

The Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

RESPECT | ASPIRATION | RESILIENCE

The Aylesbury Vale Academy Educational Visits Policy

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1. Aims

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes The Aylesbury Vale Academy a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. I.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

2. Legislation and Guidance

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, The Aylesbury Vale Academy:

- Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance and Requirements for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities**' in EVOLVE resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
- Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
- Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance. All staff are required to ensure that the adult to child ratio is correct and is responsible for the organisation of appropriate members of staff to attend the trip.

3. Types of Visit & Approval

In approving visits, the Head and Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will ensure that the visit leader is competent to lead the visit.

There are three 'types' of visit:

- **Visits/activities within the 'Local Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment)** These follow the 'Local Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).

- **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.** These are entered on EVOLVE (one month prior to the visit taking place) by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.** As above (two months prior to a residential trip taking place and six months prior to an overseas trip taking place), but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit Leaders are responsible for completing all planning paperwork prior to finalising the trip. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, including staffing. They will have completed a pre-visit beforehand.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governors will challenge and support school visits by ensuring:

- there is a policy for off-site visits and outdoor learning
- The policy covers charging for visits and activities
- There is a plan for emergencies
- The roles and responsibilities of board/governing body members, the head/manager and other staff are clear
- There are formal notification and approval procedures for visits, and staff are clear about their role in these;
- There are procedures in place to monitor the safety, quality and effectiveness of off-site visits and outdoor learning.
- Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity. (For academies, approval by the LA is acknowledgment that the plans attached to EVOLVE are sound but responsibility sits with the academy.)

5. Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is ready to be a visit leader, the Head will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.

- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

6. Planning/Assessment of Risk

The planning process by the Visit Leader is comparable to the expectation of a teacher planning a lesson. EVOLE provides a tool for this planning and allows the EVC and the head to monitor and support the planning process. Risks are expected to be reduced through planning but not necessarily eliminated.

Risk Assessments or Event Specific Notes should focus on the '**really important things that we need to do to keep us safe**' (including special and medical needs), taking into account the issues specific to the event and place and the experience of the staff team and the leader.

Planning for an adventurous activity is often delivered by an external provider. Where the external provider has responsibility for managing the activity, the risk assessment does not need to be uploaded to EVOLE (although this may be useful), however the Visit Leader may wish to use this to inform their own planning and risk assessment.

Alternative arrangements should be included as part of the planning process, for example where there may be adverse weather conditions or overcrowding expected.

The school encourage the Visit Leader to involve participants in the planning and organisation of trips to encourage greater ownership of the trip, and a greater awareness of potential risks.

7. Safety During The Visit

The Visit Leader should share the Event Specific Plan and the Risk Assessment with all staff prior to the visit and ensure that staff, volunteers and participants understand their roles and expectations.

Throughout the visit the staff and Visit Leader will carry out ongoing monitoring of the safety of the visit.

Should the circumstances of the visit change, it is the primary responsibility of the Visit Leader to modify or curtail the activity. This should be recorded as a note on EVOLE following the visit.

8. Emergency procedures

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

9. Staffing supervision, safeguarding and GDPR

The visit will not go ahead unless effective supervision exists. The following supervision will be outlined in the planning of the visit and details included on the EVOLVE form.

Direct supervision- this occurs when the group remains in sight and contact of a member of staff.

Indirect supervision (supervision within clear boundaries) occurs when the group are given the freedom to explore an activity outside of direct supervision but within clearly agreed and identified boundaries.

Remote supervision occurs when the group of students work at a distance from direct supervision. In this case a time and place to meet will be established. For example, on a Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition. Before this type of supervision occurs, an adult leader would make the decision that the group are able to operate independently.

Staffing ratios should be established by the Visit Leader during the risk assessment process. A starting point for consideration can be found on EVOLVE. (In the **Resources** tab under **Guidance and Requirements**) Where departure from the starting point results in fewer staff, the justification should be recorded as a note in EVOLVE.

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual, cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio.

10. First Aid and Medication

Although qualified first aiders may not be required for all trips the school require that one or more of the staff on the activity:

- Has a working knowledge of simple first aid
- Is competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group
- Knows how to access, and is able to access, qualified first aid support.

The nature of the visit may indicate that a higher level of medical qualification is required, especially if the visit takes place in an area where medical services may be delayed. The EVC or the Visit Leader will make a professional judgement on the level of first aid required.

An appropriate first aid kit should be carried on all trips and will be in the minibus.

For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) at least one person who holds a paediatric first aid certificate must accompany children on all visits.

11. Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the Local Learning Area that take place during school hours and which are a normal part of a child's education, such as local studies and visits to a museum or library etc. (Education Act 2002 section 29) We will inform parents of the date and location of the visit well in advance.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, e.g. after school fixtures. Parents have the option of consenting online, or through a traditional paper consent form.

Specific (i.e. one-off) parental consent must be obtained for all other visits and also for activities taking place both during and outside school hours where it is perceived to involve a higher level of risk, such as a visit involving a long journey or adventurous activity. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online or through a traditional paper consent form.

