

Educational Visits Policy

Approval Arrangements

All statutory policies in the Trust are ultimately the responsibility of the Trust Board. To enable it to discharge this responsibility appropriately and in collaboration with the constituent schools, the Trust Board will

1. set a full Trust wide policy which applies in the same way to all schools,
2. require individual schools to set a policy (in most cases with Trust-provided guidance) appropriate to the needs and circumstances of an individual school

This is a level 1 policy against the Trust Governance Plan and supersedes any previous version.

Approval Body:	CEO
Date Approved:	22/04/2025
Author:	COO
Next review:	Spring 2028
Review period:	3 years
Version:	1.1

Aims

The vision of the Tenax Schools Trust is to achieve excellence by working together so that all may feel loved and empowered to serve a thriving society. We are committed to education providing life changing transformative opportunities.

We aim to provide enriching and safe experiences for students, enhancing their learning and development while maintaining the trust and confidence of parents and the broader community. The Trust has a strong commitment to the added value of educational off-site visits, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and outside the school premises.

We recognise our duty of care and statutory responsibilities for health, safety and welfare of students, staff, volunteers, providers and members of the public in connection with educational visits for which we are accountable.

This policy outlines our expectations and procedures on how all educational off-site visits or activities that occur outside the school premises will be managed. This ranges from walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's guidance on Health & Safety on educational visits (November 2018), the LA's latest procedures for off-site visits (ESCC published 2024 and KCC published 2017) and The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) guidance for outdoor learning and educational visits.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our other school policies including the H&S Policy, Policy for supporting children with medical conditions, and the Charging and Remissions Policy.

Roles & Responsibilities

In line with our H&S Policy, staff must ensure that prior to planning or accompanying an off-site educational visit, that they are aware of the school's policy on educational visits.

Each of our schools should have a designated Education Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) whose role is co-ordinate off-site visits and make sure they have the training they need. This role may be delegated by the Headteacher to a designated and suitable member of staff.

The ***Educational Visits Co-ordinator*** will:

- Have access to training, advice and guidance
- Be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that appropriate regulations and guidelines are followed for off-site activities and educational visits
- Ensure there are school procedures in place for all visits
- Work with visit leaders to ensure that the aims of the educational visit are achievable and suitable
- After discussion with the Headteacher, either approve or decline proposals for trips and visits and confirm with relevant staff
- Confirm that adequate risk assessments have been carried out
- Keep written records of visits, accidents or incident reports
- Support the Headteacher in the management of and evaluation of educational visits
- Confirm the leadership of the group is appropriate, including accompanying staff and volunteers
- Organise training and induction of visit/activity leaders and accompanying staff and volunteers
- Ensure parents are informed and have given written consent where necessary
- Ensure systems and procedures are reviewed annually

In addition, the **Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring

- Visits and activities are planned with clear educational aims and objectives, based on students' needs and abilities, to support high quality learning outcomes
- appropriate approval for visits is given
- arrangements are in place for the educational objectives of a visit to be inclusive
- all accreditation or verification of external providers has been met
- each visit has an appropriately competent Visit Leader and suitable supervision ratios
- an emergency procedure is in place in case of a major incident, which has been discussed and reviewed by staff
- the duty of care provided by the visit leader is at least equal to that which would be exercised by a prudent parent in terms of supervisory responsibility for the students in their charge
- visits comply with regulations and guidelines and the school's overall health and safety policy
- adequate safeguarding procedures are in place, including relevant DBS and vetting checks

and safeguarding training for volunteers and external providers assisting with off-site visits and activities

- arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the students
- there is adequate first aid provision
- a school contact has been nominated and the group leader has details
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home
- travel arrangements are appropriate
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- visits are evaluated to inform the operation of future visits

The **Visit Leader** has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, including direct responsibility for the students' health, safety and welfare. The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring:

- approval by the Headteacher to carry out the visit, and that they are suitably competent and knowledgeable about the school and its policy and procedures
- planning and preparation for the visit and assessing the associated risks in conjunction with the EVC
- the roles and responsibilities of other adults and students are defined and communicated
- a pre-visit briefing is held for accompanying adults and students outlining expectations, safety and emergency procedures, itinerary and contact information
- a post-visit review is completed with the EVC to evaluate the success of each off-site visit, identify any issues, and recommend any adjustments for future visits

There should, in most circumstances, be as an **Assistant Leader** who is deemed competent to take responsibility if the Visit Leader is unable to do so.

