



# Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service

## Offsite Visits Policy

<b>Adopted:</b>	September 2019
<b>Reviewed:</b>	September 2022
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2023
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Andrew Rudge

## Introduction

- 1.1 TMBSS is committed to learning outside the classroom. In addition to the curriculum support offered by offsite visits, the young people we work with often enjoy being outdoors, opt into activities and participate fully. They are willing to seek out new challenges and will talk about their experiences with enthusiasm.
- 1.2 Learning outside the classroom has become an integral part of the curriculum. A broad spectrum of activity is found in Primary, Secondary, and Youth work including environmental studies and outdoor pursuits, each of which may be residential and involve travel at home or abroad.
- 1.3 Pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their school and teachers are encouraged to provide these opportunities. Visits can help to develop a pupil's investigative skills. Longer visits, in particular, can encourage greater independence.
- 1.4 The visit must be organised and managed to ensure the **safety of pupils** as far as is reasonably practicable. Assessing the risks for both day and residential visits before the visit takes place, is not only a legal requirement, but a useful tool in identifying the control measures needed for a safe and successful visit. All risk assessments must be recorded. These should be retained in accordance with the school's document retention policy as they may be required as evidence to defend any subsequent claim or investigation following an incident. Retaining risk assessments for future reference may also speed up the risk assessment process for future visits.
- 1.5 The degree and type of risk and danger will vary dependant on the activity, the environment, the conditions and the competence of those providing the activity.

## The management of offsite visits

- 2.0 TMBSS have a trained Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – TBA
- 2.1 All visits outside the centre at which a student or students are registered at must be planned in accordance with the latest of the Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidance for Educational Visits and Journeys. These regulations are available on the TMBSS server at [T:\Offsite visits](#) or via the Shropshire Council Learning Gateway.
- 2.2 For all Educational Visits Party Leaders must consult the flowchart in the Offsite Visits folder when planning a trip. Should activities be adventurous or present additional risks, then the lead staff must complete the eVisits process.
- 2.3. Should eVisits be unavailable, then a paper version may be submitted instead. This should be signed by the EVC and Headteacher. Visits should not take place without authorisation via either eVisits or signed paper approval.

2.4 Application for the approval and notification of an educational visit', which involves off site forest schools activities or the use of an external provider, outdoor and adventure activities (OAA), or field studies in 'high risk' environments must be submitted to the Outdoor Education and DofE Adviser – [educationalvisits@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:educationalvisits@shropshire.gov.uk) **no later than six working weeks before departure date.**

## **Staffing**

- 3.0 Staff must have enhanced DBS checks for residential visits
- 3.1 Supervision ratios during the school day must not go below the minimum acceptable ratios of adult to children / young people (based on HASPEV 1998)
- Nursery: 1:2
  - Reception: 1:4
  - School years 1-3, 1:6 (overnight's minimum 1:6)
  - School years 4-6, 1:15 (overnight's minimum 1:10)
  - School years 7 onwards, 1:15 (overnight's 1:10)
- (Please note that final ratio will depend upon individual student risk assessment and site/activity risk assessment.)

## **Charging and Remittance**

- 4.0 Charges may be made for some activities that are known as 'optional extras'. Any charges applied must be in accordance with the TMBSS Charging and Remittance Policy.

## **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**

- 5.0 Under this Act employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their work activities. This includes participants in off-site visits.

For staff employed by TMBSS **the Local Authority (LA) is the employer.**

- 5.1 Teachers and other staff in charge of pupils also have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances. Some staff have an even higher duty of care in certain areas because of their specialist expertise e.g. Head Teachers or geography or science teachers on field work.

## **Equality Act 2010**

- 6.0 LAs and schools have a duty not to discriminate against pupils for reasons relating to their disabilities.

- 6.1 Party Leaders should make all reasonably practicable adjustments to enable pupils with disabilities to participate in educational visits.
- 6.2 This should involve discussion with the pupil, parents and other supervisors as to what adjustments may be required. Discussion may also be needed with any manager of venue(s) to be visited, tour operators etc as to how these needs can be met.
- 6.3 Where a student(s) has a risk assessment in place indicating that student(s) exhibits unsuitable behaviour that could place the student(s) or others in danger or at risk from harm, then the student(s) should not participate in the activity or visit. If the formal risk assessment does not indicate this and a member of staff has made a dynamic risk assessment on the day or genuinely believes that person(s) to be at risk, then the student should not participate.
- 6.4 The group leader has the final decision on whether a student should take part in a visit or activity. On occasions cancelling or postponing a visit or activity for the group may be the best option.
- 6.5 Any pupils whose behaviour is likely to be a danger to themselves or to the party must be stopped from going on the visit if this cannot be controlled to an acceptable level. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

## **Head of Service**

- 7.0 Head of Service should ensure that:  
Those involved in planning and running visits have sufficient competence and training;
- 7.1 appoint a competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) or take on this responsibility themselves;
- 7.2 training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered. Sufficient resources must be allocated to meet essential training needs;
- 7.3 encourage the uptake of EVC refresher training every three years;
- 7.4 encourage the uptake of the training offered to party leaders by the OEA;
- 7.5 make a judgment on the proposed party leader's competence and suitability to lead a visit. Discipline on an educational visit may, at times, have to be stricter than in the classroom;
- 7.6 for school led outdoor and adventure activities the party leader or another leader is suitably competent and qualified in accordance with the LA's requirements to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.

