



# Educational Visits Policy



Review Date:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026

# **Local Authority Model Adopted**

## **Coppice Academy - Educational Visits Policy**

### **Introduction**

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds, many taking place in the local area (covered under the Local Visits Policy). 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 student'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 students and staff always. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all students, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with physical disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day, but on occasions, take place after school. Our school adopts the LA guidance when planning Educational Visits.

### **Aims**

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

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

### **Curriculum links**

For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LA:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets, and theatre groups
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to science centres
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment, visits to shops for money skills
- 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/Singsation performances

- Design and Technology – visits to local factories or design centres
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc
- Humanities - castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums; use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails; visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to local emergency services and other services in the community
- KS3/4 mix & Mobiles – visits to the community to use local shops and services and to learn about personal and road safety
- KS4 – Cross site visits

## **Residential activities**

All our students have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. The residential visit enables students to take part in outdoor and adventure activities. These visits are usually organised in conjunction with PGL or with a recognised LA authorised activity centre or National Centre. We undertake these visits only with the written agreement of the LA through the EVOLVE on-line Educational Visits system. The centres provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that are undertaken.

## **How visits may be authorised**

The visit leader will complete all planning for the visit through the on-line EVOLVE system, this will then be approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator and then subject to final approval by the Principal. (Visit Leader check list Appendix C)

The academy's Educational Visits Coordinator, along with the Principal, will be involved in the management of off-site visits. They will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed and effective.
- support the Principal in their decisions on approval.
- approve the assign staff to lead and help with trips.
- organise related staff training.
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory DBS checks, and that any letters from coach companies assures us their drivers have relevant documentation for carriage of school age students.
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained (Under the Local Visits Policy a generalised visit form can be completed yearly allowing students to take part during the normal academy day. For visits involving coach travel further than the local area agreed visits written consent will be required)
- communicate any questions or concerns regarding a planned trip through the EVOLVE note system.

- keep records of visits (through EVOLVE), and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues. (For Local Visits Policy ensure the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) form has completed with relevant information for the specific group and staffing have been updated.)

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice, and procedures (National Guidance “NG”) as detailed on the EVOLVE system. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA’s instructions.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, not using the Local Visits Policy, 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 EVOLVE submission should be made **TWO WEEKS** prior to any trip going out, which has not previously been agreed using the Local Visits Policy.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, or categorised as an adventurous activity, the Principal will seek the approval of the governing body and the Local Education Authority before permitting the activity to take place. Any residential trip must be submitted on the EVOLVE system at least **SIX WEEKS** in advance of the trip taking place and any necessary EV1 and EV2 forms must be submitted.

## **Risk assessment**

A comprehensive risk assessment (Appendix A) is carried out by the visit leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. For visits in the Local Area a SOP form can be completed and amended as appropriate for the group – see Appendix B)

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?
- What is your plan B?

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue or telephone the venue to gain as much information as possible about potential risks and to obtain any site-specific risk assessments, to carry out an on-site risk assessment.

It is important to consider 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 about the age and any needs of the students. 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 sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the visit leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if they lack the skills required to make informed judgments about the risks it may involve.

The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors, and their risk assessment procedures. Providers with the annually reviewed LOTCQB mark, BAPA and AHOEC gold mark have their own risk assessments which should be followed by all visit members, including academy staff.

Any adventurous activities of caving, climbing, mountaineering or water sports the provider MUST carry the AALA award otherwise the visit will be denied.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the correct ratios (informed by NG and by completion of staff and student list that details the medical, behavioural and mobility needs of the pupils). Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases. Ratios are subject to specific needs of our individual children and these needs must be identified on the "Staff and Student List" (Appendix D).

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. This may include walking, use of the school's minibuses, use of public transport, use of private coach firms or the use of staff or parent cars (where parents cars are used the guidance is that they make the arrangements and meet at the venue.)

Risk assessments for transport must include consideration of the following (A generic SOP is used and adapted for the specific group of staff and students.)

- supervision for students getting on and off modes of transport
- the provision and required use of seat belts
- proper insurance/training for the driver
- breakdown procedures
- DBS checks on any drivers that may in direct supervision of our students (Coach drivers must not be left with unsupervised access to the students)
- road safety

The visit leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to DBS checks.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be uploaded onto the EVOLVE system and will be shared with all adults supervising the trip. (All staff should be allocated a role on the SOP/Risk Assessment which can be checked by the EVC prior to the trip.)

## **Cost**

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers
- any refreshments the academy has opted to pay for

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches and minibuses fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Where private cars are used for transport, the visit leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal DBS checks.

Our minibus meets LA guidelines, and each seat has a belt. We instruct all students, whether travelling by car, minibus, or coach, to attach their seat belts, we also identify any students that need assistance to attach seatbelts or who need additional support to be safe on the transport.

## **Communication with parents**

The parents of students 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 student can be involved in any off-site activities if the activity lasts for more than half of the school day. For visits that form part of the weekly curriculum or that last for only a morning or an afternoon session, permission is not sought unless the activity incurs a cost or is considered to exacerbate an existing medical condition. However, it is good practice to inform parents that these weekly curriculum trips will be taking place by means of a letter at the start of the year/term (or via a message sent using ParentMail)

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No student may be excluded from an activity (that takes place during normal school hours) because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to contribute. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school website and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Principal 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 visit 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 and/or the visit leaders' 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 visit leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, students, and adults, travelling with the party, together with the risk assessment and details of the venue and travel times.

The safety of the group, and especially the students, is of paramount importance. During the activity the visit leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by care plans and ensuring that students are both safe, well and always looked after.

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

### **Visit Leader planning**

Visit leaders must be fully aware of the academy's Educational Visits Policy and Local Visits Policy.

They must consult the LA's documentation detailing procedures and requirements, including guidance on Emergency Planning and Crisis Line organisation, and must complete all sections of the EVOLVE on—line Educational Visits planning form which must include the following...

## **EVOLVE**

The EVOLVE planning form for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment/s
- staff and student list detailing any specific medical conditions, mobility issues and additional adult support entitlement
- travel schedule
- accommodation plan (if applicable)
- full plan of activities with times (if appropriate)
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures (included on RA on venue if applicable)
- intended arrangements for supervision (RA)
- insurance arrangements (as an Academy we are no longer covered by Staffordshire County Council's Travel Insurance)
- emergency contacts and procedures
- IBPs
- Care plans, PSPB information to be recorded on to register and not up loaded to EVOLVE due to GDPR

### **Monitoring and review**

Visit leaders are encouraged to evaluate visits, considering the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or Principal regarding the outcome of the visit.

Name: D Ahearn                      Role: Principal

Name: J. Wells                      Role: EVC

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

**Review date – July 2026 or earlier**

**If governing body makes changes.**