OFF SITE ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Version	6
Date of latest version	May 2026
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Changes:	
-Added in safeguarding paragraph 1.3	

1 Introduction

1.1 Well-planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice.

1.2 In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils and adults at all times.

1.3 This policy should also be read in conjunction with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. School safeguarding systems remain in place for all offsite visits including residentials.

2 Aims

2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to residential experiences in Key Stage 2.

3 Residential activities

3.1 Children in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum and parents are asked to

contribute towards the costs of the visit. The school supports those families where there is financial hardship.

3.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their curriculum work. We use centres which provide fully qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

4 How visits may be authorised

4.1 The headteacher will appoint a trip leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

4.2 The school's educational visits coordinator, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

The EVC will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- support the headteacher in their decision on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LEA (and available from the school office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LEA's instructions.

4.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

4.4 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, the headteacher will seek the approval of the Local Education Authority before permitting the activity to take place.

4.5 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

5 Risk assessment

5.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

5.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The LEA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

5.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them.

5.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the minimum ratios as advised by the LEA.
Any trip requiring a coach will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may *not* provide adequate supervision in all cases.
On some occasions, a trip may involve just a few pupils and one adult. Examples of this might be a member of staff taking four children to Brendon Care or a member of staff walking the choir to the coffee room.

5.5 A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue.

5.6 The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks (see 5.2 above).

5.7 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the headteacher and all members of staff supervising the trip. The educational visits coordinator will ensure the trip is entered onto EVOLVE prior to the trip taking place. The LEA requires risk assessments for residential visits before permission can be granted.

6 Costs

6.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

6.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

6.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal risk assessments (see 5.5). This process will be managed by the school office, and full records will be kept.

7 Communication with parents

7.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

7.2 No child may be excluded from a curriculum trip which takes part during the school day because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through this policy on our website and letters sent home about intended visits.

7.3 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

8 Further health and safety considerations

8.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

8.2 Before a party leaves school the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

8.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

8.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others, the party leader should discuss with the

headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity after all other options have been explored.

9 Group leaders' planning

9.1 Group leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities. This is available on EVOLVE and from the EVC.
They must consult LEA documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must draw up a Visit Plan which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

10 Visit plan

10.1 The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment;
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group**;**
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

11 On the Visit

11.1 Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-staff should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

11.2 Responsibilities of pupils:
The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly

- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

12 First Aid

First aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The organiser and group leader should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed.

13 This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every three years or before if necessary.