12. Inclusion

We believe that Outdoor learning and off-site visits should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of any special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. We believe in

- an entitlement to participate;
- accessibility through adaptation or modification, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services;
- integration through participation with peers

When we plan a visit or activity for a group, such as for a school year-group or youth group, we take reasonably practicable measures to include every member of the group. We will make reasonable efforts to find a venue and activities that are suitable and accessible, and to make arrangements that enable the whole group to participate fully and to gain the benefits.

A decision to exclude someone is not taken lightly, and only after consultation with those who have responsibility for them or are involved, such as the headteacher/manager, visit leader, class teacher, SENCO, parents, support staff, any third-party provider, GP or social worker. Where possible we will provide the student with a suitable alternative.

Students will not be excluded from educational visits based on their behaviour. However, it may be acceptable to exclude someone from an activity or visit if their potential behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety or welfare of either themselves or others, or to the successful completion of the activity or visit.

13. Charging / funding for visits

We follow the guidance in the Education Act 1996 for charging for visits and trips.

[3.2c Charging for school activities](#)

14. Transport

We follow Bucks Requirements and Guidance which reflects National Guidance.

Coaches - The school uses a trusted, local coach company which has been recommended by the LA.

Minibus- The School minibuses are used to transport students on local visits, school sports fixtures or if there are a small number of students requiring transport. The mini buses will only be driven by staff who have passed the BC Minibus Driving Test (Chiltern Development Training Ltd).

Pre-checks are made by the school site management team.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Head, and a 'Private Car' Form completed and retained by the school annually.

15. Insurance

The responsibility for arranging adequate insurance cover rests with the visit leader.

The academy is covered with the Risk Protection Arrangement.

For visits abroad, visits including adventurous activities and residential visits, journey insurance must be taken out. This would usually be arranged through the visit provider.

Basic levels of cover for Personal Accident and Personal Liability should be as follows:

Personal Accident	Capital Sum £25,000 with a full continental scale
Medical & Associated Expenses	£5,000,000
Personal Property & Money	£1,500
Cancellation	£2,500
Personal Liability	£2,000,000

A copy of the policy for the visit must be available to all party leaders, volunteers and parents. For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) if still valid or a GHIC (Global Health Insurance Card). This does not replace the need for medical insurance cover.

16. Swimming Lessons

Children are taught by swimming teachers at Stoke Mandeville stadium who assess the children on the first lesson and then teach them in ability groups allowing all children to progress safely and at an appropriate level. We have 3 members of staff taking the children on the bus to swimming with a further 3 swimming teachers at the pool.

Safeguarding

The male and female group changing rooms are booked for the school to use each week, these are away from the public changing rooms. One member of staff is allocated a changing room to supervise the children, once all children have left the changing rooms these are locked until they get changed again. When walking through the changing rooms to the pool, children are encouraged to bring a t-shirt and appropriate shoes as this is a public area.

For swimming, parental consent is attained for the children to wear goggles, the children must be able to put on and take these off independently to use them

Transport and safety

The children are transported to the swimming pool by coach and are picked up and dropped off at the entrances of both Stoke Mandeville Stadium and AVA Primary.

The risk assessments and Action plans for the pool and travelling to and from the venue are available in the swimming folder, along with parental consent forms and risk assessments.

17. Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

Arrangements for specific events and visits will be outlined in the parental letter and arrangements will be agreed by staff and students. .

18. Specialist Activities and Visits

The following types of visits are considered specialist:

- Farms including Farm Parks & Zoos
- Heritage visits
- Museums and Galleries
- Field Studies
- Armed Services
- Study Tours.

19. Water-Margin Activities

Activities that include walking near water-such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water are water margin activities. However, these are not swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment or water-going craft.

As with all visits, where appropriate the Visit Leader will plan for an approved alternative 'Plan B' for where conditions dictate, and for which parental consent has been obtained.

20. Residential Visits

Residential visits require specific additional management issues which are outlined on EVOLVE in **Resources** tab under **Guidance and Requirements**.

21. Oversees and Exchange Visits

The Visit Leader will consider the relevant country information from the Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the relevant information will be circulated around the team.

22. Weather, Clothing and Survival

The Visit Leader will act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

They will advise participants on the clothing they should wear appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;
- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders will plan for and consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

An agreed 'Plan B' will be a ready alternative.

23. Swimming

All swimming activities and venues will be included within the visit plan and itinerary, and lifeguarding arrangements checked in advance (On EVOLVE). This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Swimming pools including hotels

The use of a pool will be clearly identified as part of the visit planning and will never a spontaneous decision.

Natural Water Bathing (i.e. not in a swimming pool)

A 'Note' will be added to the planning documents on the EVOLVE visit form for the attention of the LA detailing the activity.

24. Adventurous Activities

The list of activities the school considers adventurous are listed in the appendix 3.

