



ASPIRATIONS

Educational Visits Policy

Magna Academy

Approved by Regional Board:

Date: [Date]

Last reviewed on: [Date]

Next review due by: [Date]

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1. Aims

Magna Academy will incorporate trips and visits to increase the breadth of learning experience for students, these opportunities will provide a stimulus and motivation for further learning and enquiry.

Magna Academy will encourage the building of relationships outside of the classroom between all involved in a trip or visit. They will provide an opportunity to develop social awareness and self-confidence.

Trips and visits will develop additional personal skills and qualities not always seen within a classroom, it will allow others to flourish in a changed environment.

Magna Academy is committed to providing all students as far as possible, including those from a disadvantaged background, with at least one trip or visit experience.

2. Rationale

Learning outside of the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards and improving student's social, moral, spiritual, cultural and emotional development. Educational visits provide context for learning and are most effective as an integral element of our broad and balanced curriculum. Additionally educational visits have an important role to play in helping students to develop healthy lifestyles whilst also re-engaging them with their natural environment. Students need to understand, love and respect the natural environment, so that they can develop sustainable ways of living in the future. The Academy's policy and procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by BCP Council and national guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP).

When educational and non-educational trips are well planned and executed, they provide students with valuable experiences that enhance both their learning and development within the Academy. These visits will provide a variety of real life opportunities that will support students understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Staff can use educational visits as a stimulus to support work covered within the classroom, alternatively visits can be

used at any point to enhance and support the knowledge being delivered within the curriculum. Staff should ensure that all trips and visits benefit the students and maximise the opportunity for learning and development.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is created with guidance from the Department of Education. It provides advice to Principal's and staff on the statutory requirements needed when organising a trip or visit. It will identify the responsibility of those involved and the process of planning, running and evaluating each trip or visit.

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Health and Safety on Educational Visits November 2018
- Charging for School Activities May 2018
- The Equality Act 2010

All secondary schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and pay particular attention to the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149 of the Equality Act).

4. Types of Educational Visits

A wide range of educational visit opportunities are open to Magna Academy students;

- Day visits
- Residential visits
- Residential visits, including time with host families
- Overseas residential visits
- Adventurous activities

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors should enable and ensure that the Academy provides quality educational visit opportunities as a 'critical friend'. In an Academy they are seen as the 'employer' and retain overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare.

The Principal is ultimately responsible for Educational Visits. The Principal will;

- Ensure arrangements are in place to keep the governing body informed about Educational Visits and that they have approved the Academy policy
- Ensure that appropriate systems are in place in order to provide a rich and varied programme of visit opportunities with well trained and competent staff that are fully aware of all charging and emergency procedures.
- Ensure visit arrangements are evaluated in order to inform future visits and staff training needs
- Arrange for the reporting of accidents, incidents and near misses with records being reviewed regularly

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) should ensure a clear policy and procedures are in place and being followed. They should coordinate induction, training, monitoring and record keeping for Educational Visits (See appendix 1).

Visit Leaders should follow Academy policy ensuring they plan and prepare effectively for all educational visits (See appendix 2).

6. Organisation and management

Following the guidelines set by BCP and national guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) the following process of approval, risk management, supervision and inclusion have been established. Where there appears to be any conflict between national guidance and Academy policy, then policy must be followed and clarification sought from the Educational Visits Coordinator.

- An Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is always in post and keeps up to date with the latest guidance. The EVC will be suitably qualified and revalidate training annually.
- All educational visits are fully integrated into the ethos and culture of the Academy and all key policies are considered for their relevance and adaptations outside of the Academy environment, in particular policy on Safeguarding, Behaviour and Learning.
- Governors are kept informed of the overall policy and programme, as well as being given information regarding specific visits and the monitoring of educational visits across the Academy.

As an employer, Magna Academy ensures that its employees are provided with appropriate guidance, that there are training regimes in place to support it and that the guidance is understood. This is done by ensuring;

- There are clear policies and procedures (including an audit trail) to ensure that all employees are directed to follow employer guidance.
- Training is provided to ensure that employees understand the guidance e.g. EVC Training, Visit Leader Training.
- Supporting information and advice is made available, e.g. there are appropriate resources to support policy implementation.
- Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that legal duties, such as training, monitoring and guidance, are complied with.
- Where duties are delegated, the roles and responsibilities of all are clearly defined and specified within guidance documents, cross referencing with relevant job descriptions.

Magna Academy retains the services of competent and experienced technical advisers to oversee all aspects of their provision of outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom, e.g. BCP.

