

# Shavington Primary School



## Educational Visits Policy

Written by: Sally Earl (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) April 2022  
To be reviewed: April 2024

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (EVC Lead)

Signed:  (Principal)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (LAB Chair)

## **Aims & objectives**

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of our school curriculum at Shavington Primary School. Off-site learning provides memorable experiences and enhance the children's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The school is committed to providing trips and residential as a positive tool to develop pupils' independent, investigative learning, and to build their understanding of the local and wider world.

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area, including local churches, parks etc
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Sporting activities including swimming sessions
- Outward bound and adventurous activities
- Residential visits

This policy been produced to offer school staff advice and support in the planning and organising of all offsite activities and to ensure the health and safety of pupils. It follows the policy guidelines as set out in the Outdoor Educational Advisory Panel (OEAP) May 2020 and the Department for Education Health and Safety on Educational Visits November 2018.

The policy should be read in conjunction with the:

Behaviour Policy  
Charging Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
GDPR policy  
Inclusion Policy  
Medication Policy  
Safeguarding Policy  
Critical Incidents Procedure

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## **Responsibilities**

All off-site visits must follow the steps outlined in this policy so as to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. The Principal must authorise all trips and may, in the case of residential, more adventurous activities or trips abroad, consult with the Local Advisory Board, Entrust Educational Visits Advisor and the Learning for Life Partnership to seek their approval and guidance.

The school has appointed an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) whose role is to co-ordinate the planning and management of these activities. All off-site activities must be approved first by the EVC usually at least four weeks prior to the proposed date of the trip unless the trip has been planned in response to an educational opportunity that has arisen, for example a last minute invitation to a significant event or rearranged sporting fixture. Where possible, dates for

educational visits will be set well in advance to enable office staff to book tickets and transport as applicable.

After the EVC has read and initially approved a trip, the Principal will then read and finally approve local and non-adventurous trips once they are confident that appropriate planning and risk assessment has been put in place. Adventurous trips, visits involving water sports, residential visits or trips abroad require authorisation from an external educational visit's advisor after approval from the EVC and Principal.

The EVC will keep a record of all trips using an online system called Evolve, provide training and support to staff involved in the running of trips.

For each off-site visit a trip leader will be appointed who will work with the EVC to ensure the visit is planned carefully, all possible risks are identified and reduced and to ensure that the trip will be safe and successful. The trip leader will be responsible for ensuring the visit is booked, transport arranged, the risk assessment completed, online Evolve form completed, the needs of individual met and that they know what to do in an emergency situation. The trip leader will usually be the class teacher, but, in the case of a residential with more than 1 class attending, staff will agree who that person is.

All staff who accompany a school trip are responsible for their own safety and that of the pupils in their care. Staff must read the risk assessment before visit and be confident that they understand all steps they must take reduce risk. Staff must be confident that they know what is expected of them and what to do in an emergency.

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## **Process and Procedure**

In order to ensure the all off site visits are planned correctly and that time and thought have been invested in how best to ensure the safety of all and that the trip is a success, the following planning process must be followed:

- Staff to research where, when and how they want to trip to take place.
- Identify clear objectives and how any visit supports our curriculum: what will the benefits be for the children?
- Seek verbal permission from the Principal
- Agree a date with the venue/provider –check these dates are suitable on our Basecamp Schedule
- Fill in Trip Booking Form and Order Forms for trip/ workshops and coach if needed
- Once transport has been booked, calculate cost per child and send out parental permission forms
- Notify EVC and agree who will be the trip leader
- Complete Evolve documents online and complete risk assessment. At least 4 weeks in advance for local trips, 6 weeks in advance for residential or adventurous trips and at least 8 weeks in advance for trips abroad.
- Work with EVC on further refining risk assessment and identifying what measure can be put in place to reduce risks

