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# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE

RHEYNN YNSEE, SPOYRT AS CULTOOR



**Isle of Man**  
Government

*Reiltys Ellan Vannin*

## Policy

### Educational Visits and Overnight Stays

# Glossary

**Adults other than teachers** means all adults who do not hold a recognised teaching qualification but who may help on a visit with the permission of the Headteacher.

**Department** means the Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) including schools, UCM, Villa Gaiety and MSR.

**DESC Educational Visits Advisor (EVA)** provides a point of contact for advice and support at DESC.

**DESC Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Document (EVOG)** is a document to provide guidance on planning and recording educational visits.

**Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)** means the person a school or youth club must nominate to help staff plan and manage educational visits and liaise with the Department where appropriate.

**Educational Visits Leader (EVL)** means the adult responsible for organising an educational visit.

**Governors** is the term used for governing bodies, management committees or any group who exercise a management function for DESC.

**Headteacher** includes all principals, centre heads, youth officers and staff who are in charge of a DESC establishment or unit.

**Parents** is the term used to describe parents, carers or guardians.

**PSC** means Public Service Commission

**Pupils** is the term used to describe all children, young people and students for whom the Department has responsibility.

**Effective Supervision** is the term used to ensure that a trip or visit has an appropriate staffing level to supervise participants effectively

**Teachers** is the term used to describe teachers, instructors, peripatetic employees, youth workers and others who are employed by DESC/PSC within a school or employed in a professional capacity elsewhere.

**Visit** is the term used to describe an activity that takes place off the school site.

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# Summary

## About this policy

This document sets out the policy for people within the Department who have responsibilities for organising and managing educational visits.

Educational visits provide a valuable opportunity for pupils and young people to encounter experiences which can't be created in a classroom or youth centre. They encourage young people to develop their initiative, engagement, resourcefulness and independence. Well-planned trips and visits should enhance the aims of the curriculum.

## Who is this document for?

This document is for governors, headteachers, teachers, youth officers, youth workers and others who are employed at DESC/PSC within a school or employed in a professional capacity elsewhere. It may also be referenced by parents, pupils and the wider public for information.

## Key points

The Department will support well planned and risk assessed educational visits, which follow the guidance contained in this document.

A school or youth club must ensure that the objectives and intended outcomes of every visit link to their wider aims and to the curriculum in the case of schools – the purpose of the trip or visit must be clear.

All trips and visits must be carried out with the highest regard for the health, safety and welfare of those taking part in them. A **specific** risk assessment must be carried out for every proposed trip.

All trips and visits **must** be planned, recorded and authorised using the EVOLVE system.

## Effective Date

This document is effective from October 2025. It will be kept under review and updated at least every two years.

# Education Visits & Overnight Stays Policy

## The Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Policy

This document sets out the policy for people with responsibilities for organising and managing educational visits within the Department. It is the Department's policy to support and encourage well planned and risk assessed educational visits.

All visits must be carried out with thorough planning and risk assessment and with the highest regard for the health, safety and welfare of those taking part in them.

All visits should be planned, recorded and managed using the EVOLVE online system. This includes final authorisation by the Headteacher or designated Youth Officer for each visit. The use of this system will also serve as notification of a forthcoming trip to the Department and will activate insurance cover.

This policy and the supporting documents reference the UK OEAP National Guidance information. OEAP National Guidance is a recommended and valuable resource.

All staff and volunteers connected to an educational visit, and directly supervising children or young people without teacher guidance, must have an up-to-date DBS check.

## Responsibilities

Overall responsibility cannot be delegated and in Health and Safety Law. In practice, individual people or groups can be given authority to act on behalf of the parent organisation.

The allocation of responsibilities is a key part in ensuring an educational visit is managed safely and effectively. The following paragraphs detail what is expected of key people or groups.

