

Educational Visits Policy and Procedures

Adapted from Wolverhampton City Councils Model Policy

Context

At our settings, we recognise that educational visits and learning outside the classroom are an integral part of the curriculum and learning experience for every child. Appropriately planned visits enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes our Schools a supportive and effective learning environment. We endeavour to make good use of our own buildings, grounds, the neighbouring area and beyond to support learning.

The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities and to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts, i.e., encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.
- Visits are memorable and enjoyable

Our priority is to ensure that all visits are safe, educational and enjoyable.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this educational visits policy we:

- 1) Adopt the Local Authority's (LA) document: '*Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Adventure Activities*' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
- 2) Adopt Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance www.oeapng.info
- 3) Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities, with an emphasis on all Visit Leaders uploading their own trips onto the system to initiate the approval process.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy and the guidelines outlined above. Staff should be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance and agree to adhere by them.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day (category A).**
- **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity, e.g., visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc. (category B).**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity (category C).**
The schools/nursery will not plan any activities of this category due to the age and development levels of pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities for Authority Schools/settings

The **Governors** will approve the Educational Visits policy and will ensure it is implemented within school and reviewed every three years.

The **Head Teacher** has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that educational visits follow the agreed procedures in the Local Authority's (LA) guidance document: '*Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Adventure Activities*'. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that there is an Educational Visits Coordinator, and that this person has received the appropriate training and is competent in this role.

The **Educational Visits Coordinator** (EVC) will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE and uploads generic school documents.

The **Visit Leader** is the member of staff who is leading the visit, who is responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE prior to the visit.

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants; they should be competent to run the intended activity or visit. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary. All risk assessments must be seen by the EVC before the visit to check all significant risks are controlled.

The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring a risk assessment is carried out and that a risk assessment is signed and dated by the Visit Leader and that the EVC and the Head approve that RA before the visit takes place. The risk assessment will include the ratio of adult to children supervision and the number of first aiders or appointed persons needed. The visit leader will share this information with all staff involved in the visit. The visit leader will share the risks with the children and how to manage the risks with a safety talk to the children prior to the trip taking place if this is appropriate. The visit leader is responsible for ensuring the Emergency Card, mobile phone, first aid kit and pupil medication are taken on the visit.

It is the visit leader's responsibility to inform the school when they have arrived at their location and when they leave, to return to school. In case of any delays the school must be informed. This is to notify the Headteacher, EVC and parents.

After the visit, leaders must ensure they inform the EVC and Headteacher of how the trip went, record any significant issues to the EVC both for reference and to inform future visits and fill in an evaluation sheet on EVOLVE.

Accompanying staff must follow agreed risk assessments, policies and practice to ensure the safe running of the visit. Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that they understand what is expected of them and have seen and signed the risk assessment.

Parents are responsible for completing and returning requested documentation and ensuring they are contactable throughout the visit.

Children need to follow instructions, the school rules, the behaviour policy and any additional rules that may be put in place for the visit.

Risk Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the visit leader before the proposed visit, this can be done in collaboration with other staff on the trip. 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 significant 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?

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 consider 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 pupils. 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 Head Teacher/Governing Body will not give its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors, and their risk assessment procedures.

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. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

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

Supervision

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. Ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.

The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be lower than the legal minimum that applies for children aged two 1:5 or aged three and over 1:13.

We believe that the following measures will be the deciding factor on the appropriate level of supervision:

- Skills, knowledge and experience of trip leader
- Qualification level of supervising staff
- Whether or not volunteers/parents are attending
- Training and briefing of all staff attending
- Appropriateness of venue and level of risk factors
- Detailed planning of visit including emergency planning of different scenarios and risk assessment
- Safety measures in place at venue

We aim for the maximum staff to child ratio of 1:6 if the above measures are in place. In the event that the above measures have not been put in place it is highly unlikely that the visit would be approved.

Where the risk assessment identifies additional measures are required a lower staff to child ratio may be used and on all visits children with complex needs may require a ratio of 1:2 or lower.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The visit leader should establish rendezvous points and tell adults, groups and pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

Additional Support

Parent helpers are welcome on educational visits and will attend a briefing with the teacher before the visit. Helpers who are not DBS checked will not be alone with children and must be guided by school staff at all times.