- Communicate date of trip with school kitchen, Premier Sports and others who may be impacted by pupils being out of school
- Before the day of the trip ensure all permission, forms have been completed, all medical information and medicine permissions are collected. Trip leader to ensure that they have up to date contact information for pupils and any accompanying staff and all the equipment they need to take with them: first aid kits, high vis jackets, curriculum resources etc.
- Best practice is to confirm bookings for transport and venues by phone or email in the week preceding the trip.
- On the day of the trip the trip leader is responsible for signing pupils and staff out and then back into the school site.
- After the trip, reflect and evaluate on what went well and what could be improved in future. Share any thoughts of feedback with EVC and, if appropriate, make a note on the visit form on Evolve to inform future planning.
- As part of Entrust educational visit's monitoring process, an independent advisor may make an announced visit to an offsite trip to assess and ensure that all procedures in the risk assessment are adhered to. Entrust will inform the school on the day if one of their advisors are planning to join the visit. Trip leaders know the name of our advisor and the advisor will have identification on them. Trip leaders will also contact school to clarify that we have been informed of any unannounced monitoring. Entrust will then feedback to the Principle and EVC.

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## Staffing and Ratios

Although the ratio of adults to pupils is not prescribed in law, the Health and Safety Executive advises: *those planning trips, on the basis of risk assessment, should decide the ratios, taking into account the activity to be undertaken and the age and maturity of the pupils.*

At Shavington Primary School we use the following ratios as guidance:

Nursery	- 1:4
Reception	-1:6
KS1	-1:8
KS2	-1:10 (1:8 if possible)

Ratios for pupils in our Resourced Provision should be a maximum of 1:3 but this is to be decided on an individual basis by RP staff who know those children. Some pupils may need 1:1 support.

Any children, who require 1:1 support from an adult to meet their individual needs are in addition and should not be included in the class ratios.

There maybe times when these ratios cannot be met, for example at an afterschool sporting event there maybe sufficient parents to help provide adequate supervision, so the ratio of school staff to pupils maybe higher than normal. These circumstances should be identified and talked about in advance with the Principal or EVC.

On residential trips, a member of the senior leadership team should accompany where possible. The senior leader may or may not be the trip leader but will be there to offer support and experience. Where possible, staffing for a residential should include male and female staff. If this is not possible, additional thought will be needed as to how to manage and supervise bathroom visits, dormitories etc.

Early Career Teacher will be accompanied by an experienced member of the teaching staff on their first visit. The EVC will offer additional support to any recently qualified teachers for as long as they feel it is needed.

Accompanying adults to include a member of staff with knowledge of basic First Aid, if possible. For off-site visits that involve children in the EYFS, at least one paediatric first aider must accompany. It is good practice to ask any accompanying first aiders to be responsible for collecting, checking and transporting first aid kits on the trip.

Additional medicines or medical equipment, e.g. asthma inhalers, epi pens, should be taken on trips as needed. Permission and administration instructions should be provided by parents and should be recorded on the medical visits form. All medicines should be named and stored safely. A named person should be responsible for looking after and administering medicines during the trip following the guidance set out in our medication policy. Any medicines administered must be recorded on the medicine record.

All planning, risk assessment proformas and medication forms are accessed and stored on Evolve.

Accompanying adults can be teachers, TAs, students, parents or volunteers and must know of any special medical information relevant to pupils under their supervision. Any parents or volunteers that are accompanying a visit should be fully briefed in advance as to the objectives of the trip, an approximate timetable for the day and what their responsibilities are. It should be made clear what our school expectations are and what steps they must take to keep our children safe e.g. not to take photographs on a mobile phone. Unless DBS checked, any volunteer or parent should not be left alone with a child and should remain in a larger group alongside school staff. All adults participating in supervision of children during a residential stay should be DBS checked. Accompanying adults should have the contact details for school and the trip leader, but to adhere to GDPR legislation, only school staff should have contact details of pupil's parents.

No adults, including school staff, should ever travel alone with children. Unless there are specific circumstances, and it has been approved in advance by the Principal, at least 2 adults should travel together with groups of children either in a private car, coach or by foot.

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## **Permission**

Parents and carers should be informed of any planned off-site visit and their permission/consent sought. Permission should be sought with enough time for parents to ask staff questions and to return the form. If a consent form is not returned reminders should be given to the parents either via email or telephone call. Even if a parent has made the voluntary contribution to pay for the trip, written permission must also be returned to school. If on the day of a trip permission has still not been received, a parent can be telephoned and asked to give verbal permission over the

phone, but then should be asked to send an email confirming that permission as soon as possible. If contact with the parent cannot be made, it may be necessary that the pupil remains in school and class teachers should make arrangements with another class for the duration of the visit.

