The Westminster Specialist College

2025/2026

Educational Visits Policy

Approved by Board of Governors on:	**14/10/2025**
Head of College:	O Flowers
Lead Personnel:	**B Taylor**
Date of Review:	**September 2026**

Introduction

Educational visits and off-site activities are an integral part of the curriculum at The Westminster Specialist College. They provide learners with opportunities to extend classroom learning, develop independence, and practise employability and life skills in real-world contexts.

This policy covers all visits and off-site activities organised by the College, including:
- Curriculum-based learning visits (community, cultural, sporting, enrichment).
- Workplace learning as part of DFN Project SEARCH internships at ASDA Oldbury, NHS Midland Metropolitan Hospital, and other employer partners.
- Outternships and personalised work-related learning programmes.
- Residential visits and extended learning opportunities.

The College uses Arbor to record, approve, and monitor all educational visits, ensuring a consistent approach to safeguarding, risk management, and evaluation.

Aims and Objectives

- Enhance the curriculum and directly support EHCP outcomes.
- Provide experiences that develop employability, independence, and social confidence.
- Prepare learners for paid employment, supported apprenticeships, or further training.
- Broaden learners' horizons through structured access to community, cultural, and workplace environments.
- Ensure all visits are conducted safely, inclusively, and in line with statutory and local authority guidance.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Principal / Governing Body – overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented and visits are safe, with annual monitoring of practice.
- Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – oversees planning, ensures compliance with policy and statutory guidance, and supports staff.
- Visit Leader – plans and leads the visit, completes risk assessments, ensures learner safety, and manages communication with the EVC.
- Job Coaches (Project SEARCH) – act as workplace visit leaders, ensuring that interns are supervised, safe, and supported during rotations.
- Staff and Volunteers – support learners, follow College policies, encourage independence, and report concerns promptly.
- Learners – follow College expectations for behaviour and safety, demonstrate employability skills, and contribute to risk awareness (self-advocacy).
- Parents/Carers – provide consent, ensure accurate medical/personal information is shared, and support preparation for visits.

Approval Process

All visits must be logged on Arbor at the planning stage. Initial approval must be sought by the EVC. The college Educational Visits Co-Ordinator is Ben Taylor (Vice Principal)
- Risk assessments must be uploaded to Arbor and approved by the EVC or Principal.
- Residential visits and any high-risk activities require Governing Body approval.
- Workplace visits (Project SEARCH rotations, Outternships) must have an individual risk assessment for each learner, updated termly.
- No visit may take place without documented approval on Arbor.

Risk Assessment and Safeguarding

- Risk assessments must cover venue, transport, activities, medical needs, behaviour, safeguarding, and adult workplace risks.
- Specific risks for SEND learners (e.g. communication, mobility, health) must be identified

and mitigated.
- Staff must know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is for the visit; job coaches are the first point of contact on internships.
- Reasonable adjustments must be made to ensure inclusion of all learners.
- Emergency procedures must be clear and all staff briefed.

Staffing and Supervision

- Staffing ratios will reflect learners' needs, recognising that internships require a different model of oversight (job coaches/instructors rather than constant 1:1 supervision).
- A qualified first aider must be available on all visits.
- All staff and volunteers must have an enhanced DBS check.
- Learners will be supervised at all times, but encouraged to build independence in line with EHCP and employability targets.

Consent and Communication

- Parents/carers provide annual blanket consent for routine, local visits.
- Separate written consent is required for residential or high-risk visits.
- Parents/carers are notified of all visits via Arbor and other agreed channels.
- For DFN Project SEARCH placements, daily communication is managed between the college, job coaches, and employers.

Transport

- Transport arrangements must be safe, accessible, and risk assessed.
- Where College minibuses are used, drivers must hold the correct licence and training.
- Public transport use must be risk assessed, and independence training encouraged where appropriate.
- Seatbelts must always be worn when travelling by road.

Recording and Evaluation

- All visits are recorded on Arbor, including attendance, incidents, and evaluations.
- Workplace visits are also recorded within learner progress reviews and contribute to EHCP evidence.
- Post-visit evaluations will assess impact, identify improvements, and feed into curriculum and employer partnership reviews.

Monitoring and Review

- The EVC monitors compliance with this policy throughout the year.
- The Governing Body reviews an annual summary of visits, including risk, safeguarding, and outcomes.
- This policy is reviewed annually, with the next review due in September 2026.

Related Policies

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Review Date: September 2026

Appendix 1: Educational Visits Checklist (Staff Use)

Purpose:
To ensure that every educational visit, work placement, or off-site activity is safely planned, approved, and evaluated in line with College policy.

Stage 1 – Planning

- ✅ Identify purpose of the visit (curriculum, enrichment, work-related, residential).
- ✅ Confirm date, times, and staffing availability.
- ✅ Check learner suitability and accessibility needs.
- ✅ Obtain preliminary information from venue/employer (supervision, facilities, accessibility, first aid).
- ✅ Draft risk assessment (venue, transport, medical, behaviour, safeguarding, SEND adjustments).
- ✅ Liaise with EVC (Ben Taylor) for advice if unsure of risk level.

Stage 2 – Approval on Arbor

- ✅ Log visit on Arbor under Educational Visits.
- ✅ Upload full risk assessment(s).
- ✅ Attach learner list, staff list, and medical details.
- ✅ Submit for EVC initial approval.
- ✅ Ensure any high-risk or residential visit is escalated for Governing Body approval.
- ✅ Await approval confirmation before making bookings.
- ✅ ⚠️ No visit may proceed until approved on Arbor.

Stage 3 – Preparation

- ✅ Confirm venue booking and transport.
- ✅ Ensure all staff/volunteers hold enhanced DBS and understand their roles.
- ✅ Identify First Aider for the visit.
- ✅ Ensure emergency procedures are in place and shared with all staff.
- ✅ Check parent/carer consent (annual or specific).
- ✅ Brief learners on behaviour expectations, safety, and self-advocacy.
- ✅ Ensure inclusion adjustments are implemented (mobility, communication, medical).
- ✅ Confirm DSL contact for the visit (e.g. Job Coach on internship).

Stage 4 – During the Visit

- ✅ Carry contact list, medical info, and risk assessment copies.
- ✅ Maintain agreed supervision ratios at all times.
- ✅ Encourage learner independence appropriately.
- ✅ Record attendance and any incidents.
- ✅ Follow safeguarding and emergency procedures if required.

Stage 5 – After the Visit

- ✅ Complete evaluation on Arbor (impact, incidents, learner outcomes).
- ✅ File attendance and risk assessment records.
- ✅ Feed outcomes into curriculum or EHCP reviews (as applicable).
- ✅ Reflect on improvements for future visits.
- ✅ Job Coaches – update learner progress logs and employer feedback.

Quick Reference Contacts

EVC: Ben Taylor (Vice Principal)

DSL: Ben Taylor

Principal: Oliver Flowers

First Aid / Emergency: Call 999 if required, then inform DSL & EVC