

Trust-wide Educational Visits Policy

Review

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Section A:

1. Application

This Educational Visit Policy and Procedures applies to Athena Learning Trust as a whole and to all the schools in the Trust.

It is subject to the Trust's Scheme of Delegation for Governance Functions. If there is any ambiguity or conflict then the Scheme of Delegation and any specific alteration or restriction to the Scheme approved by the Board of Trustees takes precedence.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher/principal of each school within the Athena Learning Trust to ensure that their school adheres to this policy and procedures.

In implementing this policy and procedures all staff must take account of any advice given to them by the CEO, the Director of Education, and/or the Board of Trustees.

If there is any question or doubt about the interpretation or implementation of this Policy and Procedures, the CEO should be consulted

2. Monitoring arrangements

This Policy will be reviewed every three years and will be updated when required due to legislation changes or as guidance from the DfE is updated.

3. Approval and review

- Maintenance of this Policy is the responsibility of the CEO.
- This Policy was approved by the Education Performance Committee on 14th July 2026
- This Policy is due for review annually

4. Legislation and guidance

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association and is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
- And for schools with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

5. Associated Policies

The following Trust and School policies and procedures are directly related to and complement this Policy:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Individual school Charging and Remissions Policy
- Individual school Behaviour policy
- Individual school and Athena Learning Trust shared service safeguarding Policy
- Individual school Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Athena Learning Trust Special Educational Needs (SEN) policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Individual school Accessibility plans

Section B

1. Policy Statement

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, a school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the headteacher or principal or other designated member of staff.

Athena Learning Trust believes that Educational Visits are a core part of pupils' education, exposing them to opportunities they might not otherwise be able to access.

Educational Visits are hugely important in raising aspirations, building cultural capital, and strengthening resilience - as well as opening pupils' eyes to the world around them, helping cement friendships, and creating memories which will be treasured.

This policy sets out the schools' approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff, and to make sure that visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1. Board of Trustees

The Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that Educational Visits are carefully planned with appropriate risk management and quality assurance processes
- Approving overseas trips. This function may be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, who may in turn may appoint a suitably experienced and qualified Educational Visits Coordinator for Athena Learning Trust to advise them on such matters.

2.2. Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, except those which require Board of Trustee Approval
- Appointing an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). If no EVC is appointed, the Headteacher has this duty.
- Making sure staff, including the EVC, have received any necessary training
- Making the Chair of Governors aware of any overseas trip.

2.3. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The EVC is responsible for:

- Overseeing and guiding other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assessing the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit
- Assessing outside activity providers
- Advising the Headteacher and/or Board of Trustees when required for the approval of trips
- Accessing the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Evaluating all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and using this to improve future arrangements

2.4. Trip lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including coordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Assume responsibility for students at all times, including when they are being managed by other professionals (e.g. activity instructors)
- Ensure that all staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times, and that staff adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times.

2.5. Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. All staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

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- Act in accordance with the Code of Conduct at all times.

2.6. Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

2.7. Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

2.8. Pupils

All educational visits remain subject to the schools' behaviour policy. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of each school's behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

3. Planning and preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Headteacher, and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school
- Health and safety considerations

- Staff-to-pupil ratio appropriate to the destination and county guidelines
- The age of the pupils
- Any other factors deemed appropriate and relevant

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks
- Any additional minimum standards, depending on the age of the children

3.1. Approval

Responsibility for approving most trips rests with the Headteacher, who may do so on the advice of their local authority.

In cases where a trip involves travel overseas, the Headteacher will seek approval of the Board of Trustees (who may delegate this as detailed above).

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the Headteacher (and the Board of Trustees) where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

3.2. Parental Consent

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

Where trips take place entirely during the school day, and do not require a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment, schools are not required to seek parental consent, but must still notify parents in advance of the visit.

3.3. Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

The above does not preclude schools from restricting participation on trips based on either attendance or behaviour (for example, by organising a rewards trip for the pupils with the best conduct in school).

4. Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment before the start of all trips. This will normally take place at least two weeks before the start of the trip - but in exceptional circumstances (for example, if a last minute opportunity arises) the Headteacher may approve a risk assessment carried out at any point before the visit.

This will be completed using the school's existing risk assessment templates, and approved by the Headteacher - who may delegate this to the EVC. Existing risk assessments or those provided by the destination itself might also be used to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the Headteacher and, where appropriate, third-party vendors.

A copy of the Risk Assessment will be taken on the visit and another copy left with the EVC.

4.1. Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- For overnight trips with mixed pupil groups, at least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present. For non-overnight trips, at least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult will be present where possible.
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips
- [For EYFS settings] At least 1 qualified paediatric first aider is present on all trips
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip, and issued with the appropriate medication/guidance
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls

4.2. Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and the Health and Safety policies and procedures. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

4.3. Joint Trips

Schools within sometimes conduct joint trips (e.g. several schools might opt to run a joint Duke of Edinburgh expedition together). In such cases, the following should be made clear:

- Each school should appoint a Trip Leader as normal, who retains overall responsibility for the students at their school at all times. Their role is to coordinate any operations across multiple schools. In the unlikely case of a disagreement between trip leaders, they may resolve decisions, but in doing so should always favour the option with lower risk.
- Where students may be directly supervised by staff from another (for example, if students from one school are in a DofE group under the supervision of a leader from another school), this should be indicated on the trip letter. Students should follow instructions of that member of staff, but the Trip Leader still retains overall responsibility for their safety.

4.4. Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, the school will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, the school will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

The school will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

5. Volunteers

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

- The needs of the pupils going on the trip
- The setting and circumstances of the trip
- Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed at least 2 weeks ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance in writing. They will also be asked to confirm they agree with the expected behaviour and sign a volunteer code of conduct for educational visits which will be provided by the school.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits, volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

6. Communication and consent

The school will normally contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 2 weeks before the proposed date of the trip (unless the trip is a last-minute opportunity).

Communication will be in writing, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

The school will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school
- Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, the school will not always need written consent. However, the school will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Schools with EYFS will always get written consent before taking nursery-age children off-site.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

In the case of overseas trips, pupils will be asked to provide passport information and European Health Insurance Card or UK Global Health Insurance Card information, if available.

7. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

One member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to

comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

A limited exception to this exists on some adventurous trips, where pupils are expected to navigate/operate independently in groups (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh's Award Expeditions). On such trips, the trip leader will take all reasonable steps to ensure pupils have been properly trained, and that appropriate safeguards (e.g. checkpoints, emergency phone numbers, pupils always being in groups etc) are set up, and will adapt their risk assessment to reflect this. Once a reasonable amount of time for pupils to relocate has expired, the trip leader will handle this situation as above.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

8. Charging and insurance

Each school will follow its charging and remissions policy at all times.

Parents/carers won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place during school hours. They also won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place outside of school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, or religious education.

Where necessary, the school may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the trip.

The school will ensure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

9. Residential visits

The Headteacher will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

In cases where a trip involves travel overseas, the Headteacher will seek approval (see section B3i)

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- Staff have received any necessary training
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip, as far as is reasonable
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Including relevant DBS checks where appropriate.

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission as far in advance as possible. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school
- The full address and contact details of the destination
- Planned activities and options
- Meal provision
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations
- Accommodation options and arrangements
- The names of staff attending

For visits abroad, the Headteacher will make sure that any organisation providing activities holds the LOTC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. The Headteacher will follow the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance and foreign travel advice when organising these visits.