

Oakfield School

64. Educational Visits Policy



To be Reviewed:

March 2019

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every child to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment and so form a key part of what makes Oakfield School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of children taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change and novelty
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities 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. Students 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 giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts
- 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

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds, during school time, is covered by this policy.

Oakfield School adopts the Hull LA’s document: **‘Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE’** (available via EVOLVE Resources). EVOLVE is the web based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system, used by Hull LA, to which all staff have access.

The Local Authority’s guidance links directly with National Guidance www.oepng.info.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with Hull LA’s Guidance. Staff undertake training and are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

The rest of this policy explains how visit approval and planning takes place at Oakfield School.

Types of Visit

There are three types of visit, for each of which the approval process is slightly different:

1. staff using the local area to deliver lessons
2. other single day visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities
3. Any visit involving adventure activities, involving travel abroad and/or an overnight stay

Roles and Responsibilities

Visit Leaders are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying colleagues and the children in this process. Staff must make appropriate checks of any third party providers. Staff are advised to obtain outline permission for a visit, from the Headteacher, before beginning to plan and certainly before making any commitments.

The EVC is (Dawn Maddick) who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom. She is the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Headteacher. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE.

The Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits.

The Governors Governors are made aware of all Residential and Hazardous trips in advance of them taking place.

Staff Competence

We realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe visit management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to the role of visit leader

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the Headteacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise
- Knowledge of the children, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

Visit Planning and Approval

The internal school approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local area visits will be Risk Assessed by the staff leading the visit and could extend from the schools local community out to wider local venues such as East Park or the local shops.
2. Single day visits within the UK excluding adventure activities – these are put on EVOLVE and approved internally by the Headteacher. Visits should be submitted to the EVC via EVOLVE at least **3 working days** in advance. *Visits not submitted 3 days in advance, will not be authorised and therefore the visit will not go ahead.*
3. Visits involving an overnight stay must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least **14 days** in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance. *Visits not submitted 14 days in advance, will not be authorised and therefore the visit will not go ahead.*
4. Visits involving adventure activities must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least **14 days** in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval at least 10 days in advance. *Visits not submitted 14 days in advance, will not be authorised and therefore the visit will not go ahead.* Visit leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence (http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php) and/or an LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>). If they don't hold the LOTC Quality Badge then they must complete a Provider Questionnaire.
5. Visits abroad require detailed planning to commence well in advance and the Headteacher must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third party providers and permission from the Headteacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge (see above) do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a Provider Questionnaire, which visit leaders should scrutinise. For all visits abroad the permission for the Chair of Governors will be required in advance of the EVOLVE application being submitted. The Headteacher will need to submit final plans to the Local Authority at least 10 days before the departure date.

Emergency Procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has a Crisis Management/Emergency Plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; where it involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Local Authority.

The Visit Leaders Job List

The visit leader will ensure all the following steps are completed for any type 2 or 3 visit:

- Gain outline approval from the Headteacher to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism/charging policy
- Ensure the visit:
 - has clear learning outcomes
 - has activities appropriate to the group
 - is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks
 - is appropriately staffed
 - complies with the school's safeguarding policy
- Involve children in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure the LA procedures are followed and that the visit plan is recorded on EVOLVE.
- Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults and children are:
 - fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
 - know what to do in the event of an emergency
 - are given information they need about individual pupil needs

Emergency procedures must include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the party leader.
- Ensure the base contact back at school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent, for all local, non-residential visits, at the start of each year. For any visits not covered by the local area visits, or 14-19 curriculum, information should be sent home giving the parents information on the visit and including a request for information on any changes in their child's medical details.

For residential visits, visits extending beyond the school day or visits out of the Area, specific consent should be requested via parental contact, usually by letter in advance. For any pupils having a full care order, social care will have to sign as corporate parents, as well as the parent/carer with designated parental responsibility.

Inclusion

No pupil will be excluded from a visit on the grounds of their individual disability or statement, in compliance with the Equalities Act 2010. However, pupils and their families will be reminded that there is an expectation of the highest levels of behaviour whenever a pupil is out of school on a visit.

Charging/Funding for Visits

The Governing Body has agreed to follow the guidelines of the Local Authority with regards to charging for school activities. Voluntary contributions from parents may be sought to ensure that activities may take place. No child will be excluded from school activities through inability to make a contribution.

Transport

The School follows LA guidance on the transport of pupils including the use of Self-drive minibuses, taxis, coaches and school cars. All of these methods of transport have individual risk assessments available to all staff members before each visit.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Any use of private vehicles will be subject to a specific risk assessment.

Insurance

All educational visits are covered by Hull LA's insurance policy.

This Policy was reviewed February 2018.

Signed:

Mr Lee Morfitt (Chair of Governors)

Appendix 1 Local Area Territory

Boundaries

We use this area on a daily basis for a variety of learning activities and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the visit approval process so long as they follow the agreed standard operating procedure. The EVC and the office maintain a list of currently approved staff.

Operating Procedure

The following are potentially significant hazards within our extended territory:

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

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- 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 extended learning terrain is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas' and have practiced appropriate management techniques.
- Children have been trained and practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Children are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group. This could include – return to school, wait where they are, go to x and ask for help, etc.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended territory is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- On residential visits, Children's clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness before leaving school and staff carry additional spare clothing, a survival blanket and a first aid kit, as appropriate.
- Staff carry student medical information and emergency contact details (collect this from the office on the way out).
- Staff will ensure a list of all pupils and staff is left behind before leaving for their visit and a proposed route and an estimated time of return. A school mobile is taken with each group and the office/key staff have a note of the numbers.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles).

Appendix 2 Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the Senior Leadership Team or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the trip participants (including staff).
4. Both the visit leader(s) and the base contact know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; involves serious injury or fatality or where it is likely to attract media attention.
5. The National Guidance role specific emergency action cards are carried by:
 - a. The visit leader
 - b. The first point of contact (e.g. the office receptionist)
 - c. The designated base contact senior manager
6. This procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders