



St. Nicholas C of E Primary School

Educational Visits & Adventurous Activities Policy

Our vision

We prepare every pupil for their best future by ensuring they reach their full potential and attain the knowledge, skills and understanding required for success as we believe that 'With God, all things are possible'. Matthew 19:26



Date reviewed:	February 2023
Reviewed by:	R. Younger
Approved by Headteacher:	February 2023
Date of next review:	Spring 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

Safely managed educational visits and onsite adventurous activities with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. These activities can also help increase the personal resilience and self-esteem of those involved, as well as having a positive impact on team-working skills.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Blackpool Council's Policy and Guidance for the Management of Offsite Visits & Adventurous Activities, which St Nicholas C of E Primary School has adopted. This policy can be found on the 'Staff Shared' area of the school server under "Educational Visits" and in the resources section of EVOLVE.

Further guidance can be found on the website of the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel National Guidance at <http://oeapng.info/>

All educational visits and onsite adventurous activities at this school are prepared and submitted for approval through EVOLVE which can be found at www.blackpoolvisits.org

At this school, all educational visits require discrete parental consent. Onsite adventurous activities do not require consent as these are part of the school's curriculum, however parents are informed as to what type of activities their child will be taking part in.

It is the school's policy that staff who are not first aid trained should not administer first aid treatment of any kind, except in the case of absolute emergency. Therefore, on every educational visit and at every onsite adventurous activity the visit team should include at least one member of staff who is first aid trained.

Before any trip is planned it is essential for the Visit Leader to speak to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All activities which take place off the school site where adults, acting in the course of their employment at St Nicholas C of E Primary School or as volunteers at the school, have responsibility for children who are not their own, i.e. are acting 'in loco parentis';
- All adventurous activities that take place on the school site where adults, acting in the course of their employment at St Nicholas C of E Primary School or as volunteers at the school, have responsibility for children who are not their own, i.e. are acting 'in loco parentis'.

1.3 Definitions

Activity Any specific element within a visit. This might be a particular activity (such as pond dipping) but could equally refer to a specific element of the visit (such as travel or residence). Visits should be regarded as comprising a number of consecutive and/or concurrent activities.

Adventurous Activities These are defined as one where a National Governing Body (NGB) qualification is required in order to lead it. This includes caving, climbing, horse riding and water sports, to mention but a few. For a full list see the resources section of EVOLVE or speak to the EVC.

Base contact The person or people who can be contacted by the Visit Leader at any time (day or night) during a visit and who has the competence to provide support and, if necessary, take charge of the situation.

Deputy Leader The person or people who supports the Visit Leader and is capable of taking over from the Visit Leader whenever this may be necessary.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The member of school staff appointed to co-ordinate all visits and with the status to effect change and be the focus of good practice.

Employer The organisation that is responsible under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 for the health and safety of any of the participants and/or visit leadership team. As this is a voluntary aided school, the employer is the Governing Board.

Recommendations demonstrate good practice. **Requirements** are instructions and must be followed.

Risk assessment A systematic analysis of the risks associated with all aspects of the visit and what controls (measures) will be used to eliminate or mitigate the risks. Following the risk assessment, a decision can then be made as to whether the residual level of risk is acceptable. If it is not acceptable, then the visit must not go ahead.

Visit The entire period between departing from and returning to the school, including time devoted to travel. The visit will usually comprise a number of Activities.

Visit Leader The designated person responsible for the visit / onsite adventurous activity and who will have over-all responsibility for the safety and conduct of participants.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

2.1 Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy complies with the school's Health & Safety Policy and all relevant Health & Safety legislation;
- Scrutinising the details of any residential, overseas or adventurous educational visits / onsite activities that the school is planning to undertake before granting approval.

2.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all visits / adventurous activities are carried out in line with this policy;
- Ensuring that the school's EVC has adequate training to carry out the role;
- Ensuring that all visits / adventurous activities are inclusive and do not discriminate on the basis of any of the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010;
- Counter-checking and approving all educational visits via EVOLVE, after they have been approved by the EVC;
- Bringing to the attention of the Governing Board any residential, overseas or adventurous educational visits / onsite activities that the school is planning to undertake.

