

Willows Academy

Educational Visits Guidelines

This policy was formally adopted by Willows Academy on:

The renewal date for this policy is:

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Note: In view of the size of these guidelines, the appendices are in a separate document.



1.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy and provision rests with the Head of Academy. On an operational basis, the management, responsibility and evaluation of this policy is undertaken by the **designated colleague**.

2.0 Suggested Audience

All learning and support staff. As part of their academy induction programme or professional development all staff will participate in training so that they are able to competently use the information, procedures and principles defined in this policy. Those staff who intend to take Pupils on visits or residentials will be expected to have a clearer understanding of this policy and may request additional training or support to do so.

3.0 Related policies

This policy is part of a suite of policies which should also be referred to:

Safeguarding and promoting Pupil welfare policy

Child protection policy

Pupil behaviour policy

Equal opportunities for Pupils

Health and Safety policy

Medical treatment of Pupils' procedures

Charging and Remissions policy

First aid policy

Crisis Management Policy

4.0 Academy Mission Statement

Believe & Achieve – Growing Together

5.0 Introduction

This academy is a member of the School Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA). It will work closely with SPTA personnel and other SPTA academies to fully implement this policy, drawing upon best and emerging practice. Academy visits provide a valuable opportunity for Pupils to encounter experiences which are not available to them in the classroom. They can enable Pupils to develop initiative, resourcefulness and independence. However, it is essential that all such visits are carried out with the highest regard for the safety and welfare of the Pupils taking part in them.



6.0 The Need for Guidelines

- 6.1 Academy visits provide a means of significantly enriching the curriculum and stimulating interest and enthusiasm amongst Pupils. Visits should promote all aspects of the development of Pupils and they provide opportunities for developing a wide range of skills and personal qualities. However, they also create the potential for danger to Pupils and staff, whether the trip is a half-day local expedition to a nature trail, or a residential activity lasting for a week. Nevertheless, despite possible dangers, it would be a sorry state of affairs if the academy did not undertake off-site activities through fear of what might happen. The aim of these guidelines is to support the proper organisation and safe conduct of visits organised by Willows Academy staff. The guidelines give instructions and advice about careful planning and proper supervision, so that any foreseeable mishaps may be prevented and problems arising from unforeseeable events minimised.
- 6.2 These guidelines have been developed from the information provided in the DfES booklet 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits - A Good Practice Guide' (HASPEV), published in 1998. A copy of this booklet will be available from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator(see EVC) and further copies are available free of charge from the DfE Publications Centre 0845 6022260. It can also be looked at online at www.dfe.gov.uk/h_s_ev
- 6.3 It is expected that all teaching staff and other adults organising or accompanying academy visits will be fully acquainted with the guidelines contained in both this policy and the DfES booklet.

7.0 Structure and Scope of these Guidelines

- 7.1 The format of this document is fairly straightforward. General guidance is provided in sections **Authorisation of Academy visits** through to **Package Tours** and appendices are provided (separately for ease of access), giving additional detail, general information, checklists and sample forms and letters. Although some activities may be regarded as 'high risk' compared to others, there should be no less rigorous an approach to the preparation and supervision of 'low risk' activities. Ineffective organisation in a town centre on a theatre visit could be just as dangerous as ineffective supervision on a caving expedition. It is vital that everyone involved in the approval, planning

and supervision of a visit understands their role and the duty of care they should exercise in carrying out that role. This duty extends from academy governors to volunteer helpers.

- 7.2 These guidelines cover all off-site activities, with the exception of work experience, and include part day, full day and residential visits, both during term time and in academy holidays. If the visit is associated with the academy, even if it is an 'optional extra' outside normal academy time, the provisions of the guidelines should be followed.

8.0 Queries

If you need to seek further guidance or clarification on any aspect of an academy visit, please discuss with the Head of Academy.



9.0 Educational Visits Co-ordinator ('EVC')

9.1 Supplemental guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in August 2002 states that it is good practice for all schools to have an EVC. This will be the Assistant Head of Academy. It is not envisaged that the academy should need to create or fund a new post, but rather that the EVC function will be recognised formally, thereby helping the academy fulfil its Health and Safety responsibilities in relation to trips. In particular, the formal recognition of an EVC (where this is not the Head of Academy) should help the Head of Academy to be confident that this delegated aspect of the Health and Safety responsibilities is being properly fulfilled.

9.2 The EVC will report to the Health and Safety Committee on every trip or visit to ensure that this Committee has a full appreciation of all the excellent work (and rare mishap) which takes place. This report from the EVC will be a regular item on the Health and Safety Agenda.