## **Party Leader Responsibilities**

- 8.0 The party leader, usually a teacher or teaching assistant, should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and must have regard to the health and safety of the party. The party leader should have been appointed or approved by the Head of Service or EVC. Full details are given section 2.13 Party Leader Responsibilities of Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys.
- 8.1 To simplify the planning procedure, a flowchart for planning visits and activities is provided at [T:\Offsite visits](#). All staff are to follow this procedure when planning visits away from site.

## **Safeguarding and DBS – Disclosure and Barring Service**

- 9.0 This should be carried out in accordance with TMBSS and Shropshire LA policies for this area. Additional guidance is given in section 2.21 and 2.22 of Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys.

## **Complete a Risk Assessment**

- 10.0 Party leaders should carry out and document a risk assessment that identifies the foreseeable risks of all aspects of the visit and the measures to be taken to control these to an acceptable level. This process should be carried out by a competent person in collaboration with other adult supervisors for the party and, where, appropriate with the pupils too.
- 10.1 The risk assessment should be approved by the Head of Service/EVC. School Governors/ Head of youth service have a right to see copies of risk assessments so they can be assured that the school is complying with health and safety law.
- 10.2 The completed risk assessment should be made available to parents should they request this.
- 10.3 A form for recording the risk assessment can be found in Section 16 Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys.
- 10.4 Generic Risk Assessments for elements of a visit or activity are available from the EVC within TMBSS. However, these do not cover all foreseeable risks and staff should build upon those provided.

## Plan travel arrangements

- 11.0 The party leader must give careful thought to planning transport. The main factors to consider include:
- type of transport to be used;
  - passenger safety;
  - the competence and training of the driver;
  - number of driving hours required for the journey and length of the drivers day (including non-driving hours);
  - capacity and experience of driver to maintain concentration – whether more than one driver is needed to avoid driver fatigue;
  - type of journey – will the visit take place locally or will it include long distance driving i.e. motorways;
  - traffic conditions;
  - contingency funds and arrangements in case of breakdown or emergency;
  - appropriate insurance cover;
  - weather;
  - journey time and distance;
  - stopping points on long journeys for toilets and refreshments;
  - supervision;
  - *for visits abroad obtain information on travel regulations which apply in the countries to be visited, especially if a school minibus is to be used.*
  - Head count of students before trip has started and on and off the transport used

More detailed advice can be found in **Section 7 Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys** which covers use of minibuses, child seats, private vehicles, hiring coaches and buses, supervision licences etc.

## First aid arrangements

- 12.0 The party leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed and ensure that this is provided and first aid equipment is readily accessible. This can form part of any Risk Assessment.
- 12.1 On all visits it is recommended that, as minimum, one of the accompanying adults is qualified to at least the Emergency First Aid at Work level. Alternatively, this requirement may be met by confirmation that access to such provision suitable to the needs of the party (both as a group and during activities) is available throughout the visit. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

## **Alcohol and drugs**

- 13.0 Alcohol consumption. Staff must behave in the manner expected of a reasonable parent. However if a member of staff drinks excessively, this would breach their duty of care, which they have 24/7, whilst on a visit. Head of Service consider the position they would take regarding other adults who are acting as supportive voluntary staff on educational visits. In this case all adults have a duty of care but not as high as Teachers/Youth Workers.
- 13.1 DFE guidance is as follows – Schools are strongly advised to have a written drugs/ alcohol policy to which school staff can refer. The policy should also state the arrangements for ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to drinking in school hours and on school trips.

## **Competencies if Leading an Outdoor and Adventurous Activity (OAA)**

- 14.0 This will be as stated in sections 4.5 and 9 of Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys.

## **Residential Visits**

- 15.0 Overnight stays of any kind require additional levels of care and supervision.
- 15.1 For all groups there should be the minimum of the Party leaders + 1 other adult supervisor per group regardless of the number of pupils. Ideally both genders represented in the case of mixed parties of pupils.
- 15.2 For primary aged pupils it may be acceptable for female teachers only to accompany mixed parties as long as the Head of service, parents and staff involved are satisfied that it is an appropriate arrangement.
- 15.3 For single sex parties the majority of the accompanying teachers and adult supervisors should be of the corresponding gender.

## **Parental Consent and medical information**

- 16.1 Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in off-site activities organised by a school (with the exception of nursery age children) where these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.
- 16.2 The Department of Education suggest that one consent form can be valid for the entirety of a child's time in school. This is not regarded as good practice by this LA as medical details can change significantly and without detailed information about each visit this can hardly be regarded as informed consent.

Therefore consent and medical information will be updated annually or should there be a change in a student's circumstance.

- 16.3 Medical Consent should form part of the parental consent form. Parents should be asked to agree to the pupil's receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or as considered necessary by the medical authorities present if this should occur at a time when their consent to the particular treatment cannot otherwise reasonably be obtained.

### **Forest Schools**

- 17.0 See detailed guidance in SECTION 13 Shropshire Council Regulations and Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys