

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 7 July 2022

### Report of the Head of Health, Safety and Resilience

#### Part I

Electoral Division affected:  
(All Divisions);

**Corporate Priorities:**  
Delivering better services;  
Caring for the vulnerable;

### Review of Lancashire County Council's Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines September 2022-September 2025

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Nicky Scott, Tel: 01772 531519, Service Delivery Manager Educational Off Site Visits, [nicky.scott@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:nicky.scott@lancashire.gov.uk)

#### Brief Summary

This report contains revisions to Lancashire County Council's Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines September 2022 – September 2025.

#### Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the revised Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines September 2022 – September 2025, as set out at Appendix 'A'.

#### Detail

The Lancashire Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines apply to:

- Schools where Lancashire County Council is the employer;
- All schools that are covered by the county council's insurance arrangements;
- All Education Services; and
- Academies, Free and Independent schools that have purchased the Educational Visits Packages and adopted the Policy.

The development of the Policy and timeline is as follows:

2003            The Lancashire Educational Visits Policy and Guidelines were initially approved.

- 2005 Substantially reviewed and revised, following the recommendations of the Health and Safety Executive report on the Glenridding Tragedy and the operational experience.
- 2007 Further minor revisions were undertaken to the Policy and Guidelines, pending the publication of updated guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families. The Department for Children, Schools and Families published a draft document 'Health and Safety of Learners Outside the Classroom' for consultation in November 2009, but following concerns set out in responses from Local Authorities and other organisations, no final guidance was released by the Department for Education until 2011.
- 2011 (and updated in February 2012 and December 2012) the Department for Education published 'Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies'. The Department for Education document was supported by the Health and Safety Executive publication 'School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities: Tackling the Health and Safety myths'.
- 2016 An updated, more accessible Policy for Educational/Off Site Visits was launched, to form the focus for all training opportunities for Educational Visits Co-ordinators and all staff associated with educational off site visits.
- 2019 The subsequent review of this policy for the launch of the 2019 edition of the Policy and Guidelines included for Type B Visits (higher risk) the inclusion of London day visits and other multi venue city visits, an expanded and improved guidance on good practice essentials, covering; Informed Parental Consent, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Off Site Visit Emergencies, Visit Closed Procedures, the Post Visit Evaluation process for all types of visit.
- A new section 'Accompanying adults and the supervision of Educational Off Site Visits' was added, to provide greater clarity on related persons on visits.

## **2022 Revision**

During the 2021/22 academic year, an Officer Review Group had undertaken a full and comprehensive appraisal of the Lancashire Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines in the light of:

- A commitment by Lancashire County Council to review the 2019 edition of the Policy and Guidelines in 2022. (The Educational /Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines being a controlled document.)
- Improvements to the on-line service approval and vetting process for visits called 'EVOLVE'.

- Feedback on the procedural and operational arrangements in schools and services from the Educational Visits Co-ordinators at Networks, Educational Visits Co-ordinators Refresher and Update training courses, and from the monitoring of visits by the Authority's Professional Support Team.
- The lessons learned from reviewing accidents/incidents nationally and locally.

The main changes in the revised Policy and Guidelines are:

- a) The category of a Local Learning Area has been introduced to support routine Type A visits covered by a school's current policies and procedures. These are specified visits/activities within a designated geographical area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the school day.
- b) An amendment to London City Visits and other multi venue city visits will remain as Type B where the school is not also located in the city.
- c) For all type A and B visits which have been processed on EVOLVE, the Post Visit Evaluation section must now be completed within 28 days of the visit, rather than 14 days as stated in the previous policy. This aligns with the EVOLVE system, which has always allowed a visit to be closed by the school up to 28 days.
- d) A new section 'establishment led walks' outlines the three pathways available to be recognised as competent to lead a walk. This is further supported by a further detailed framework of criteria for walks permitted to be led by an individual without a recognised qualification or a statement of competence. This has been embedded in the planning and approval process for Educational Off Site Visits section.
- e) Enhanced detail on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the explicit signposting of the Instructor Pack for schools. This is alongside specific guidance for schools using external specialist companies to deliver their Duke of Edinburgh programme. This section also includes a clear operating ratio for school led Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.
- f) New guidance and an expanded First Aid Provision section. There is now a specific policy requirement for visits operating in rural and remote settings to evidence competence through an Outdoor First Aid Qualification. Types of visits where Outdoor First Aid cover will be required include Geography field trips involved in data collection in rural or remote settings, often involving water; Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions and establishment led walks. The two available courses are detailed in the policy.
- g) Working with Providers of activities. This section has been expanded to include clear definitions and the differences between registered providers and registered instructors and the processes involved to achieve registration with Lancashire County Council status. This section again signposts the revised Instructor Pack.

- h) Additional guidance in the duties and responsibilities section under the Visit Leader function. There has been a new insert 'competence to lead'. This is recognition that the competence of the Visit Leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants.

### **Consultations for 2022 Revision**

The Educational/Off Site Visits Advisory Board has overseen the review of the Policy and Guidelines. The Board consists of the following representatives:

- Service Delivery Manager, Educational Off-Site Visits;
- Technical Lead for the Outdoor Education Service/ Off Site Visits;
- Solicitor, Legal and Democratic Services;
- Health, Safety and Quality Service Delivery Manager;
- Quality Review Officer, Children and Family Wellbeing Service;
- External Independent Representatives: the retired investigating Officer for the Health and Safety Executive and Glenridding Beck Investigation and a Special School Headteacher.

As part of the review process, drafts of the Policy and Guidelines have also been shared with the following for comment/agreement:

- Representative Educational Visits Co-ordinators from all phases of schools, academies and services.
- Head of Health, Safety and Resilience Service.

There has been an overwhelmingly positive and supportive response from the consultees.

Since the adoption of the current Policy and Guidelines in 2019, there has been an improvement in the engagement of children/young people and the need for them to be 'risk aware', by engaging them in thinking about risk. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator training sessions have been updated, particularly following any local or national incident. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator annual networks, which have moved to a webinar format and Refresher and Update training opportunities provide excellent ongoing professional learning for Educational Visits Co-ordinators, typically accessed every 3-5 years, where and they are encouraged to share the information to school staff and governors.

The revised Policy and Guidelines for Educational/Off Site Visits will be presented to the Autumn Term 2022 series of two Educational Visits Co-ordinator Network webinar meetings. These sessions will be recorded and available to all school staff with EVOLVE access until January 2023.

At these events, the main changes to the 2019 edition (encapsulated in the 2022 edition) will be highlighted, alongside other key messages from a review of all visit activity 2021/22.

## **Implications:**

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

### **Risk management**

The revised Lancashire County Council Educational/Off Site Visits Policy and Guidelines September 2022-September 2025 provides that best practice has been observed when planning and undertaking such activities involving children and young people for whom the county council is responsible.

It is essential to review Health and Safety Policies and procedures on a regular basis, to ensure that they meet national guidance and operational needs. All Educational Visits Co-ordinators have been trained in the use of the Policy and Guidelines and they will receive appropriate continuing professional development. It is a requirement that no off site visit can take place without a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator. In the absence of a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator, the Educational Visits Team will fulfil this role until a new Co-ordinator is appointed.

### **List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		