BIG CREATIVE ACADEMY
CLIFTON AVENUE
WALTHAMSTOW
LONDON, E17 6HL
TEL: 020 8498 3300
WWW.BIGCREATIVE.EDUCATION

RESIDENTIAL & INTERNATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Updated October 2023
Approved by the Principal

This policy refers to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Work Experience Policy
- Pay Policy
- Guidance on Appropriate Conduct for Staff
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Learning and Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary Policy

1. Educational Benefit

1.1 It is widely recognised that students can gain a great deal of educational benefit from taking part in appropriately organised off-site activities. Not only can they be an excellent way for students to obtain information and experiences related to their study area, they also provide opportunities for the development of social skills. It is, however, also acknowledged that to enable students to gain the most benefit possible, Big Creative Academy needs to ensure that staff adhere to correct planning and organisation processes.

1.2 Staff should ensure the visit enhances the student learning experience by:

a) relating it to specific aims within the programme to maximise the learning experience
b) supporting learners' careers ambitions and positive progression

2. Authorisation

2.1 When planning a residential or international visit staff will need to consider the following:

a) Curriculum – impact of guided learning hours (GLH)
b) Finance
c) Health and safety considerations
d) Public liability insurance
e) Safeguarding considerations
f) Student support needs (including medical considerations)
g) Communication to parents, parental consent
h) Good practice
i) Emergency procedures

2.2 Residential and international visits must be agreed with the Principal, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

2.3 Once a residential or international visit has been formally approved, funds have been committed and students, parents/carers have been informed or made payments; any cancellation or significant change of detail must be authorised by the Principal.

2.4 The implications of the impact of cancellation or significant change must be considered carefully which could include financial loss or a negative effect on the reputation of Big Creative Academy.

3. Curriculum – impact on guided learning hours (GLH)

3.1 Where possible staff should ensure the visit enhances the student learning experience and is related to specific aims within the programme to maximise the learning experience. If a trip can be said to be an integral part of the course, the hours that students spend on the trip can be included in the GLH for the course. For residential trips, only the hours that would be normally be available when the Academy is open can count towards recorded GLH.

3.2 Work experience placements count towards the dedicated work experience hours on students' study programmes as per the Academy's Work Experience Policy.

3.3 Where there is a crossover in vocational hours and work experience hours, vocational GLH will need to be made up by students, outside of Academy hours, with full support from the relevant members of staff.

3.4 Registers must be marked correctly on Arbor to demonstrate ESFA funding compliance.

4. Staff Ratios

4.1 For low and medium risk activities at least 1 member of staff for every 10 students if a group has a significantly high SEND need or EHCP students attending an additional members of staff would be needed as per learner needs.

4.2 Mixed gender groups for overnight visits should include at least one male and one female member of staff.

4.3 A student with learning difficulties and/or disability should only be unaccompanied where this has been assessed within the scope of the activity and negotiated with the trip organiser, the student (and parents/carers for students under 25 years).

4.4 These ratios are intended to be a guideline only and can be reviewed on an individual basis.

4.5 Staffing selection for all residential and international visits will be agreed by the Senior Leadership Team, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Curriculum Managers

5. Finance

5.1 Big Creative Academy will make all residential and international visits accessible to all students regardless of family income. Where students and parents are asked to contribute to costs, hardship funds will always be made available for those most in need.

5.2 Full costings of residential or international visit must be agreed in advance of it taking place.

5.3 Budgets must be in place with sufficient funds to cover the visit. Where a visit is funded by a grant, a full costing must be agreed by the Academy Business Manager.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 It is the primary duty of Big Creative Academy to ensure the safety of all learners and members of staff.

6.2 The Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999 requires staff to:

a) Assess the risks of activities
b) Introduce measures to control those risks
c) Tell their students about those measures
d) Communicate with other areas to finalise measures e.g. Inclusive Learning, medical support

6.3 Students are required to:

a) Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
b) Co-operate with their teachers over safety matters
c) Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
d) Inform the teacher of any serious risk concerns

6.4 These duties apply to all off-site activities. Organisers and other staff accompanying visits have a duty of care under common law to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances, where participating students are under the age of 18 years old. The correct completion of the appropriate paperwork will ensure that the Academy and its staff are meeting these requirements and will demonstrate that reasonable care is being taken.

6.5 Staff should be aware of the emergency services contact number 112. This emergency number is available throughout the UK and EU, and is free of charge.

6.6 As a guide where possible a first aider should accompany all trips. For Medium and High risk trips it is essential that there is at least one named first aider. When planning any trip students' individual needs need to be considered and advice taken from the Student Services team of the level of needs required.

