

Learning Outside the
Classroom and
Educational Visits
Policy

Written March 2025

Review May 2027

Rationale:

First-hand experience is fundamental to the productive and successful learning of children.

'Learning Outside the Classroom' (LOtC) relates to any activity which uses the outdoors to enrich the curriculum.

'We believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.'

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto

Visits encourage an improved understanding of our surroundings, enrich the curriculum, have a positive effect on children's self esteem and facilitate many skills including the ability to work with others. Educational visits are planned in advance, giving sufficient time for approval, risk assessments, for parents to give their permission for the visit and to collect necessary funding and equipment.

Aims:

March CE Primary aims to provide high-quality, progressive and frequent provision of LOtC experiences, which promote personal development and well-being.

March CE Primary aims to maximise LOtC in order to:

1. Increase knowledge, understanding and appreciation of our locality and other areas which are different in nature and environment.
2. Develop confidence, independence, sense of adventure and responsibility, particularly towards personal safety and the safety of others.
3. Develop social skills through opportunities to explore situations different from the home/school environment.
4. Provide opportunities for the community to participate in the education of our children.
5. Develop partnerships with providers (e.g. outdoor, field study and environmental centres, farms, museums, sacred spaces, historic houses, theatres).
6. Celebrate achievement e.g. by using digital cameras; display; include details about activities and achievements in newsletters and on our website/learning platform.

Opportunities for LOtC:

Subjects:

Literacy & Drama , Numeracy, Science, ICT, Art & Design, D&T, History, Geography , Music, RE, PE, PSHE

Areas: Garden Area, Field, Playgrounds, Seeley Copse, Rolls Royce Wildlife Area, Local Places of Worship

Day Visits and Residential Visits

1. Approval Process:

1. Year Group Leaders submit a completed form indicating all proposed trips for the year, including purpose and approximate costs to the EVC. See Appendix 1
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied with the purpose, proposed staffing and timing of the proposed off-site activity.
3. The Educational Visits Coordinator must be satisfied with the planning and Risk Assessment for the proposed off-site activity.
4. Approval must be obtained from the LEA for residential visits and for all off-site activities involving hazardous pursuits or in areas of high risk. This includes activities such as rock climbing or canoeing. The Outdoor Education Training & Safety Manager (LEA) will provide advice and assistance where necessary in order that approval can be given.

2. Responsibility for Off-site Visits:

The Head Teacher is responsible for all off-site visits.

Staff must demonstrate a duty of care for children during residential and day visits.

The Activity Leader (usually the trained instructor in residential visits) has full responsibility for the safe running of any activity.

The Visit Leader will have agreed in advance for the activity to take place, following the guidance laid down in this policy.

3. The Role of the Visit Leader:

- ensures parents are informed and give consent
- liaises with the EVC
- plans and prepares for the visit and assesses the risks 2-4 weeks prior to the trip
- ensures effective supervision in line with the procedures outlined in this policy
- is responsible for the supervision and conduct of the children, including responsibility for the group's health, safety and welfare whilst on the visit
- reviews the trip within 2 weeks

4. Preliminary visit:

A preliminary visit will be undertaken and the risk assessment will take into account:

- Number, age, ability and general behaviour etc of children involved
- previous experience of staff and AoTs (adults other than teachers) and children in undertaking off-site visits
- time of day and year
- travel arrangements
- hazards of the environment being visited
- numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and AoTs
- nature of the activity

- previous risk assessments for the same visit and the review

5. Risk Assessment:

The Visit Leader must undertake a Risk Assessment, complete the form and all parties – accompanying adults and children - are informed of safety measures.

1. Look for hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
4. Record the findings
5. Review the assessment and amend if necessary

All forms will be discussed and agreed with the EVC at least 2 weeks, preferably 4 before the trip (6 weeks for a Residential) and must be kept as a record. If an accident occurs the risk assessment form will be sent with the accident form to the LEA.

Activities and services provided by qualified or competent people do not have to be assessed except in the way that children might interact with them e.g. children on a cave visit who are claustrophobic or afraid of the dark / behavioural difficulties

The Visit Leader must take account of ongoing risk assessment if dangers emerge however all activities must be planned for and not happen spontaneously, (for example paddling), because the risk will not have been assessed and adequate measures will not be in place.

Pupils are also be involved in risk assessment when they are on site to raise their awareness of hazards and how to minimise risks. After a trip the Risk Assessment form must be reviewed with input from all parties involved and any comments or updates to the risk assessment form recorded on staff shared with a copy given to the EVC within 2 weeks of the visit.

Further guidance is available in the DfE guidelines 'Health and Safety of children on Educational Visits'

Ratios of adults to children:

Visits will only proceed with adequate and appropriate levels of adult supervision.

There must be at least 2 adults with the party: at least one must be a teacher who shall be the designated Visit Leader. A ratio of 1:15 is suggested as a useful guide for outings with no transport with a minimum ratio of 1:12 for any trip.

Minimum Recommended Ratios – (must include a female adult). These ratios are a guideline and may need to be altered to take account of the type of activity, surroundings and children's needs.

Age range Adult: child ratio Age 4 1:2 Age 5 - Y3 1:6 Years 4-6 1: 12-15

*It is recommended that the Visit Leader is not directly responsible for a group of named children; rather they are responsible for the whole party including staff and AoTs.

Voluntary Help and Members of the Party:

Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure checks are carried out on AoTs who have regular contact with children and those on residential trips. Parents must sign the Agreement for Trip Volunteers form, including pertinent medical information eg asthma. Appendix 2 (this may be placed in a sealed envelope and destroyed after the trip) The Visit Leader will ensure that all members of the party are given adequate details about the trip in advance, including their responsibilities. This includes the Risk Assessment form and associated actions to be taken. Parents will not be made responsible for their own child except where the parent is there to assist with a special need.

Pupils with SEN and Special Medical Needs

The Inclusion Manager will lead consultation between the parents, child and County medical officers/doctors as appropriate, if a child requiring specific medical needs is to participate in an off-site activity.

Discipline:

All off-site visits will reflect the Behaviour Management Policy

Records and Communications:

Parents complete a generic consent form when their child joins the school for local visits, where the children will walk to the activity.

Visit Leaders complete visits forms (held in the office) detailing costs, dates and travel arrangements (liaising with the bursar and EVC)

A Risk Assessment form is completed preferably 4 weeks but a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the visit and is given to the EVC and saved onto staff share.

Within 2 weeks of the visit, the Visit Leader will review the Risk Assessment form on staff share and give a copy to the EVC. This will be used to inform future plans.

The Visit Leader will inform parents of the purpose and details of the visit, eg when their children are leaving the school premises, its duration, arrangements for eating and travel and 'going-home' procedures if children return after the end of the school day. Parents will be reminded of school policy regarding food and drink and the need to be aware of allergies.

No child will leave the school premises unless a parent/guardian has signed a consent form although telephone consent is acceptable.

In certain circumstances, parents may wish to exercise their right to refuse to allow their child to take part in a visit, however this does not offer the opportunity for a day off and alternative arrangements for work during the visit is provided.

If an incident occurs during a visit, details will be recorded following the usual school procedures and the LEA and HSE will be informed to comply with LEA and RIDDOR rules (All appropriate forms are kept in the office)

Mobile Phones/Communication:

Governors are informed of visits through Head Teacher Reports and parents through learning platform, newsletters, schools app and letters. The Visit Leader will have copies of telephone number for the class. The Visit Leader will ensure that key staff share phone numbers to ensure contact is possible if groups are, or become, split up – completing the contact details form. Children

are not allowed mobile phones on any trips. If there is an incident, all adults must be made aware that access to telephones and mobiles is controlled until contact is made with the Head Teacher and all those who are directly involved.