Staff and volunteers accompanying the visit must:

- be competent to carry out their defined role and responsibilities
- understand and agree the expectations of them
- understand their relationship to the students, staff and visit leader
- recognise the limits of their responsibility
- ensure that they are not left in sole charge of students unless this has been formally agreed through a risk assessment
- follow instructions from Visit Leader

- raise any concerns for student welfare with the Visit Leader

Parents and carers

The school must always get written parental consent for nursery-age children. For children over nursery age, written consent may not be needed for visits which are part of the curriculum and in school hours. However, the school may ask for written consent for each visit together with medical and emergency contact details. Parents and carers will be given sufficient written and supplementary information about visits to enable them to make an informed decision.

When appropriate for high risk, residential and foreign visits a briefing meeting with parents/carers will be arranged. Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents/carers. This information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.

Students

Students should be adequately briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all educational visits.

Risk Assessment

A suitable risk assessment for each proposed off-site visit must be in place, considering factors like the location, distance from the school, type of activity, student age, need for staff with specialist skills, potential hazards, weather conditions, and necessary safety measures.

This necessitates that the Visit Leader, where possible, has made a pre-visit in order to be able to plan for the visit and to conduct a Risk Assessment appropriately.

The EVC and/or Headteacher should check the risk assessment as part of the approval process.

Supervision Ratios

There are no legally set ratios (except for Early Years) to abide by in respect of staff to student ratios for off-site visits. Our recommended overall adult to child ratios for low risk activities are as follows:

EYFS - 1:5

Years 1 to 3- 1:6

Years 4 to 6 – 1:10

Year 7 -13 – 1:10/15

However, the ratios for each particular visit should be carefully considered as part of the risk assessment depending on the activity, environment, student age, mode of transport, and any special needs to ensure adequate and safe supervision.

Transport

If students are to be driven in private cars by parents, the driver must have completed a [school drivers form](#) indicating they have an up to date driving licence and that their vehicle is adequately insured and has an up to date MOT certificate before children can use the car.

All staff who drive children within their own cars must also ensure that their insurance companies will cover their transporting of children for work purposes and their vehicle has an up to date MOT certificate.

Those children who are below the designated height must use a booster seat, except in an emergency situation, where if the correct child seat isn't available, a child over 3 years of age can use an adult seat belt, if the journey is unexpected, necessary and over a short distance. (Government Guidance, 23rd September 2015).

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of staff as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to the school office, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave a copy of full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including emergency contact numbers.

Schools should have an emergency response plan that covers what to do if there is an incident away from school. They should also have a communications plan that covers how routine communications should be handled, including regular check-ins and calls to reassure people. Visit leaders should be familiar with the plan.

Weather conditions

Our key priority is to protect the health and safety of our staff, volunteers, and students in the event of severe weather. This should be included within the risk assessment. A risk-based and informed decision to cancel or curtail an off-site visit will be taken by the Headteacher should a severe weather warning be in force and issued by the Met Office for the visit date/s and/or during the visit.

Before cancelling a visit, consideration should be given to alternative venues, postponement to a later date or a modification of the visit.

All visit plans should have a contingency plan for adverse weather, including a visit cancellation procedure.

Inclusion

Every effort will be made to ensure that visits are available and accessible to all. Reasonable efforts must be made to find a venue and activities that are suitable and accessible for the whole group to participate in fully.

Visit Leaders should consider the needs of the group at the earliest point when planning a visit, so they can ensure the needs of the young people are met. In some circumstances it may be impossible for reasonable adjustments to be made to enable someone to be included on a visit.

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. Also, if it affects the successful completion of the activity or visit. However, if the behaviour is associated with a protected characteristic, great care should be taken to ensure that unfair or illegal discrimination does not take place.

Charges and Refunds

Charges and refunds will be in line with the Trust's [Charging and Remissions policy](#).

Insurance

Adequate insurance coverage must be in place for all off-site activities. The Trust is a member of the Government's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) for insurance cover. Off-site visits are generally covered under the RPA. This means that if the school or Trust is legally liable for an incident occurring during an off-site visit, the RPA will provide indemnity for the damages, as long as the incident falls within the scope of the standard RPA coverage. Please refer to the RPA Membership rules in relation to conditions and cover for off-site visits including 'adventurous' activities.

Other Considerations

The visit leader must always be a member of staff.

No fewer than half the adults accompanying the party should be staff from the school.

If a visit includes using an external organisation, only appropriately accredited providers with adequate safeguarding procedures and vetting checks should be used. The visit leader must check the organisation has appropriate safeguarding and safety standards and public liability insurance and be approved by the Headteacher. All staff and volunteers should be aware of the provider's emergency procedures.

Students may be engaged in preparatory work prior to the visit and follow-up work on their return.

The visit leader or EVC will have an emergency action folder containing consent forms, address lists, emergency contact numbers, medical and dietary information relating to students.

Policy review

This policy is reviewed at least every 3 years or in response to legislative changes and lessons identified from incidents and near misses.