HAPPY HOME ENGLISH SCHOOL, SHARJAH

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY
2026–2027

Policy Information			
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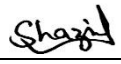
Author Name	**Shazia Waqar**	**Signature**	
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Table of Contents

Section	Contents	Page
1	Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Statement	3
2	Purpose, Scope, Aims and Objectives	3
3	Roles and Responsibilities	4
4	Preparation and Approval Guidelines	4
5	Risk Assessment and Venue/Provider Checks	4
6	Parent Information and Consent	4
7	Inclusion and Individual Support	5
8	Staffing and Supervision	5
9	Transport, Medical and Health Requirements	5
10	Safeguarding and Professional Conduct	6
11	During the Visit	6
12	Emergency Arrangements	6
13	Changes, Cancellation and Safe Return	7
14	After the Visit: Reporting and Evaluation	7
15	SPEA and Regulatory Compliance	7
16	Final Authorization Checklist	8
17	Linked Policies and Review	8

1. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Statement

At Happy Home English School, Sharjah, educational visits and off-site activities are an important extension of classroom learning. They provide students with opportunities to explore real-life situations, strengthen curriculum understanding, develop cultural awareness and practice social responsibility. The school is committed to making visits purposeful, inclusive, safe, enjoyable and appropriately supervised.

Student safety, inclusion and educational benefit must guide every visit from departure until safe handover on return. All visits must respect UAE laws, local culture and school values.

2. Purpose, Scope, Aims and Objectives

This policy sets out the procedures for planning, approving, supervising and reviewing learning beyond the school premises. It applies to FS2–Year 7 and covers local walks, museums, parks, sports fixtures, competitions, performances, community projects and other school-organised off-site activities, including those outside normal school hours. Residential, overseas, water-based and adventurous activities require enhanced planning and specific approval.

Aims and objectives:

- Provide meaningful, age-appropriate learning experiences linked to curriculum outcomes.
- Extend classroom teaching through practical, real-life experiences and experiential learning.
- Promote students' academic, social, emotional and personal development, including confidence, independence and teamwork.
- Maintain high standards of health, safety, safeguarding and supervision.
- Provide equitable opportunities for participation and plan reasonable adjustments for individual needs.
- Ensure approvals, risk assessments, consent and supporting documentation are completed before departure.
- Promote positive behaviour, responsibility, respect for others and care for the environment.
- Evaluate learning outcomes and use feedback to improve future visits.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

School Leadership Team / Principal

- The governing body approves the policy and ensures appropriate oversight and resources.
- The Principal provides written final approval, appoints a competent Visit Leader and deputy, and ensures a school-based emergency contact is available throughout the visit.
- The Principal confirms any required external permissions and postpones or cancels a visit if essential controls, consent, staffing or approvals are missing.

Health and Safety Officer and Visit Coordinator

- Review the risk assessment, transport and venue checks, emergency arrangements and control measures.
- Maintain the visit register, check documentation and verify current SPEA requirements through official school channels.
- Record relevant approvals and ensure required documents are retained.

Visit Leader and Teachers in Charge

- Prepare the proposal, educational objectives, itinerary, risk assessment, group lists, staff briefing and emergency plan.
- Coordinate venue and transport arrangements, costs and learning activities.
- Allocate each student to a named supervising adult and check attendance at every transition.

- Ensure parents and students receive the necessary information and report incidents or concerns immediately.

Supervising Staff, Nurse, Inclusion Lead and DSL

- Supervising adults actively monitor assigned students, follow the agreed plan and report concerns immediately.
- The school nurse reviews medical needs, allergies and medication arrangements.
- The inclusion lead plans reasonable adjustments and individual support for Students of Determination.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) manages child-protection concerns in line with school procedures.
- Volunteers must complete required safeguarding checks and receive a briefing. Providers and drivers do not replace school supervision.

Parents and Guardians

- Provide written consent and accurate medical and emergency contact information.
- Ensure students are prepared with the required clothing, food, water and other items.
- Support the school's expectations for safe and responsible behavior.

4. Preparation and Approval Guidelines

- Submit a written proposal with educational purpose, destination, dates, itinerary, year groups, student numbers, staff, transport, cost, accessibility and foreseeable risks.
- Obtain the Principal's approval in principle before making commitments. Do not present an unapproved visit as confirmed.
- Check current SPEA instructions through official school channels and establish whether permission, notification or another authority clearance is required.
- Complete risk, provider, transport, consent, medical and supervision checks. Written final authorisation is required before departure.
- Reassess and obtain renewed approval for material changes to destination, activity, staffing, transport or timing. Inform parents and renew consent where required.
- Where practicable, conduct a preliminary venue visit, especially for unfamiliar or higher-risk locations. If this is not practicable, obtain reliable site information and record why it is adequate.
- Provide parents with the purpose, itinerary, departure and return times, transport, activities, costs, clothing, food requirements, supervision, contact arrangements and cancellation conditions.

