



# Educational Visits Policy

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## **Introduction**

All offsite visits and activities (apart from work experience or college placements which are dealt with separately) that are organised and undertaken by the school are regarded as “educational visits”. Whenever pupils leave the school site under the direct or indirect supervision of school staff, they are undertaking an educational visit.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The school aims to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. The Headteacher and Governing Body recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum and enhance the learning and development of our pupils.

## **Types of visits organised by the school**

The school offers a wide range of educational visits, including:

- Visits to Colchester Zoo, universities, including Cambridge and Essex Universities, educational fieldwork in and around the town of Clare, visits to local primaries, coastal fieldwork e.g. Walton-on-the-Naze, sporting activities, cultural visits to local theatres e.g. Bury St Edmunds Theatre Royal, visits to London etc.
- Residential visits to Outdoor Educational Centres, Modern Foreign Language visits to Europe and beyond, Ski Visits etc.

The above list is only meant as an indication of visits possible. It is intended that visits will be very widely encouraged, and their nature will evolve over time.

## **Access to Policies and Guidelines**

Staff involved in the leadership and management of visits should be familiar with all relevant guidelines and policy documents and should know how/where this information can be accessed.

Copies of all relevant documentation can be found in the following places:

- School office
- *Staff Shared / Educational Visits / Policy and forms / Policy*

In the case of any serious incident, details of the correct procedures to be followed can be found in the Off-site Emergency Procedure.

Trust and School Policies related to this document:

- Accessibility Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- E-safety Policy

- First Aid Policy
- SEND Policy
- SMSCE Policy
- Supporting children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- GDPR Protection, Retention and Records Management
- Privacy Notice – Student Policy
- Equality Policy

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for all the school's educational visits. If the Headteacher is absent or unavailable, the Deputy Headteacher will act as the appointed deputy, and fulfil the same responsibilities regarding the management and approval of educational visits.

The School's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), Mr J Craig, will receive training. The EVC oversees the planning and organisation of the school's visits and provides advice and guidance to staff members and the Headteacher, including recommendations regarding the approval of visits. The EVC will attend refresher/update training at least every 3 years.

The Governing Body representative (Chair of Governors), is responsible for overseeing educational visits, and for assisting with the approval of residential/overseas/high risk visits, will receive specific Governor training in order to fulfil this role.

## **Advice and Guidance**

Staff should seek advice and guidance regarding educational visits from:

- the school EVC
- the Headteacher
- other experts with specialist/local knowledge (e.g. National Park ranger)

## **Training**

The school will ensure that the following training opportunities regarding educational visits are made available:

- The Headteacher will be updated on any developments by the EVC
- Training for EVC (to be refreshed every 3 years) and use of OEAP website to ensure they are fully informed on latest developments related to educational visits.
- Opportunities for Visit Leaders to seek advice from residential centres etc./ make prior visits where practical.
- Training for Deputy Leaders from experienced Visit Leaders before leading their first educational visit.
- Training for NQTs and new staff from the Educational Visits Coordinator as part of initial induction.
- Training for TAs/others from the Visit Leader before the visit takes place.

## **Monitoring**

To assure quality of standards on educational visits:

- a member of the Senior Leadership Team and/or the EVC will accompany at least one visit per year to monitor real practice, and to assist with the review of policies and procedures.
- Records of these monitoring visits will be kept on file for future reference.

## **1. Planning and approval procedures**

The EVC has final say on what forms need to be completed for any visit and therefore, should be consulted as to what paperwork needs to be completed.

All forms, templates and policies can be found in *Staff Shared / Educational Visits / Policy and forms / Policy*

Visits should be recorded, checked and approved in accordance with the following procedures:

### **SPORT FIXTURES**

For routine sports fixtures, a generic risk assessment, which can be found in the resources section of the Educational Visits Folder, should be completed. The generic risk assessment, covering all fixtures should be provided and reviewed at the start of each academic year by the PE department with approval by the Head teacher. Written parental permission for students to participate in fixtures, as required, should be obtained, and stored with the PE department, with a copy held on the school system. Routine sports fixtures do not need to be processed through the EVC.

### **PRINCE'S TRUST**

Prince's Trust visits only involve those students that are enrolled onto the Prince's Trust course through the options process. Prince's Trust visits are local one day visits within the immediate local area of Clare. Any visit that is of a further distance or has a specific risk should complete all aspects for Category 2 – Day visit procedures.

Prince's Trust visits should be recorded using Form 00 – Local Area Visits which is located on the Staff Shared Area.

These visits are overseen by the EVC.

#### **Category 1 – LOCAL AREA VISITS – See Appendix 1 for further information**

Visits that take place on a regular basis throughout the year and meet the following criteria:

- within the immediate local area of Clare.
- within school working hours of 8am to 4.30pm Monday-Thursday or 8am-4pm Fridays
- incur no cost
- low risk

Notification of Day visits is given by written letter/email prior to the event.

Category 1 visits are recorded using

- Form 00 – Local Area Visits
- Visit approval should be acquired within 1 week of the visit taking place.