2.3 EVC

The EVC is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy is reviewed at least every three years; more often if there are significant changes to relevant legislation or national/local guidance;
- Checking and approving all educational visits / adventurous activities via EVOLVE;
- Bringing to the attention of Visit Leaders any proposed arrangements for an educational visit / adventurous activity that do not meet the school's requirements and supporting Visit Leaders to alter arrangements in order to make the visit viable;
- Keeping records of all visits including reports of accidents/near misses that occur;
- Providing in-school training/briefings for all staff organising educational visits / adventurous activities;
- Facilitating the sharing of good practice with regard to educational visits / adventurous activities;
- Organising external training for Visit Leaders as and when appropriate;
- Monitoring practice and reviewing systems.

2.4 Visit Leaders

Visit Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are clear and well-considered aims to the visit / adventurous activity which contribute to the wider curriculum of the learners.
- Ensuring that all visits / adventurous activities receive initial approval from the EVC before any detailed arrangements are made;
- Ensuring that all the necessary approvals have been granted before beginning the visit / adventurous activity;
- Submitting all EVOLVE forms to the EVC in a timely fashion, as per this policy;
- Ensuring that parental consents are obtained before the visit takes place and that any children from the relevant class/year group not taking part in the visit have suitable alternative arrangements. Under no circumstances should a child be taken off-site without parental consent;
- Organising emergency arrangements including a base contact who can be contacted at all times during the visit (NB for residential, adventurous or overseas visits there must be at least two 24 hour base contacts);
- Ensuring that the base contact has the list of participants taking part in the visit before it begins, contact details for the Visit Leader and contact details of the venue to be visited;
- Checking with the school's Business Manager that all accompanying adults have the necessary DBS or pre-2002 police checks;
- Explaining all visit arrangements, including risk assessments, to all adults taking part in the visit and ensuring that they have the base contact's details (to be used by other adults only in the event of the Visit Leader being incapacitated);
- Explaining to participants, before the visit begins, the standard of behaviour expected of them and why rules must be followed. Depending on the type of visit and the age of the participants, the visit leader will also explain to them what they should do in the event that they become separated from the visit group.
- Recording any accidents/near misses that occur on visits which they are leading and sharing these with the EVC;
- Ensuring that adequate first aid arrangements are in place for all visits which they lead;
- Making adequate arrangements for all special educational or medical needs of visit participants;
- Stopping the visit or an activity if the risk to the health & safety of participants or members of the public is unacceptable and having a back-up plan in place for such an eventuality;
- Following all aspects of this policy when organising educational visits / adventurous activities.

3. Risk Assessment

When planning a visit, the Visit Leader must undertake a robust risk assessment of the entire visit, from the moment that the group will set foot out of the school door to the moment that the group returns, and including everything planned to happen in

between. The risk assessment should also include any possible incident that is reasonably foreseeable. The thought process for the risk assessment is:

- What might go wrong?
- What are you going to do to try and stop it from going wrong?
- And how would you deal with it if it did go wrong, despite all of this?

The school is aware that it is rarely possible to eliminate risk entirely, but there are ways of mitigating risk – ‘controls’ – that can be put in place. These controls are what bring the level of risk down to an acceptable level, so that the activity can go ahead.

Risk assessments must be completed for all visits and onsite adventurous activities and uploaded to the EVOLVE visit form. The risk assessment/s must include details of all significant risks, and how they will be mitigated or managed to an acceptable level. No activities should take place which have not been risk assessed in advance. Whilst it is the assessing of risk which is primarily important and not the piece of paper at the end of the process, it is a legal requirement for these risk assessments to be recorded (ref. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999). Visit Leaders should use the risk assessment format which is approved by the school; these are available from the school server and on the resources section of the school’s EVOLVE account. Generic risk assessments for certain activities are also available on the resources section of EVOLVE.

4. Procedures

4.1 Local Visits

Use of the local area for environmental, historical and geographical work is encouraged. This includes traffic counts, Visits to the local shops, garden centres, etc. No transport will be needed but safety issues and staffing ratios must be considered and kept to.

- a) As a guide, staffing ratios should be at least 1:10 for Key Stage 2; 1:6 for Key Stage 1 and 1:4 for Reception. However, these ratios are not definitive and will vary according to the nature and challenges that some children may present. The nature of the activity and the level of experience of accompanying adults should also be taken into consideration. This is part of the risk assessment process and should be documented therein.
- b) All visits off site require that parents give written consent.
- c) The Visit Leader must take a mobile phone and first aid kit in case of emergencies.
- d) The Visit Leader must complete a risk assessment and EVOLVE entry at least a week before the visit and ensure that approval has been given by the EVC and Headteacher before starting the visit.

