EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND SCHOOL TRIPS POLICY

As a trust, our ethos is encompassed in our vision statement

'Making Lives Better'

and we commit to doing this through:



Reviewed by: Trust Board

Adopted: 20th October 2026

Review due: Autumn 2027

Review cycle: Annual

Rationale

Southern Education Trust and our schools understand that visits and trips can be effective ways of motivating pupils, and they can often offer unique educational experiences. Our schools aim to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and are given opportunities to explore this in a more practical setting.

Each school takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and pupils very seriously. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for pupils and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips.

Roles & Responsibilities

The Trust Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented across the Trust.

The Local Governing body is responsible for:

- Working with the Headteacher to ensure that the policy is implemented in school

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Day to day implementation and management of the policy.
- Appointing an educational visits co-ordinator (EVC).
- Liaising with the EVC and Local Authority (LA) and ensuring relevant trip information is communicated to parents.
- Liaising with the local governing board regarding the organisation of trips and activities.
- Being part of the approval process for trips and visits.
- Ensuring the EVC is trained and competent to carry out the role.
- Overseeing the work of the EVC to ensure a whole-school approach to planning and co-ordinating trips and ensuring appropriate safety measures are in place.

The Educational visits co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing all trips and visits and the control measures in place to ensure they are safe.
- Carrying out liaison with staff, local authority and any relevant organisations during the planning and organising of visits.
- Ensuring school systems are robust and adhere to this policy.
- Implementing procedures to ensure that all trips have the required paperwork, risk assessments and sign off to ensure their safe delivery.

- Ensuring trip leaders are appointed for all trips and are appropriately trained.

The designated trip leader selected to be in charge on an individual trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all pupils on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the headteacher.
- Undertaking any relevant training or courses which are arranged by the educational visits coordinator.
- Completing all essential documentation for the trip and ensuring it has been approved by the educational visits coordinator.
- Conducting a risk assessment prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- Creating an itinerary prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity at least six weeks in advance and distributing permission slips to parents.
- Implementing safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.

The designated deputy leader supports the designated trip leader and will assume the designated trip leader's responsibilities if the designated trip leader is no longer fit to lead the trip, e.g., is unwell at short notice. They are also responsible for supporting the designated trip leader in completing all their relevant responsibilities by assuming any delegated tasks.

Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring they are competent and comfortable with their delegated responsibilities, undertaking training where necessary.
- Ensuring the safety of the pupils is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.

Volunteers on the trip are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Supervising and ensuring the safety of pupils by following the procedures outlined by the designated trip leader.

Planning school trips

Prior to planning a school trip, the following guidance will be read by the organisers:

- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'

- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'

A thorough risk assessment will be conducted by the designated trip leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure pupil and staff safety.

When partaking in adventure trips, activities will always be identified at the planning stage and never added during the trip. When planning water sport activities, the need for instructors and lifeguards will be considered, particularly when using facilities which may not have a trained lifeguard present.

The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all pupils are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all pupils. Where there is a maximum capacity of pupils for a trip, places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. This will be clearly communicated to parents.

Risk assessment process

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are fully experienced. The individual carrying out the risk assessment process will have the skills, status and competence needed for the role, understand the risks involved, and be familiar with the activity. A pre-visit will normally be required to ensure that the risk assessment is carried out in an informed way as well as to allow for detailed itinerary planning and preventing decisions being made ad-hoc.

The process is as follows:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record findings and implement them
- Review assessment and update if necessary

A risk assessment will be conducted for each school trip before it is undertaken to identify hazards and control measures specific to the trip.

Vetting providers

When considering external providers for activities, the educational visits coordinator will check whether they hold the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge' to indicate they meet nationally recognised standards.

If a provider does not hold the badge, the educational visits coordinator will check the following to ensure they are a suitable organisation to work with:

- Their insurance arrangements
- Their adherence to legal requirements
- Their control measures
- Their use of vehicles

- Staff competency levels
- Safeguarding policies
- The suitability of their accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements in place
- The presence of necessary licences

If it is deemed appropriate to engage with an external provider, a written agreement will be created outlining what each party is responsible for. If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

Equal opportunities

The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of pupils when organising a trip. The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to pupils will provide new experiences and develop life skills. Extra-curricular trips and activities are organised, managed and conducted in accordance with the school's commitment to equity and inclusion.

