



Educational Visits Policy

Approved by: Kate Mather **Date:** February 2024

Last reviewed on: February 2024

Next review due by: February 2025

It should be noted that the Deputy Headteacher is the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and completed the training in September 2023.

This policy adopts the Shropshire LA model (Shropshire Council Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits and Journeys) – January 2021.

Introduction

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day, but on occasions, take place after school. Our school adopts the LA guidance and uses their proforma when planning Educational Visits.

Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

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

Curriculum links

Trips and visits will only be considered if they add value and impact to the schools' curriculum.

Some examples of previous educational visits linked to subject areas are listed below.

English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets, and theatre groups.

Science – use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens, Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre.

Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment.

History – castle visits, study of local buildings, local museums.

Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, local surveys.

Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality.

PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches.

Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, concerts.

Design and technology – visits to factories or design centres.

ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc.

RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers.

Residential activities

Children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to take part in a city tour residential visit as well as an outdoor adventure residential. The residential visits enable children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work, as well as having links with PSHE, Science, History and Geography. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

Group Leaders' planning (See Appendix 1)

Group Leaders must read the Shropshire guidance for educational visits thoroughly before planning any off-site visits.

Educational Visits and journeys are placed in 3 categories: -

- **Category 1. Routine activities covered by generic risk management.** These are off-site activities and outdoor learning on-site activities that take place during school hours, and which are a normal part of a child's education. These involve no more than an everyday level of risk, such as slips and trips, and are covered by a school's current policies and procedures. They only need a little extra planning beyond the educational aspect of the trip. They can be considered as lessons in a different classroom. These would include the use of the school grounds for enhancing the delivery of the curriculum including data collection and local studies. Also included typically would be regular visits to a library or place of worship. Routine PE fixtures although not covered by Educational Visits and Journeys Guidance would be another example.
- **Category 2a. Visits and/or journeys that require enhanced planning and event/journey specific risk management but are NOT residential, overseas or adventurous.** These visits require one-off consent, parents **must** be given specific information about the visit and their child's proposed participation, and **must** also be given the opportunity to withdraw their consent should they not wish them to participate. Examples will include visits that extend beyond the school day (out-of-hours), longer journeys that involve breaks e.g. for toilets and food stops, and larger public venues such as national museums and cultural events.
- **Category 2b. Visits that are residential, or require travel overseas, or are adventurous in nature.** These require detailed planning to reflect the challenging environments, locations, and higher risk activities. The activities in this category require enhanced Leader competence.
- These visits are those that are any of the following:
 - Residential visits
 - Visits that involve travelling outside England, Scotland and Wales
 - On-site adventurous activities
 - Off-site adventurous activities
 - The associated journey and travel arrangements

How visits may be authorised

The EVC will liaise with the party leader who is responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

The school's educational visits coordinator, currently the Deputy Headteacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. He will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed.
- support the headteacher and governing body in their decisions on approval.
- assign competent staff to assist with trips.
- organise related staff training.
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained.
- keep records of visits and subsequent evaluations
- ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity requiring greater planning (Category 2a), they must seek and obtain the approval of the EVC before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made. The visits proformas are available from the staff servers or EVC.

Where the activity involves a **residential, or require travel overseas, or are adventurous in nature**, the EVC will seek the approval of the headteacher, governing body and the Local Education Authority's Outdoor Education Adviser before permitting the activity to take place.

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

Risk assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit **using the forms suggested in Appendix 1**. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

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

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the

facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to curriculum impact, the age of the group and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group Leader to experience the activity beforehand.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the correct ratios. Shropshire Council provide the following ratios of staff: young people for guidance with staff numbers capable of being decreased if the risk assessment supports it. (The term 'staff' here includes all competent adults provided by the school).

- Nursery: **1:2**
- Reception: **1:4**
- School years 1 – 3: **1:6** (overnight minimum **1:8**)
- School years 4 – 6: **1:15** (overnight minimum **1:10**)

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

Volunteers:

- DBSs required for regular volunteers
- All volunteers to receive induction (particularly on confidentiality and protocols on appropriate behaviour)
- Volunteers must not act as visit leaders
- Volunteers must not be left unsupervised with pupils if they do not have an appropriate CRB

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely taken, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts and booster seats (if required).
- details of first aid and emergency equipment.
- breakdown procedures.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the EVC and all adults supervising the trip.

Communication with parents

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

Charging for a school trip must be in line with the School/Trust Charging and Remissions policy.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). However, trips can only take place if enough contributions are received for the children wishing to take part. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

If children do not wish to take part, alternative activities will be held for them in school.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Headteacher to decide about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Further health and safety considerations

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

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

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

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of making additional arrangements for that child.

Behaviour on the visit will be managed with in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Staff Training

Staff training/refreshers sessions will be given annually either as a staff meeting or as part of an agenda during a teacher training day.

Monitoring and review

Visit leaders are asked to review visits, considering the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved (this includes impact on the curriculum). Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or Headteacher regarding the outcome of the visit.

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

APPENDIX 1