6.7 Briefings will be held with the staff accompanying learners on visits to ensure full understanding of responsibilities. Attendance will be recorded.

7. Public Liability Insurance

7.1 Big Creative Academy subscribes to the Department for Education Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) for insurance purposes, which covers students on authorised residential visits in the UK and Europe. Full details of the cover can be found at the link below, and is the responsibility of the Academy Business Manager.

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-risk-protection-arrangement-rpa-for-schools

7.2 Please note that personal items of equipment are not covered by the Academy insurance.

7.3 Special insurance needs to be taken out for visits to countries outside of Europe. The facilities office will arrange cover and require one month notice.

7.4 Since RPA is designed to protect the Academy, it is advised that students ensure they have adequate personal insurance to provide cover particularly against personal injury and personal possessions. Remember that public liability insurance only covers costs for

compensation claims made against the Academy – it does not protect against criminal negligence.

7.5 For trips overseas, students/parents/carers should be informed that they should take out personal insurance protection. For overseas trips, it is possible that local insurance cover is very different to what is available in the United Kingdom, and language differences may make it difficult to know the level of protection and so students should be advised to take out insurance before embarking upon the trip.

7.6 Should an extension to the standard insurance cover be required for a particular activity, this will need to be confirmed by the Academy Business Manager after the production of an approved risk assessment, as the terms and levels of protection provided by insurance companies alter yearly at renewal. It will be assumed that most venues will have their own liability insurance provision in place, and in general it will not be necessary to obtain a copy of those certificates. However, it is good practice to ask for confirmation when booking tickets/places/activities. If a venue is being used for the first time, or it may be a smaller, independent organisation, or the activities fall within a Medium or High Risk, then it will be necessary to ensure that copies of their Public Liability and Employers Liability certificate is obtained. Students should be advised to take care to ensure that any insurance they take out for Medium and High Risk trips properly cover activities within the terms.

8. Safeguarding Considerations

8.1 The safeguarding of students is paramount and members of staff will act in accordance with Big Creative Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.

8.2 Safeguarding cases and concerns will be treated on a case by case basis and consideration taken for the safety of individual members of staff and students.

8.3 All reasonable checks must be conducted for individuals involved in host activities, homestays and work placements, as per Annex D of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. For international visits, this may include contacting the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible.

9. Student support needs (including medical considerations)

9.1 Residential and international visits are open and accessible to all students and full consideration of learners' needs will be assessed in undertaking a risk assessment.

9.2 Support will be provided to learners as appropriate in accordance with their needs.

9.3 Venues, accommodation, travel and work placements will be checked in advance to ensure they are accessible to students with disability or impairment.

9.4 A student with learning difficulties and/or disability should only be unaccompanied where this has been assessed within the scope of the activity and negotiated with the trip organiser, the student (and parents/carers for students under 25 years).

10. Communication to parents, parental consent

10.1 For students under the age of 18, parental consent must be provided in order for a student to attend a residential or international visit.

10.2 Where students are over 18, Big Creative Academy will encourage conversations and agreement with parents in order for the student to attend the visit.

10.3 A briefing will be arranged for parents in advance of the residential or international visit using the items below.

What will be covered	What is included
Introduction and Welcome	Introduce the members of staff Confirm dates and list of participants outlining the benefits of this off-site visit and provide context
Transport	Pick up & drop off point(s) and times, flights, transfers etc. Include insurance arrangements, VISA's, EU medical cards
Accommodation and meals	Location of accommodation, what is included and rooming arrangements. Arrangements for meal times
Itinerary	Day by day information
Health and Safety and behaviour	Code of conduct, medical forms / medical conditions
Emergency Contact Details	Ensure emergency contact numbers are correct
Check Details	Spending money, luggage restrictions, ID cards, clothes and equipment
Q&A	Opportunity for questions
Conclude	Thank you and goodnight

10.4 Information packs with full details of the residential or international visit will be provided for parents, including points of contact for them to call.

11. Good Practice – international visits

11.1 Staff and students need to be aware of the difficulties that may arise with certain aspects of overseas travel, including those pertaining to passports, health cover and visa regulations. Please note that all overseas trips and high risk activities will need to be approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

11.2 The Finance Department must be involved when selecting a tour operator. All Overseas Trip forms must be signed by a member of SLT. Before using a tour operator the trip organiser must ensure it is reputable and must be approved by a bonding agency. If using air transport ensure there is an Air Travel Organisers Licence (ATOL) in place.