The following activities are **not** regarded as adventurous and therefore do not require approval by the LA but will be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience:

- Walking in parks or on non-remote country paths
- Field studies - unless in the environments stated in 'open country'
- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
- Theme parks and tourist attractions
- Pedal go-karts
- Farm visits, museum, library, etc.
- Local traffic survey
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either the external provider or a member of staff. The Visit Leader will establish this as part of the planning process.

25. Water-based Activities

The following are **not** regarded as adventurous activities for the purposes of LA approval:

- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools -
- Water-margin activities as explained in section 19.
- Commercial craft, tourist boat trips, and similar activities for which young people would not normally wear personal buoyancy.

With the exception of these, all other forms of water-based activities are regarded as adventurous activities, and as such require LA approval. The responsibility for the safety of participants in a water-based activities will rest with either the external provider or a member of staff. The Visit Leader will establish this as part of the planning process.

26. Activity Leader Qualifications and DofE

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either the external provider or a member of staff. The Visit Leader will establish this as part of the planning process.

The school follows a separate policy for Duke of Edinburgh Expeditions.

The Visit Leader/EVC will support staff with establishing the minimum leadership qualifications for staff wishing to lead activities based on the different terrain or water type involved.

27. Snowsports visits

Snowsports (e.g. skiing and snowboarding - inside or outside) are regarded as adventurous activities, and the visit therefore requires LA approval. This will be obtained by the Visit Leader through the planning process on EVOLVE.

All members of staff intending to organise a snowsport visit (but not instruct, lead or supervise on snow) will hold the Snowsport Course Organiser award (SCO), administered by Snowsport England www.snowsportengland.org.uk and have previously accompanied at least one educational snowsports visit.

All participants of a visit including snowsports will be under the direction of a qualified and competent instructor. This is approved by the LA through EVOLVE. All details of snowsports activities and off-piste activities will be recorded by the Visit Leader on EVOLVE and approved by the LA.

28. Overseas Expeditions

Given the complexity of Overseas Expeditions, all Visit Leaders will discuss the visit and the most suitable provider with the Outdoor Education Adviser (LA) and/or the EVC.

The school use providers that hold LOTC Quality Badge that is specific to Overseas Expeditions.

The expedition will be registered on EVOLVE as soon as the provider has been chosen **with a note to the advisor.**

29. Approval of staff to lead an adventurous activity

Staff who wish to **lead** (i.e. supervise or instruct) an adventurous activity, as defined in will scan copies of their relevant qualifications (e.g. instructor certificates, first aid etc.) to the 'My Details' section of their EVOLVE account.

The visit leader will complete the Visit Form on EVOLVE as usual. During this process EVOLVE will ask for an **Activity Leader Form (ALF)** to be completed, which will request further details regarding the proposed venture (e.g. dates, venues, numbers, etc). The ALF will then be embedded within the Visit Form for that particular visit. On receipt of a Visit Form (and embedded ALF), the Outdoor Education Adviser will view the proposed activity in the context of the leader's competencies and qualifications.

30. Using an External Provider

The decision about the use of an external provider is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, EVC, and Head.

An 'External Provider' delivers an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding, for example:

- Activity Centre
- Ski Company
- Educational Tour Operator
- Overseas Expedition Provider
- Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff
- Freelance instructor of adventurous activities
- Youth Hostel (where instruction is provided)
- Voluntary organisation (e.g. Scout Association), where instruction is provided

For the purposes of LA approval, an External Provider is NOT a:

- Youth Hostel (where accommodation only is used)
- Hotel, B&B, etc
- Campsite
- Museums, galleries, etc
- Tourist attractions
- Theme Parks
- Coach, Train, or Airline company
- Swimming Pool
- Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by a member of your establishment's staff with an approved Activity Leader Form (ALF)
- 'Volunteer' instructor of adventurous activities (see below)

EVOLVE automatically identifies providers that hold an LOtC Quality Badge and includes the level of Public Liability Insurance carried.

For Providers that hold an LOtC Quality Badge: No further action is necessary, other than to check the suitability of the provider/venue in relation to the intended learning outcomes for the particular group.

For Providers that do not hold an LOtC Quality Badge the Visit Leader will complete a Provider Statement Form on EVOLVE.

Appendix 1 – Local Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- Will be recorded on EVOLVE as a LAV (Local Area Visit)

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area for Secondary students includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- Berryfields area
- St Mary's Church, HP18 OPY
- Stoke Mandeville Stadium Swimming Pool
- The fields surrounding the school grounds
- For Primary children the definition of a School Learning Area is no more than 0.5 of a mile.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- A current list of staff approved to lead in this setting is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area and will have completed a pre-visit walk through, including identifying any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques. Staff have completed a pre visit walk through?
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.

- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles).

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always two emergency contacts identified on the EVOLVE trip form. For residential visits where the emergency contact has a home landline number it must be included on the form otherwise enter 'No home landline'.
2. This nominated base contacts will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the normal establishment hours a Serious Incident Action Card must be with the Visit Leader at all times. This along with the Incident Recording Sheet can be found in EVOLVE under the Resources tab.
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 3- Adventurous Activities

[8.1f Adventurous Activities](#)