

Frequently asked questions – Educational visits

Version 1 updated at 11/03/20

Current at 9 March 2020. These FAQs will be reviewed regularly as more information becomes available.

There is currently significant media attention and uncertainty regarding the coronavirus (COVID 19) outbreak. All parents and carers will appreciate that the situation is developing daily, as the government and other agencies such as Public Health England, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and local authorities continue to update their advice and information for the public. It is therefore a very fluid situation regarding the potential spread and impact upon global travel.

We have prepared responses to a number of frequently asked questions in relation to educational visits which will be updated if the situation changes.

1. Will school educational visits be going ahead during the COVID-19 outbreak?

In making our decisions about all school educational visits, the health and welfare of all of our students and staff will be at the forefront of our considerations.

Great Wyrley Academy will ensure that careful consideration is given before deciding to proceed, cancel or postpone an educational visit. This consideration will be the subject of regular review, as more information becomes available.

2. How will the Academy and Trust decide whether or not to cancel the educational visit?

Great Wyrley Academy will respond to the guidance and advice from the World Health Organisation, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Home Office, Department for Education, Public Health England, local authorities and any other relevant bodies. Should they, or the tour operator, determine that international or UK travel should be restricted or a specific visit cancelled or postponed, Great Wyrley Academy will, of course, comply.

Based on the above advice and the needs and interests of the students and adults participating in the educational visit, Great Wyrley Academy will also carry out its own risk assessments for each educational visit.

Our assessments will be thorough and comprehensive and will take account of the risks to individuals, the group participating in the educational visit, as well as Great Wyrley Academy

When assessing each educational visit, we will also factor in contingency for provision for disruption to travel; and the need to self-isolate in the course of an

educational visit, including the need to have a contingency in place for ensuring there are sufficient numbers of staff/supervising adults for the duration of the educational visit.

3. If the educational visit is cancelled, will I get my money back?

You will see from the above that advice from external bodies, including the tour operator, may result in an education visit having to be cancelled or postponed in light of the current COVID-19 outbreak. Likewise, on completion of Great Wyrley Academy own risk assessment, it may become necessary in the best interests of our students, staff and the wider academy/trust community for a decision to be taken to postpone or cancel the educational visit.

We would like to stress that an educational visit will only be cancelled where we consider it strictly necessary on the basis of our own thorough internal assessment and/ or due to external advice from public bodies.

Great Wyrley Academy is a charitable organisation, and educational visits are organised on a not for profit basis and we do not hold any reserves for such educational visits. Once monies are paid to the tour operator, we are bound by the tour operator's terms and conditions, including those relating to cancellation. In the event of cancellation, we will be wholly reliant on recovering monies from the tour operators and/or insurers, in so far as we are able.

Great Wyrley Academy will act in the interests of parents/carers in seeking refunds if a visit is cancelled following government advice and/or tour operator decision.

4. I am concerned about the COVID-19 and no longer want my son/daughter to attend the educational visit, can I get a refund?

We do appreciate that for a variety of reasons, parents and carers may decide that they do not want their child to participate in a school educational visit at this time.

Unfortunately, it will not be normally possible for refunds to be made in these circumstances. Bookings are made and managed via private organisations and/or tour operators and their terms and conditions, including cancellation policies, will apply which will usually not provide for refunds where a student voluntarily withdraws, particularly close to the departure date. In that case you are still likely to be liable for costs incurred and any remaining costs.

5. If there is a travel restriction whilst my child is overseas what will happen?

As we have explained, our risk assessment for each educational visit will include contingency planning in the event of a travel ban while the group is abroad. This will include taking account of where the group will stay in the event of a travel ban; and identifying replacement transport. During this period of time additional costs may be incurred which will be met by either the tour operators or insurers. Parents and carers will be kept fully informed of all developments in the event of a travel restriction via group messages and / or phone calls.

6. If my child gets ill whilst overseas, what will happen?

As with all school educational visits, in the event that any child is ill, the staff on the educational visit will seek urgent medical advice. Any parent whose child becomes ill would be kept fully informed.

Due to the nature of COVID-19, the medical advice may include the need for your child to self-isolate on the educational visit pending the outcome of a medical test.

Great Wyrley Academy risk assessment for each educational visit will include a contingency plan for this possibility. The contingency plan will include provision to cover supervision and care for your child throughout the isolation period.

The contingency plan will also include provision for the staff leading the educational visit to take urgent medical advice and action in respect of the whole group on the educational visit in the event of anyone presenting with COVID-19 symptoms or coming into contact with someone who may be affected by the virus.

Current sources of government advice and guidance include the following:

NHS website - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/COVID-19-covid-19/>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office for overseas travel - [GOV.UK foreign travel advice](#)

UK Government - [GOV.UK information on COVID-19 and the situation in the UK](#)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Public Health England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>