Date: August 2025
Review Date: August 2026

Responsibility: Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing/ EVC

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Epsom College in Malaysia a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Increased critical curiosity and resilience;
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other);
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish;
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence;
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. i.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse;
- Greater sense of personal responsibility;
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills;
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments;
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document). Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance and the need for State Ministry of Education approval for class day and overnight trips outside Negeri Sembilan.

Staff conducting trips should act as would a reasonably prudent parent in a similar situation. Planning and execution of the visit should be carried out in accordance with health and safety and safeguarding training and must comply with best practice.

Types of visit

There are two types of visit:

1. Routine and day local visits in the 'Extended learning locality'
2. Visits that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

SLT will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning activities outside the classroom. He/She is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters and will check final visit plans.

The Headteacher has responsibility for authorising all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits.

The Board of Governors, through this and other policies, has responsibility for ensuring the Health and Safety of staff and pupils at Epsom College in Malaysia.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role;
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits;
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience;
- Previous relevant training;
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge in the event of an emergency;
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

There are no exact ratios for school trips. The visit leader must ensure that the staffing for a trip is 'reasonable'. This will depend on the age, gender mix, ability and behaviour of the pupils involved. It will depend on the type of activity undertaken, the nature of the journey and the type of accommodation if the trip is overnight.

Approval

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local visits follow the 'Extending learning locality' policy **within the state of Negeri Sembilan & Kuala Lumpur** (Appendix 1). These must be submitted to the EVC for approval and checking at least **28 days in advance** (although it is recognised some exceptions may occur)**;**
2. Approval by the school for overseas and residential visits whether they are adventurous activities or not must be 2 terms in advance**. Approval from the Government must also be sought from the State Education Department, Ministry of Education in Seremban 5 weeks in advance of the trip. Staff should liaise with the College's Government Liaison Officer for assistance with this application.**
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity are then submitted to the Headmaster for approval.
4. A thorough Risk Assessment is to be carried out and completed by the trip leader and shared with the EVC in advance of the trip to be reviewed and approved. A trip cannot proceed without the Risk Assessment being reviewed and approved.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the appropriate staff at the College.

Educational Visits Checklist

Epsom College in Malaysia's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

Parental Consent

Through the College's Terms and Conditions the school obtains blanket consent for activities that fall within the 'Extended learning locality' (see Appendix 1).

Specific, (i.e. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via letters, meetings, etc.), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Pupil Expectations

Prior to the trip, the purpose of the visit and the expectations of pupils will be clearly explained to all those attending, in writing and verbally. General standards of behaviour, dress, meeting points, emergency procedures, along with the consequences of any poor behaviour, will be discussed with the pupils, and their confirmation and understanding of these expectations will be sought.

For residential trips, a clear itinerary should be sent to parents, and details of the consequences of any poor behaviour by pupils explained, including any financial implications.

Inclusion

The school recognises its obligation to promote equal opportunities for pupils and will try to make trips accessible for all where possible. Careful consideration must be given towards those with special behavioural, medical, and/or dietary needs; disability access must also be considered.

For pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, notes will be taken of relevant recommendations in IEPs.

Party leaders can ensure that any pupils with special or medical needs may be accommodated by:

- Checking that accommodation and activities are suitable;
- Altering staffing arrangements where necessary;
- Making special arrangements with parents
- Ensuring that any relevant medical paperwork (including medication, dietary requirements and allergies) has been provided by the parents and that all needs can be catered for.

Charging / funding for visits

Parents will always be asked to give consent to any visit if a charge is to be made.

The cost of compulsory visits are included within school fees; charges are only made for optional visits, and the cost will represent the actual cost that the school incurs in organising and operating the visit.

Transport

Pupils may be transported to or from a visit by the following means:

- On foot;
- By College minibus;
- By coach;
- By public transport, e.g. train or bus;

Staff should not use their private car for transporting students on school trips

All pupils are expected to wear a seatbelt when travelling. They will be reminded of this requirement by staff, and pupils are not permitted to leave their seats whilst in transit.

Special care should be taken when travelling by train to ensure that pupils are not separated from the group; such considerations should be included in the risk assessments.

Pupils are not permitted to travel to or from visits in their own car unless prior permission has been given to the Visit Leader by the pupil's Housemaster or Housemistress and parents.

Insurance

Whilst the school has travel insurance that covers the majority of trips, potentially hazardous activities may require additional cover. All Visit Leaders should consult the Bursar in the planning stages of the trip to ensure adequate cover and to arrange further insurance if necessary.

Categories of cover available are as follows:

- Employers' liability
- Public liability
- Motor Vehicle
- Personal Accident cover
- Travel insurance

Parents should be informed of the insurance that is applicable to the trip and whether the school's travel insurance applies or whether holiday insurance is additionally necessary.

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Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Locality

Boundaries

The boundaries of the extended learning locality are within the State of Negeri Sembilan and Kuala Lumpur

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the visit approval process, provided they follow the Operating Procedure for the Extended Learning Locality.

Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The EVC must give approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults present. Where only one adult is present, there will be a nominated contact at the school able to respond immediately on receiving a phone call from any member of the group.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group (e.g. return to school; wait where you are; go to a pre-arranged place).
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will ensure the trip folder on the shared drive has a list of all pupils and staff, the proposed route, contact number and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile is taken with each group and the EVC, Deputy Headteacher Pastoral and Nominated School Contact have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles).

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a Nominated School Contact for any visit. During school hours this is the Reception Desk. At other times it is the Nominated School Contact.

2. This Nominated School Contact will either be an experienced member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.

3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.

4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.

5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the Senior Leadership Team ('SLT') in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.

6. For visits that take place outside the Extended Learning Locality' the visit leader will carry an Emergency Contacts card

This policy is updated as necessary and reviewed annually.