5. Risk Assessment and Venue/Provider Checks

- Every visit must have a written, visit-specific risk assessment reviewed by the Health and Safety Officer and approved of by the principal.
- Record hazards, people who may be harmed, initial risk, control measures, responsible persons, remaining risk and review date.
- Consider traffic, boarding, crowds, separation, public access, water, equipment, weather, heat, dehydration, food allergies, infection, accessibility, behavior and emergency access.
- Check toilets, drinking water, shade, exits, assembly points, security and accessible routes.
- Check provider competence and licensing where applicable, activity restrictions, equipment maintenance, emergency arrangements and insurance. Resolve any insurance gaps before approval.
- Uncontrolled serious risks mean the visit must not proceed. Provider risk assessments support but do not replace the school's assessment.
- Residential, overseas, water-based and adventurous activities require separate enhanced planning, specialist supervision and specific written approval.

6. Parent Information and Consent

- Obtain explicit written parental consent for the visit and approved activities before departure. No student may attend without valid consent.
- Update relevant medical, allergy, disability and emergency contact information before the visit.
- Photography and publication permissions are separate from permission to attend. Consent does not remove the school's duty of care.
- Provide a suitable supervised learning alternative for students who do not participate.
- Any consent covering a series of visits must clearly state its scope and dates and comply with current SPEA requirements.

7. Inclusion and Individual Support

- Plan participation with parents, the inclusion lead, the nurse and the student where appropriate. Do not automatically exclude a student because of disability or medical need.
- Consider reasonable adjustments to transport, routes, activities, communication, sensory support, toileting and staffing.
- For students requiring individual support, prepare a visit-specific support plan and risk assessment. Identify the name supporting adult and backup adult.
- Prepare a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) where required, including accessible exits, equipment and evacuation arrangements.
- Do not make parental attendance a routine condition of participation. If safe participation remains unachievable after reasonable adjustments, the principal must document the reasons, discuss them with parents and provide an appropriate supervised alternative.

8. Staffing and Supervision

- The principal must approve a documented adult-to-student ratio based on age, maturity, individual needs, activity, venue, public access and emergency arrangements. Follow any current SPEA or activity-specific minimum.
- As a school control, use at least two school-approved supervising adults for a group visit, with additional staff where required by the risk assessment. A driver is not counted while driving; provider staff are not automatically counted as school supervisors.
- Allocate students to named groups and adults. Complete name-based checks before departure, when boarding and alighting, at each venue or activity change, after breaks and before final handover. A headcount alone is insufficient.
- Brief staff and students on behaviour, road crossings, staying with the group, public interaction, meeting points, lost-person procedures and how to raise concerns.
- Set clear boundaries, meeting points and toilet arrangements. A buddy system may support, but must not replace, adult supervision.

9. Transport, Medical and Health Requirements

Transport

- Use school-approved transport that meets applicable licensing, inspection and safety requirements. Verify the operator, vehicle, driver, insurance, capacity, restraints and required attendant arrangements.
- Allocate a seat to every passenger, use required seat belts or restraints and keep aisles and exits clear.
- Reconcile the passenger register after every journey. After students leave, a designated adult must physically check the entire vehicle, including rear seats, and record that it is empty.

- Do not use an unapproved substitute vehicle or informal private-car arrangement. Equivalent checks and authorization are required for replacements.

Medical and Environmental Safety

- The nurse reviews health information, allergies and individual healthcare plans. Agree medication storage, administration and trained support with parents.
- Carry necessary prescribed emergency medication, a suitable first-aid kit and an accessible confidential medical summary.
- At least one suitable first aider must accompany each visiting group as a school control. Increase cover for split groups or assessed needs.
- Check emergency medical access and identify the nearest suitable medical facility. Emergency assistance must not be delayed while contacting parents.
- Check official weather and safety alerts. Provide water, shade, rest and suitable clothing; modify, postpone or cancel outdoor activities when conditions are unsafe.