9.3 Functions and Competencies of the EVC (Shortened summary)

(a) Government Education Department guidance suggests that the EVC's main function is to liaise with the employer and other staff to ensure that educational visits meet the employer's requirements including those of risk assessment in approving trips and other decisions

(b) The EVC will have responsibility for ensuring that all staff organising academy trips plan these properly and carry out appropriate risk assessments and checks on providers, for example. The monitoring and review process will provide the academy with a formal mechanism for demonstrating that it takes on board any lessons from visits where things may not have gone quite according to plan, to introduce new checks and identify training needs as appropriate.

(c) The EVC will be competent to carry out all of the above functions and be fully familiar with HASPEV and its supplements. The appropriate level of competency will of course depend on the number and the types of visits undertaken. Evidence of competence may be through qualification and/or experience of practical leadership over a substantial period of time.

(d) It may also be appropriate to consider if any additional training will be necessary to ensure that the EVC is fully competent to carry out the role.

10.0 Authorisation of Academy Visits

10.1 It is the responsibility of the EVC, Head of Academy and Local Governing Body of Willows Academy to ensure that appropriate procedures for the approval and subsequent organisation of academy visits are established, and that all members of staff are familiar with them.

10.2 The EVC and Head of Academy may authorise visits lasting one day or less, but will keep the Local Governing Body informed regarding the schedule of visits. It is vital that all interested parties – the EVC, Head of Academy and Governors, - should be informed well in advance of any proposed visit, so that there is an opportunity for comment or enquiry. **Appendix 8a provides staff with a Generic Risk Assessment which should be carefully followed**

10.3 Authorisation by the EVC, Head of Academy and the Local Governing Body is required for all visits or journeys which involve:

- absence for one night or more;
- travel by air or sea and/ or;
- potentially hazardous environments or pursuits.

10.4 Where a visit is planned during term time, the Local Governing Body should satisfy itself that there are valid educational reasons for the visit taking place. The Visit Leader should also check with the EVC and senior colleagues that the planned trip will not impact on Pupils' study time. In addition, the Local Governing Body should be comfortable that the academy can be run effectively in the absence of those teachers who will accompany Pupils on the visit.

10.5 The Head of Academy and Local Governing Body should also consider the implications of the European Working Time Directive, as set out within the Working Time Regulations of employment law. This is particularly in relation to an employee's entitlement to rest periods. Details can be found in the guidance notes available from the Department of Trade and Industry 0171 215 5000.

- 10.6 As an independent school, the academy does not need the approval of Grimsby Council for any activity; however, the SPTA have established a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Evolve, a respected and independent web-based notification, approval and monitoring system already used by many Councils and an Educational Visits specialist consultant. Evolve and the specialist consultant will be consulted before the EVC, Head of Academy and Local Governing Body authorise any proposed visits involving potentially hazardous environments or pursuits. This can be done initially by using the appropriate forms on the Evolve website. The academy will have to set a budget for this service
- 10.7 Before authorising a visit, the EVC, Head of Academy and/or Local Governing Body should be satisfied that:
- i. the activity will be efficiently organised and supervised; and
 - ii. the visit is educationally appropriate.
- 10.8 Guidelines concerning the organisation and supervision of visits are given in later sections of this document. As far as the appropriateness of visits is concerned, an activity should:
- i. have significant value for the development of the Pupils taking part in the visit;
 - ii. be suitable for all Pupils concerned, having regard to their ages and abilities; and
 - iii. not interfere unduly with the work of other Pupils at the academy.
- 10.9 Where the visit is due to take place in academy time, it should be possible to relate the activities undertaken on the visit to the appropriate National Curriculum Programme of Study or the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. While such links are not a requirement for visits taking place outside academy time, consideration should be given to the purpose of the visit and whether it is appropriate for the academy to be organising it.

11.0 Planning the Visit

- 11.1 Teachers planning an academy visit should follow the guidelines set out in this section of the document, as far as they are appropriate to the particular visit concerned.
- 11.2 Ensuring the safety of Pupils on a visit depends largely on the extent to which the teacher can foresee the possible dangers and difficulties which may arise and can therefore plan to avoid or overcome them. Contingency arrangements for potential problems such as bad weather, illness or the incapacity of accompanying adult supervisors should be taken into account and planned for. The availability of telephones or other means of emergency communication should be considered and the use of staff mobile phones should be encouraged. Planning for any individual need, such as medical or dietary requirements, should take place as early as possible.
- 11.3 Steps should be taken to minimise risks and all hazardous activities must be identified. Risk assessments should be carried out and recorded, in line with the procedures identified in the samples provided. Risk assessment also applies to Pupils: any Pupils whose behaviour is considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these Pupils should be fulfilled in other ways, wherever possible. Further advice on the carrying out of risk assessments can be found in Appendix 10.
- 11.4 Adequate child protection procedures must be in place at all stages of the visit, and any guidelines laid down in the academy's Child Protection Policy should be followed. Further advice is contained in the DfES Circular 10/95 'Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service', available from the DfES Publications Centre.
- 11.5 A checklist is provided in Appendix 2 for those organising an academy visit, but the main aspects which teachers need to consider are detailed in sections 12 to 20: **Approval to Transport Arrangements.**

12.0 Approval

- i. The teacher organising the visit should seek the approval of the EVC and the Assistant Head of Academy before making any firm plans. This is best done by submitting details of the proposed trip in writing at least **three weeks** in advance of a **trip lasting less than a day**, but at least **three months** for **all residential visits**. It is then the responsibility of the EVC, the Head of Academy, and the Local Governing Body, where appropriate, to ensure that the arrangements for the visit are satisfactory. A sample form given in **Appendix 3**.
- ii. The EVC and Head of Academy should be satisfied that visit leaders are familiar with any relevant codes of practice e.g. those for lifting or for outdoor activities.
- iii. If the academy decides to procure an SLA with Evolve, notification of any proposed residential visit or visit involving potentially hazardous pursuits will be made at least 1 month prior to the scheduled date of the visit.

13.0 Preliminary Visits

It is essential that a preliminary visit is made, at least by the visit leader and preferably by other accompanying adults, unless the visit leader has recent experience i.e. within one year of a previous visit, of the site or venue. This allows the leader(s) to gain first hand knowledge of the venue, facilities and activities to be followed and so become aware of the potential hazards and difficulties prior to encountering them with Pupils. Particular attention should be paid to fire and other safety precautions and emergency evacuation procedures. All accompanying adults should be familiar with the operation or use of any necessary safety equipment.

14.0 Parental/Carer Information and Consent

- 14.1 Activities which take place in the immediate locality of the academy and which are part of the academy's curriculum e.g. traffic surveys or local field work, do not require separate written parental/carers approval on each occasion. However staff are recommended to obtain written permission from all parents/carers at the start of the academy year for activities of this type, and

to keep such information on file. In addition, parents/carers should be notified separately of any visits of this kind which involve, for example, possible late arrival home.

14.2 It is essential for all day visits involving a full day away from the academy, special lunch arrangements, special clothing requirements, travel etc. that parents/carers are provided with full written information and that written consent is mandatory for every Pupil going on the visit.

14.3 Residential visits and journeys abroad require full and detailed written information to parents/carers, and this should be followed up by a parents'/carers' meeting to give further information and provide an opportunity for parents/carers to ask questions and discuss details with the visit leader.

14.4 Leaders should ensure that those who have parental responsibility for children (as distinct from the child's natural parents) give their permission for visits to take place, particularly if these are of a residential nature. Permission should be sought from Social Services for any looked after children and, where a child is subject to a court order, application should be made to the court well in advance of the departure date, for any visit involving an overseas trip.

14.5 The information given to parents/carers will depend upon the nature of the visit and whether it involves any overnight stay, but as a general rule the following details should be included:

- i. the nature of the visit and the destination;
- ii. dates, times and venues for departure and return, and the method of travel. Visit leaders should note that their responsibility for Pupils ends only when the Pupils return to the academy (if the visit is within normal academy hours), or when the Pupils are handed back into the care of their parents/carers or other responsible adults. Pupils should only be allowed to return home from the site of the visit unaccompanied if this has been previously agreed by their parents/carers;
- iii. the itinerary for the visit, including details of any 'free' time or unsupervised activities;
- iv. the cost of the visit - see the academy's Charging and Remissions Policy;

- v. details of the activities in which Pupils will be expected to or be able to participate;
- vi. guidance concerning appropriate clothing or footwear;
- vii. guidance concerning an appropriate amount of money to be taken;
- viii. guidance concerning the behaviour expected from Pupils and the procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including the arrangements for sending a Pupil home early if the activity involves an overnight stay;
- ix. the size of the group taking part in the visit, and the names of accompanying adults;
- x. details of the insurance cover provided;
- xi. in the case of a residential visit, an address and telephone number at which the group can be contacted in the event of an emergency;
- xii. the name of a contact person at the academy who will be in touch with the group and can inform parents/carers if there are unavoidable changes in timing arrangements or if there is an emergency of any kind;
- xiii. a request that any necessary parental consent form be signed and returned to the visit leader, together with details of any known medical condition from which the child may be suffering, and details of any medication which the Pupil may be receiving. Permission should also be obtained for any necessary medical treatment to be carried out in the case of an emergency. (Asthma is an increasingly common condition; parents are strongly advised to ensure that a spare inhaler is provided to the trip leader.)
- xiv. Details of Pupils' dietary needs and allergies

14.6 A sample letter and parental consent form are given in **Appendix 4** and **Appendix 5** respectively.

15.0 Preparation of Pupils

15.1 To maximise the benefits from each trip and Pupils' safety, Pupils will be carefully prepared for any trip or visit well before the departure date. In addition, Pupils should be made aware of the following:

- i. the aim and purpose of the visit;
- ii. the activities planned and the overall itinerary;

