

Author	Governance Manager	Intended target group	Principals, Business Managers, Local Academy Representatives, DBMAC Directors
Issued	Sept 2017	Next review due	September 2020 unless circumstances indicate amendments

This policy is applicable to all DBMAC academies

Off-site visits and learning outside the classroom Policy

Introduction

We aim to provide purposeful and stimulating opportunities to enable our children and young people to reach their intellectual and physical potential in a safe and caring environment and as part of that vision, each academy may decide to provide off-site visits, including residential visits or learning outside the classroom as part of its educational approach. All children are entitled to participate and accessibility through adaptation or modification will be planned. It is unlawful to treat a disabled young person less favourably and reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Roles

DBMAC Board: Responsibility for setting the policy and monitoring adherence; dealing with the media in the event of an incident (Chair, Vice-Chair) if the BDES Press Secretary to the Archdiocese of Birmingham is unavailable. Ensuring that policies about charging and remissions are in place.

Principals: Responsibility for ensuring that a trained Educational Visits Coordinator in place and that all staff running off site trips attend EVC training run by either the school EVC Coordinator or by OCC. Approval of planned visits including taking advice from external consultants where necessary. Responsible for reporting planned visits in advance to LAC meetings. Ensuring that suitable and sufficient emergency procedures are in place. Responsibility for decisions about which visits should be monitored by field observation and by whom. Decisions about individual volunteers. Responsible for ensuring that Emergency Procedures are produced and issued to Visit Leads.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) : In addition to following requirements as set out in EVC training, contact the insurers to ensure that the particular trips are covered within the insurance policy and inform the Governance Manager about planned visits. Preparation of an Evaluation form for use by staff and preparation of monitoring arrangements; collation of these for reports to the LAC and amendment to arrangements. Development of procedure to assess the competency of volunteers and recommendations to the Principal concerning the volunteers – written records to be kept. Provision of training to volunteers.

Preparation of list of pupils going on the trip and the amount of money to be collected from each to be provided to the school's finance office. Collection of money from pupils or parents.

Governance Manager: Collation of information provided by the academies to ensure that the DBMAC can communicate with parents and the media if an incident occurred.

LACs: To be aware of responsibilities as explained in the National Guidance (www.oeapng.info); to be aware of which visits may require LAC approval or involvement as a “critical friend”; to ensure that visits are included on meeting’ agendas and are planned in accordance with DBMAC policy; to ensure that monitoring procedures are in place and to receive and evaluate monitoring reports; to be responsible for adjudicating parental complaints or dealing with emergencies;

Procedural requirements

Evaluation of external providers Proposed providers must be approved by the EVC Coordinator and Principal

Prior notification and approval of visit plans Staff proposing to organise an off site trip must submit the plan together with a Risk Assessment and obtain approval of the EVC Coordinator and the Principal. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring that consultation with an external adviser takes place if necessary.

Parental communication and consent The written consent of parents or guardians must be received before any child is taken on a trip. The consent forms must be provided to the EVC Coordinator with a register of children taking the trip.

Information about participants’ medical conditions, special needs, behavioural issues and any other relevant issue must be collated from the appropriate sources in school, checked by the SENCo and be taken by the member of staff leading the trip.

“Checking in and “checking out” before, during and after a visit Staff leading an off site visit must ensure that a register of pupils present is taken before, during and after a visit.

Emergencies The Principal will ensure that a suitable and sufficient action code for emergencies is created and provided to staff leading off site visits.

Monitoring and Evaluation The EVC will make arrangements for monitoring the implementation of this Policy and provide reports to the LAC. The staff leading a visit will provide an evaluation using an Evaluation form prepared by the EVC.

Insurance arrangements

The DBMAC has arranged comprehensive insurance for its academies, however, it will be the responsibility of the EVC to liaise with the nominated supplier (-ref Procurement Manager) to ensure that the visit is covered in full.

Induction, training, succession planning

Staff identified as requiring practical training and experience as assistant leaders should be given the opportunity to work within an apprenticeship model. An induction should be prepared by the EVC Coordinator and approved by the Principal for such staff. OCC guidance states that Staff who lead off site trips should be offered Visit Leader training. This can be provided by the EVC or by OCC. The EVC will keep the training records for inspection. The Principal will be responsible for addressing issues of succession planning to ensure the sustainability of visits.

Risk management and risk-benefit assessment

Staff initiating a proposal for an off-site visit must be trained and must produce a risk assessment for approval by the Principal and EVC and records to include a risk assessment on untrained volunteers. The EVC will provide generic risk assessments and standard operating guidelines which will apply to specified events. Information to be included : specific local hazards and how the associated risks should be controlled (eg specified road crossing places); minimum requirements for staff ratios for specific types of visit, transport arrangements.

Assessing venues and providers

The use of established national approval schemes is recommended. For providers who do not hold external accreditation, a pre-visit questionnaire to assist with gaining information to help Visit Leaders manage the visit should be issued and returned to the EVC and Principal. The Principal will be responsible for deciding when a preliminary visit is required to check a venue or provider.

Volunteers

The Principal will decide when an enhanced DBS check is required. Volunteers must be assessed as competent to carry out their assigned role – the EVC will develop procedures to assess competency.

Volunteers must undergo training provided by the EVC as required. Staff leading visits will be required to supervise volunteers who will be trained to recognise the authority of the staff lead. Untrained volunteers and those who have not undergone an enhanced DBS check will not be permitted to assist with residential visits.

Emergency Procedures and incident reporting

The DBMAC Accidents and Incident Policy specifies that incidents must be reported using the Incident report form and to whom. The Principal is responsible for the production of Emergency Procedures to be used for an off site visit including contact details for people – Emergency Contacts - to provide 24/7 cover at base during the visit. The Emergency Contacts should be provided with all details of the visit including medical and next-of-kin information for staff and pupils on the visit. In the event of an incident which would attract press attention, the Principal should inform the Press Secretary to the Archdiocese of Birmingham (currently Ms Caroline Bletso – 07464 674630) who will handle press enquiries on behalf of the school. The Principal should inform the Governance Manager also who will report the incident to the Chairman. In the absence of the Governance Manager, the Chief Financial and Business Officer should be informed.

Behaviour

The DBMAC Behaviour Policy establishes codes of behavioural conduct and should be explained to pupils and parents/guardians before a visit as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of behaviour and reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and sanctions which should be clearly set out for them. Principals should consider whether to get pupils to sign up to a “behavioural contract” for a residential visit and whether to obtain the consent of parents to remove pupils in prescribed circumstances. Visit Leads need to consider specific rules relevant to the visits (eg whether pupils are permitted to bring mobile ‘phones or other electronic devices.

Finance

The DBMAC's Charging and Remissions Policy should be referred to for information including arrangements for those unable to afford a visit. The trip should be accounted for using the Trips Module of PSF and any handling of cash should follow procedures as outlined in the DBMAC Finance Manual.

Approved by the Board: 13th December 2017

Verified by the Company Secretary: Maureen D Jackson Date: 14th December 2017