#### **Category 2 - DAY VISITS**

Visits that take place on a regular basis throughout the year but are classified as one of the following:

- deemed high risk
- is further than 15 miles from the school location – see Appendix 6.
- outside normal school working hours of 8am to 4.30pm Monday-Thursday or 8am-4pm Fridays
- incur a cost

Notification of Day visits is given by written letter prior to the event.

Category 2 visits should be recorded using:

- Form 01 – Educational Visit Approval
- Form 02 – Information for Educational Visits
- Form 03 – Risk Management Form for specified visit
- Form 04 – Additional Needs Register

Category 2 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher (with EVC support)

- In addition, the Governing Body should be informed of visits that have taken place.

Category 2 visits should be submitted for approval:

- at the beginning of the academic term in which the visit is planned or
- at least one month in advance of the visit

### **Category 3 – UK RESIDENTIAL VISITS**

Visits that involve one or more nights away from home in the UK.

Category 3 visits should be recorded using:

- Form 01 – Educational Visit Approval
- Form 02 – Information for Educational Visits
- Form 03 – Risk Management Form for specified visit
- Form 04 – Additional Needs Register

Category 3 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher, EVC and the Governing Body.

Category 3 visits should be submitted for approval:

- at the beginning of the academic year or the term before the trip is proposed

### **Category 4 – OVERSEAS VISITS**

Residential or day visits to any place outside the UK.

Category 4 visits should be recorded using:

- Form 01 – Educational Visit Approval
- Form 02 – Information for Educational Visits
- Form 03 – Risk Management Form for specified visit
- Form 04 – Additional Needs Register

Category 4 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher, EVC and the Governing Body.

Category 4 visits should be submitted for approval:

- at least, at the beginning of the academic year, ideally 2 academic years where possible.

For any visits with significant financial commitment, "Outline Approval" should be obtained from the Headteacher and/or Governing Body before any firm bookings are made, Governors require at least three quotes to be obtained to ensure due diligence and value for money for students is achieved.

If any of the above 3 types of visit involve what may be regarded as "High risk activities or environments" they MUST be given an additional subcategory "A" classification:

### **Sub Category "A" – HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES and ENVIRONMENTS**

All day visits, or residential or overseas visits that involve hazards that are significantly different or more serious (in terms of severity and/or likelihood) than might normally be encountered in everyday or school life.

e.g. a weekly climbing day visit, a day visit to dry ski slope, a residential stay at outdoor centre, an overseas trekking expedition

All Sub Category "A" visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher, the EVC and Governors.

All Sub Category "A" visits should be submitted for approval:

- at the beginning of the academic year in the case of residential visits.

## **2. Visit objectives**

All educational visits should have a defined purpose, with clearly stated, justifiable educational objectives, or else they may not be approved by the Headteacher or Governing Body. Objectives can include resilience, key skills, confidence, broaden horizons, health and fitness, increased motivation, enjoyment, social skills/awareness, problem solving skills, environmental awareness, rewards.

## **3. Selection of students taking part**

Every effort is made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, or religion. However:

- Students may be excluded from educational visits because of poor conduct in school, previous poor conduct on visits or because of any risk they may pose to other students on the visit.
- Parents of students may also be asked to settle any outstanding debts (such as transport payments) to be allowed to join a trip.
- Efforts will be taken to ensure that all visits are as inclusive as is reasonably possible and will support students with special/medical needs - e.g. transport provision. It may be necessary on some occasions to insist that a parent or carer accompanies a trip to provide further support than that available from staff.

## **4. The Overall Group Leader/Visit Organiser**

The Overall Group Leader must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their role and responsibilities by the Headteacher and EVC.

- Leaders should normally have been Deputy Leaders on at least one similar visit and been involved in the planning process.
- Deputy Leaders must have experience of accompanying a similar visit previously.

The Headteacher would normally require Visit Leaders of more complex and demanding visits (e.g. ski visits or overseas expeditions) to have much broader leadership experience.

## **5. Deputy and Volunteer Leaders**

Visits require a Deputy Leader who can deputise, and take full responsibility for the Visit Leader, if necessary. Deputy Leaders should be chosen carefully and must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities by the Headteacher, EVC and Visit Leader.

Leaders should carefully consider the implications of volunteers being present on a school trip, especially where family members are present, and the possible complications that this might present.

Stour Valley Community School has a responsibility to ensure that all adults involved in the supervision of children during school-related activities (including visits) are suitable people to work with children, and pose no threat to the young people in their care. All adults who are accompanying visits must have been DBS checked by the school.

Concerns about possible safeguarding issues or poor practice by a member of staff, volunteer or another adult should be reported immediately to the visit leader.

Young people on educational visits should always have ready access to a competent adult who has an appropriate level of first aid training. This normally requires at least one of the attending adults to have appropriate and current first aid training. If first aid is provided /available at the venue then the visit leader must take a first aid kit, accident book, near miss forms and incident record sheet, it is not a requirement for the visit leader to be first aid trained in this instance. At the very minimum, in the case of local visits, a first-aid kit must accompany one of the adults.

## **6. Staffing selection and supervision ratios**

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of the children on educational visits.

It is generally good practice to have at least two adults accompanying any off-site experience so that there is some flexibility and reserve capacity if things go wrong.