- iii. the rules which apply during the visit - particularly in relation to 'free' time and 'unsupervised' activities - and the details of any safety procedures. Regular head counts should take place, and an appropriate 'lost' procedure should be established. For younger Pupils it may be appropriate to determine a suitable recall signal whereby all Pupils can be immediately recalled to a predetermined point without delay. Some specific guidance is given in **Appendix 6** about rules for groups who will be travelling by coach, rail, ferry or air;
- iv. the standards of behaviour expected, and the sanctions to be used for those who disregard rules and procedures, including the withdrawal of Pupils from an activity or the sending home early of Pupils on a residential visit;
- v. the areas or activities which are out of bounds;
- vi. the type of clothing and footwear which is appropriate;
- vii. the correct use of any equipment which forms an integral part of the visit (unless the visit itself includes specific tuition in the use of equipment); and
- viii. the procedures for emergency evacuation, where relevant. These will be particularly necessary on residential visits.

The booklet 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV)' contains (on page 53) a suggested checklist for Pupils to complete before taking part in the visit, in order to ensure that they are clear about key items of information and appropriate safety procedures.

16.0 Pupils with Additional Needs

- 16.1 As part of the provision of inclusive education, academy visits will be available to all Pupils, including those who have additional needs. The particular needs of individual Pupils will be carefully considered when planning the visit. These needs may influence the adult/Pupil ratio needed (see **Adult/Pupil Ratios**) and decisions about special skills required by the adults accompanying the visit.
- 16.2 All adults involved should have clear information about the nature all Pupils' additional needs, and it should be clearly understood how these will affect

each Pupil's ability to take part in the planned activities. Specific necessary information (such as any medication required, details of any allergies or special dietary requirements) should be identified on the parental consent form - see the example form in **Appendix 5**. In particular circumstances, it will also be necessary to check the venue for wheelchair access.

- 16.3 As well as ensuring a full exchange of written information between the academy and parents/carers, it may be particularly valuable to consult directly with the parents/carers before the visit takes place. Some Pupils with additional needs may not have spent time away from home before, and discussions with parents/carers can relieve some of the anxiety which would otherwise be felt.

17.0 Briefing the Academy Team

- 17.1 It is essential that all supervising adults are fully briefed before the visit takes place, and at least one briefing meeting should be arranged for this purpose.

- 17.2 The following points should be borne in mind:

- i. the visit leader must be free to exercise full authority during the journey, and this must be accepted by everyone else taking part, including those who normally hold a more senior position in the academy;
- ii. visit leaders and other staff must recognise that when experts are engaged for specialist activities such as climbing, sailing etc. their instructions on procedure and safety should be followed at all times;
- iii. all supervising adults should be given full instructions concerning their own specific responsibilities, and the extent to which they should exercise their own judgement. The visit leader should ensure that all supervising adults are aware of any emergency procedures;
- iv. one of the supervising adults should take responsibility for welfare issues, including first aid arrangements and the supervision and distribution of any medicines which have to be taken by members of the group;
- v. the visit leader should have access to sufficient funds to meet any emergency which might be encountered; the academy will seek to procure a credit card which enables fuel, etc to be purchased by visits staff, to reduce the amount of cash needed to be taken.

- vi. the visit leader should have at hand a list of all group members' names, and - in the case of residential visits - addresses and telephone numbers, in case of emergency. It is good practice for all staff to have copies of Pupil details and the groups they are in. (**A copy of this list should be left with the designated Assistant Head of Academy and the Head of Academy in the academy**); and
- vii. a deputy visit leader, who is competent to assume the leader's responsibilities in the case of an emergency, should be appointed. The deputy leader should be involved in the preparation and organisation of the visit so that any handover of responsibility, should it become necessary, can take place quickly and effectively.

18.0 Medical Issues

- 18.1 All accompanying adults should be familiar with the first aid guidelines (**Appendix 7**), and it is recommended that at least one of the supervising adults accompanying the group should have a current qualification in first aid.
- 18.2 The visit leader will ensure that travelling first aid kits are available during all visits and the visit leader must be satisfied that the kit includes all of the items which may be needed, bearing in mind the possible additional items which may be required for some Pupils with special needs.
- 18.3 The visit leader should also ensure that all supervising adults have adequate information about any special medical or dietary needs which Pupils on the visit may have. Decisions about the administration of medication to Pupils must be made before the visit, and any necessary routines and checks agreed and established. **It is useful to have a summary sheet which records the names of all Pupils, any medical conditions and dietary requirements which can be given to all staff. Small plastic-backed cards which contain all this information, are waterproof and can be easily stored are very useful.**
- 18.4 Any accident which occurs on an academy visit should be reported in the same way as an accident taking place on the academy site. Details of the procedure to be followed are contained in the academy's Health and Safety Policy. A visits accident record book should be provided for every trip.

