

## School Visits, Wider Achievement & Equity

### A Guide for Parents / Carers

#### Introduction

In April 2023, East Lothian Council produced guidance for schools in relation to school visits, wider achievement and equity.

The purpose of this document is to provide parents and carers with a summary overview of this guidance.

#### Context

When planning school visits and opportunities for wider achievement, schools are guided by key pieces of local and national policy and legislation. These include:

The Curriculum for Excellence	The curriculum comprises the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people wherever they are being educated.
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.	<p><b>Article 28</b> (access to education) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to an education</p> <p><b>Article 29</b> (aims of education) of the convention states that children’s education should help them develop their personalities, talents and abilities.</p> <p><b>Article 31</b> (leisure, play and culture) recognises the right every child has to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.</p>
The National Improvement Framework	To support work to continually improve Scottish education and close the attainment gap, delivering both excellence and equity.
The East Lothian Council Poverty Plan 2021-2023	To create: “An even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy, that enables our people and communities to flourish.”
The Scottish Government’s Ending Core Curriculum Charges	The overarching aim of this policy is to ensure that our schools and curriculum is accessible for all children and young people, regardless of their home circumstances.

Schools are also guided by current social and economic context. The impact of COVID-19 and the subsequent cost of living crisis has put a strain on families and children and young people. In East Lothian:

- On average 1 in 5 children are living in poverty, after housing costs and in some areas this rises to 1 in 4.<sup>1</sup>
- 24% of homes are in fuel poverty.<sup>2</sup>
- It is one of six local authorities in Scotland with the largest increase in the most deprived data zones in Scotland compared the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation statistics for 2016.<sup>3</sup>

In it is these challenging times that schools need to be able to satisfy themselves that visits and opportunities for wider achievement are appropriate for **all** of their children, young people and they do not put additional pressure on families.

### Planning School Visits

It is with this policy, legislative and social and economic context that East Lothian schools are being asked to consider the following when planning visits and activities linked to wider achievement:

- ✓ Training for all members of the school community to understand the impact of poverty on children, young people and their families.
- ✓ Ensuring the children and young people do not miss school if they are not participating in visits or wider achievement opportunities.
- ✓ Knowing which of their families may need their financial support to allow the child to participate and offering to provide this.
- ✓ Ensuring that the desired outcome of a residential visit could not be obtained locally.
- ✓ Evidencing that visits provide value for money.
- ✓ Giving parents and carers as much notice as possible to pay for any costs.
- ✓ Ensuring that any additional costs such as spending money are clear and transparent.
- ✓ Approaching organisations who may be able to provide financial assistance to request funding.
- ✓ Satisfying themselves that the proposed visit has significant education value.

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<sup>1</sup> [Child Poverty: Taking Action in East Lothian \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/)

<sup>2</sup> [Energy Action Scotland | National Body \(eas.org.uk\)](https://www.eas.org.uk/)

<sup>3</sup> [The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/)