

Educational Visits Policy

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

These often the most memorable learning experiences, help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside the classroom.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn.

Wood's Foundation School has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Nottinghamshire Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits. Further school procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Nottinghamshire Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits are available to view at www.nottinghamshirevisits.org.uk

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school;

- Develop confident, secure and happy children.
- Provide a fresh, vibrant and active curriculum that models and inspires enthusiastic lifelong learners.
- Track the progress and attainment of all pupils; celebrate and value their successes.
- Foster love and compassion for each other and the wider community.
- Nurture trust, promote self-discipline and respect within a safe environment

The range of opportunities and activities are outlined in the school prospectus along with the criteria by which pupils are able to access them and the methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs (choir, orchestra, art, sports, homework, etc)
- School teams

Due regard has been given to the equality legislation Sept 2016

- Regular nearby visits (village hall, Governor's Field and St Swithun's Church)
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits Y5/6

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Headteacher has nominated the SBM as per DfE Guidance as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Finance and General Purposes committee and has nominated the Headteacher as signatories, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the EVC must approve the initial plan. Check if the visit is a category A, B or C visit (descriptors below) to confirm what must be done to make the visit compliant.

Visits that include adventurous activities and/or a residential element will require approval by the Local Authority via the on-line Evolve system. Usernames and Passwords will be managed by the EVC or Headteacher.

Day visits that do not include adventurous activities but involve events and activities that do not normally form part of a local or regular input (e.g. visits to locations of interest, all day low level walk, sporting fixture that involves considerable travel) will be registered on the Evolve system at least 4 weeks prior to the visit taking place.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For out of hour's clubs, school teams and nearby visits, parents will be asked to sign a letter of consent for participation in these activities. Parents will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed if an activity has to be cancelled.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction, apprenticeship and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

The school will ensure that CRB screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

On residential visits the gender of the staff responsible for supervision and pastoral care will reflect the gender of the pupils

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The staff:pupil ratios will not exceed those as recommended by the Local Authority:

Benchmark guidance for adult: participant ratios for normal day visits are:

- school years 1 to 3 (ages 4 - 8 yrs):

1 member of staff or adult for every 6 participants

(under fives need higher ratios established via a risk assessment process)

- school years 4 to 6 (ages 8 - 11yrs):

1 member of staff or adult for every 10-15 participants

- school year 7 onwards (ages 12 yrs and above)

1 member of staff or adult for every 15 - 20 participants

Residential visits – as for day visits plus:

- a minimum of two members of staff are required on residential visits
- 1 professionally qualified member of staff or adult for every 10 participants
- mixed gender groups should have at least 1 male and 1 female member of staff.

On residential visits it is usually necessary that both male and female adults accompany a mixed group though parties of younger participants can often be adequately supervised by female adults. There should always be a male and female adult with any mixed group abroad.

Visits abroad – as for day visits plus:

- a minimum of two professionally qualified members of staff
- 1 professionally qualified member of staff or adult for every 10 participants
- mixed gender groups should have at least 1 male and 1 female member of staff.

These ratios are guidelines that should not normally be exceeded. The actual level of supervision should be established via a risk assessment process which considers the needs of the group and the nature of the visit. A minimum number of two members of staff/adults with each group is usually necessary. However, for small groups, in certain circumstances, the head of establishment, VC and Visit Leader may agree that only one supervisor is required. Where a participant requires specific support, such as a 1:1 carer this person should not be considered within the overall staffing ratio as there prime responsibility of the young person they are there to support. Careful consideration should be given to the inclusion of other people on a visit such as the leaders' own children or friends. Care should be exercised to ensure that the safety of the group is not put at risk because of their inclusion and that suitable supervision of all participants will be maintained at all times. If additional children are not of the same age and ability of the main group, separate supervision must be arranged for them and their supervisors may not be included in the main group's staff/participant ratio. An establishment's policy must identify if this practice is locally endorsed or not supported as appropriate within a given service area.

