

Educational Visits Policy



This policy is intended to be read by teachers, teaching assistants, parents, governors, inspectors, support staff and staff from other schools with which we may have links.

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We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil 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 St. Luke's C of E Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. 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 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. Pupils are active participant's 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.

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, St. Luke's C of E Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).

2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the 'Extended learning locality' (See Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visit that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Roles and responsibilities

EVC leads are responsible for entering these on EVOLVE. The visit lead should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC) are Clare Walker and Martin Moriarty, who 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 Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend.' Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE. Governors authorise the school's residential visit and they review the school visit process during Health and Safety monitoring visits.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders or the EVC before taking on a trip leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

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

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Approval

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

1. Local visits follow the 'Extending learning locality' policy (Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 14 days in advance, and then forwarded to the Head for approval.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous') are then submitted by the Head to the LA for approval.

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 an 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.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or 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.

Educational Visits Checklist

St. Luke's C of E Primary School Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. St. Luke's C of E Primary School Educational Visits Checklist is available to all staff on TEAMS.

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within the 'Extended learning locality' when children are admitted to the school in paper copy.

When to get consent from parents. :

Parental consent to off-site activities from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of offsite activities organised by a school (with the exception of nursery age children) as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's

education at school. However, parents should be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required. Any activities which include 'out of school hours' will need parental/carers consent. A teacher must remain with any uncollected children until all parents have arrived and all children have departed after a trip.

Inclusion

All activities must have a clearly defined educational purpose and we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for the children at St. Luke's C of E Primary school, we offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn at school. The Inclusion Matrix is completed by EVOLVE to ensure all reasonable adjustments are explored in order for a child to safely attend a trip or part of a trip.

Charging / funding for visits

When stating the cost for each individual:

Explain where this cost has come from and that the school would like a voluntary contribution from parents/carers to fund the visit. Stress, however, that if sufficient financial support is not forthcoming that the visit may have to be cancelled. State when and how you would like to receive payment. Voluntary contributions are non-refundable in the event that the child does not attend the trip. If events are not part of the child's curriculum, and are additional enrichment opportunities, there will be a charge.

Some visits may incur vast amounts of money.

Transport

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – we refer to the LA guidance.

All staff transporting in their cars have business insurance. We have the Local Authority insurance for all trips. Staff submit all documents to the Business Manager if they are transporting pupils in their vehicle.

Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Locality

Boundaries

The boundaries of the locality are shown and noted below. This area includes the following frequently used venues:

Tiptree War Memorial

Asda

Tiptree Duck Pond

Tesco

Tiptree Community Centre Playground

Grove Road Park

St. Luke's Church

Tiptree Fire Station

Church Road

The parade of shops along Church Road

Thurstable Secondary School

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 EVOLVE visit 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 or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves. This is not strictly necessary if you have clearly identified competent staff and are confident in your operating procedure, and the fact that staff will follow it.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults (this depends on the size of the group).
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised 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.

- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile phone is taken with the group and the office have a record of the number.

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 and/or member of SLT).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s 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.