For school trips that require additional payment, the fee will be reasonable and help will be provided where possible for pupils who cannot afford the initial fee.

Transport

The school is responsible for arranging the annual maintenance of the minibuses, including MOTs and road tax. The use of minibuses will be organised in accordance with the Minibus and School Driving Policy.

Parental consent

Parental consent is not generally required for off-site activities that take place during school hours.

Written consent is required for:

- Activities of an adventurous nature.
- Residential trips.
- Foreign trips.
- Trips outside of school hours.

If preferable and appropriate, parents may complete an annual consent form at the start of any academic year which gives consent for their child to be involved in any and all activities, both on and off-site, that take place at any time, including the school holidays. Separate consent will be sought for trips which require payment. Parents will be informed of activities by letter and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part.

Staffing ratios

There must be sufficient staff to cope in an emergency and generally. Staffing ratios are not simple and require risk assessment as well as consideration of the age of pupils and nature of visit. Our staffing ratio guidelines are as follows:

- Abroad: 1:6
- Other residential: 1:10
- High risk: 1:6
- Day trip visits: 1:10

Insurance and licensing

When planning activities of an adventurous nature in the UK, the educational visits coordinator will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence. Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place. Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.

Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible.

Medical expenses will be recorded and stored by the school.

Accidents and incidents

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy. In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip abroad:

- Organisers will cooperate fully with local emergency services and understand that any injury or death of a member of staff or pupil outside of Great Britain may be subject to the law of the land where the accident occurred.
- The first point of contact within the UK will be the headteacher who will contact the family of the injured person.
- Pupils will be asked not to contact friends or parents in the UK until the family of the injured person can be contacted.
- The British Embassy/Consulate will be informed.
- The insurer will be notified.

The headteacher will keep written records of any incidents, accidents and near misses.

Media enquiries will be referred to the headteacher or a senior leader of Southern Education Trust.

Staff will use guidance as set out in the Business Continuity Plan, in particular the 'initial response' section, to ensure the safety of pupils and staff should anything happen, e.g. a terrorist attack. Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip, including for points of interests such as museums

and hotels. Pupils and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Risk assessments will give consideration to ensure pupils are easily identifiable, if this is a useful factor in managing their safety. Pupils may wear an item of uniform or be given an identifier, such as a badge.

Missing person procedure

The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips, either domestically or abroad.

Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with this policy. The educational visits coordinator will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

When travelling with a pupil with SEND, the educational visits coordinator will ensure an adult is with them if required and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the pupil's needs.

Everyone on the trip will be provided with a contact sheet for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group. All staff members will be required to carry mobile phones with them at all times. Consideration to the use of pupil mobiles will be given as part of the risk assessment.

Upon arriving at every venue, the designated trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where pupils and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group. Pupils and staff will wear school branded clothing if this is part of the risk assessment, in order to make them easily identifiable.

Regular head counts of all pupils and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times.

In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip domestically or abroad:

- The designated trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining pupils and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
- The designated trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person and another adult to contact them via phone if they have one, these people will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
- Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
- If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities, e.g. the British Embassy, will be contacted.
- If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the headteacher, or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.

If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.

If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school. If this is not possible, e.g. when a trip is taking place abroad, the educational visits coordinator will make arrangements to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits. The trip leader will liaise with police to decide whether a member of staff needs to remain on scene with police.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

Pupils with SEND

Where possible, activities and visits will be adapted to enable pupils with SEND to take part. The school will liaise with pupil's parents, where appropriate, to consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary.

Where this is not possible, an alternative activity of equal educational value will be arranged for all pupils. Pupils with SEND will be accompanied by a responsible adult during the extra-curricular trip or visit if required.

Finance

The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.

Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.

All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen if the trip is cancelled or a pupil cancels their place on the trip.

If the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter if needed, considering the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

If a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter if required, considering the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else.

The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all pupils are treated equally. Any charge made in respect of pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school.

Trips abroad

When planning school trips abroad, the school will consider the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's guidance 'Safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas' (2015) and, where an activity poses significant risks, the school will also consult the British Standard for adventurous activities outside the UK.

Validity of passports, visa requirements and other entry requirements, e.g. vaccination status, will be researched and dealt with within three months of the initial notification of the trip, to avoid problems when the trip is due to take place.

