannot be given and the trip will not go ahead. A minimum of four working weeks' (except for overnight/overseas trips which require 8 weeks) notice to the EVC is required for trips and, wherever possible, proposed trips should be calendared at the start of the school year. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Principal deviate from this approach.

As soon as the visit is proposed, the member of staff organising it must consult their Faculty Leader and the Assistant Principal/EVC, concerning the wider school implications, such as clashes with other activities and the cover required. Once agreed, a trip pack should be completed as an aid to discussion and sent to the Assistant Principal/EVC. The Assistant Principal, as outlined above, may refuse to give permission for the trip to take place at the time proposed or at all if s/he considers that it would be too disruptive to other activities in the school.

A decision to refuse to authorise a trip, even on an alternative date, would be taken by the Principal. Once the trip has been approved/outline permission has been given by the Principal/governors (dependent on category of trip), preparations may commence.

The EVC will send an email to the trip organiser, the Finance Assistant, Faculty Leader, Catering Manager, Communications Manager and Pupil Records (staff cover), to keep them informed.

It is essential that the following checklist/s be followed when planning a trip/visit of one day or involving overnight stays.

- First - See the Assistant Principal (EVC) and your Faculty Director before booking anything!
- Identify costs/budget– this must not include supply cover (see later.)
- Complete outline proposal forms with purpose clearly stated (see later).
- Risk assessment – could involve students in this.
- Provisionally check and book venue (preliminary visit/information gathered if required e.g. suitability e.g. AALA license, references from other users) and transport (e.g. minibus).
- Read relevant detail in policy specific to nature of your trip/visit.
- Await authorisation from the EVC that all approvals have been sought.
- Send letters home, collect and record permission slips from parents.
- Confirm bookings when definite.
- Ensure adequate staffing ratio – including gender balance for mixed groups.
- Ensure external instructors are appropriately qualified and experienced.
- Ensure other non-school adults are CRB/volunteer cleared.
- Check medical details of students, medicines being taken, any inoculations, collect EHIC's, passports (any of these as relevant).
- Complete and check insurance arrangements as required.
- Brief parents/use of consent forms/hold a parents' meeting (if relevant).
- Student preparation/written code of conduct for students if appropriate – equipment and clothing lists too.
- Provision of first aid kit with relevant contents (see school First Aider).
- Weather information and alternative programme in case of bad weather considered.

- Make arrangements with EVC regarding emergencies (to include an emergency contact number).
- Leave a full list of students and staff with the office/EVC with emergency contact numbers.
- Student count regularly and accurately – on/off or in/out.
- Ensure you notify Key Stage Attendance staff of the names of students taking part in the trip.

## 5. Approval Procedures

All trip organisers undertaking off-site activities with young people, as part of their work, should follow the system of approval outlined below. Please note the following key points:

- For any off-site activity the approval of the Assistant Principal/EVC is required.
- Governor approval is needed according to agreed procedures within the school.
- If the approval procedures outlined are not followed, insurance may be compromised.
- There is a separate system of approval for activities which take place as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, based on the same activity guidelines and regulations.

These are the categories of educational visits A, B and C with differing levels of approval dependent on the nature of the visit:

Category	Trips/Visits	Approval
<b>A</b>	<p><b><u>Trips and visits that present no significant risks:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be supervised by a teacher who has been assessed by the EVC as competent to lead this level of educational activity.</li> <li>• There is no need for National Governing Body (NGB) or other accreditation.</li> <li>• Activities should be conducted following the standard visits procedure outlined by the school.</li> <li>• For example, day trips during school time, cinema or theatre visits, walking in parks or on non-remote country paths; field studies in environments presenting no technical knowledge or hazards.</li> </ul>	<p>EVC</p> <p>Assistant Principal</p>

<b>B</b>	<p><b><u>Trips and visits that are higher risk or higher profile activities, or that take place out of school hours:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe supervision by a leader who has, as a minimum, undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction specific to the activity and/or location. He/she will be approved by the EVC.</li> </ul>	<p>EVC</p> <p>Assistant Principal</p> <p>SLT</p>
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<b>C</b>	<p><b><u>Trips and visits with the highest risk:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All residential activities.</li> <li>• All visits abroad (day or overnight).</li> <li>• Any activity which falls within scope of the Adventure Activity Licensing Authority.</li> <li>• Activities outside of the scope of licensing, or are less commonly pursued by participant groups (such as motor sports), whose safe supervision requires the leader to have completed some prior test of his/her specific competence. For example, a recognised training course, recorded accumulation of relevant experience or an assessment of competence by an appropriate body.</li> <li>• All hazardous activities.</li> <li>• All water-based activities.</li> <li>• Climbing.</li> <li>• Skiing.</li> <li>• Activities in the air (except commercial flying).</li> <li>• Activities where there is significant concern about health, safety or welfare.</li> <li>• This category also includes activities not currently licensable such as high ropes courses, sub-aqua activities, or canoeing in placid waters.</li> </ul>	<p>EVC</p> <p>Assistant Principal</p> <p>SLT</p> <p>Principal</p> <p>Governors</p>
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In assessing the appropriate category in which to place an activity, the EVC will take into account the environment in which the activity will take place.

In addition to technical competence, recognised by qualification, the EVC and Assistant Principal, should be satisfied that the trip organiser has adequate non-technical skills and judgement to supervise or manage the group in question. By their nature, qualifications indicate a reasonable standard of competence in the activity and the ability to assess the suitability of a proposed activity within the terms of reference of that qualification.

Qualifications should be kept up to date and maintained with recent personal experience.

#### 6. For ALL Trips/Visits

Staff ratios MUST be adhered to, based on the risk assessment and take into account:

- Sex, age and ability of the group
- SEND/medical needs
- Nature of the activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of journey
- Competence and behaviour of children

The following ratios (adults to children) as a guide are 1:15/20 for UK based trips and 1:10 for residential, or overseas trips (where there must also be one male and one female present).

For all trips, but definitely overseas and overnight, students should be divided into groups and attached to a given member of staff who will be responsible for the welfare of these students.

- You must liaise with the Assistant Principal/EVC (i/c trips and visits).
- You must have read/be familiar with the full school policy and in particular those areas that are specific to your trip.
- A list of names of students involved must be passed to the Key Stage team, Attendance and the EVC.

## 7. Day Trips and Visits

***Sheets MUST be completed as soon as possible at least 4 weeks in advance but no later than 2 weeks before the visit (dependent on level of approval required).***

- See Assistant Principal regarding calendar.
- Obtain a day visits pack from the Staffroom or EVC.
- Information as relevant (return to EVC/Director of Learning (DoL)).
- Complete the *Budget Estimate* form if required.
- Complete *Risk Assessment* forms.
- Inform staff whose lessons will be missed.
- Write to parents, via the Communications Office outlining all relevant details (date; time; travel arrangements; cost; lunch arrangements; reason for the trip, emergency contact mobile phone). Students must obtain permission from parents via a consent form. (Example letter included in the trip pack).
- Contact the school Finance Assistant to provide details for them to set up an account for the trip (staff must not collect money themselves), organise transportation and tickets as required and to arrange for the school mobile phone to be available, if required. The organising member of staff should ensure by reference to the Finance Assistant records that all monies due have been received, and should remind students who have not paid. The Finance Assistant must be informed well in advance of the trip if payments which we are legally entitled to demand (i.e. excluding voluntary contributions) are still outstanding.
- Contact the EVC to check any insurance issues, if the trip involves any unusual activity and to make arrangements about the mobile phone.
- If the trip runs through lunch-time – arrange for those students who are entitled to a Free School Meal to be provided with a packed lunch from the restaurant. Packed lunches should be collected by the trip organiser from the restaurant on the morning of the trip.
- Travel: liaise with Finance Assistant concerning travel arrangements.
- Ensure the ratio of staff to students is appropriate for the proposed trip and any risks that have been identified. See notes above, under point 6, on Staff Ratios.
- Students to be divided into groups and attached to a given staff member who will be responsible for the welfare of these students.
- Keep the relevant Faculty Leader informed of all plans.

## 8. Trips and Visits involving an overnight stay

***The Purple trip pack MUST be completed as soon as possible, at least 8 weeks in advance, but no later than 6-8 weeks before the visit (dependent on level of approval required)***

- See Assistant Principal regarding calendar.
- Obtain and complete all sections of the overnight/overseas Purple visits pack from the Finance Office.
- In addition to the procedure listed above for day trips and visits, Governor's approval will be required.

***The following should take place immediately after outline permission has been given:***

- The Finance Assistant should be consulted concerning financial matters (including pricing the trip) and insurance. It is not permissible for the costs of covering absent staff to be incorporated into the amount charged to students.
- A letter of invitation, via the Communications Office should be issued to parents / carers stating the reason for the trip, its approximate cost and the deadline for applications. It is essential that the consent form is received (completed and signed) for all participants, as this also acts as parental consent.
- Discuss general Health & Safety implications with the EVC (see Health & Safety section below). Where adventure activities are planned, the trip organiser must read the publication 'Health & Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' carefully, together with the other appropriate documentation.
- The organiser of the trip should ensure that the organiser of the activities holds the appropriate licences or accreditation.