## The Department

DESC will;

- receive notification of all educational trips and visits via EVOLVE System.
- provide a point of contact (EVA) for offering advice on visits, especially those which involve more unusual or complex risk.
- have, and share, an understanding of the legal responsibilities relating to educational visits.
- support schools and clubs in monitoring their trip and visit provision
- expect each school and setting to ensure the EVOLVE system contains full details of all trips, visits and personnel.
- notify establishments of guidance for appropriate adult:pupil ratios.
- provide access to appropriate training.

- review policies and procedures in the light of lessons learnt and share good practice. This requires all settings to maintain a monitoring and evaluation system to record visit achievements, issues and concerns.

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body shall expect to be notified in advance of all trips deemed to be adventurous or those with more complex risks such as off-Island or residential.

### **The Headteacher**

Overall responsibility for trips and visits remains with the Headteacher who must approve and authorise each visit when it has been created in the EVOLVE online system.

Headteachers and Youth Officers should ensure that all educational visits have a clear and appropriate educational purpose and are properly planned and authorised in accordance with this policy and before the commencement of the trip.

### **The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)**

All schools and youth clubs **must** have a nominated Educational Visits Co-ordinator who has attended DESC EVC training. The EVC will;

- act as a point of information, support and advice during the planning of a visit.
- share and exemplify good practice.
- act as a point of communication with the Department.
- engage with Visit Leaders and sign off each visit or trip. Final authorisation always rests with the Headteacher or Youth Officer.
- maintain school trip and visit records on EVOLVE and monitor provision. The planning and approval process should take place in good time. If the visit is not approved and authorised on EVOLVE before the planned date the trip should not take place.
- shall keep their own knowledge and competency current through engaging with CPD, EVC collaboration and recognised training.

### **The Educational Visit Leader (EVL)**

The EVL will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and therefore the health and safety of the group. The EVL will, among other things;

- start the online notification and approval form via EVOLVE.
- advise the EVC / Headteacher of details of the planned trip or visit.
- undertake a specific risk assessment and plan for each visit that includes; health, safety, safeguarding, specific individual needs and financial risks.
- ensuring that the adult:pupil ratio is compliant with published policy guidance.
- liaise with the EVC to review the trip planning and risk assessments.
- hold a parent meeting before any residential or more complex trips.
- ensure the visit plan is shared appropriately with all supervising adults.
- engage with appropriate training and professional development opportunities.
- devise and communicate a plan to deal with emergencies.
- ensure parents and pupils are given an opportunity to prepare for the visit.

## Accompanying Adults other than Teachers

Any other adults participating in the visit must;

- hold a valid DBS check if they are directly supervising children without teacher or youth worker guidance.
- be familiar with their designated role, responsibilities and expectations of them whilst on the visit. This requires a pre-trip briefing.
- be supervised and answerable to the EVL during the visit.

## Parents and Pupils

- parents and pupils can expect to receive detailed information about any educational visit that is to be undertaken.
- to ensure the safety of all participants in a visit, parents must disclose (to the trip leader) information about a student's physical and psychological health when requested.
- where appropriate, pupils may be involved in discussions around assessing potential risks in line with current curriculum guidelines.

## Planning, Risk Management and Review

Planning needs to be systematic, specific, consistent and appropriate. A planning checklist is available in the Educational Visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Document (EVOG).

Risk assessment is a major part of planning for educational visits. Template forms which **must** be used are available in the EVOG Document. Detailed risk assessments **must** be included in the online submission via EVOLVE. Post trip analysis should also be recorded on EVOLVE.

Approval in principle must be sought by an EVL from the EVC before planning for a visit commences and before any financial commitment is made.

Certain categories of visits with more complex risk (adventurous pursuits or visits abroad) require prior notification to the Governing Body, as well as the Department (via the EVOLVE system).

All visits must be approved, before commencement, by the Headteacher with a record of the approval being logged on the EVOLVE system.

The Department will have a record of all visits entered onto EVOLVE, however it is the responsibility of the Headteacher, EVC and EVL to ensure that the visit is authorised, approved and delivered according to this policy and guidance. The Department must be notified of *all* visits via EVOLVE.

Details and guidance on planning and risk management can be found in the EVOG guidance document.

