

Educational Visits Policy

The John Harrox Primary School



Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 12/11/2024
Last reviewed on:	12/11/2024	
Next review due by:	November 2026	

Context

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 The John Harrox 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 (adult in child, child in adult, within themselves, children 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. ie. 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, The John Harrox 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 this 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 & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
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.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). 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.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mr. Luke Taylor, 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 EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'.

Governors monitor school visits by questioning the rationale of visits during governor meetings following the basic premise of the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel:

OEAP National Guidance starts from three basic premises:

1. Well planned and facilitated opportunities to learn in the real world, away from the classroom, and to experience adventure, help to improve the lives of young people.
2. Delivering learning outside or off-site does not need to be more difficult than delivering it inside a classroom. Planning and management should, therefore, be practical, proportionate and non-bureaucratic.
3. The key to effective and successful outdoor learning and off-site visits is: **The right leaders doing the right activities with the right young people in the right places at the right times.**

Further guidance can be found from OEAP National Guidance www.oepng.info
Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, 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 before taking on a 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.

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 and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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

The John Harrox Primary School Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. 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'. (Appendix 3)

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. Parents are informed of this at the beginning of each year and when the activity is taking place.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents consent, through a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

Inclusion & Equality

External visits should be available to all pupils regardless of background or abilities. Schools which provide such visits and activities must ensure that their provision meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

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.

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy 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 head teacher the possibility of making additional or alternative arrangements for that child. Further guidance may be sought.

Charging / funding for visits

The School will ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits whenever necessary. Where sufficient funds are not raised through voluntary contributions then trips may not be able to take place. visit expenses may be subsidised by the School's Fund.

Transport

School does not provide its own transport for school trips. Where the school organises transport for educational activities and trips it will use reputable companies known to the local authority.

There are occasions where parents are required to transport their own children to events, particularly after school sporting events. Transport arrangements are then the responsibility of the parent.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils

We follow LCC guidance regarding this aspect which can be found under the resources tab on Evolve.

Insurance

The school takes insurance through the local authority and in addition has a School Journey (Winter Sports Excluded) Policy with Zurich Municipal.

Other topics

Swimming

Swimming lessons are delivered through Key Stage Two. This is organised through the hiring of Spalding Swimming Pool (Castle Sports) and the hiring of designate swimming teachers.

Changing facilities are in group separate boy Girl areas. There is a limited provision for individual changing facility.

Dismissal after usual end of day school clubs.

At the end of unusual out of school clubs, children are brought to the main school gate to be handed to their parent/carer. School must be notified of alternative collection details for children.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg visits around the village such as geography field work or visits to the church.
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are shown on the attached map.



This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- Church
- Shops – post office/butchers/fish and chip shop etc.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic with tractors and lorries.
- 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, Deputy 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 and office and includes all teaching staff.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group 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.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- 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 school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)
- When crossing to go to the Church the Green will be used as a staging point. Wheelchair access is to be via the path across the Green.

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 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.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
 - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card ([Available via www.oeap.info](http://www.oeap.info))
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

**Appendix 3:CHECKLIST FOR VISIT LEADERS (All trips including
RESIDENTIAL VISITS which will require all questions to be answered)**

Visit:		Dates:	
Visit Leader:			

TASK/ACTION	DATE COMPLETED	COMMENTS
Roles and responsibilities for all supervisors explained		
Significant risks identified with control measures to be used		
Group lists prepared		
Activity plans prepared		
Emergency contact lists prepared		
Medical information gathered		
Code of Conduct and Behaviour discussed with pupils		
Travel details, stops etc clear		
Plan 'B's clear and risk assessed		
Recreation or 'Downtime' procedures		
Night time emergency procedures		
Pupils' pocket money/entrance fees		
Medical/First Aid Kits ready		
Venue information understood by all		
Buddy pairs organised		
Location and contact details of key services noted in locality		
Parents meeting arranged		
Information for non-attending parents		
Meal arrangements on travel days organised		
Key information retained at school		
ADDITIONAL NOTES		