***It will not generally be appropriate for adventure activities to be run by the school's own staff.***

***The following should take place immediately after the deadline for student applications has passed:***

- The trip organiser should consult the Finance Assistant concerning whether sufficient interest has been shown to allow the trip to go ahead; if minimum numbers have not been reached by this date, it will not generally be appropriate to extend the deadline and the trip will be cancelled.
- If minimum numbers have been reached the organiser and the Finance Assistant will agree the final price per student.
- The organiser will need to check the records of the students going on the trip for relevant medical conditions and will inform the EVC accordingly of any issues.
- Finalise Health & Safety issues, including issuing emergency contact cards.
- Contact the school's Finance Assistant to provide details for them to set up an account for the trip (staff must not collect money themselves), and to arrange for a school mobile phone to be available. The organising member of staff should ensure, by reference to Finance Assistant records, that all monies due have been received and should remind students who have not paid. The EVC/trip organiser must be informed well in advance of the trip if payments, which we are legally entitled to demand, are still outstanding.
- At least two weeks before the proposed visit date, inform staff whose lessons will be missed.

## **9. Finances**

A budget form is included with the visits packs. It specifies the breakdown to be included in the budget. For any insurance queries or for the full policy see the EVC.

Single day visits and residential trips within the UK are automatically covered by the school's insurance policy, speak to the EVC, if you require copies of certificates.

A copy of the letter(s) sent home must be given to the Communications Office AND the Finance Assistant. Fundraising by the cohort/group involved in the trip/visit is also deemed appropriate.

- If the trip is an essential part of the curriculum, legally a charge cannot be made - the school must pay. However, we are allowed to ask for a "*voluntary contribution towards costs*", and where appropriate, should do so. Because of the costs of residential or overseas trips, the implication of this is that they can rarely be treated as an essential part of the curriculum.
- A sentence must be included in the letter to let parents know that if the cost of the trip would inhibit participation, they should contact the school and this will be referred to the Director of Pastoral Care for a decision regarding their circumstances.
- Students on Free School Meals cannot be charged for trips, they can merely be asked for a donation. They cannot be prevented from attending the trip/visit as a result of inability to pay. It is usually appropriate to ask for a donation to cover a proportion of the cost.

## 10. Risk Assessment

*Obviously, the key to successful trips and visits is that all reasonable efforts have been made to ensure the health and safety of those with you. A risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what, through your off-site activities, could cause harm to people, so that you can decide whether you have done what is reasonably practicable to prevent harm.*

- A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause injury or harm.
- A risk is the likelihood and extent, great or small, of harm being caused.

The important task is to identify significant hazards and ensure risks are minimised so that they are small. An action plan or list of tasks, may need to be drawn up to ensure risks are at an acceptable level, through the use of adequate control procedures.

You must have satisfactorily completed a risk assessment document.

You are also advised to ask tour operators for a copy of their safety management system.

The key features of risk assessment are that:

- The hazard is identified
- The people who may be affected by the hazard are identified
- The risk rating is identified
- The control measures to minimise the hazard are identified
- Any further action you may need to take is identified

The most likely general hazards would be:

- Student/staff medical conditions
- Transport
- Accommodation
- Security
- Members of the group becoming separated
- Incidents/Injury or getting lost during an activity
- Incidents/injury or getting lost whilst separated from staff
- Road traffic
- Incidents with members of the public
- Unsupervised time
- Risks involved in the range of activities undertaken and environments used

***There are then the hazards specific to your trip/activity, most organised events/tourist locations will have risk assessments already in place, and these risk assessments must be requested from the provider and understood by the trip organiser prior to the trip taking place.***

Ensure you have a mobile phone on the trip and that for residential/overseas trips, students and parents/carers know the number of the school mobile.

The EVC and Principal should be designated as the school/home contact in case of Emergency. The Principal or a designated Vice Principal, should handle all contacts with the media; ***no-one on the trip should speak to the media.***

## **11. Emergency Procedures**

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit or off-site activity.

***PLEASE REFER TO THE CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY UNDER THIS SECTION***

Any accident or injury occurring during any visit must be reported to the Principal/Facilities Manager on return to the school (as for any that occur on the school premises) as in some cases there will be forms to complete. Keep a note of any details for accurate reporting. The member of the SLT with responsibility for trips and visits should be informed. Parents should also be informed of all injuries/accidents and procedures taken to deal with them.

***If an accident occurs the priorities are to:***

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the rest of the party
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services – if necessary

An emergency is difficult to define. It may be a fracture, food poisoning or a fatality, or an illness requiring immediate medical treatment. It may on the other hand be missing children who are soon found, or a road traffic accident in which no serious injuries are sustained.

The procedures listed will not all apply to all emergencies.

In the event of a serious injury, accident or other emergency the Principal, or other nominated senior member of staff, should be contacted.

A mobile phone carried by accompanying staff can be a useful item of additional equipment and may save valuable time in the event of an emergency. However, technical difficulties easily arise. When available, their use should complement and not replace traditional safety and communication procedures.

***Ensure you have left a telephone number where you can be contacted. Keep details of the emergency procedures to hand and ensure that you have the means of implementing them.***