For overseas visits, at least 3 adults should normally accompany the group, as additional reserve capacity and flexibility are often vital in these circumstances.

Consideration should be given to staffing levels required for visits that involve adventurous/high risk activities, and those that involve indirect or remote supervision.

Consideration should be given to supervision during any 'down-time', particularly during evening or residential activities. Visit leaders should ensure that supervision levels are maintained during this time and expectations of both staff and students during this time are clear. This applies to over-night residential stays where consideration should be given to arrangements around security and safety of both staff and students.

As a rule:

- one member of staff should be present for every 16 students on a trip.



- a minimum of two members of staff should accompany a Category 1 visit, rising to three for Category 3 and 4 visits.
- a first aider should accompany the visit. If first aid is available at the visit venue then there is no specific requirement for visit staff to be first aid trained, although this is dependent on the nature of the visit itself.
- mixed groups of students should be accompanied by male and female members of staff. For Category 2 visits, if a member of the opposite sex is available at the visit venue then there is no specific requirement to have both male and female members of staff accompanying the visit.
- visits that involve adventurous/high risk activities, or involve indirect or remote supervision should have a higher staff:pupil ratio. (to be determined by the provider)

## **7. Selection and suitability of accommodation or venues to be visited**

As part of the overall risk assessment process, and in keeping with their legal duty of care, the Visit Leader must take reasonable steps to check that any accommodation (e.g. youth hostel) that is used, and any venues (e.g. castles or museums) that the group plans to visit, are suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe. The visit leader should ideally look to book out a whole 'block' of accommodation or a floor of a hotel, where this is not possible the visit leader should agree expectations with the venue. The Visit Leader should agree expectations regarding the nature of the visit to include behaviour expectations. Where there is support from provider staff the visit leader should agree clearly who is responsible for the aspects of the visit.

Many organisations now have websites or supply teacher information packs that provide all reasonable assurances regarding standards or have obtained a Learning Outside the Classroom "Quality Badge". However, if necessary, a letter should be sent to the manager of a place of accommodation or venue to be visited, requesting signed, written assurances regarding their safety management systems and operating procedures.

In order to assist staff with the selection and suitability of accommodation or venues to be visited staff are directed to [www.kaddi.com](http://www.kaddi.com). This is a provider website which provides ratings, reviews, and evidence of whether providers hold the LOTC quality badge.

When planning a visit, the Visit Organiser (and other group leaders) should, wherever possible, undertake an exploratory visit to inspect and familiarise themselves with the accommodation to be used and venues to be visited.

## **8. High risk activities and environments**

Leaders who organise visits that involve high-risk activities and environments must be aware that such visits normally require a greater degree of planning and preparation by virtue of their complexity and unpredictability. Leaders and other supervisors must be sufficiently competent to supervise pupils in the activity/environment. Competence derives from knowledge, experience, training, and personal qualities and may be evidenced by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where appropriate, for high-risk activities. The school keeps a record of staff qualifications, training, and leadership experience. This is stored in the Main Office.

Visit Organisers should plan alternative activities and venues to cater for possible changes in circumstances (e.g. worsening weather or rising river levels), and all staff should be aware of these possible contingencies. The EVC will ask to see and check these plans.

Stour Valley Community School pays annually insurance which covers all school visits within the UK (providing the visits are correctly approved). However, it is a requirement of the school to inform the insurance company of any trip which involves 'water' or other 'high-risk' activities.

## 9. Risk assessments and management

Stour Valley Community School has a legal duty of care for its young people and must therefore give careful consideration to the hazards involved during an educational visit, and ensure that risks are managed at reasonable and acceptable levels.

The Visit Organiser should undertake an appropriate risk assessment for each visit, and this should be shared/discussed/agreed by all visit leaders before the visit takes place. Appropriate written evidence of this process should be provided.

The process of risk assessment should be a positive means of raising awareness of hazards and prompting constructive discussion regarding the best means of risk management – it should therefore be of real practical value to the leaders and group members, not just a paper exercise. A set of written generic risk assessments and all necessary forms are available from the EVC and on the Learning Platform. It is essential that:

- all relevant generic risk assessment forms are reviewed, amended, and agreed at the start of each academic year by all relevant staff.
- these generic sections are stored on the Learning Platform and staff are encouraged to use these in order to complete a specific risk assessment for the visit taking place.
- each visit should then have a specific risk assessment written for the visit taking place.
- new leaders/volunteers are asked to read all relevant forms and add their signed agreement before assisting with the leadership of a visit.
- completed assessments are spot checked/approved by the school EVC/SLT.
- each visit should also consider the medical or other needs of staff members attending in order that the risk to the visit can be accurately assessed.

## 10. Insurance and finance arrangements (including charging arrangements)

The EVC/Group Leader must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place for all educational visits and Group Leaders should check carefully that the scope and level of cover provided is adequate for each visit. Visit Organisers should also check that any external service providers have sufficient public liability cover (normally at least £5 million).

- Stour Valley Community School pays annual insurance which covers all school visits within the UK (providing the visits are correctly approved). You DO NOT need to add an extra cost on for insurance purposes; however, we are required to inform the insurance company of any trip which involves 'water' or other 'high-risk' activities.