4.2 Day or Half Day Trips

Once a member of staff has decided on a visit location which needs transport, and gained initial approval in principle from the EVC, the following schedule should be followed:

- a) Depending on the mode of transport to be used, either:
 - i) Ask the school's Administrative Assistant to contact the approved coach companies to get quotes; or
 - ii) Ask the school's Administrator to calculate the fuel cost of using the school minibus.
- b) Complete a basic costing of the visit – including transport, entrance fees, etc. – to establish the financial feasibility.
- c) The Visit Leader is recommended to undertake a preliminary visit to the location wherever possible, in order to carry out an on-site assessment. If this is not possible, an in-depth conversation should take place between the Visit Leader and a member of staff at the venue so that the Visit Leader is in a position to knowledgeably undertake the risk assessment. If the visit is to a location that is not staffed, a pre-visit is a requirement.
- d) At least 2 weeks before the visit date, complete the EVOLVE entry and submit it to the EVC for approval.
- e) Once approval has been given by the EVC and Headteacher, confirm coach/minibus and venue bookings. Check disabled facilities if necessary. Liaise with the school's Administrator regarding payment for the venue.
- f) Calculate any financial contributions to be requested from parents, referring to the school's Charging and Remissions Policy. The Business Manager can assist with this.
- g) Liaise with the Administrator to have information about the visit sent to parents via ParentApps. If the visit includes an external organisation who may wish to take photos of the children, consent for this should be requested at this point. Payment by either ParentPay or PayPoint barcode letter indicates consent for the pupil to go on the visit. In the case of a child taking part in the visit without the parental contribution being made, a signed parental slip must be obtained prior to the visit.
- h) 1 week before the visit, inform the kitchen of the date of the visit and arrange for the required packed lunches for those children on school dinners (if necessary) and re-confirm bookings.
- i) On the day before the visit, ensure that the pupils know of the lunch, travel, equipment and grouping arrangements. Emphasise the behaviour expected while representing our school.
- j) On the day of the visit, hold a briefing with all other adults who are coming on the visit with you, to make sure they are clear about all the arrangements, including those that are in your risk assessment.
- k) Also on the day of the visit, collect the first aid kit, sick bags, wipes, etc. for the journey. Make sure that you have all the necessary inhalers and other medication required by participants. Take a mobile phone in case of emergencies and make sure the base contact has this number. Collect signed cheques for fees payment if needed.
- l) Prior to leaving ensure that a full list of adults and participants on the visit is left with the base contact.

Please bear in mind:

- i. Child / adult ratio should be at least 1:10 for Key Stage 2; 1:6 for Key Stage 1 and 1:4 for Reception. The actual number of adults needed will depend upon the nature of the visit and the particular challenges that some children may

present. If a pupil has 1:1 support as part of their educational provision, this adult must not be counted into the over-all child / adult ratio: this should be outlined in your risk assessment.

- ii. When costing the visit, remember to include any fees for additional adults.
- iii. Where a parent has particular difficulty in meeting the cost, the school may contribute. However, if a significant number of parents do not make a contribution, the visit may need to be cancelled (see Charging & Remissions Policy).
- iv. We normally expect full school uniform to be worn when out on a visit. This looks smart and aids easy identification.
- v. It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to check for possible safety hazards and to ensure that all pupils are well supervised at all times.
- vi. Pocket money – instructions regarding this should be on the initial letter to parents.
- vii. Please ask a senior member of staff about anything which concerns you.
- viii. Try to ensure that you have a senior member of staff with you if you have less than 5 years teaching experience.
- ix. ALWAYS ensure that you have a Plan B. Most accidents occur when no Plan B has been devised (e.g. what happens when it rains?).

4.3 Residential, Adventurous and Overseas Visits

All residential, adventurous and overseas visits undertaken by the school follow Blackpool Council guidelines.

Planning for such visits will be undertaken at least 9 to 12 months in advance. Permission for these has to be obtained from the school's Governors and from Blackpool Council.

Due to the need for additional permissions, the EVOLVE form for these types of visits should be submitted at least 6 weeks before the visit is due to take place.

