

FAO Headteachers, Senior Leaders and Educational Visits Coordinators in Schools

Dear Colleagues

Solihull Council supports schools with learning outside the classroom opportunities and arranging a wide range of out of school activities, e.g. visits to museums, trips to the countryside, taking part in adventurous activities and residential trips etc.

In preparation for summer trips or new visits in the autumn term, we wanted to take the opportunity of reminding schools of the information, guidance and support which is available to ensure that educational trips and visits are safely managed and continue to be successful learning opportunities:

Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance

The OEAP National guidance is a source of good practice for managing and delivering outdoor learning and off-site visits and a place to seek information on the application of relevant legislation. Solihull Council (SMBC) has formally adopted the National Guidance as their standard which can be accessed at www.oeapng.info.

In addition to guidance on policies, procedures and general risk management, model forms and checklists are included to assist schools with the effective planning of trips and visits. **Schools must follow the OEAP National Guidance to demonstrate that reasonable steps are being taken to manage risks.** As part of meeting these standards schools must ensure they have an emergency plan in place for outdoor educational visits.

The Health and Safety Executive and Department for Education have also published educational visits guidance on their website which schools should follow and note. The relevant information and guidance can be accessed at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.htm> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>

EVOLVE System

EVOLVE is an online system for the planning, management and local approval of educational visits, trips and extra-curricular activities. EVOLVE aims to reduce paperwork, simplify procedures and improve staff confidence in following employer and National Guidance.

It is a Solihull Council requirement that all maintained schools record their educational visits on the [EVOLVE system](#) including overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits. Academy schools can also use the system as well. This will help SMBC to be aware of visits undertaken, support schools by having knowledge available in an emergency or to deal with media enquiries etc.

When recording trips on the EVOLVE system schools must include the 'visit specific' risk assessment, which covers those risks not covered by a provider's generic risk assessment such as travelling to and from the venue, general safeguarding arrangements of pupils, medical and health issues, procedures in the event of an emergency or a lost child etc. Training and access to the EVOLVE system can be arranged by the SMBC Health and Safety Support Team.

In order to help streamline the process in the planning of educational visits, **from 1st September 2019 SMBC will be delegating the formal 'approval' of all visits and trips to headteachers and governing bodies in schools – trips will no longer require processing through SMBC.**

It is important that schools ensure that **the headteacher or an alternative designated senior leader is appointed to carry out the formal approval of trips and visits.** We will be updating the SMBC Learning Outside the Classroom Policy in due course and it is advised that schools review their own policy and procedures too.

Educational Visits Coordinators

In order to assist in the planning and management of educational visits, **schools should appoint an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** and ensure they attend EVC training at designated intervals as part of maintaining their competence and professional development. The EVC should be an experienced visits leader and have the status to be able to guide the working practices of other staff, and have sufficient time and resources given to them to carry out the role effectively.

The delivery of EVC training within SMBC is currently being reviewed, in the meantime schools can access EVC and Visit Leader training through the courses published on the OEAP website. A list of accredited OEAP Members is also available should schools wish to contact them direct to discuss training requirements. The link to the website is <https://oeapng.info/>

We hope this guidance note provides a useful update for schools to help them secure safe and rewarding learning opportunities outside the classroom for children and young people. **Please ensure this information is brought to the attention of all relevant staff in your school.**

If you have any further queries about this guidance, the following services/teams can be contacted for further advice and support:

Health and safety and general risk management advice & guidance:

Health and Safety Support Team
Resources Directorate
Solihull MBC
Tel: 0121 704 6328
Email: healthandsafetysupport@solihull.gov.uk

Advice on learning outside the classroom, teaching & learning approaches, the curriculum, educational legislation and safeguarding:

Learning and Skills Service
Children's Services & Skills Directorate
Solihull MBC
Tel: 0121 704 6620
Email: seisenquiries@solihull.gov.uk

Kind regards

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