The school does not support additional people accompanying educational visits who are not pupils at the school or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Governing Body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

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The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the conditions of booking by the parents, and will include guidance in relation to the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SMT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Visit Leader will take with them a copy of the schools Major Incident Procedures, along with the contact details of the appointed emergency school contacts.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems. The Outdoor Education Unit should also be advised of any serious incidents or accidents.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Visit Leader in any emergency that occurs in the UK or abroad.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Visit Leader with the EVC.

The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments for the visits or activities are evaluated and/or modified as a result of findings or feedback from the visit.

The Visit Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the school's procedures.

School Visits Checklist

When booking a trip please remember.....

- Check date on Sims calendar
- Email Admin@ with **full** details of the trip, method of transport (minibus should be used for local trips where possible) and chosen date. The office will check that the date is available and book the minibus/coach, work with you to calculate the cost of the visit (including staffing) and prepare letter to send to parents.
- Check which category the visit falls into (see descriptions below), if it is B or C log on to Evolve and complete necessary risk assessment(s) including generic and specific which relate to the visit on Evolve 4 weeks before the visit (8 weeks if residential). These will need to be attached to the visit in evolve



- Follow school specific risk assessment for category A Visits (view in establishment documents).
- Check adult helper ratio above (taken from LA Educational Visits policy April 2011). Ensure that the number of staff going on the visit is correct, as the cost of additional staff will taken into account when costing the trip. If you wish to take additional help please do this by way of **volunteers**.
- Check TA timetable and rearrange slots in plenty of time with other teachers is necessary (first aider).
- Ensure any medication is taken (inhalers etc) and completed medication forms are taken.
- Ensure procedures are in place to communicate with parents return time, especially if it is after school.
- Refer to EVA policy to ensure you are meeting LA requirements.

PLEASE ADD TO THIS LIST IF YOU THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE WE NEED TO REMEMBER...

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Descriptors of category A, B and C visits taken from LA Educational Visits policy April 2011 (also available on Evolve under Establishment Documents).

Category A visits (recorded in house and approved by Nominated Managers)

These are visits and activities that are generally perceived as being routine events presenting low levels of risk. These events can be adequately managed through the use of LA generic risk assessment and establishment operating procedures (such as a school's visits policy and existing risk management procedures).

Examples of these visits:

- ☐ Local events that occur as part of your work programme and within your normal operating hours (such as core operating hours or the school day).
- ☐ Sporting activities within your locality or those that take place immediately after hours, including trips to swimming pools, leisure centres or local sports fixtures
- ☐ Local enrichment opportunities on site, or a short journey from it, such as to a café, village hall, library, local shops etc.
- ☐ Work placements.

Establishments must:

- refer to, and work within, the LA generic risk assessments adding additional control measures as appropriate for participant needs or the visit in general. These should be reviewed annually, where a significant change occurs or following an incident on a trip
- follow the most recent LA advice and develop and follow any establishment policies and codes of practice they consider necessary in respect of these types of visit.
- decide as part of the risk assessment process, what type of consent is appropriate, i.e. for a period of time or specifically for a series of events where the nature of activity may deem it appropriate
- if an activity happens after hours such as school sports matches, inform parents of the specific dates and times of each activity throughout a programme or fixture and detail transport arrangements if applicable
- follow other relevant LA guidance such as that for physical education activities, lone worker guidance or work placement procedures.
- ensure that competent staff are allocated to lead and supervise such trips
- ensure that effective arrangements and/or contingency plans are in place to manage an unforeseen incident if it were to occur, this may form part of the sites routine operating procedures.
- ensure that formal approval has been provided, this could be carried out by approval of the risk assessments for the events planned via a dated signature on the form by the Nominated Manager or as stipulated in a local establishment visits policy

Category B visits (approved by Nominated Managers but also recorded on EVOLVE)

These are events and activities that do not normally form part of a local or regular input. They may extend beyond normal operating hours, necessitating a late return, but do not involve an overnight stay.

Examples of these visits:

- All day visits to neighbouring cities or locations of interest.
- Theme park trips.
- All day low level walks or activities.
- Sporting fixtures that involve considerable travel.

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Approval for these trips must be obtained from Nominated Manager. A record of these visits must be entered onto the EVOLVE system. This will provide a suitable record of trip details and approval provided.