## Staffing

Educational visits involve considerable responsibility on the part of teachers and youth workers. The overall party size should be restricted to that which is manageable safely – this supports effective supervision.

Determining effective supervision will be dependent upon the specific aspects of the visit, however, **the following information details the minimum level of adult:pupil supervision.**

Any supervision ratio below this number needs careful consideration and justification at the planning stage and should be identified and addressed in the risk assessment and management submissions.

### Non-residential, on-Island visits

#### **Minimum ratios are:**

Pupils in Reception (Foundation Stage)

1 adult : every 4 participants **plus** 1 additional member of staff

Pupils in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2

1 adult : every 10 participants **plus** 1 additional member of staff

Pupils in Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4

1 adult : every 16 participants **plus** 1 additional member of staff

Pupils in Key Stage 5

The level of supervision would normally be as defined for pupils in Key Stage 4 except for certain activities such as theatre visits or lectures where one supervising teacher or youth worker may be acceptable.

### **On-Island residential visits, extended trips beyond the normal school day or those involving adventurous activities.**

#### **Minimum ratios are:**

Pupils in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2

1 adult : every 8 participants **plus** 1 additional member of staff (16 - 23 pupils; 3 staff)

There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker, accompanying each residential visit.

Pupils in Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4

1 adult : every 10 participants **plus** 1 additional member of staff

There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker, accompanying each residential visit.

Pupils in Key Stage 5

The level of supervision would normally be as defined for pupils in Key Stage 4 except for certain extended visits where appropriate risk management has been considered. There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker, accompanying each residential visit.

### **Off-Island visits**

#### **Minimum ratios are:**

Key Stage 2

1 adult : every 8 participants plus 1 additional member of staff.

There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker, , accompanying each visit.

Key Stage 3 and 4

1 adult : every 10 participants plus 1 additional member of staff.

There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker,, accompanying each visit.

Pupils in Key Stage 5

The level of supervision would normally be as defined for pupils in Key Stage 4 except for certain extended visits where appropriate risk management has been considered. There must always be a minimum of 2 adults, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher or area youth worker, accompanying each visit.

Specific activities that might be undertaken on a trip or visit, such as water sports or hiking, may have specific participant ratios. These are considered in the Safety in Outdoor and Adventurous Activity Guidance document.

### **Duke of Edinburgh Award**

For Duke of Edinburgh Awards Expeditions (open to pupils ages 15+) there will be times when participants are not accompanied so that the pupils develop essential life skills such as teamwork, resilience and self-reliance. One way this can be achieved is through remote supervision, which balances the participants independence with the necessity of ensuring their safety.

Adult to participant ratios should be in line with the Policy's recommendations.

### **Equality Provision**

Under the Equality Act 2017, it is illegal to discriminate on the grounds of disability or gender and other protected characteristics. Students with additional needs require individual consideration and may result in a higher level of staffing (including specialist staff) to facilitate supervision and communication. The Education Visits Advisor at DESC is able to offer advice if needed.

Any additional adults taking part in an educational visit and directly supervising children or young people must hold a valid DBS check. Additional details regarding staff supervision in special cases can be found in the EVOG Guidance Document.

### **Charges for School Activities**

Section 11 of the Education Act 2001 states that;

(1) The Department may, by regulations, provide for the making of charges for or in respect of —

- (a) such descriptions of teaching provided for pupils, or
- (b) such descriptions of activities arranged for pupils,

at a provided school or maintained school (whether or not as part of the normal curriculum of the school) as are specified in the regulations.

(2) Except in accordance with regulations, no charge may be made by or on behalf of the Department or the governing body of a provided school or maintained school for any teaching provided for pupils at the school or any activity arranged for pupils at the school."

However, no such regulations have been made and the law as it stands prohibits charges being made for compulsory school activities. The intention of Section 11 of the Act is that there is no charge for teaching or activities that are compulsory for pupils. If the activity or teaching is optional, parents may be asked to contribute to costs. In the instance that the parent is unwilling or unable to contribute to the cost then the school may either make alternative arrangements for the pupil to remain in school or pay for that pupil to join the visit.