Magna Academy provides appropriate emergency planning procedures in the event of a critical incident. There is a sample monitoring process in place and there is clear advice about how visit leaders are assessed for competence.

7. Outline Approval and Planning Process (Appendix 3)

Magna Academy uses its own system for the planning, approval and management of educational visits. This is supported from the latest, most up to date guidance and aims to reduce paperwork, simplify procedures, produce self-review and inspection preparation data,

and improve staff confidence in that they automatically follow both employer, and National Guidelines.

Before a Visit Leader submits an initial visit proposal, they must check the Academy calendar to ensure the dates are available, this part of the process is supported by the line manager. Once the calendar has been checked, the initial visit proposal document (Appendix 3) is to be submitted to the EVC. This document is to be completed in full, with as much accurate information as possible. The EVC will take the proposal to a Senior Leadership Team Meeting for approval.

Once a visit has been approved, the visit leader is asked to complete more detailed planning on venue and transport etc. Adventure activity providers that do not hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge must be asked to complete a Provider Form which must be sent to them by the Visit Leader.

All planning documentation including letters, risk assessment and itineraries are to be saved within the EVC folder found on the Google Drive, prior to final approval. Ideally final approval must be sought at least six weeks prior to the visit occurring. In the case of residential, overseas or adventurous activities final approval must be sought no later than six months prior to the visit going ahead.

8. Inclusion

Magna Academy is an inclusive Academy that ensures;

- An entitlement to participate for all
- Accessibility through adaptation or modification (where necessary and appropriate)
- Integration through participation with peers

Educational visit activities are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, disability or protected characteristics of individual students. The Academy ensures that when visits are being planned all reasonable practicable measures are taken to find venues and activities that are suitable and accessible allowing the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved. As stated within the Equality Act 2010.

In the event that it may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments to include a student, nor to provide the rest of the group with a suitable alternative it would not be necessary to deprive the whole group of worthwhile opportunities. Instead the Academy will take into consideration the impact of excluding any individual student from a visit and ensure a suitable alternative is provided. All those that have responsibility for the student must be fully consulted.

Although rare it may be reasonable to exclude a student from an educational visit where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk. However if this occurs the Academy would provide an alternative way of achieving the same learning outcomes. Where there is doubt whether or not a student should be excluded from a visit on these grounds the following process should apply;

- Early identification of possible issues at the planning stage
- Involvement of all interested parties
- Attempt to establish a behaviour management plan

- Establishment of behaviour targets with timescales to be met to allow inclusion
- Consideration of using an additional adult on the visit as support to manage behaviour issues
- Consideration of what is expected of staff is reasonable and within their competence

9. Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, Group Leaders and all other staff involved, to safeguard and promote the welfare of students during an Educational visit. It is important that visit leaders ensure they are informed of any student who may be particularly vulnerable or have specific safeguarding needs, and ensure that other staff are made aware as necessary.

The School's Child Protection Policy, the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2019' and the OEAP national guidance for *Safeguarding* provides further clarification of expectations whilst on an educational visit.

Mobile communication and social media can be a useful tool in organising visits. For example they can be used for disseminating information such as keeping parents informed about the progress of a residential visit. However the Academy encourages staff to be aware of the following;

- Comments and/or photographs shared on social media can appear very different when seen outside the context.
- Any personal information about vulnerable individuals being shared on social media could pose a risk (such as details of where they are spending a residential visit)
- Smartphones may give students access to unsuitable web content
- Individuals may be vulnerable to cyber-bullying.

9.1 Foreign exchange visits and host families

Education providers often make arrangements for students to take part in exchange visits, either to other parts of the UK or abroad. Exchanges can benefit learning across a range of subjects. In particular, foreign visits can enrich the languages curriculum and provide exciting opportunities for students to develop their confidence and expertise in the use of other languages.

We have a duty to safeguard and promote students welfare. This extends to considering their safety and how best to minimise risk of harm to those students during any exchange visit that may be arranged by the Academy. Considerations must be taken into account when organising the care and accommodation of a student with a host family (known as homestays) as part of the exchange.

It is not possible for Magna Academy to obtain criminality information from the DBS about adults who provide homestays abroad. Our established relationships will allow us to liaise with partner schools abroad, to establish a shared understanding of, and agreement to the arrangements in place for any visit.

Parents should be aware of all agreed arrangements and consent to this prior to any visit commencing. The EVC will establish whether they consider it necessary to contact the relevant Foreign Embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

During the visit students should understand who to contact during a homestay should an emergency occur or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable. All students and parent/carer will be provided with this information prior to the visit commencing.

10. Risk and Benefit assessment

As part of planning any educational visit a clear process is followed;

- Analysis of the benefits of the activity translated into clear objectives and expectations
- An assessment of the risk of harm and its likelihood is made, followed by putting clear control measures in place so that they can be satisfactorily managed

Whilst visit leaders may make use of or refer to generic or pre-prepared risk assessments the Academy expects a site specific risk assessment to be produced for each visit, this should take into consideration specific factors such as the nature of the group of students which generic and pre-prepared documents would not take into account. The Academy 'Risk Assessment and Risk Management Form' (Appendix 5) can be found (here).

11. Communicating with parents/carers

Parents (or persons with parental responsibility) are informed at the start of the academic year that Sports fixtures and local visits during the Academy day will occur with blanket consent being sought through the return of the 'Personal Information Data Collection sheet'. This is then recorded on Progresso.

Medical information is collected at the start of the academic year with a request to parents to keep us updated with any changes. All visit consent forms remind parents to update changes in medical information. Only residential visits require detailed specific medical forms to be completed.

Letters to Parents regarding proposed Educational visits should/could include:

- The Academy's standard address and details.
- The purpose of the trip.
- The date and timings of the trip.
- Details of transport arrangements.
- Details of food/drink provision or what students should bring with them.
- Special clothing requirements: Academy uniform, waterproofs, warm clothing, sports kits etc.
- Details for collecting the students at the end of the trip.
- Details of charges to be made, including the paragraph stating this is a voluntary contribution.
- An invitation to parents to notify you, the organiser of any special dietary requirements, etc.
- A reply form for parents to give their consent, with a space for parents to print the student's name, restating the date, times and venue for the trip, confirming payment of any voluntary charges, leaving a space for a date and signature. (This is done via Parent pay).

For visits away from the Academy, detailed information will be sent to parents on transport, residential and overseas issues, and their specific consent requested. In the case of residential and overseas visits parents would usually be invited to an information evening.

12. Supervision

Visit Leaders must ensure that young people are supervised in accordance with the principles of “Effective Supervision”, requiring them to take account of:

- The nature of the activity (including its duration).
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place.
- The age and gender of the young people to be supervised.
- The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
- Staff competence.

The strategies to be used are dependent on typical risk factors of the group or individuals concerned, the site or location, the leaders present and other factors such as transport or weather. These are agreed as part of the planning process and can be adapted to changing circumstances, for example ‘Plan B’ where we always plan clear alternatives when it is necessary or prudent to do so.

Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity.

Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may only be appropriate where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements. For example, the DfES publication HASPEV (1998) suggested the following “starting points” for school years 7 onwards, 1:15/20. However without special safeguards or control measures, these ratios will not be adequate to meet the needs of most residential or more complex visits.

Supervision strategies are taken from OEAP National guidance on *Group Management and Supervision* and include;

- Direct – the group remain within sight and contact of a leader.
- Indirect – occurs when a group is given the freedom to explore an environment or engage in an activity away from direct adult supervision but within clearly identified and agreed boundaries
- Remote – occurs when a group works at such a distance that direct supervision would take some time to be re-established (e.g. during a remotely supervised adventure walk; young people travelling independently to a venue; a Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition).

13. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

A serious accident or incident is defined as:

- An accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury.

- Circumstances in which a group member might be at serious risk or have a serious illness.
- Any situation in which the press or media are or might be involved.

The Academy provides full and comprehensive guidance for staff on emergency procedures and incident reporting. This is available in the Visits and Trips resources area on the Academy system, found (here) and disseminated through staff induction and annual training.

14. Monitoring

This will enable staff, Academy leaders and governors the opportunity to monitor educational visits at any time. In addition the EVC will report to the governors annually.

On occasion throughout the academic year the EVC/Senior staff will conduct monitoring visits. During their monitoring visits they check;

- The Employer's guidance and establishment Policy is made available to all staff and volunteers who are involved in off-site activities and visits.
- All activities and visits comply with the employer's guidance and are formally approved as required.
- All staff involved in the visit are specifically competent to carry out such responsibilities as they are allocated.
- They are assured that transport arrangements are suitable and meet any regulatory requirements.
- Details related to specific off-site activities (including both participants and staff) are accessible to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) at all times in case of a serious incident.
- An Academy Risk Assessment and Management Form is in place which is suitable, sufficient and based on the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management'.
- Staff are aware of appropriate emergency procedures and what to do in the case of other serious incident or 'near miss' situations.

15. Induction, training and succession planning

All new staff will undergo an educational visits induction which includes guidance on the Academy policy, procedure and expectations.