The Visit Leader has responsibility for the planning, organisation, costing and informing of parents. This includes:

- Safety issues
- Itineraries
- Supervision and safety of pupils and especially 'down time'
- Insurance arrangements
- Medical and emergency arrangements
- Consent forms and parent emergency contacts
- Dietary arrangements
- Pocket money
- Special clothing and/or equipment
- Use of 'spare time'
- In the case of overseas visits, passport arrangements.

The Headteacher has over-all responsibility for checking that all of the above arrangements are satisfactory.

It is the school policy that when pupils are on residential visits, no direct contact is made between the pupils and home. This is to avoid homesickness and under no circumstances should mobile phones be taken by children.

The Visit Leader must have details with them of two base contacts as well as the contact number of the school itself. Both base contacts should be available 24/7.

Both base contacts must hold the trip manifest which must include all medical information as well as signed consent forms for emergency medical treatment.

As the staff accompanying children on a visit have direct responsibility for the welfare and safeguarding of the children in their care, no alcohol must be consumed and staff must be always ready to act speedily and coherently in an emergency situation, should it arise.

4.4 Onsite Adventurous Activities

The school has a dedicated Forest School area onsite and all of our pupils take part in Forest School at some point during each school year, as part of our curriculum. In addition, we sometimes run Forest School holiday clubs which are an 'optional extra' (ref. DfE guidance 'Charging for school activities').

At Forest School, pupils and staff take part in bushcraft activities such as whittling, den building and campfire lighting. Bushcraft is on the list of activities classified as adventurous by Blackpool Council. Our Forest School Leader has undertaken specialised training that qualifies her to lead these activities safely and she has been approved by Blackpool Council to lead these activities for us.

A new EVOLVE form is submitted for each academic year's Forest School plans. A separate EVOLVE form must be submitted for each holiday club event. Due to the need for additional permissions, the EVOLVE form for onsite adventurous activities should be submitted at least 6 weeks before they are due to take place.

5. Emergency Procedures

5.1 Definition of an Emergency

An emergency can be defined as:

- i) An incident where a group member:
 - has suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality;
 - is at serious risk; or
 - has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.
- ii) Any incident that is beyond the normal coping mechanisms of the Visit Leadership Team.

5.2 Base Contacts and Communications

- All off-site visits and on-site adventurous activities must have at least one base contact. Residential visits must have at least two base contacts.

- At this school, base contacts are always senior managers.
- All staff on the visit / on-site adventurous activity should carry a mobile phone, details of who the base contacts are and how to contact them.
- Staff should ensure that their mobile phone has enough credit, is charged and if necessary is water/weatherproof.
- Staff should check before the visit that there is mobile coverage from their provider in the area of the visit. Alternative means of raising the alarm should be carried where necessary.
- If the visit is overseas, staff should ensure that their mobile phone is enabled for roaming and to make overseas calls.
- Parents/carers should not be given the telephone numbers that activate the school's emergency plan. This is so that communications can be maintained between the Visit Leadership Team and the employer in the event that primary channels become overwhelmed.
- Direct contact with a parent/carer of a visit participant from the scene of an emergency should be avoided. This task should be carried out from the school by senior staff.
- The Visit Leader (or Deputy Leader if the Visit Leader is incapacitated) should contact the base contact as soon as possible. You may be in shock and need support. Also, news travels quickly and the school will need accurate information.
- No staff on visits should speak to the media. Refer all media interest / enquiries to the Headteacher via the school.
- The Visit Leader should control any communications by the rest of the group. Rumours spread very quickly and can cause serious and unnecessary upset.

5.3 Emergency Action Cards

Emergency Action Cards for both Visit Leaders and Base Contacts are provided at the end of this policy.

A copy of the Visit Leader Emergency Action Card should be carried by all staff accompanying a visit and can also be placed in first aid kits. Base Contacts should ensure they keep a copy with them whilst the visit is in progress and a copy should be placed visibly in the school office at all times.

