



**Milton Keynes
College**

VISITS POLICY

Responsible Officer:	Director of Learner Services
Date:	August, 2006
Review Date:	August, 2008
Policy available:	College intranet and website

Visits Policy Updated August 2006

VISITS POLICY

SCOPE

The Visits Policy applies to any visit organised by the College. The policy covers all learners including workbased, under 16s and those in higher education. The College policy applies to part day, day, hazardous, residential, and visits abroad.

INTRODUCTION

The college recognises the value of visits which are planned as an integrated part of the learner's programme or will help to develop their personal skills.

Student Entitlement

- ❖ Visits are organised to form an integral part of the student's learning programme
- ❖ The pattern of the visits proposed for any group of students, in any period, should not have a detrimental affect on the overall pattern of their studies
- ❖ When visits are arranged, unacceptable or unexpected financial burdens should not be placed on students or their parents or guardians
- ❖ Students and parents of under 18 students will receive written information appropriate to the type of activities planned. This should include: costs, departure and return times, details of activities to be undertaken, details about accommodation arrangements, special clothing that may be required, emergency procedures, and telephone contact number for the duration of the visit in case of emergency
- ❖ The College will minimise the health and safety risks to students by assessing potential risks prior to the visit taking place and ensuring students are well briefed and prepared for the visit. The College will also monitor and review safety during and after visits.
- ❖ The College will maintain appropriate insurance cover for students attending authorised off site activities and visits.
- ❖ Wherever possible the college will ensure equal access for learners with learning difficulties, disabilities, additional needs or medical conditions. Support for these learners will be included in the risk assessment process.

Types of Visits

It is recognised that different types of visits will be subject to different requirements.

The group leader/visit organiser is required to identify the educational/training objectives of any such visit.

NON-HAZARDOUS DAY OR PART DAY VISITS

The following types of visits are identified and will require a standard Visit Authorisation Form 1.

These are visits which last up to one day and do not include any activity defined as hazardous. For these visits Authorisation Form 1 and a Risk Assessment Form must be completed. These visits can be covered by the Annual Visit consent Form, but where this has not been completed, a Specific Visit Consent letter should be signed for each student.

This category includes visits/journeys that last for less than a day, or may involve attendance beyond the learner's normal college programme. Where this is the case, learners and the parents/carers of under 18s, should be provided with written confirmation of the visit arrangements.

VISITS INVOLVING HAZARDOUS ACTIVITY / RESIDENTIAL / TRIPS ABROAD

This category includes any visit which involves hazardous activities. Typically these visits might include:-

Walking in remote areas	Mountain Climbing
Rock climbing	Orienteering
Water Sports	Skiing, including artificial slopes
Caving and Potholing	Horse Riding
Field Studies	Pony Trekking

If staff are in doubt as to whether or not a proposed activity falls into the hazardous category, they should consult the Director of Learner Services.

The category also includes residential visits and visits abroad which may or may not include hazardous activities. Visit Authorisation Form 2, and a Risk Assessment form must be completed for all of the above visits. These visits require the approval of the Governors.

All visits requiring Governors approval require a Specific Visit Consent Letter signed by the parent/carer of under 18s or by the learner if over 18.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VISIT ORGANISER

- ❖ Visit organisers/leaders are required to complete the appropriate documentation and procedures (copies attached) according to the type of visit including the appropriate letters of consent to ensure health & safety guidelines are met.
- ❖ Before booking the group organiser/leader should obtain a written or documentary assurance that the providers such as tour operators have assessed the risks and have appropriate measures in place.
- ❖ Where the visit includes hazardous activities the visit organiser must ensure the provider is appropriately accredited or licensed. Licences are required for Watersports, Climbing, Caving or Trekking. Licences can be checked through The Adventure Activities Licensing Authority see www.aala.org for details. The letter of consent includes a statement that participation in hazardous activities is undertaken voluntarily by the student.
- ❖ A risk assessment must always be carried out by the group organiser/leader before and during each visit which will be based on the following considerations:
 - identifying potential risks
 - who is at risk
 - how are they at risk
 - action that will be implemented by the group leader to reduce the risk
 - assess level of risk i.e. high, medium or low in order for the college to decide whether the visit is appropriate.
- ❖ Visit organisers should ensure equal access for learners with learning difficulties, disabilities, additional needs or medical conditions. Support for these learners should be included in the Risk Assessment form. Where a student has a serious medical condition which could require hospital treatment, this must be identified and notification given to the Director of Learner Services before seeking the Governors' approval.
- ❖ The visit organiser/leader is responsible for ensuring that clear communication is made with the students/parents/carers regarding:

departure and return times, activities to be undertaken, special clothing that may be required, accommodation, and contact numbers

- ❖ On the day of the visit organisers must ensure that reception has a list of the names of students who will be attending the visit.
- ❖ The visit organiser/leader is responsible for monitoring the risks and on returning to college should evaluate the visit with the students in order to minimise any risk in the future. Where there have been any health and safety, behaviour or organisational issues a visit evaluation form should be completed and forwarded to the Director of Learner Services.

Travel by coach

- ❖ Organisers should use the coach companies from the approved college list.
- ❖ Organisers who wish to use the college minibus should ensure the Driver is authorised.

Staff / Student Ratios for Students under 18

Day visits not involving hazardous activity – adult/student ratio 1:20.

Day visits involving hazardous activity at licensed or appropriately accredited provider 1:20

Other day visits involving hazardous activity 1:15

Residential, visits abroad, - 1:15 – including one supervisor of each sex if both sexes are involved in the visit.

Staffing for Residential Visits

The visit organiser will be responsible for designating staff to be on duty to provide 24 hour coverage.

The Curriculum Managers are required to authorise all visits within their curriculum area. The Curriculum Managers should ensure that the visit has no detrimental effect on the overall pattern of the students' studies.

The Director of Learner Services is the central information point responsible for collating all documentation regarding visits and off site activities organised as part of the student's programme. The Director of Learner Services is required to authorise all visits and is responsible for ensuring the college procedures and guidelines are followed.

The Chief Executive is responsible for advising governors about proposed visits and may delegate these responsibilities to identified members of staff, at
Visits Policy Updated August 2006

present the Director of Learner Services. Ultimate responsibility lies with the Board of Governors who have the right to veto any proposed visits and whose authorisation is required for visits involving hazardous activity or being away for more than one night.

Cross References

A Good Practice Guide – Health & Safety of Pupils on Education Visits published by DFEE – website address www.dfes.gov.uk and a copy is available in the LRC.

Monitoring Review & Evaluation

Visits documentation is centrally collected and reviewed by the Director of Learner Services