Schools and clubs should be aware of the financial burden expensive trips can place on families. It is important to consider the educational benefits when planning a trip and the possibility of disadvantaged pupils being excluded for financial reasons.

### **Insurance**

A special responsibility, recognised in law, is assumed for the reasonable protection of children in the care of any organisation looking after children. The Department of Education, Sport and Culture (along with all other Isle of Man Government Departments) has a number of insurance policies in place to cover various risks.

The Department also has specific insurance cover for educational visits and journeys which is arranged through the Government's insurance brokers – all schools are included in the policy provided they process the trip on EVOLVE.

The EVOLVE online system will generate a question about insurance for all overseas or residential trips or adventurous activities. There will be a cost to the school if the visit is overseas / off island and insurance is arranged independently from the existing Government insurance policy. Any perceived requirement for additional insurance must be agreed in advance with DESC.

## **Parental Information, Pupil Details and Consent**

All off-site activities that form part of the regular curriculum (for example, swimming lessons) will require written parental permission. This could be obtained at the start of each term or academic year, as considered appropriate by the headteacher. The information provided must support the parent making an informed choice

Day visits which may involve a full day away from school, special lunch arrangements, special clothing requirements, travel or adventurous activities will require specific written parental consent.

Extended residential stays on-Island and all off-Island visits require full and detailed written information to be sent to parents and their written consent obtained.

Special medical or dietary requirements of any participants and staff should be known and catered for.

## **Sustainable Future**

The Isle of Man is committed to developing more sustainable practices across all institutions. Education has a key role to play in working towards this ambition. The planning stage of all trips and visits should consider how environmental impact can be reduced and how awareness of environmental impact can be raised. A Sustainability Checklist is provided to support schools and settings and is referenced in the EVOLVE system.

## **Prohibited Activities**

The following activities are **not approved** by the Department of Education, Sport and Culture:

- Blood sports
- Cross-country motorcycling
- Disused mine exploration (other than commercial mines open to the public)
- Hang gliding and Parachuting
- Ice skating (other than on recognised rinks)
- Racing in power boats, racing competitively or speed testing micro light flying
- Shooting (other than at a range controlled by a shooting club or outdoor centre)
- Sliding activities which have no safe means of arrest, including poly-bag, sledging and tubing (other than on recognised courses).

## Associated Resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Department of Education, Sport & Culture Educational visits and Overnight Stays Guidance Document (EVOG)

Safety in Outdoor and Adventurous Activity Guidance (SOAG)

[The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel \(OEAP\) National Guidance](#)

[HSE - School trips - Tackling the health and safety myths](#)

[School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

## Version Control and Review

The business area that owns this document is **Education Advice and Support**.

Version	Author	Date	Changes
V0.1	Policy Hub	May 2021	First Draft based on existing document
V0.2	Education Visits Advisor	September 2022	Created using information available in the existing EVO guidance document. Consultation with stakeholders has taken place during EVC training
V0.3	Policy Hub	September 2024	Formatting and amendments made
V0.4	DESC Director	October 2024	Consultation and amendment
V.05		Dec 2024	Consultation
V0.6	Education Visits Advisor	Feb 2025	Amendments following consultation with Department's H&S Officer
V0.7			Draft submitted to SLT
V0.8	Education Visits Advisor	February 2025	Amendments following SLT review (if applicable)
V.09	DESC Risk Manager	May 2025	Consultation and amendment
V.10	Education Visits Advisor	Sept 2025	Revision following consultation with DESC 12 Sep 2025
V.10.1	Education Visits Advisor	Sept 2025	Revision following consultation with DESC 24 Sep 2025

V10.2	EVA / Policy Hub	Oct 2025	Revision following consultation with DESC 28 Oct 2025
V.11		20/10/2025	Final Draft approved by SLT
V.11		05/11/2025	Version 1.0 published

### **Review Date**

This document was issued in November 2025 and is due be reviewed in October 2026.