The Visit Organiser and school EVC should ensure that:

- each visit is accurately costed and budgeted for.
- adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances.
- financial plans – especially for more complex and committing visits – are checked over and agreed first by the finance office before financial commitments are made.
- for visits that involve substantial commitment financially (e.g. overseas expeditions), no firm bookings or financial commitments are made until the visit has been agreed and received "Outline Approval" by the relevant authorities.
- the costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents), including how much will come from school funds and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute.
- money collected for visits is accounted for separately, and secure systems are in place to ensure that money is accessed and accounted for correctly.

## Charging arrangements

No charge may be made in respect of any activity that is deemed to take place in school hours. An activity is deemed to take place during “school hours” if 50% or more of the activity, takes place within school hours.

If more than 50% is deemed to be outside of school hours, then a charge may be made for “optional extras” only.

For residential visits, a school visit is considered to have taken place within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupil’s amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity.

The school will not charge for:

- any activity undertaken as part of the curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school trip and are accompanying students on a residential
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip during school hours where the trip is part of the curriculum or public examination preparation.

The school may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of these visits, but it must be clear that any contribution is genuinely voluntary.

Where it is not permissible to charge parents, any subsidy will come from departmental allocations or school funds.

The school may charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras (see details in the school charging policy). Any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

The costs of the visit should be clear to all concerned, stating how much will be given, if anything, from other school funds and how much parents are being expected to contribute.

The school will normally make a charge for board and lodging on residential visits and ask for a voluntary contribution towards transport and specialist instruction for certain activities.

The school will include an additional charge for the use of Parent Pay to the cost of any trip which is planned depending on the cost of the trip.

The cost of school visits or activities will have the following charges added to the overall cost of the visit to cover the charge for administration:

Cost of visit	Parent Pay fees to add
Up to £20	50p per person
£21 - £100	£1.50 per person
£101 – £200	£3.00 per person
£800 - £1000	£15.00 per person

The organisation and set-up of the Parent Pay account for the trip will be coordinated by the finance officer.

Those pupils in receipt of free school meals are eligible for financial assistance (usually 50% of the cost of the visit) if requested by parents/carers in writing (email is fine)

## 11. Overseas visits

All overseas visits (Category 3) require Governing Body approval as well as Headteacher approval. Because of the additional complexity and financial commitment involved, staff planning overseas visits should seek outline approval for the visit at an early stage from all the relevant authorities before parents or the school make commitments.

It is good practice, wherever possible, for the Visit Organiser to make an exploratory visit to a location. If this is not reasonably practicable, then the Visit Organiser should gather sufficient appropriate information and assurances (via website/teacher pack) about the location and facilities.

The level of staffing required for overseas visits should reflect not only the direct supervision needs, but also the contingency plans made for emergencies. It is not uncommon for a member of staff to need to return home early or to accompany a group member to hospital.

The Overall Group Leader must ensure that the party is covered by comprehensive insurance that covers all travel and all planned activities.

### UK's continuing relationship with the EU

As of the 1st January 2021 the following guidelines apply for travel to the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein.

Before any international travel visit leaders should check the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel guidance, paying particular attention to 'Entry Requirements', or at the very least ensure that the organising agency has put in all necessary checks and that all required paperwork is in place.

New EES border system expected to launch in October 2024

- The Entry/Exit System (EES) will collect biometric data, such as face recognition and fingerprints, at the EU border using booths similar to the passport machines you see at airports
- The EES is expected to be operational from October 6 2024
- From this date you will need to allow plenty of extra time for your group to have their face and fingerprints scanned, especially those travelling via Dover and Folkestone

### ETIAS expected for EU trips from Spring 2025

All non-EU passport holders will need to apply online for an ETIAS from late Spring 2025

- The European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) is an online visa waiver scheme for UK citizens, similar to ESTA in the USA
- All British passport holders, including children, will need to apply online for permission to enter the Schengen area
- The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years and is expected to cost €7 for adults, free for under-18s
- Though no official date has been announced for ETIAS, it is expected to be in place six months after the introduction of the EES border checks

EES and ETIAS rules do not apply to school trips to Ireland as the UK currently maintains a Common Travel Area with Ireland.

## Passports

Prior to travel Visit leaders must check all staff, volunteers and students have:

- a valid passport with at least 6 months left until expiry from the date of return; and
- was issued within the last 10 years.

Visit leaders will also need to check if there are visa requirements; this is especially important if any staff, volunteers or students do not hold a UK passport.

A collective (or group) passport is a way for visit leaders to simplify travel outside of the UK to certain European countries. (Austria, Denmark, France, Italy, Malta, Norway, Romania, Spain, Switzerland).

A collective passport costs £39 and takes six weeks to be processed. Between five and 50 children can travel on a group passport. If there are more than 50 in the group, visit leaders can split the group and apply for two or more passports. Everyone on the group passport must be a British national and under the age of 18 by the end of the trip.