10. Safeguarding and Professional Conduct

- School safeguarding, behaviour and staff conduct policies apply off site. Prevent bullying, inappropriate contact and unsupervised access by members of the public.
- Arrange toilets, changing and personal care to preserve dignity and appropriate supervision. Corporal punishment and humiliating treatment are prohibited.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL and follow the school's escalation procedure. Urgent protection must not be delayed.
- Share only necessary student information with authorised staff or providers. Use school-approved communication and photography arrangements; do not publish identifiable student images without relevant permission.

11. During the Visit

- The Visit Leader carries the itinerary, student and staff registers, parent contacts, necessary emergency medical information, venue details and contingency plan.
- At least one responsible staff member must carry a working mobile phone, and a backup communication method must be available.
- Identify assembly points and emergency procedures on arrival. Remind students of behaviour and safety expectations before and during activities.
- Always keep students under active adult supervision and conduct name-based checks at every transition.
- Provide appropriate drinking water, food arrangements, rest and bathroom breaks, taking account of allergies and individual needs.
- Students should take part in learning activities connected to the educational purpose of the visit.
- Stop any unsafe activity immediately and inform the principal.

12. Emergency Arrangements

- Protect life first. Stop the activity, secure the group and contact emergency services when required, giving the exact location and nature of the emergency.
- Provide first aid with staff training. Assign an adult to meet responders and, where necessary, accompany an injured student while maintaining supervision of the remaining group.
- Notify the school emergency contact and Principal promptly. Keep a timed, factual record and coordinate parent and authority communication through the school.

- If a student is missing, secure and account for the remaining group, alert venue security and the school, and contact police promptly where a child is missing or at risk. Do not wait before seeking help.
- For fire, evacuation or a security threat, follow venue instructions and competent authorities, implement individual evacuation support and account for every student.

13. Changes, Cancellation and Safe Return

- Staffing shortages, missing medication, transport defects, severe weather, official restrictions or loss of a safe venue require reassessment and may require cancellation.
- The principal decides on cancellation or rescheduling and informs families of changes, costs or refunds according to the terms communicated.
- On return, reconcile attendance, check the vehicle, record early departures and release students only through the school's authorized collection procedure.
- Maintain supervision of delayed collection and inform parents of significant delays. The visit ends only when all students are safely accounted for and handed over.

14. After the Visit: Reporting and Evaluation

- Report incidents, near misses and safeguarding concerns immediately through the relevant school procedure.
- The Visit Leader submits a short evaluation within five school working days as an internal school target.
- Review learning outcomes, student feedback, inclusion, provider performance, incidents and improvements needed for future visits.
- Retain the proposal, approvals, risk assessment, consent forms, registers, provider and transport checks, briefings, emergency information, incident records and evaluation securely according to the school's retention schedule.

15. SPEA and Regulatory Compliance

The school will check and follow the latest applicable Sharjah Private Education Authority (SPEA), Ministry of Education, UAE child protection, transport, health and safety requirements before adopting this policy and before each visit. The principal must verify current school-held circulars, approval routes, deadlines, supervision rules and restrictions through official channels and retain the relevant references in the visit file.

This document is a school draft and is not an SPEA-issued or SPEA-approved policy. The detailed operational procedures are proposed by school controls unless explicitly attributed to an official source. Binding requirements take precedence. Pending applications or silence must not be treated as approval.

16. Final Authorization Checklist

Complete this checklist before departure. Any unmet essential check means the visit is not authorized.

Visit and destination	_____
Date / year groups / student total	_____
Visit Leader / deputy	_____
Supervising adults and approved ratio	_____
Educational purpose and itinerary approved	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Current SPEA instructions and required permissions checked	Yes / No — Reference: _____
Risk assessment and venue/provider checks completed	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Consent and current student register complete	Yes / No — Evidence: _____

Medical needs, medication, SEN support and PEEPs addressed	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Staffing, safeguarding and first-aid cover confirmed	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Transport, insurance and vehicle checks confirmed	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Emergency contacts, briefings and return arrangements ready	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Weather, restrictions and final conditions checked	Yes / No — Evidence: _____
Health and Safety Officer name/signature/date	_____
Principal final approval/signature/date	_____

17. Linked Policies and Review

This policy should be read alongside the schools:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Attendance Policy

The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following a significant incident, changes to SPEA regulations, UAE child protection law, health and safety requirements or school operational needs.

Official References and Verification

This policy shall be reviewed annually or whenever required by amendments in:

- SPEA regulations
- School operational requirements
- UAE Child Protection Law
- UAE Health and Safety Requirements

Linked Policies

1. Health and Safety Policy
2. Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
3. Behaviour Policy
4. Risk Assessment Policy
5. Inclusion Policy
6. Teaching and Learning Policy
7. Attendance Poli