19.0 Emergency Procedures

- 19.1 Despite good planning and leadership, it is always possible that unforeseen emergencies may arise on an academy visit. On such occasions, visit leaders are likely to need the support and advice of the EVC, Head of Academy, Local Governing Body and possibly Evolve, the web-based notifications and approvals system. Clear guidance about the procedures for dealing with an emergency situation should be provided to all staff and supervising adults involved in an academy visit. Suggested emergency procedures, designed to ensure the rapid transfer of information, enlist services and help and deal with the probable attentions of the media, are described in chapter 10 of the booklet 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'.
- 19.2 Where a visit involves an overnight stay, each Pupil should be provided with a card giving details of the address of the hotel or residential centre being used, in case a Pupil becomes lost and has to find their own way to the venue. If the visit is to a foreign country, the card should include - in English and the language of the country - a request for directions to the hotel or centre.

20.0 Transport Arrangements

- 20.1 Small groups of Pupils are often transported in minibuses, either the academy's or hired from a commercial organisation. If this form of transport is planned, visit leaders should refer to the booklet 'Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice' published by ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents). (http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/minibus_code_2008.pdf)
- 20.2 If the plans for a visit involve teachers driving minibuses abroad, teachers should be aware that this could exceed the entitlements of their driving licences. Motor insurance is obviously conditional upon the driver's licence being valid throughout the visit. In addition, where payments have been made by parents/carers of Pupils taking part in the visit, the driver of a minibus travelling abroad must hold a licence with a PCV (Passenger Carrying Vehicle) entitlement.
- 20.3 If the visit is for more than 16 Pupils, most leaders will choose to travel by coach. **Appendix 8b** provides a generic risk assessment which visit leaders should consider when planning to transport Pupils by coach.

- 20.4 Private cars of staff and voluntary helpers, such as governors or parents/carers, are sometimes used to assist with transport on school visits. Visit leaders must take reasonable precautions to satisfy themselves that such drivers and vehicles are suitable for the proposed use. Parents/carers should be informed if their children are to be carried in private cars and be given the opportunity to indicate if they do not wish their children to be transported in this manner.
- 20.5 The responsibility for the insurance of private vehicles rests with the owner or driver concerned. The academy cannot provide insurance cover to protect the interests of the driver if an accident were to happen. Members of staff must have a 'business use' extension to the normal social, domestic and pleasure use provided by motor insurance policies and the EVC will need to verify that staff concerned have such cover. Voluntary helpers should check with their insurance company or broker that their policy provides the necessary cover for transporting Pupils on school visits.

21.0 Potential Hazards

- 21.1 Any visit has potential hazards, such as supervising Pupils across a busy road. However, some activities are generally regarded as more hazardous than others - skiing, rock climbing, water sports etc. - and particular care needs to be exercised in arranging school visits of this type.
- 21.2 In the HASPEV booklet (Annex B) there is a list of National Governing Bodies from whom advice can be sought in relation to a range of potentially hazardous pursuits. The information given in the sections below refer to some of the more common hazards encountered on school visits, but it is not intended to be a complete list.

22.0 Visits to the Coast or Tidal Waters

- 22.1 There is a high degree of risk in any activity where Pupils are close to the coast or tidal waters, such as the danger of individuals or groups being swept from rocks or cut off by unusual tidal conditions.
- 22.2 Risks of this type can be minimised by seeking the advice of the local Coastguard about the state of the tides and the prevailing weather conditions before embarking on a visit to the coast. The academy will ensure that the Coastguard is contacted if there is any possibility of the visit being affected by tidal or weather conditions and the visit should only go ahead if the visit leader is fully satisfied that the prevailing conditions pose no threat to Pupils or staff. The potential for danger always exists in visits to the coast or tidal waters and every effort must be taken to minimise such danger.
- 22.3 Leaders may wish to consider undertaking training in water safety issues. Various programmes - ranging from basic water safety and rescue skills to a professional Lifeguard Qualification - are available from Lifesavers, The Royal Life Saving Society UK 01789 773994.

23.0 Field Trips

Field trips, which are arranged as an integral part of the curriculum, must be treated just as rigorously in terms of safety considerations as would any other visit. They may also include their own specific hazards, for example a geology field trip involving the collection of rock specimens and requiring the use of protective equipment such as goggles and hard hats. Visit leaders must carry out a thorough risk assessment and ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise any identified risks before embarking on the visit or carrying out any fieldwork. (See sample Risk Assessments: Appendix 8).