As pupils join our school, a generic local walks and visits permission form is included in the induction pack. Once signed, it means that we have permission for pupils to go on walks and to be taken to places within our local community such as the Church, post box, the high school etc. Class teachers should seek confirmation from the office staff that all pupils in each class have this permission at the start of the academic year and when a new pupil joins the class. It is good practice to still inform parents in advance that these local visits will take place. This can be via the weekly newsletter, text message etc.

For looked after children, our safeguarding and deputy safeguarding lead can advise who will need to give permission in individual circumstances.

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## **Risk Assessment**

Trips are planned using the online Evolve service. This allows trip leaders to collate important information about the trip:

- When and where the visit will be
- Dates and times
- Travel Arrangements
- Adults and pupils taking part
- Any medical needs of pupils
- Who emergency contacts will be
- What activities will take place
- What the benefits for the pupils will be

Trip leaders will complete and upload other planning documents to Evolve including- permission letter to parents, risk assessments, itinerary, maps and information about the venue/provider etc.

Evolve can be accessed remotely and used to share information with the EVC, Principle and external educational visit advisors. We use Evolve to store information about previous trips and useful documents and contact numbers to aid the planning of future off-site visits. Evolve also provides an audit and approval tool to allow EVC and Principal to view and formally approve visits

A risk assessment must be completed and shared with the EVC, Principal and if the trip is adventurous, involves water or is abroad, an external education visits advisor. They will review the potential risks highlighted and the mitigating steps and feedback to the trip leader. They will work together to further refine the risk assessment before the trip goes ahead.

Trip leaders must ensure that venues and external providers are accredited, safe and can provide a high level of experience for pupils. Looking out for accreditation from Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) or Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (LAAA) etc is helpful.

It is good practice, where possible, to make a pre-visit to new venues/providers in advance to help inform the risk assessment. Venues that have been used before may need to another pre-visit if they undergo significant changes.

The risk assessment should set out clearly what risks may be present in an environment or an activity and must take into consideration variables such as weather conditions, travel delays etc. Reasonable steps to mitigate risks must be outlined and it must be clear what procedures will be put in place in the case of problems arising. External providers can often supply their own activity-based risk assessment which can be used in addition to the trip leaders overall risk assessment. If a provider has a valid LOTC award, there is no requirement to obtain their risk assessments as these have all been checked and verified as part of the LOTC accreditation.

Thought must be given as to how to group pupils, how to move them from place to place, how to board and disembark from a coach safely and how to manage any planned stops on the journey. How pupils will be recalled if they are working in a large space? How can the group be easily identified in a public space? Regular headcounts/ registers must be done to ensure the group stays together. This is particularly important when the group changes location and before starting the return journey.

For trips containing more than 1 class additional thought must be put into how many coaches will be needed, who will be the named leader or any additional coaches. Staff on both coaches will need contact details for each other, school and parents and to be able to contact each other easily. Additional first aiders and equipment may need to be taken.

When travelling by coach, we will only use established, reputable companies who have seat belts fitted to their vehicles. Staff will ensure that pupils use the seat belts and will help younger pupils to fit them. It is not a legal requirement for booster seats to be used in coaches, however, parents will be given the option to provide one for younger children to sit on if they would like to. Staff will not fit any form of additional safety seat, so any supplied by a parent must be simple booster seats that just raise the height of a child on the seat.

For longer journeys the trip leader must liaise with the coach company to ensure that any necessary driver breaks or additional drivers needed are accounted for in the planning of the trip. Where personal vehicles are used to transport pupils, 2 adults must be present and the trip leader must ensure that vehicles are insured for business use.

For residential trips, risk assessments will need to outline how pupils will be kept safe in the accommodation and during downtime as well as during activities. How will pupils know what to do if they need help, how will their free time be supervised etc. What will be put in place to ensure staff have time to themselves at different points in the day.

A code on conduct must be agreed and shared with pupils before the visit to ensure our usual school expectations are maintained. Pupils need to know if they are in a group and who they need to stay close to.

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## **Emergency Procedures**

Most incidents that happen on off-site visits can be dealt with by the trip leader and accompanying staff. Trip leaders are experienced staff who can use their skills and professional judgement to quickly decide how to best deal with challenging situation and keep pupils safe. However, sometimes an incident becomes an emergency when the trip leader needs support from school. Examples of emergencies may include:

- A pupil or member of staff being injured and requiring medical care
- A pupil or member of staff being separated from the group
- A coach breaking down or being involved in an accident

As part of our risk assessment process the trip leader will know who to contact in the event of an emergency for help and guidance. This will usually be the Principal but may sometimes be the Vice Principal or EVC, via the school office during school hours. For residential visits and trips going on beyond school hours, the trip leader will have phone numbers to contact the Principal (and Vice and EVC) directly.

In the event of an emergency it is the responsibility of the trip leader to inform the school as soon as possible of the situation. The leader must clearly communicate what the emergency is, what has been done and what assistance they need. Assistance school might be able to provide may include:

- Sending additional staff to support
- Arranging onward travel or alternative accommodation
- Communicating with parents
- Making safeguarding arrangements

If a child becomes unwell or injured the trip leader will contact school first and then decide if the they or someone back at school is best placed to phone parents. If a trip leader needs to phone a parent directly, they must still inform school as soon as possible.

If a situation requires more support than school leaders can provide, i.e. the response of emergency services, the situation would become a critical incident and the school's Critical Incident Procedure must be strictly adhered to. The procedure sets out the responsibilities and protocols to be followed. All staff accompanying a trip must have read and know where to access the policy in an emergency situation.

School staff have key contact numbers on their lanyards and the information can also be accessed remotely via one drive and Evolve.

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## **Charging**

When calculating the cost of school visits, trip leaders should factor in the costs of transport, entrance fees, costs for any specific workshops, experiences or resources undertaken and any entrance fees involved in pre visits.

Funding for off-site visits should be provided mainly by parental contributions. No child can be excluded from an activity because of unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a financial



contribution. There is clear guidance from the DFES May 2018 that states parents do not have to pay for educational activities that take place within the school day. We can ask parents to contribute to them and obviously the cost of transport, but they do not have to pay.

On all letters about off-site visits where we ask for parental contributions, we will include the following paragraph:

*We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £XXX to cover the cost of this visit. However, if any family feels they are unable to meet this financial commitment by the date below, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. Failure to do so will result in reminder letters being sent home. Unfortunately, unless we receive sufficient contributions to cover the costs involved we will be forced to cancel the visit.*

If a child is entitled to free school meals or pupil premium, then they are entitled to help from the school towards these costs.

- We offer up to 100% funding for school trips and residential visits for children eligible for **Free School Meals** at the time of the trip.
- Up to 50% funding for school trips and residential visits for children eligible for **Pupil Premium** at the time of the trip.

Requests for support with funding must be made in person, via telephone or via e-mail to the school business manager for every trip.

We would direct any parent who feels that they cannot contribute financially to talk to the office, principal, vice principal or our home school mentor.

As the costs of some of the residential visits are much higher, we may set up payment plans for certain trips allowing parents to pay in instalments. However, full payment must be received before the date of the trip.

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## **Staff Development**

The EVC will be a member of staff with experience of planning and leading a range of educational visits and who has undergone EVC training delivered by an educational visits' advisor registered with the OEAP. EVC training should be revalidated once every 3 years.

The EVC is responsible for keeping up to date and disseminating new guidelines and requirements around off-site visits to the rest of the staff.

Newly and recently qualified staff, along with any staff new to our school, will plan, risk assess and upload visit documentation to Evolve with the support of the EVC. The EVC will support all staff with the off-site visit planning process.

Top up training to be provided annually to all staff on requirements and best practices in relation to educational visits will be provided by the EVC.

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## **Inclusion**

Our inclusion policy states that we: *ensure that [we] meet the needs of all, taking into account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this school we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion for all... To make the school a place where everyone, has equal opportunity promoting good relations between different groups within the school and within the wider community.*

All pupils have an entitlement to fully experience and take part in all learning activities provided as part of our curriculum. We may need to think carefully as to how best to provide and adapt off-site visits to ensure all pupils can benefit. The SENCo can provide support in how to meet the needs of individual pupils on school trips.

Trip leaders may have to consider any additional equipment or steps that might needed for a pupil to physically access all activities. What strategies might be needed to help pupils cope with new situations or distress caused by sensory overload etc.

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## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the EVC leader in April 2024