A group leader must be named on the passport. The group leader must be over 21 and have a British passport themselves. The passport is invalid if the group leader cannot travel, but if a deputy leader is named on the application, they can take over

## Travel Insurance and EHIC

Prior to travel the visit leader should liaise with the business manager in order to consult your insurance policy regarding the country you are planning to visit. It is also important to check you are covered if you are undertaking adventurous activities whilst away, such as skiing or snow sports.

If a valid EHIC is held, provided it was issued before 1 January 2021, this can still be used as normal whilst travelling in the European Union provided that it has not expired.

For most people, the UK Global Health Insurance Card (UK GHIC) replaces the existing European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for new applications. Each individual teacher and student that are travelling will need a E/GHIC card.

Neither the EHIC nor the GHIC cards includes repatriation, nor replaces travel insurance. It doesn't cover lost or stolen property. It is the visit leader's responsibility to ensure appropriate travel insurance. Please note that some insurers may not provide coverage if you do not have a valid EHIC or GHIC, therefore please do be aware of this upon purchase.

If any of the students or staff travelling have long-term illness or existing injuries, the visit leader may need to check insurance options to ensure they are covered.

## Driving Abroad

If taking the school minibus abroad drivers might need an international driving permit (IDP) and green card\*. It is the visit leaders responsibility to check if an IDP is required, the full list of countries where an IDP is required can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/driving-abroad/international-driving-permit>

\*Staff will need to ensure they carry a physical Green Card. Green cards are an international certificate of insurance issued by insurance providers in the UK, guaranteeing that the motorist has the necessary minimum motor insurance cover for driving in the country being travelled to. **It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that any tour operators/providers have a Green card if travelling abroad.**

## Communications

From 1 January 2021, the guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway ended. Many mobile providers sell a travel bolt on. Without this bolt on, international call charges can mount up. Many providers cap the spend at £45 and you will need to

opt in to allow greater spend. Visit leaders will need to factor this extra cost into finance considerations, when costing the visit. Accompanying staff, volunteers and parents/carers will also need to be made aware of this prior to the visit.

## Providers

The school highly recommends visits take place with a provider who holds the LOtC Quality badge. Visit leaders can check this by visiting [kaddi.com](http://kaddi.com). If visit leaders opt not to travel with a provider who holds this badge, they must ensure they have appropriate bonding such as ABTA.

**The EVC in conjunction with the Business Manager will keep up to date on latest developments and advice related to the UK's relationship with the EU. The EVC will update staff as appropriate. Further information can be found here:**

**<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/exchanges/travel-guidance>**

It is recommended that pupils carry a note in the relevant foreign language in case they get lost to help re-unite them with the group.

For exchange visits, both parents from host families in the UK are required to be DBS checked. Partner schools abroad are expected to make maximum practicable use of the facilities for vetting that are available in their own country.

New organisers of ski visits, overseas expeditions, or other complex overseas visits should obtain specific training and guidance before organising a visit.

## 12. Transport

As part of the overall risk assessment process, the Visit Organiser must take reasonable steps to check that any transport used during the visit is suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe, and that any specific legal requirements are met.

As a rule:

- risk assessments should include the use of transport
- coach/bus/minibus/taxi hire should be through approved companies. A purchase order for any transport that involves a cost, should be passed to the finance office who will then get quotes and check availability. The finance office will then liaise with the visit leader regarding choice of company and cost.
- a minimum of one adult should accompany every 16 students on large coaches, with a minimum of 2 members of staff per coach.
- Members of staff should always carry mobile telephones. Numbers should be left with reception to allow contact from the school
- the EVC should be contacted in the case of breakdown or another emergency
- seatbelts must always be worn by all students on coaches, staff should follow the expected school procedure for checking this is adhered to. No student must be allowed to stand at any time when the coach is moving.
- students should all accompany visits back to the school site. There should be no ad-hoc 'dropping off' at places along the way unless written approval from parents/carers is given.

The school hires coaches/buses from reputable companies used previously by the school. Any concerns about the condition of the coaches/buses are reported to the company, any concerns of the visit leader prior to a trip departing are discussed with the EVC and a decision is made on the course of action. (This could involve requesting another vehicle, getting the issue fixed prior to departure or cancelling the visit)

For the safe supervision of pupils on coaches/buses, staff are required to:

- ensure all students are wearing seatbelts prior to departure
- sit in various locations, spread throughout the coach
- sit near emergency exits
- carry a first aid kit and a mobile phone

The Headteacher must ensure the safety of pupils travelling by private car, and should:

- assess and decide if the driver is suitably qualified, experienced and competent.
- inform parents and obtain their written consent (this may not be possible in emergencies).
- gain assurance on main points of reference – insurance, licence, roadworthy, seatbelts, etc.
- ensure the driver has a clean driving licence
- carry out suitable Child Protection checks (all drivers carrying young people must be DBS cleared).
- ensure that drivers are aware of any specific requirements (e.g. compulsory use of seatbelts).
- ensure that drivers are aware of their responsibilities and school procedures (e.g. use of seat belts, keeping to speed limits etc).
- drivers have appropriate insurance – including business cover for employees

For visits that require the use of staff cars, drivers must:

- have business insurance
- have a clean driving licence
- be assessed as competent and suitable by the Headteacher

For visits that require the use of parents' cars. Drivers must:

- be assessed as competent and suitable by the Headteacher
- provide written confirmation to say their car is roadworthy, taxed and insured
- be DBS checked where possible, there should at least be written parental consent from the parents of the students who would be travelling in that vehicle.

In all cases where drivers are being used, care must be taken that appropriate rest periods are taken (45 minutes after 4.5 hours of driving). Where drivers have been working from 8.20 am, a period of time for rest must be given before the driver leaves school to attend events with students which involve driving some distance.

### **13. Parent information and consent**

The Group Leader and EVC must ensure that parents/guardians are provided with appropriate and sufficient information about all visits. The amount of information and method of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned and the assessed level of risk involved.

Parents/guardians of each pupil on a visit are asked to complete and sign a written consent form, whether it be the SVCS consent for routine visits, or specific consent for a particular visit/activity.

There is no legal requirement to obtain parental consent for visits/activities during normal school hours, but it is nonetheless good practice to inform parents and seek consent for any activities that parents might be particularly concerned about.

Any special/medical needs of pupils are collated by the Group Leader and supervising staff are briefed and trained accordingly.

Parents are asked to give written consent to the administration of plasters and off-the-shelf first aid/medication, if deemed necessary.

In the case of more serious medical treatment being required the assistance of a GP or A&E Department of a hospital should be sought. The Children Act 1989 allows a doctor to provide any necessary treatment by doing 'what is reasonable in all the circumstances of the case for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare'.

In this case the Parent/Carer must be contacted and advised of the situation as soon as possible. Consent for this is obtained via the 'Consent for School Visits' (Template D).

Parents should be clearly informed of the arrangements and responsibilities for collecting a pupil after a visit.

The Visit Organiser must obtain parent contact details for all pupils on the visit, including primary and secondary contact if visit is outside of school hours.

Parents should be kept clearly informed about arrangements for any educational visits, the nature and extent of which will depend on the visit. Documentation and recommended information include:

- Parent letters, using the approved template – e.g. sports fixtures/regular events
- Parents meetings –e.g. residential/overseas
- Parental consent – parents receive a letter giving permission for day visits at the start of the school year. However, further permission must be sought for residential visits or other specific visits
- Forms to gather up to date information regarding special/medical needs
- Forms to obtain up to date parent contact details of parents or other responsible adults
- Letters informing parents of late returns to school or incidents on visit.

## **14. Mental Health and educational visits**

There is a growing body of evidence that time spent in outdoor green spaces is vital for mental health, and that well-managed outdoor learning and adventure activities can be powerful ways of helping children and young people to develop their emotional and psychological wellbeing, mental resilience and happiness.

Visit leaders should do their best to include any students with mental health conditions in outdoor learning and off-site visits, particularly because of the many mental health benefits that such activities can bring. This may mean making reasonable adjustments to the planned activities so that they can be included. A mental health condition is considered a disability if it has a long-term effect on someone's normal day-to-day activity. It is then regarded as a 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act 2020.

Challenging activities, including residential visits and visits overseas, can be stressful for both staff and students, and so the visit leader should consider mental wellbeing in their planning. The visit leader should ensure that participants are fully prepared for all aspects of a visit in advance and consider how best to support the staff and students on the visit, e.g., including more rest breaks. As with physical health, the visit leader should seek to obtain information from students, their parents and the school mental health lead about any mental health issues that may affect them during a visit. It may also be helpful to seek advice from colleagues who know the participants, such as class teachers or leaders of previous visits. Because mental health sometimes involves stigma and embarrassment, the visit leader should approach this sensitively and confidentially. Where a student has particular mental health issues, you should consult any relevant mental health and/or safeguarding professionals to help prepare for the visit.

The Visit Leader should also make the following considerations when planning the visit:



- If any of the activities might trigger mental health issues then the students should be briefed beforehand and parents informed, this can be done through information evenings and letters/emails.
- Where there is significant risk of a participant suffering a mental health incident during a visit, the Visit Leader should have a clear plan for dealing with it and this should be shared with the visit team.

Specific needs that may need extra consideration by the Visit Leader:

- Autism: If a student has autism, it can be important to provide very detailed information about what is planned, such as a timeline including when they will eat, sleep, be able to go to the toilet and return home, so they can mentally prepare and their parents can help them to do so.
- Eating Disorders: An eating disorder is a mental health condition where someone uses the control of food to try to cope with their emotions. It can be a form of self-harm. If a participant is not eating properly, this could become a serious issue during strenuous activities or an expedition. If this is a possibility, the Visit Leader should have a clear plan for managing the student and dealing with any issues that arise.
- Self-Harm, Bullying and Abuse Some participants with mental health conditions may be at risk of self-harming behaviour. Visit Leaders should have a clear plan for managing the student and dealing with any issues that arise.
- Advice for all these conditions should be sought from the school mental health lead and DSL with plans agreed with one or both.

## 15. Transgender Young People and Visits

Where a visit may involve both trans and cisgender participants, the visit leader should consider any individual needs and make any reasonable adjustments that may be required. It is important that the visit leader does not make assumptions or resort to 'labels', but engage in dialogue with the transgender person and, where appropriate, with the whole group and/or the parent(s) to find acceptable solutions.

Decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis, taking all the factors into consideration, and based on principles set out in relevant Trust and school policies.

### Residential Visits

Residential visits may involve the most significant issues, particularly around accommodation, showers and toilet facilities. The STAGER variables (Staff, Timing, Activity, Group, Environment, Remoteness) will all influence the wider context, as will the age, sexual maturity and gender identity of the individual and where they may be in any transition process.

It is important not to dictate someone's gender when making accommodation, changing, toilet and showering arrangements. A solution should be agreed with the individual participant.

Practical solutions for a visit could include:

- access to disabled/neutral gender toilets and showers.
- showers used at alternative times.
- a separate bedroom (although this may introduce other safeguarding/safety issues).
- a shared bedroom with other transgender young people, or with friends, where there is trust and understanding, with appropriate safeguarding arrangements.
- private individual changing areas.

If parents of other young people taking part in the visit express concern, the visit leader should explain that the establishment is following its equalities policy, which is sensitive to the welfare and safety both of individuals and of the group. Before the visit there should be understanding and agreement about toilet, showering and bedroom arrangements. Parents can be offered a copy of

the establishment's policy and the opportunity to speak individually with the Visit Leader or Head if necessary.

## Overseas Visits

Transgender people should encounter few problems while travelling, as long as the visit is well planned. However, there are countries that are not as legally or culturally open or accepting as the UK. The visit leader may need to consider some potentially serious issues when planning an overseas visit.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Potential problems entering a country if the person does not appear to be of the gender indicated on their passport or other identification documents.
- Potential problems where a passport indicates a non-binary gender, but such a category is not recognised in the country to be visited.
- Countries or states where it is illegal to be openly lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or other (LGBT+), or where discrimination, hostility or violence against LGBT+ people is prevalent (in the USA, for example, attitudes and the legal position vary from state to state).
- Border crossing and police searches – the procedures and sensitivity of officers vary widely.

Visit Leaders should make themselves aware of the issues in the countries being visited. The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Association website [www.ilga.org](http://www.ilga.org) has more information about countries that pose a risk to trans individuals. Local LGBT+ associations in countries to be visited may also be a useful source of country-specific guidance.

## 16. Staff briefing and emergency procedures

<b>All staff in charge of visits must be fully aware of the off-site emergency procedures.</b>
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It is important that all staff (including volunteers) involved in the leadership of a visit are fully briefed about each visit. Staff should be aware of their expected roles and responsibilities before, during and after a visit.

Visit leaders should be aware of emergency procedures and how to obtain outside assistance or contact the emergency services if required.

Part of the planning for emergencies must involve the recording of one or more Emergency Home Contact(s) who should be available at any time during the visit.

The Visit Organiser must ensure that group leaders have immediate access to the emergency contact details of the School Leadership Team, EVC and the parents of those on the visit.

A properly equipped first aid kit is always available to staff during school visits and must be checked and taken on all visits. The school first aid kits are stored in the Medical Room.

All staff should be made aware of the conduct and behaviour expected of them during the visit, particularly in regard to issues such as smoking and alcohol use.

The Visit Leader has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the following have been taken into account:

- staff roles and responsibilities

- emergency procedures/arrangements
- emergency home contacts
- school/personal mobile phones for staff
- mobile phones for students – policy e.g. should they be confiscated in emergencies
- first aid equipment – how many? where stored? who is responsible for upkeep?
- staff conduct/behaviour

## **17. Briefing and preparation of the students**

Providing relevant information and guidance to students is an important part of preparing for all school visits. Students should be briefed about safety arrangements and what clothing/equipment should be brought.

Leaders must ensure that students clearly understand what will be considered unacceptable behaviour or conduct, and the consequences of non-compliance. “Buddy systems” are an effective means of promoting safety and welfare within the group, especially with younger students.

During any time that remote supervision takes place the visit leader must ensure that students are aware of the supervision and emergency contact arrangements, and that they have the necessary skills, maturity, responsibility, knowledge and equipment to operate safely as an independent individual/group.

Students should be briefed what to do in an emergency, or if they become separated from the rest of the group.

It is good practice to teach students how to recognise dangers and manage risks sensibly.

Students should be made very clear of the expectations of the visit, in particular:

- conduct and behaviour
- discipline and consequences of non-compliance
- use of mobile phones
- group safety – group leader’s/buddy systems
- special/medical needs – data protection
- personal medication – storage/administration
- required uniform/identifying clothing – eg. School uniform
- remote supervision arrangements - e.g. ID /contact cards/mobile phones
- emergency contact arrangements – e.g. ID /contact cards/mobile phones

## **18. Documentation (and visit records)**

Hard copies of supporting documentation (e.g. risk assessments) should be stored and retained in the school for 10 Years.

If no significant incidents occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork after a period of 10 years. If a significant incident occurs during a visit that could be investigated at a later date, all relevant details are retained until 25 years since the year the visit has taken place.

## **19. Visit Approval**

Local area visits do not require approval, they must be recorded on the school calendar and the attendance officer must be informed of students on the visits. Low risk day visits (Category 2) are approved in-house by the Headteacher (with EVC guidance and support)

Day visits involving high-risk activities or environments (Category 3) are approved by Headteacher/EVC/ Governors.

UK and overseas residentials, including those involving high risk activities or environments (Category 4) are approved by Headteacher /EVC/Governors.

The Visit Organiser must carefully check all visit forms before submitting for approval.

When required, Governor Approval for a visit is given by the governor with specific responsibility for overseeing educational visits.

The procedure for Governor Approval involves:

For low risk day visits (Category 1 and 2) – not required.

For high-risk day visits – the governor with specific responsibility for overseeing educational visits. A hard copy of the visit form is given to and signed by the Chair of Governors.

For residential/overseas visits (Category 3 and 4) and those involving high-risk activities/environments – the governor with specific responsibility for overseeing educational visits. A hard copy of the visit form is given to and signed by the Chair of Governors.

## **20. Amendments to visits**

If there are significant late changes to visit plans that have already been approved or submitted for approval, the Visit Organiser must notify all relevant approving authorities (EVC/Headteacher/Governors) of these changes and ensure that their additional consent is given.

If there is an amendment to a visit and there is time to update the paper work then this should be done following consultation with SLT and the EVC (Accompanying staff should be made aware of changes and parent/carers informed as appropriate). In the case of a last minute or emergency amendment then Form 11: Emergency Changes Report Form should be completed and attached to all copies of relevant paperwork. Staff accompanying the visit should also be advised of any changes. If the changes affect timings, location or activities then parent/carers should be informed of these changes.

## **21. Post visit review and evaluation**

It is good practice for Visit Organisers, on return from a visit, to review the visit with their Deputy Leader and/or the EVC/member of the Senior Leadership Team, and to record any examples of good practice and lessons learned that might assist with the planning and leadership of future visits. (Form 09 – Visit Evaluation Form)

In particular, it is important to record and review any accidents, incidents, or near-misses (i.e. dangerous incidents that nearly happened, but fortunately didn't) on the relevant forms. (Form 07 – Incident Report Form and Form 08 – Near Miss Report Form)

It is important that details are recorded as soon as possible after an incident whilst they are still fresh in the memory, preferably with signed witness accounts.

Visit Organisers should take blank photocopied pages from the school's accident book to record details of any incidents. These can then be copied or added to the school accident book on return home.

Serious incidents must be notified to RIDDOR (HSE's "Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995), using the procedures and standard forms available from the Headteacher. The report must be made according to the guidelines attached on the form.

Post visit reviews and accident/near miss records are reviewed annually by the Headteacher and Governors. Any lessons learned are shared with all relevant staff and any necessary changes to procedures made.

After any major accident, the school will undertake a review of the incident and their emergency procedures.

Staff are encouraged to express any concerns regarding the organisation and management of visits in writing to the Headteacher and these will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence. If necessary, issues will be considered further by the Governing Body.

Ratified by Governing Body	SVCS LGB
Date	25 June 2024

## Appendix 1: Forms to be completed for visit approval

Form 00 – Local Area Visits  
Form 01 – Educational Visit Approval  
Form 02 – Information for Educational Visits  
Form 03 – Risk Management Form for specified visit  
Form 04 – Additional Needs Register

## Appendix 2: Forms to be taken with staff leading and accompanying a visit

Form 05a – Off-site emergency procedures – Loss of student/Serious accident to individual  
Form 05b – Off-site emergency procedures – Vehicle breakdown/accident  
Form 06 – Safeguarding on visits report form  
Form 07 – Incident report form  
Form 08 - Near-miss report form

## Appendix 3: Forms to be completed post-visit, in monitoring and changes prior to a visit

Form 09 – Visit Evaluation form  
Form 10 – Visit Monitoring Form  
Form 11 – Emergency Changes Report Form

## Appendix 4: Templates to assist staff in the planning of Educational Visits

Template A – Procedure Flow Chart  
Template B – Checklist for Visit Organisers  
Template C - Day Visits letter  
Template D – Residential Trip letter  
Template E – Initial Meeting with Parents- Possible outline agenda  
Template F – Educational Visits Annual Consent Form

## Appendix 5: Local Area Visit specific guidelines

### **Boundaries**

The boundaries of the locality are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues: *e.g.*

- *Country Park*
- *Parish/Baptist Churches*
- *Local Schools*
- *Old People's Home*

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the Category 2 approval process, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure.

## **Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality**

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:**

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Head and EVC must give verbal approval before a group departs.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Area Visits' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical, mental health and SEND information and ensure that any required medication is available – extra plans will be put in place for specific students within the group (e.g. Diabetes, EHCP students)
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return, including Form 00 – Local Area Visits
- A school or personal mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)
- Transport by minibus will follow the guidelines and procedures laid out in Section 12: Transport as detailed in the Educational Visits Policy.
- Visits into Clare Town will avoid (where possible) using the pavement on the corner by 'The Bell Pub' as this is particularly narrow.



Appendix 6: Map showing boundary of Local Area Visits

