**Educational Visits 2021**

There are significant benefits of educational visits for children’s educational development, as well as their mental health and wellbeing. In line with the schools roadmap educational day visits were allowed to resume from 12th April 2021. From 17th May 2021 school’s will also be able to undertake residential educational visits. International educational visits are currently not recommended and this will be reviewed on 5th September 2021. All educational visits must follow the up to date COVID secure guidelines and must have a risk assessment. Below are some guidelines to help you with your educational visits.

* All educational visits must be fully compliant with COVID-19 requirements.
* You should be fully engaged with parents, carers and children about the organisation of the visit and the COVID-19 measures in place, from the initial planning to completion of the visit. You should be very clear and able to demonstrate that the visit has been fully risk assessed and that measures are in place to ensure that, as far as is practicably possible, the visit is and will remain COVID-19 compliant.
* **Bubble size**
  + bubbles should be formed from existing school bubbles: residential visit bubbles should only have pupils from a single existing bubble
  + form bubbles no larger than circa 30 children - where possible aim to establish smaller bubbles. Multiple bubbles of 30 is allowed but maintaining the bubbles must be achieved.
  + only teachers and members of the school workforce already part of the established school bubble should accompany pupils on the visit as they are already part of the existing school bubble - teachers do not count towards the bubble size
  + parents, carers or volunteers should not accompany the group to maintain the integrity of the bubble
* **Risk Assessment**
  + you must undertake a full and thorough risk assessment. This should set out;-
    - that the integrity of the bubble will be maintained throughout (including during recreational times) - you should:
      * not ‘top up’ or mix the bubbles at any time during the visit
      * the integrity of the bubbles should be maintained and bubble mixing prevented if more than one bubble is going on the trip
      * you will maintain the bubble throughout the visit and ensure that bubbles do not mix with other school groups or bubbles or other guests
      * contingency plans enable a rapid response to symptoms developing in the group or someone needing to self-isolate
      * your risk assessment and extra planning must reflect the public health restrictions in place and your residential visit provider should be able to demonstrate how their centre meets the requirements set out in the guidance on [hotels and other guest accommodation](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation). You should request this information prior to any visit and pay particular attention to how the centre will manage any COVID-19 cases during your stay.
      * secondary schools may use lateral flow tests to manage the COVID-19 risk.
* **General Preparation**

You should:

* + check in advance that the provider has assessed the risk of COVID-19 and implemented appropriate control measures. In particular, you should ask the accommodation provider to confirm that they:
    - are confident they can maintain the integrity of the school bubble and prevent mixing with other guests and bubbles
    - have assessed overnight sleeping arrangements in line with the size of the group that will be expected to share rooms or dormitories, particularly in respect of measures to ensure appropriate ventilation (see more in the accommodation section)
    - have measures in place to ensure the effective and frequent sanitising and cleaning of any shared facilities such as:
      * bathrooms
      * kitchen or dining
      * any potentially shared equipment or communal facilities
      * frequent touch surfaces
* **Accommodation**
  + you should be familiar with the guidance on [hotels and other guest accommodation](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/hotels-and-other-guest-accommodation)
  + residential educational visits organised by a school should be conducted in a way that maintains the integrity of the established school visit bubble.
  + if the educational visit contains more than 6 people it is strongly recommended that the bubble is broken down into smaller groups for sleeping and room sharing is limited as far as possible.
  + it is also recommended that members of school staff have their own single room and do not share with other members of school staff.
  + In advance of any visit, it will be important for you to confirm arrangements with the accommodation provider, especially with regard to maintaining the integrity of the bubble, arrangements for overnight accommodations and travel to, from and during the visit.
* **Insurance**
  + ensure you have appropriate insurance cover. Trips booked prior to COVID should cover COVID-19 but cancellation cover may be difficult for new bookings
  + given the likely gap in COVID-19 cancellation related insurance, schools considering booking a new visit are advised to ensure that any new bookings have adequate financial protection in place.
* **Travel**
  + schools should carefully consider and plan their travel arrangements to and from their destination and follow the advice set out in this guidance. It is important to observe and make travel plans that reflect the system of controls, especially in relation to maintaining the integrity and exclusivity of the educational visit bubble. General information on travel is available in the [safer travel guidance for passengers](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers)

If you would like more information please go to the [Actions for schools during the coronavirus outbreak guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-schools-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=2cf98893-ba2a-44af-bbbd-19736ed9f673&utm_content=immediately)