The Academy ensures that the designated EVC is fully trained. All other staff receives annual update training and the EVC ensures workshop style training opportunities throughout the year where appropriate. Staff with specific qualifications and training that allow them to run adventurous activities record on the suitable log created by the EVC, found (here).

The Academy champions the process of apprenticeships within educational visits where less experience staff members learn alongside the most experience visit leaders before taking on the role themselves. This succession planning is actively encouraged.

16. Volunteers

In the case of volunteers being used to support an educational visit (not for DBS) the Academy requires a completed 'Educational Visit Volunteer Form' to be completed and saved in the Visits and Trips area on the Academy system.

Volunteers that have regular contact with or will spend overnight with students must be referred to the Director of Business and Operations for DBS at least six weeks before the planned visit. This also includes volunteers for which there are any concerns.

17. Insurance and Finance

Full details of the Academy's insurance can be obtained from the Director of Business and Operations, including travel, employer's liability and public liability. The finance office will be happy to answer questions on any aspect of insurance by consulting the Academy's Director of Business and Operations where necessary.

When calculating the cost of an educational visit the Visit Leader should take into consideration the cost of entrance tickets, transport, cover implications, reprographics, postage, equipment, ParentPay transaction charges and contingencies.

Voluntary contributions can be requested for any of the Academy's activities. Staff must make it clear that there is no obligation to make a contribution and that no student whose parents/guardian do not make a contribution will be treated differently on this account.

A certain form of words that are legally required when asking for voluntary contributions must be present in all letters requesting a contribution of any kind. All letters relating to educational visits must be processed through the main office where they will be checked before leaving the Academy. Examples of educational visit letters can be found in the Visits and Trips area ([here](#)).

A range of arrangements are in place for students unable to afford a visit

- Students/parents should make contact with the Assistant Principal and request support
- Alternatively parents could write to the Principal
- Applicable Sixth Form students would qualify for assistance via the discretionary bursary.
- All Sixth Form students could make an application for support through the Magna Academy Educational Support Grant.

VAT may be reclaimed on expenditure, provided the Academy did not set out with the intention of making a profit on Academy visits. However, fortuitous profits, e.g. non refunded costs for students absent on day of visit are quite acceptable. Educational visits will qualify for VAT Avoidance providing they have a clear educational purpose and are not purely recreational or social visits. Invoices showing a clear breakdown of VAT must be supplied prior to payment in order that VAT may be reclaimed.

VAT cannot be reclaimed for Academy visits abroad. This needs to be considered when budgeting for the cost of the trip. In practice, however, very few foreign trip transactions attract VAT.

It is very important that the Academy protects itself from loss of funds due to parents/carers cancelling at the last minute and asking for their money back. Visit leaders should include a paragraph as below stating a deadline for cancellation after which no money will be refunded within letters to parents. (They should only be able to get any money back if the place is refilled). The letter might include the following;

- A deposit/balance is required by.....(date) and can only be refunded if notice of cancellation of your son/daughters place on the trip is received in writing by.....(date)

It is important that visit leaders bear in mind that all visits have to be self-financing and that any debts incurred will come out of a specific area's capitation.

The Finance Office will order currency for visits abroad. Visit leaders must ensure currency is ordered at least 14 days prior to the visit. Currency will be delivered to the Academy prior to the visit.

Visit leaders are expected to keep a regular check on each visit account balance. The Finance Office will provide balance enquiries and print outs when required. Once all transactions have been completed the finance office should be informed and will ensure all costs have been covered.

18. Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

Katie Poore

The primary functions of the EVC are to co-ordinate and oversee all issues and controls regarding educational visits and liaise between all parties involved during the planning and organisation phase. This includes ensuring that all requirements of this policy are carried out and any problems meeting these requirements are recorded and reported.

The above named person has responsibility for ensuring that any systems and procedures agreed, when dealing with educational visits and the selection of suitable persons and organisations involved, follow the primary requirements of this policy and are fully in place prior to any educational visit commencing.

In addition, the above named person is responsible for ensuring that feedback is obtained from all educational visits and utilised, where practicable, to both enhance and improve any future arrangements and selection processes.

The above person can delegate specific tasks to other staff members and is responsible for ensuring that such delegation is appropriate and clearly understood.

The EVC will endeavour to ensure that:

- They have appointed a suitable group leader.
- All necessary planning actions have been completed before the trip or visit begins.
- The risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to commence/complete the trip or visit.
- Training needs to have been met.
- The group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
- The group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the locations of the activity (where possible).
- All supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise students and have appropriate clearance.

- The governing body (or delegate) has approved the trip or visit if necessary, this is applicable to all residential trips or visits.