24.0 Farm Visits

- 24.1 Farms can be dangerous places - even for the people who work on them - and any visit to a farm should be carefully planned. In general, it is important to check that the farm is well-managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare, and that it maintains good washing facilities for use by Pupils, clean grounds and public areas.
- 24.2 Some specific guidance on farm visits is given in the HASPEV booklet (page 33). Further advice can be found in the DfES letter to schools, dated 9th June 1997, entitled 'Pupil Visits to Farms: Health Precautions', copies of which are available from the Health and Safety Team at the DfE: 0171 925 6490. More detailed guidance has been produced by the Health and Safety Executive (01787 881165) in its information sheet AIS123 and accompanying supplement "Avoiding ill health at open farms - Advice to teachers".
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais23.pdf>
- 24.3 Leaders should be aware of the danger of Pupils being infected by the E-coli bacterium (leading to possible brain damage) by visiting farms. The bacterium is usually transmitted by young children licking their fingers and thumbs after touching animals or farm property such as a fence. All academy visits to farms will be provided with anti-bacterial handwashes (one per member of staff).

25.0 Supervision

- 25.1 There is no law which lays down particular supervision levels for academy visits. The EVC, Head of Academy and where appropriate, the Local Governing Body, must be satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision will be provided before approving an academy visit.
- 25.2 There should be a designated leader, who must be a qualified teacher (and deputy leader) who should be clearly identified to Pupils, parents/carers and other adults accompanying the visit. The deputy leader should be involved in the preparation and organisation of the visit so that he/she can take overall responsibility for the visit at any time, should this become necessary.

26.0 Adult / Pupils Ratios

- 26.1 In general it is not appropriate to lay down inflexible adult/Pupil ratios for visits, as there are a number of factors applicable to a particular visit which must be considered before reaching a conclusion about the appropriate level of supervision. These would include, for example, the age of the Pupils, their abilities and previous experience, the gender mix of the group, the experience of the accompanying adults, and the number of staff as opposed to voluntary helpers.
- 26.2 DFES Circular 22/94 'Safety in Outdoor Activity Centres: Guidance' contains some recommendations on adult/Pupil ratios for certain types of visit, and these have been incorporated in the overall recommendations set out below.
- i. For visits where the element of risk to be encountered is similar to that normally encountered in daily life, a minimum ratio of 1 adult to 15 Pupils is recommended. In many circumstances, the actual supervision ratio of adults to Pupils will be higher than this, for example on visits abroad or visits involving young Pupils. For visits involving Pupils under the age of 8, a minimum ratio of 1 adult to 6 Pupils is recommended. For every trip, a careful assessment of supervision ratios needs to be made and approved by the EVC.
 - ii. A minimum of two adults should accompany each visit, and at least one of these adults must be either a qualified teacher, or an unqualified teacher who has been approved for this task by the Head of Academy.
 - iii. It is strongly recommended that mixed groups should be accompanied by at least one adult of each gender. This recommendation is particularly important for residential visits involving an overnight stay. Where the academy decides that it is not possible to have at least one adult of each gender accompanying a residential visit, parents/carers should be given clear notification of this fact, together with details of the practical arrangements for supervision throughout the visit.
- 26.3 Various National Governing Bodies (such as the British Canoe Union and the English Ski Council) recommend specific supervision ratios for particular types of activity. Details are available directly from the organisations concerned, and a full list of the current National Governing Bodies is given in

the DfES booklet 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (pages 64-65).

27.0 Adults other than Teachers

27.1 Non-teaching staff, parents/carers, governors and other voluntary helpers can make an important contribution to academy visits, but it is important that their role on the visit is clearly established and that appropriate responsibilities are assigned to them. The following guidelines should help to ensure that this is the case:

- i. The visit leader must be a qualified teacher, or an unqualified teacher who has been approved by the EVC or Head of Academy for this task.
- ii. Wherever possible, qualified teachers should form at least 50% of the total number of adults accompanying the party.
- iii. Both the EVC or Head of Academy and the visit leader must be satisfied that other accompanying adults are responsible individuals who are capable of carrying out any duties which may be assigned to them. Such duties should be made clear to them as part of the planning process.
- iv. Both the EVC or Head of Academy and the visit leader should be aware of the potential for a conflict of interests if a parent/carer of one of the Pupils on the visit accompanies the party as a voluntary helper.

28.0 Child Protection Issues

28.1 Voluntary Helpers and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosures

Use of parents/carers, or other voluntary staff or helpers including non-teaching staff, as supervisors is acceptable. **Every adult** who accompanies a trip must be in possession of a **valid enhanced CRB certificate**, which has been inspected by the Head of Academy's administrative officer before participating in the trip and recorded on the Central Single Register (CSR).

28.2 Recent legislation: Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, places volunteers in the same category as staff. Accordingly, they must be fully aware of the visit risk assessment, itinerary, special instructions, emergency procedures and any other relevant information.

28.3 Should voluntary helpers, including Pupil teachers, parents/carers and partners of staff, be used on off-site visits, it is imperative that appropriate checks are carried out in accordance with Child Protection legislation and current guidance. DfE guidance 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' aims to prevent people who are barred by the Secretary of State from being directly employed by an LA, academy or College from getting around the ban by:

- Working as a volunteer; or
- Working in a business that is contracted to provide services to academies, schools or Pupils attending them.

28.4 Checks **must**, therefore, be carried out on any volunteer who:

- accompanies a residential trip;
- has regular long term contact with Pupils; and
- is likely to be in sole charge of a Pupil under 18 years of age on a one-to-one basis.

28.5 Irrespective of whether the volunteer has had a CRB check carried out by another body, it is best practice for the academy to carry out further checks.

28.6 The Head of Academy is responsible for ensuring CRB checks are carried out. In practice, the Admin Manager will oversee the completion of CRB Disclosures and Disclosure application forms are available from the office. Guidance notes can be found on the CRB website, www.crb.gov.uk. Position applied for should be completed as 'Volunteer', Organisation: 'Willows Academy'. Certain documents are also required in order to verify information on the completed form and these documents should be submitted to the Admin Officer along with the completed form.

28.7 The documents will be returned immediately after the Admin Officer has carried out the verification process. The completed CRB form will then be submitted to the appropriate authorising authority.

28.8 The Head of Academy must be made aware of any prospective voluntary helpers and a copy of the completed CRB form must be kept by the Head of Academy's admin officer. Since these checks are quite lengthy, as much notice as possible should be given.

28.9 Eventually both the volunteer and the Head of Academy will receive an acknowledgement and, hopefully, approval. The volunteer will also receive a Disclosure Certificate. The volunteer will be asked to present their Disclosure Certificate at reception in order that the Head of Academy's admin officer can record the clearance date and disclosure number in the Central Single Register. Once approval has been obtained, should the same person accompany Pupils again it should not be necessary to submit another form unless the individuals' circumstances have changed.

28.10 The visit leader should also gain assurances from any external providers that appropriate checks have been made for any of their staff who are likely to have access to Pupils as part of their normal duties.

28.11 For further advice on Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures please see the Admin Officer.

28.12 For the protection of all concerned, adult supervisors, both staff employed by the academy and additional adult volunteers, should ensure that they are not alone with a Pupil wherever possible.

29.0 Other Considerations

29.1 The EVC will try to ensure that teachers gain experience of accompanying academy visits, as a normal part of their staff development, before they are given the responsibility of leading a visit. The EVC and Head of Academy should also be satisfied that the teacher designated as visit leader is both suitable and competent to lead the visit, particularly if any potentially hazardous activities are involved.

29.2 The EVC and Head of Academy must also be satisfied that parents/carers of Pupils taking part in a visit have had the opportunity to disclose any relevant medical information about their children, and that this information is known to the visit leader and other accompanying adults. In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to invite the parents/carers of a Pupil with a known medical problem (e.g. a heart condition) to accompany their child on the visit.

29.3 Teachers and other adults accompanying Pupils with additional needs should have appropriate experience of dealing with the particular requirements of the Pupils in the party. Pupils with additional needs should not be excluded from a visit simply because of those needs. However, it may be appropriate to make reference to statements of special educational need and other individual Pupil records when planning activities for the visit. Special attention should be given to Pupils, statemented or not, who are prone to wander.

30.0 Duty of Care

- 30.1 All adults connected with a visit or activity owe a duty of care in common law to the young people they accompany. Teachers taking a group away from the academy have a higher duty of care. The duty of care expected is that of a reasonable, prudent and careful parent applying his or her mind to the specific situation. The duty is continuous during the whole period of the visit and cannot be delegated to anyone else. Because teachers are trained professionals, courts in the UK have tended to expect them to exercise a higher standard of care than that which is expected from the general public.
- 30.2 There is a legal judgement - which academy staff need to be aware of - arising from the tragic case of Caroline Dickinson, the teenager from Cornwall who was raped and murdered in France in 1996, on a trip organised by her school. Mrs Dickinson, Caroline's mother, subsequently sued Cornwall County Council, alleging a breach of duty on the part of the school staff. The judge's key finding was that, at the time of the trip, the possibility of rape and murder of a Pupil sharing a dormitory with others could not be considered to be a foreseeable possibility, especially in rural Brittany. Now that this has sadly happened, such an event must now be deemed to be a foreseeable event and should, therefore, be covered in any advice given to academy staff on residential visits.
- 30.3 Leaders arranging residential visits must therefore consider the likelihood of such an event occurring as part of their overall risk assessment for the visit. Supervising staff should then take due care during the course of the visit to minimise the possibility of such an event taking place.

31.0 Insurance

The public liability insurance policy held by the academy covers the legal liability of the academy and its staff against third party claims for negligence in respect of Pupils taking part in all recognised academy activities, including visits. This includes loss or injury sustained by Pupils or caused by Pupils or other members of the party.

