



The Westminster  
Specialist College

# 2022/2023 Educational Visits Policy

Approved by Board of Governors on:	15/12/2022
Signed by Chair of Governors:	P Coldicott
Head of College:	O Flowers
Lead Personnel:	O Flowers
Date of Review:	15/12/2024

## Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

The Westminster College has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the College premises. It will seek to provide a broad & balanced range of Learning Outside the Classroom opportunities for all its students.

Each year the College will arrange a number of activities that take place off the College site and out of College hours, which support the aims of the College. The range of activities which the Board of Governors has given its approval includes:

- Regular local visits (i.e. shops, local amenities and swimming)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous Activities.

## Approval Procedure

The Head of the College approves offsite activities throughout the year.

The Head of College has delegated the responsibility of Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to Mr Ben Taylor.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head of College, Senior Leadership Team and EVC will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher/EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk management for the visit before departure.

This will be undertaken using a risk assessment process using the College's Microsoft SharePoint platform.

The College has agreed a policy for categorising its visits in line with Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities i.e.:

### Overseas, Residential or Adventurous Activities -

Visit Leader: Record application SharePoint and share paperwork through SharePoint.

EVC : Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.

Head: Check application and either request additional information or Authorise to be approved by Governing Board (Resources Committee).

Board of Governors: Check application and either request additional information or Approve. This will be minuted by the Clerk to the Board.

An exception to the above is where a Sandwell Residential Centre is being used AND centre staff are running the activities, in these circumstances delegated approval has been given to the Head and the visit does not need to be submitted to the Governing Board. An example of this that the College uses annually would be Frank Chapman or Plas Gwynant.

### Local regular day visits

Visit Leader - Record application on SharePoint

EVC - Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.

Head - Check application and either request additional information or Approve.

NB Approval for this type of visit has been delegated. This visit does not need to be submitted to the Governing Board for approval.

### **Staffing**

The College recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a College visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. There will be a system within the College to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for Educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The College values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with Educational activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the Head of College and Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the College. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate the College will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteers.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. The Visit Leader will have received Visit Leader training endorsed by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP).

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

### **Risk Management**

All visits must be risk managed appropriately. To support effective risk management of visits SharePoint Applications must include the following:

**Site Risk Assessment** – this will include risk assessing transport, location hazards, how students may respond to the environment, contact with the public (including animals), group dynamics and procedures for transitioning between activities (for example leaving and entering a premises).

*As a College we recognise that dynamic risk assessments must be made during visits and trust staff to make these decisions when they arise. Emergency contacts are readily available through the SharePoint system.*

**Individual Risk Assessments** – Individual Risk Assessments will need to be written for students where this maybe deemed appropriate. If staff are unsure then they should liaise with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This risk assessment must include the possible dangers and how these dangers/risks can be minimised. *All risk assessments must be completed with the knowledge of the young adult and where permitted their parent or carer.*

*All site and individual risk assessments must be signed by all staff attending the visit.*

**Medical Information for Students/Care Plans** – these should be added and any indication of how this impact on the student participation in the offsite activity

**Group List** – A group list should be added that includes the member of staff that are responsible for those students. This will help with the organisation of the visit and general running of the visit on the day.

**Letter to Parents** – A consent letter will need to be added to the SharePoint system. This letter must be approved by a member of the College Senior Leadership Team prior to being sent.

**Itinerary** – An itinerary must be added in the case of an emergency. This must indicate estimated times and venues that the group will be during the visit.

The Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken.

### **Staffing Ratios**

Staffing ratios will be decided by the College through careful consideration of students numbers and their needs. We recognise that staffing changes can happen (even on the day) but ratios will always be maintained.

### **First Aid**

With every visit there must be a member of staff who has knowledge and experience of first aid. If a student has quite complex medical difficulties a member of staff who works closely with that student, or has an understanding of their medical needs will attend. There may be visits where students attending a venue where there are first aid facilities readily available then it may be that staff with good working knowledge of first aid would supervise the visit.

### **External Activity Providers**

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the College on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made either through the College accounts or by the student if they are liable for the payment. This promotes their independence.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the College to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing. Wherever possible the College will seek to use holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge for which no Providers Contracts or other assurance checks are required.

### **Student/Parental Consents**

The Westminster College will use the one-off consent form available within the Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities. This form can be completed by the students due to their age. With their consent the College will also inform parents/carers to ensure they have adequate provisions for the trip.

For visits which contain any element of the following:

- Adventurous activities
- Residential visits
- Visits abroad

Additional consent will be requested in the form of a Specific Consent form which will be completed by the student and parent/carer prior to the activity/visit.

## **The Expectations of Students and Parents**

The College has a clear code of conduct for College visits based on the College 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of the booking. Students, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity.

## **Emergency Procedures**

The College will appoint a member of the College Senior Leadership Team as the emergency contact for each visit. If the visit is residential or overseas details of two emergency contacts should be provided. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal College procedures for reporting and investigating accidents, for example the behaviour MIS.

**Staff Medical** – At the beginning of each academic year staff will be asked to state their medical information as this may be required in an emergency if they were to fall ill when on an offsite activity. This information will be kept in a sealed envelope and will only be accessed by visit leaders in the case of an emergency. Staff who are not prepared to give this information cannot be considered for offsite activities. The staff medical information document can be found in appendix 5 of this policy.

**Staff Conduct – Social Media** – please refer to the College social media policy as to how staff should use social media in relation to offsite activities.

## **Charging for Activities and Visits**

The College may invite, but not require, students to make voluntary contributions for College activities in order to enhance what is otherwise provided. There is no obligation to contribute and students will not be treated any differently according to whether their financial situation. College bursary funds and fund raising can be utilised to support the payment for trips.

The College has a policy on remission of charges stating how much they are prepared to contribute etc.