11.3 If individuals require additional insurance cover then this must be made known at the early stage of the planning and preparation to ensure plenty of time to organise.

11.4 Should it be required, all students must provide evidence of their travel insurance by bringing in a copy of their policy. This must be photocopied twice with a copy being retained by the Academy Business Manager.

11.5 Further to the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, there are new travel considerations to take into account for individuals and groups travelling to Europe. If staff members or any students have specific nationality circumstances to consider before travelling, the government Foreign Travel Advice website should be consulted.

https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

11.6 There must be a check that everyone has their own passport. To be eligible to enter the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland from the United Kingdom, your passport will need to meet the following criteria:

- Valid for at least a further six months
- Less than ten years old (even if it has less than six months validity left)
- This rule does not apply to travel to the Republic of Ireland, where you can use your passport for entry as long as it is valid for the duration of your stay.
- Note - groups will now need to use separate lanes from EU citizens, and may need to provide return ticket or onward travel details as proof for the visit.

11.7 The European Travel Information and Authorisation Scheme (ETIAS) that was foreseen to come into force in 2024. Full British citizens will apply online in advance of their visit and a security check will be done before their arrival (similar to the ESTA requirement of the US). An ETIAS will be valid for three years from date of issue, with information stored electronically against passport details in the European Immigration system. It will cost approximately €7 per person.

11.8 For most people, the UK Global Health Insurance Card (UK GHIC) replaces the existing European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for new applications. Each individual teacher and student that are travelling will need a E/GHIC card. Apply for free on the NHS website.

https://www.gov.uk/global-health-insurance-card

11.9 If staff/students travel to Europe without a E/GHIC card, or lose it, a Provisional Replacement Certificate can be obtained by contacting NHS Overseas Healthcare Service. Depending on the country visited there may be an expectation to pay all or part of the bill upfront and then claim a refund afterwards. In this instance staff should inform their manager at the Academy as soon as is practicable for advice and guidance.

11.10 If any of the students or staff travelling have long-term illness or existing injuries, insurance options should be discussed to ensure they are covered.

12. Good Practice - supervision of learners

12.1 The manager on the visit is responsible overall for the group at all times. In delegating supervisory roles to other staff in the group, it is good practice for the group leader to:

- allocate supervisory responsibility to each staff member for named participants
- ensure that each staff member knows which participants they are responsible for;
- ensure that each participant knows which staff member is responsible for them
- ensure that all staff understand that they are responsible to the Trip Organiser for the supervision of the participants assigned to them
- ensure that all staff and participants are aware of the expected standards of behaviour
- have a reasonable prior knowledge of the participants including any special educational needs, medical needs or disabilities
- carry a list/register of all group members
- directly supervise the participants (except during remote supervision) - particularly important when they are mingling with the public and may not be easily identified
- regularly check that the entire group is present
- have a clear plan of the activity to be undertaken and its educational objectives
- have the means to contact the Trip Organiser/other supervisors if needing help
- have prior knowledge of the venue – the Trip Organiser should normally have made an exploratory visit where appropriate
- anticipate a potential risk by recognising a hazard, by arriving, where necessary, at the point of hazard before the participants do, and acting promptly where necessary

- continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions
- be competent to exercise appropriate control of the group, and to ensure that participants abide by the agreed standards of behaviour
- clearly understand the emergency procedures and be able to carry them out
- have appropriate access to first aid

12.2 Each student should:
- know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact them
- have been given clear, understandable and appropriate instructions
- rarely if ever be on their own unless remote supervision is appropriate
- alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties
- have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated
- understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour, and that they will be sent home or collected by parents/carers if they behave in an unacceptable way

12.3 Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of participants should take place, particularly before leaving any venue. It is good practice for all supervisors to:
- carry a list/register of all participants and staff involved in the visit at all times
- ensure that participants are readily identifiable, especially if the visit is to a densely populated area
- ensure that all participants are aware of rendezvous points
- ensure that all participants know what to do if they become separated from the group

12.4 Supervision can be close or remote but is always 24 hours (where applicable):
- close supervision occurs when the group remain within sight and contact of the supervisor
- remote supervision occurs when, as part of planned activities, a group works away from the supervisor but is subject to stated controls - the supervisor is present though not necessarily near or in sight, but his or her whereabouts are known
- down time (or recreational time) – for example during the evenings – may involve close or remote supervision, but should not be unsupervised - the supervisors continue to be in charge; BE ALERT TO SECURITY OF ACCOMMODATION
- it is essential that everyone involved in the visit understands the supervision arrangements and expectations