32.0 Charging

- 32.1 The law on charging for school visits is laid down in the Education Act 1996 (Part VI, Chapter III). In summary, schools and academies may not charge for any activity which takes place during school hours, although on residential visits a charge can be made for board and lodging. Parents/carers can, however, be asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of a visit and this is the procedure adopted by most schools.
- 32.2 The academy has a Charging and Remissions Policy, so it is essential that visit leaders comply with this policy in preparing and planning for the visit. Whenever voluntary contributions are asked for, it must be made clear to parents/carers that there is no obligation to contribute. However, leaders may indicate the amount required for the visit to take place and advise parents/carers that the visit may not go ahead if there are insufficient contributions.
- 32.3 Where money is collected in installments, parents/carers should be given information about:
- the amounts involved in each of the installments;
 - the dates on which the payments fall due; and
 - any "penalties" for late or non-payments at any stage

33.0 External Providers

- 33.1 There are many providers of outdoor activities and other pursuits, some of which are commercial organisations operating for profit and others of which are voluntary or charitable organisations aiming simply to cover their costs. In making use of any external provider, the trip leader is strongly advised to check thoroughly before allowing Pupils to take part in any of their activities. This advice applies not only to outdoor activity centres, but to any outside agency providing or supporting an academy-related activity, whether it is a 'hazardous' activity or not.
- 33.2 In accordance with the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Act 1995 and the associated Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996, any operator providing facilities for adventure holidays in return for payment must have a

special licence. The licensing scheme includes activities which fall within the general categories of caving, climbing, trekking and watersports, and the licensing authority (appointed with the approval of the DfE and the Health and Safety Executive) is:

Adventure Activities Licensing Authority
17 Lambourne Crescent
Llanishen
Cardiff CF4 5GG
02920 755715

- 33.3 Any enquiries about the licensing of operators should be addressed to this organisation. It is important to note that not all activities are covered by the AALA, for example, canal barge holidays, so visit leaders must ensure that careful checking of all procedures and activities are undertaken for every visit
- 33.4 An academy which operates its own activity centre for use by its own Pupils does not require a licence from the AALA. However, if an academy provides facilities to Pupils of another school/academy, it must have a licence.
- 33.5 Even though an activity centre may be licensed, it remains the responsibility of the EVC, Head of Academy and Local Governing Body to satisfy themselves that any activity centre to which the Academy proposes to send Pupils is competent, trustworthy and, above all, safe.

34.0 Package Tours

Where academy visits are booked through travel agents or package tour operators, the visit leader should ensure that they are covered by a bonding arrangement, such as that provided by the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA). Academy staff who have any queries about the use of individual travel agents or tour operators are advised to contact the appropriate bonding body approved by the Department of Trade and Industry 0171 215 5000.

35.0 Legal Responsibility

- 35.1 Willows Academy Local Governing Body (LGB) is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of all staff and Pupils in the academy. These guidelines are one way of discharging its responsibilities in relation to academy visits. The LGB's day to day responsibility is delegated to the Head of Academy.
- 35.2 The Head of Academy is responsible for both staff and Pupils and also for any accompanying adults on an academy visit. It is important for everyone involved that the Head of Academy is satisfied with the arrangements and that there is a record that they have been approved. Risk assessment for academy visits is the key to successful safety planning. It is important to appreciate that risk assessment is an ongoing process, continuing throughout the visit, is not just a paper exercise. Neither teachers nor the LGB are likely to be found at fault if they have made all necessary preparations and ensured that activities are carried out in accordance with proper procedures.
- 35.3 The visit leader is responsible for the planning and organisation (or the co-ordination of this in appropriate cases) of the trip and for taking day to day decisions once the trip is in progress. There must always be a designated visit leader, who is a member of the teaching staff.
- 35.4 The accompanying teachers are in loco parentis (i.e. responsible for taking immediate and appropriate decisions) of the Pupils in their charge at any given time. Recent case-law has established that a teacher is unlikely to be held negligent if his or her decision is one within the reasonable range of options available to a reasonable teacher in the particular circumstances.

35.5 Even if other adults accompany the trip, the staff remain ultimately responsible in law for the Pupils. It is, therefore, essential that adults are properly briefed on their role.



36.0 Monitoring and Review

- 36.1 This policy is a living document and will be regularly reviewed by the **designated Assistant Head of Academy** who, in turn, will report to the Head of Academy and Local Governing Body. Its procedures will be monitored and reviewed annually or sooner if necessary, as a result of further guidance from SPTA, the Local Governing Body, DfE, or other recognised body.
- 36.2 Any changes to this document as a result of changes in legislation or current best practice will be brought to the attention of the Local Governing Body at the discretion of the Head of Academy.
- 36.3 The Health and Safety Committee and designated Assistant Head of Academy will review this policy annually at this time and report to the Head of Academy with its findings.

37.0 Approval by the Local Governing Body and Review Date

This policy has been formally approved and adopted by the Local Governing Body at a formally convened meeting