Staff and pupils will be taught about the culture and values of the country they are visiting, to ensure they understand and respect the values of the citizens.

Before the trip the educational visit coordinator will check the travel advice for each country the trip will visit to ensure no visa or permit is needed and to check any other regulations or time limitations.

Staff and pupils will be made aware that they must not have spent over 90 days in the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein, within a 180-day period if they intend to participate in any trips within these countries.

Before the trip, the relevant healthcare and travel insurance checks will be conducted to ensure attendees are covered for medical issues or accidents.

Pupils and staff will be informed if they need to apply for a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to ensure they can access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in the EU.

Before the trip, staff are trained in spotting suspicious behaviour and remaining vigilant whilst abroad. Before the trip, pupils will be taught how to remain vigilant in the country they are visiting, particularly about advances from strangers.

Registers will be taken at the start and end of each day, as well as before, during, and after events, and at regular intervals whilst on days out to ensure the whereabouts of pupils are known at all times.

Staff will check the location's local news at the start of each day of the trip, to ensure their planned activities are safe to go ahead. A minimum of two members of staff attending the trip will have at least an intermediate understanding of the destination country's language.

At the start of the trip, all pupils and staff are provided with an emergency contact sheet, this includes the trip leader's mobile phone number, as well as emergency numbers and phrases for the country they are visiting.

When using external providers abroad, the school will check whether the provider holds an equivalent of the ‘Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge'. If no such equivalent can be ascertained, the school will make checks prior to agreeing to use the provider.

Evaluating trips and visits

Following an educational trip and/or visit, the educational visit coordinator will meet with any staff members present on the trip to assess the success of the trip in respect of both educational value and safeguarding effectiveness.

Based on this assessment, recommendations will be made to improve future trips and visits.

Equality Impact

The Trust does all it can to ensure that its policies do not discriminate against pupils or others, either directly or indirectly, in line with any Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.

Model annual consent form for all educational visits and school trips

Please sign and date the form below if you are happy to give consent for your child,

_____,

a) To take part in school trips and other activities that take place outside school premises; and

b) To be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during any school trip or activity if necessary.

Please note the following important information before signing this form:

- The trips and activities covered by this consent include:
  - All visits, including residential trips, which take place during the holidays or over a weekend.
  - Adventure activities at any time.
  - Off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day.
  - All off-site activities for nursery schools.
- The school will send you information about each trip or activity before it takes place.
- You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular school trip or activity.
- Written parental consent will not be requested from you for the majority of off-site activities offered by the school – for example, year-group visits to local amenities – as such activities are part of the school's curriculum and usually take place during the normal school day.

Please complete the medical information section below (if applicable) and sign and date this form.

Medical information

Details of any medical condition that my child suffers from and any medication my child should take during off-site visits:

.....
.....

Signed..... **Date**.....

Consent form for specific educational visits and school trips

Educational visits consent form	
Pupil details	Visit details
Name:	Destination:
Year group:	Date:
Date of birth:	Time:
Home telephone number:	I acknowledge the need for my child to behave responsibly ❑
Please detail below if your child suffers, even mildly, from any medical condition such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, heart condition, allergies, bed wetting or physical weakness. Also, if your child has suffered from any contagious or infectious diseases during the past three months, please detail these. All information will be treated in confidence.	
When did your child last have a tetanus injection?	
If your child is taking medication, please give details, including whether it can be self-administered:	
Is your child allergic to any medication? YES/NO. If yes, please specify:	
Please give details of any special dietary requirements and the type of pain/flu relief medication your child may be given if necessary:	

Family doctor		Telephone number	
Address			

I am happy to let my son/daughter make their own way home ❐ I will collect my son/daughter at 4:30 pm from _____ ❐
I give permission for my child to participate in the above school visit and I have read all the information given. I further consent to my child being given any urgent medication or surgical treatment which may be considered necessary by the medical authorities during the school visit. I understand that my child is covered by the school's liability insurance, and that I am able to take out my own additional insurance if I wish. I will inform the school of any change in the circumstances outlined above.

Signed:_____

Date: _____

Parent's name in BLOCK capitals: _____ Address: _____ _____ Telephone number: _____	Please give an alternative contact name and telephone number in case we cannot reach you in an emergency: Emergency contact one Name: _____ Telephone number: _____ Relationship to pupil: _____ Emergency contact two Name: _____ Telephone number : _____ Relationship to pupil: _____