Parental Consent

Parents should be given information about the purpose and details of the visit and consent obtained due to the age of pupils. Consent is not legally required for activities within the School Learning day but we consider it polite and correct to gain parental consent for all visits. The visit information must be made available to parents via letters and must contain sufficient information so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. Parents should be told where their child is at all times, and of any extra safety measure required.

Specific written "signed-for" consent for individual trips need only be requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management such as full day trips outside of the authority. Written consent for local visits will be obtained at the start of the academic year.

Parents will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit. Due to the high level of supervision required on all day off-site visits, the school will not be able to provide additional staff to offer alternative education for children who do not attend full day off-site visits.

Mobile Phones and Social Network

- Under normal circumstances adults should not use their mobile phone to take photographs or make phone calls.
- No photos should be posted on social media such as 'Facebook' and 'Twitter' and instant messaging services such as 'WhatsApp'.
- Only the Lead teacher and class teachers will have the phones switched on to communicate with the school or in case of any emergency.
- Any information about a child should only be passed onto the child's parent or guardian through the class teacher or head teacher.
- If you need to make an emergency call please speak to the Lead teacher who will support you in any way possible.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. It is particularly important for a first aider to accompany pupils on educational visits, the minimum requirement is that an appointed person must take charge of the first aid arrangements.

A senior first aider will be nominated on each visit. Regulations require at least one Paediatric First Aider must attend however all of our settings have over 90% of staff qualified in Paediatric First Aid so each visit will have a high ratio of First Aiders in attendance.

Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled

participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. Schools are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

We will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. We tailor visits to the educational needs and development levels of all our pupils therefore we offer educational experiences at different times of the year and to different venues. Pupils will not be excluded from a visit but offered a visit that meets their educational and development needs so that every child has a positive and impactful learning experience.

Every effort will be made to support pupils with additional needs whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

We will work with families to find ways so that all children can attend educational visits.

Farm/Animal Visits

Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions. Refer to EVOLVE National Library: 'Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions- Advice to Teachers' and associated documents. Refer to: Farming & Countryside Education: www.face-online.org.uk; 'Farm Visits' in National Guidance www.oepng.info

Water Margin Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along the riverbank, collecting samples in ponds or stream or paddling in shallow water, then the 'Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Adventure Activities' will be followed and regard will be given to the DfE guidance 'Group Safety at Water Margins. All visits including water margins must have these aspects specifically risk assessed.

Regular Local Visits and Activities

Regular visits and activities such as walking visits to locations within a mile of the school and coach travel are covered by generic risk assessments which form the agreed principles for conducting these visits. However, these need to be accompanied by an additional risk assessment if needed. Times when this may be required is when the groups being taken has additional needs or requirements, the activity is to be changed or the venue has altered.

All visits including those that Wolverhampton City Council class as category A visits must be recorded on EVOLVE. To enable all visits off-site to be tracked, monitored and authorised by the Executive Head Teacher ALL visits need to be recorded on the EVOLVE system as Category B as the system does not notify the Head Teacher or EVC of trips without this classification.

Transport

On coaches seat belts must be provided and all children must wear a seat belt whilst travelling. The visit leader is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of children whilst they are travelling. All aspects of transport and road crossing should be risk assessed.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – staff must have personal business use insurance and must ensure that they do not chauffeur children on a 1:1 basis.

Accident/incident reporting

The Council's Incident Reporting Procedure must be followed i.e. all accidents or near- misses involving employees or service users are reported on an IR1 form. Serious incidents must be notified immediately to the corporate Health & Safety team. After any significant incident, schools/services must undertake an investigation of the incident, and review their risk assessments and emergency procedures. It is also good practice to record and learn from 'near misses'.

Requirements of Ofsted Registered Settings

As an Ofsted registered daycare setting, Little Village Nursery will follow all guidance for settings as prescribed by their Ofsted registration including reporting requirements in the event of accidents/incidents.

Insurance

The school will hold insurance for trips.

Reviewed in May 2024 by:

Emma Smith Executive Head Teacher

Wendy Binder Education Visits Co-ordinator

Approved by Full Governing Board 10th June 2024