12.5 When supervision is remote (as in the case of shadowed activities):
- groups should be sufficiently trained and assessed as competent for the level of activity to be undertaken, including first aid and emergency procedures - remote supervision will normally be the final stage of a phased development programme
- participants will be familiar with the environment or similar environments and have details of the rendezvous points and the times of rendezvous
- clear and understandable boundaries will be set for the group
- there must be clear lines of communication between the group, the supervisor and the Academy - Do not rely exclusively on mobile phones
- the supervisor should monitor the group's progress at appropriate intervals
- the supervisor will be in the expedition or activity area and able to reach the group reasonably promptly should the group need support in an emergency
- there should be a recognisable point at which the activity is completed
- there should be clear arrangements for the abandonment of the activity where it cannot be safely completed

12.6 Sometimes large groups need to be rearranged into smaller, for example:
- when a large group is split into smaller groups for specific activities
- when groups transfer from one activity to another and change supervisor
- during periods between activities
- when small groups re-form into a large group

It is therefore important at these times that the activity supervisor:

- clearly takes responsibility for the group when their part of the programme begins, particularly making certain that all group members are aware of the changeover
- clearly passes on responsibility for the group when their part of the programme is concluded, together with any relevant information ensuring that the group members know who their next leader is

12.7 Members of staff should ensure that students continue to be properly supervised during downtime before, between and after activities, including the evenings on residential and international visits. A group occupied in study or activity is far safer than a group left to its own devices in an unfamiliar environment. Too much unstructured free time in a residential programme can allow time for mischief, homesickness and wandering off from the main group.

It is good practice to:

- ensure that all staff and participants understand the standards of behaviour that apply at all times, not just during activities and are subject to the Learning and Behaviour Policy (students) and Disciplinary Policy (staff)
- ensure that handover between activities is properly supervised, with a named supervisor responsible for the group if there is down-time between activities
- ensure that all supervisors understand that their supervisory role continues in the evening – however hard a day it has been, that it is not a time to relax in the bar or in front of the TV
- use down-time in the evening or at the beginning of the day to brief the group on the planned activities for the day to come, e.g. the planned learning outcomes, specific health and safety issues, meal and break times etc
- use down time after activities for individual reflection on personal learning outcomes, and group discussion about the highs and lows of the day
- apply the advice contained in “Remote Supervision” above, adapted as necessary, if it is felt reasonable to allow participants some time without close supervision
- occupy the group with mildly active, non-academic activities in the evening, e.g. craft activities, environmental activities, quizzes, team challenges, led-walks

12.8 At night time, members of staff should ensure that:

- as far as possible, the group’s immediate accommodation is exclusively for the group’s use - this is likely not to be possible in hotels, youth hostels etc., but always ask when booking
- staff (of both genders where appropriate) have sleeping accommodation on the same floor immediately adjacent to the participants’ accommodation, particularly where accommodation is not exclusive to the group e.g. hotels, youth hostels
- there is a staff member present on that floor whenever the participants are there
- where hotel/hostel reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visits
- in the absence of 24 hour staffing of reception, external doors must be made secure against intrusion and windows closed as necessary to prevent intrusion – check when booking
- room checks will be made where possible
- where possible, internal doors are lockable but staff must have reasonable access to the participant accommodation at all times
- where participants’ doors are locked, staff have immediate access, as necessary, to a master key
- all staff and participants know the emergency procedures/escape routes in the event of a fire - where windows and doors are locked against intrusion at night, ensure that alternative escape routes are known and that all fire doors function properly

12.9 Do not be lulled into a sense of false security by local assurances, such as “no need to lock doors in this part of the country”. The presence of the group may attract unwelcome attention that is unusual in the locality.

12.10 Poor behaviour may be reduced by ensuring that all participants are signed up to agreed standards of behaviour before the visit; as organiser, you set out the standards which are expected of the students taking part;

- No drugs or alcohol will be consumed by staff or students for the duration of the trip and the expectations about prohibitions on alcohol/drugs should be made clear to all students and staff
- educational visits can be a good opportunity for Academy staff to get to know participants away from the confines of the Academy, but the group leader should resist any temptation to accept lower standards of behaviour - the different hazards that participants may be exposed to away from the Academy will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as, or higher than, in conduct at the Academy
- if one member of staff has to give prolonged attention to one group member, the group leader should reassess the supervisory roles of the other staff to ensure that all members of the group know who is responsible for them - activities may need to be amended until the other staff member returns all of his or her attention to the group
- group leaders should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement
- this may include challenging an activity leader where the group leader’s knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan

13. Good Practice – Transport

13.1 Coaches must be booked through the Finance Department. It is preferable for notice when booking coaches to be **30** working days (6 wks.) in advance of the trip for low/medium trips and **50** working days (10 wks.) in advance of the trip for high risk and overseas trips.