Parents/guardians must be informed of such activities and specific consent will be required in writing. Because these trips are likely to be more complex, existing risk assessments will need reviewing and a specific risk assessment produced identifying safety management procedures for the event.

Establishments must:

- refer to, and work within, the LA generic risk assessments pertinent to the planned excursion.
- complete a specific risk assessment for the planned event/activity.
- inform parents and guardians of organisational details in writing, e.g. via briefing sheet or information contained on consent forms (see page 14).
- ensure that competent staff are allocated to lead and supervise such trips; suitable competence must be clearly identified by the head of the establishment or Nominated Manager with support of the Visits Coordinator.
- outside providers may be employed to deliver part of the visit or some activities; these will require any necessary checks being made to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient to do so. A checklist of considerations is provided for leaders and others to support this process.
- ensure that the Nominated Manager has considered the application for approval together with details of the proposed programme; specific risk assessments produced by the leader and any other relevant information and, if satisfied with the arrangements, provide their approval. Nominated Managers may contact an OEA for specific advice and guidance prior to approval.
- ensure that effective arrangements and/or contingency plans are in place to manage an unforeseen incident if it were to occur while on the visit. This may include nominating a base emergency contact person with access to staff and participant contact details in the event of an emergency. Where an activity is deemed non routine but occurs on an annual basis, the specific risk assessment may be sufficient for use again with minor amendments.

Category C visits (require LA approval via EVOLVE)

This is the most complex and demanding activity level, where participants and staff may be involved in residential visits, adventurous activities, activities with higher than normal risks and trips to higher risk environments.

Examples of these visits:

- Residential visits or activities that require an overnight stay.
- Travel outside the United Kingdom, exchange visits, expeditions and study tours.
- Outdoor and adventurous activities including – canoeing, caving, high ropes courses, moor land and mountain walking, rock climbing, stream scrambling, sailing activities, mountain biking, wild country camping, pony trekking and open water swimming.
- Hazardous activities and or locations e.g., motorised sports, cliff edge walks, coastal walking, planned entry into water in the environment such as river study.

Where a visit involves a new venture to the establishment, visiting a developing country or remote area, an expedition, skiing or adventure activities using a new provider/company, establishments should take initial advice from the LA Outdoor Education Adviser before making any financial commitment. The Nominated Manager must give approval for category C events AND obtain specific approval from the LA. Specific consent must be obtained for all such events and specific information

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provided to parents and guardians. This is usually facilitated by attendance at planning meetings or information sharing events with participants and parents.

Outside providers may be employed to deliver part or all of the visit or activities. These will require any necessary checks being made to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient to do so. A checklist is available in the LA Educational visits policy on Evolve, See Additional insurance cover may be required; establishments should investigate the appropriate level of insurance required for their planned excursion. Approval must be recorded on the EVOLVE system. These trips will automatically be submitted to the LA for further approval.

Establishments must:

- refer to, and work within, the LA generic risk assessments pertinent to the planned excursion.
- plan according to guidance contained within generic risk assessments and the nature of the trip.
- complete a specific risk assessment for the planned event/activity
- obtain outline approval for the trip from the Nominated Manager prior to commitment of nonreturnable funds.
- obtain specific consent from parents and guardians.
- ensure that competent staff are allocated to lead and supervise trips; suitable competence must be clearly identified by the Nominated Manager with support of the Visits Coordinator and with reference to LA generic risk assessment requirements. Advice may need to be sought from the OEA.
- ensure that the Nominated Manager has considered the application for approval together with details of the proposed programme; specific risk assessments produced by the leader and any other relevant information and, if satisfied with the arrangements provide their approval.
- Managers may contact an OEA for specific advice and guidance prior to approval
- comply with any suggested amendments/advice provided by the OEA and ensure that LA approval has been provided.
- submit information for approval purposes to the LA at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed excursion if in the UK and a minimum of 8 weeks in advance for foreign travel excursions.

NB where any proposed event contains activities with higher than normal risk (see section 11) LA approval will be required in addition to that of the Nominated Manager as a Category C event.