Visit Leader Emergency Action Card

Emergency Procedure

In the event of an incident overwhelming your team's coping mechanisms, use the following to guide your actions:

1. REMAIN CALM - Assess the situation.
2. Safeguard yourself and then any other uninjured members of the group. Make sure all other members of the party are:
 - ✓ accounted for
 - ✓ safe
 - ✓ adequately supervised
 - ✓ briefed to ensure that they understand what to do to remain safe.
3. Delegate Deputy Leaders if possible so you can keep an overview of events and to allow 'concurrent' activity.
4. Call emergency services as appropriate.
5. Ask first aiders to carry out first aid to the best of their abilities. Remember the aims of first aid are to:
 - a. Preserve life
 - b. Prevent the condition worsening
 - c. Promote recovery

Essential First Aid

1. Casualties need to be able to breathe – if they are unconscious this means being put into a safe airway position.
2. Try to find and stop any serious external bleeding.
3. Protect the casualty from the environment - keep them warm.
4. Monitor their condition, talk to them, reassure them, hold their hand and provide emotional support.

Once the immediate situation is contained:

- Inform your base contact. They will need the following information:
 - Who you are
 - What number can you be called back on?
 - What is the nature of the emergency?
 - How many casualties there are and their status
 - The total number of people in your party
 - Your current location
 - Whether you are staying where you are or moving – if you are moving where to?
 - What time did the accident/incident happen?
- Liaise with, and take advice from, emergency services if they have attended the scene.
- Consider the physical needs of the group and casualties in terms of shelter, refreshments, transport/repatriation.
- Consider the emotional needs of the group such as removing them from the scene, providing emotional support (they can often do this for each other), giving them useful things to do.
- Control communications - prevent group members from using phones or going online unsupervised or until approval is given.
- Keep a written log of all actions taken, conversations held and a timescale.
- Refer all media, parental or other enquiries to the Headteacher via the school.
- Inform the Foreign Office Consular Assistance Team if abroad.

Base Contact Emergency Action Card

On receiving a call:

In the event of receiving an emergency call from a group on a Visit, remember they will be very stressed. You need to STAY CALM to be able to take down some key information without missing anything. Carry out the actions below, as appropriate.

1. Take down the following information:

Who is calling?
What is their role in the group? (Visit Leader, Deputy Leader, Helper, Participant)
What number can they be called back on should you be disconnected?
What has happened? What is the nature of the emergency?
What is the number and status of any casualties?
Have the emergency services been called? Have they arrived yet?
What is the group's current location?
What is the total number of people in the party?
Are they staying where they are or moving? If they are moving, where to?
What help do they need?
What time did the incident happen?
What time is it now? If the group is outside the UK, what is the time difference?

2. Reassure them and tell them they will be called back once you have contacted the Headteacher and/or established the Emergency Support Team (within 30 minutes).

3. Depending on the circumstances and the support needed you may need to consider some or all of the following:
- Inform Headteacher and other senior managers.
 - Establish an Emergency Support Team, which may need to include the following roles (combine if insufficient staff are available):
 - Overall Controller
 - Co-ordinator / contact with visit group (consider keeping the same person to always speak to the Visit Leader)
 - Communications (could be a number of people dealing with different aspects)
 - Logistics – arranging transportation, accommodation, etc. for the group and any Travelling Team
 - Resources – e.g. office space, reception for any visitors (parents, media, etc.), refreshments/food
 - Record/log keeper
 - Inform governors and, if media interest is possible, Blackpool Council's comms team.
 - Keep a log of all actions, communications and decisions, including people involved and times.
 - Arrange alternate and additional phone lines if necessary, so that incoming calls do not swamp communications. Consider other means of communication such as internet, email and text.
 - Liaise with emergency services, tour operators, insurance companies, etc. as necessary.
 - Carry out the actions required to support the Visit Leadership Team.
 - Decide if a 'Travelling Team' is needed to provide support at the scene.
 - Ensure the security of the school site and ensure the access gates are staffed to control access (elements of the press may seek to gain access wherever they can).
 - Make arrangements for parents/carers, etc. to be catered for onsite or nearby, if possible, while they wait for news.
 - Arrange for the return or onwards travel of the party and/or arrange transport for parents/carers to the scene/hospital.
 - Control communications and the flow of information to the affected group, parents/carers and other staff (beware of other staff inadvertently starting rumours circulating).
 - Control information to the media – use the expertise of the local authority's comms team where appropriate.
 - Make arrangements for meeting the group back from the visit and returning children to parents/carers.
 - Consider the possible need for future emotional support and care for anyone involved (don't forget other pupils, staff, and the Emergency Support Team as well as those directly involved).