13.2 Members of staff should not use their own vehicles for the purpose of educational visits unless agreed by their line manager. In the event that they do, it is the owner’s responsibility to make sure that their policy includes business use and extends to indemnify the Academy in respect of any third party claims. In the event of an employee being involved in an accident in his/her car whilst on an official journey the claim must be dealt with under the owner’s insurance. In an absolute emergency an individual member of staff may feel they can justify using their own transport. This would have to be considered in any potential subsequent investigation.

13.3 Levels of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment for the journey. The driver should not be responsible for supervision during the journey. Driver supervision may be sufficient if a small number of students are being taken on a short journey.

When planning supervision on transport, the activity leader should consider the following:

- Level of supervision that will be necessary on double decker coaches (one supervisor on each deck should be appropriate in normal circumstances)
- Safety when crossing roads as part of the journey
- Safety on buses, trains, ferries and boats- the activity leader should make clear to students any restrictions
- Students should be made aware of what to do in an emergency
- Safety of students waiting at pick-up and drop-off points and getting on or off transport, particularly when using UK vehicles abroad

- Safety while on rests during the journey and safety of the group in the event of accident or breakdown
- Head counts by staff should always be carried out when the group is getting off or onto transport
- Responsibility for checking that seat belts are fastened
- Travel sickness tablets should only be administered with previous authorisation from the parents

13.4 Students are not allowed to convey one another on official Academy business in their own vehicles.

13.5 Staff should be discouraged in taking students in their own vehicles even if they have business insurance. Under exceptional circumstances this can occur only if there are at least two members of staff in each car and each student's parent/carer have given consent.

14. Emergency procedures – Pre-emergency Preparation

14.1 By their nature, emergencies are usually unexpected, but careful emergency planning can mitigate the trauma of being caught up in an emergency. It is good practice for the manger to:

- agree an emergency action plan, which includes 24-hour (i.e. constant cover where overnights are planned) contact points at the Academy and clear roles for the group leader, Academy contact, Senior Manager e.g. managing media interest, supporting parents of an injured participant, transport arrangements etc.
- ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem
- hold evening briefings with supervisors to discuss issues for the next day (on overnight residentials) and spend time early the next morning explaining arrangements to the participants
- ensure that the first aid kit is properly stocked and accessible
- that all participants' medical needs are known and that staff are competent to handle them
- be aware that some diseases are more common in some countries and know what preventative action to take and what to do if a group member becomes infected
- recognise that many of the health problems of participants on longer visits are caused by lack of food, of liquid or of sleep
- if appropriate, advise group members about the dangers of over-exertion in the heat and of dehydration, which can cause headache, dizziness and nausea
- in warm climates, keep fluid levels high, take extra salt and wear loose, lightweight clothing – preferably made of cotton or other natural fibres – and use suitably factored sun protection creams and sun hats/glasses
- ensure that drivers take adequate rest breaks on long journeys
- ensure that all participants understand and follow the Student Code of Conduct
- practice emergency drills e.g. evacuation of mini-bus
- if abroad, know where the nearest British Embassy or Consulate is located and the telephone number. Ensure staff are aware of the European emergency services number 112. Depending on the age of the participants, it may be appropriate to ensure that they have this information to hand.

15. Emergency procedures - During the visit

15.1 If an emergency occurs members of staff should maintain or resume control of the group overall. The main factors to consider include:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention

- ensure that a staff member accompanies casualties to hospital with any relevant medical information, and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- notify the police if necessary
- ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident
- ensure that all group members are following the emergency procedures and the roles allocated to them – revise procedures and re-allocate roles as necessary
- inform the Academy contact and provider/tour operator (as appropriate) - the Academy contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit
- details of the incident to pass on to the Academy should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
- Academy contact should notify parents, providing as full a factual account of the incident as possible
- notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the Academy contact)
- notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
- ascertain phone numbers for future calls - try not to rely solely on mobile phones
- write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence
- keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- no-one in the group should speak to the media - names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media – refer ALL media enquiries to the Academy media contact
- no-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability
- keep receipts for any expenses incurred – the Academy's insurance provider and other companies insurers will require these

16. Review

16.1 This policy will be reviewed after each individual residential or international visit to ensure continuous improvement in the educational benefits for learners and their safety.