First Aid and Medicines:

The Visit Leader must ensure that adequate first aid arrangements are made. If the party is to be split into smaller groups, more than one first aid kit may be required. Guidance on the contents of the first aid kit can be found in the DfES guidelines 'Health and Safety of pupils on Educational Visits'.

The Visit Leader ensures medical information and emergency details for accompanying adults is collated (cc EVC). The Group Leader is responsible for ensuring first aid provision is provided at any destination. If the trip is not to a site offering first aid provision e.g. the local park, a party member holding a current first aid certificate must be present.

For day visits, the Visit Leader will ensure that all necessary medicines are collected from the office e.g. inhalers, epipens etc and Risk Assessments are completed for these named children. For children with medical conditions where intervention may be required, the child must be in a group led by an adult trained to administer epipens, inhalers etc.

For residential visits, a list of medical and dietary requirements will be prepared before the trip and medicines provided by parents are clearly labelled with name, class and dosage. For certain conditions e.g. asthma and allergies the medicines e.g. inhaler/epipen will be returned to the child as required.

Transport:

Parents are informed of transport arrangements for an off-site activity. Coaches are hired from reputable companies and seat belts worn. Staff cars will only be used to transport children if they have professional insurance which is fully comprehensive or County Insurance and if the seating arrangements are in line with government legislation (children under 1.35m tall require a booster seat). Parents who transport children must return them to school and not to their home address so there is never only one child in their car.

Insurance:

☑ The school insurance policy is with DCAT Insurance Company Limited. The insurance covers any employee, pupil or volunteer travelling on behalf of the school. Full details can be obtained from the office.

Voluntary Contributions: see Charging and Remissions Policy.

When initially estimating the overall cost of a visit, all expenses are included (eg. pocket money) to give a realistic global figure to parents and a refund in the case of an over-estimate is then returned.

A voluntary contribution towards the cost of the trip is requested. Every child must have access to visits, regardless of ability to pay, however the school reserves the right to cancel the trip if there are insufficient contributions.

Payments or an initial deposit are requested at an early stage. Regular payments by instalments by agreed dates may be offered. The school operates a Cashless schools account which can be used for this purpose, into which all monies are paid. Receipts and payments are fully documented and the account details are available for scrutiny by the Head Teacher or LEA representative at all times. For residential trips, government legislation allows charging for board and accommodation but not

transport; visits must be self-financing and parental contributions will be sought for the total amount to include accommodation and travel. Parents will be given details of costs in advance with all the possible methods of payment.

Dress Code

All adults accompanying a trip are expected to conform to guidelines in the Dress Code policy. Children are expected to wear school uniform for all non-residential trips. The Visit Leader may consider alternative footwear, tracksuits, coats etc. to enable safe participation in the activities.

Residential Trips

Prior to the visit:

The Visit Leader will make a preliminary visit (with EVC where possible) to evaluate accommodation, activities, supervision and risks, preferably when another group is in residence so activities can be seen and other party leaders consulted. Check written procedures for each activity and ask for written evidence of the qualifications and experience of the staff leading activities. If the centre is approved by County this check will already have been completed. Confirm with the centre staff the level of supervision and who is responsible for first aid. Enquire about nearby hazardous areas e.g. dangerous animals, water, heights, etc. Check washing and catering facilities, work bases, recreational/relaxation and sleeping areas to ensure they are adequate for the needs of the group and to consider safety issues e.g. securing of doors during the day and night. Ensure sick pupils can be catered for appropriately. Ensure the roles, duties and expectations of accompanying adults are clearly defined and understood, through formal meetings and confirmed in writing in a 'Visit Pack'. All of the considerations for a day visit also apply.

Communication with Parents:

Parents will be informed of visit details through an initial letter, followed by a parents' meeting which includes:

- a. Reason and purpose of the visit;
- b. Details of all activities;
- c. Supervision arrangements;
- d. Behaviour Expectations (Code of Conduct);
- e. Method of travel, including names of coach companies
- f. Insurance arrangements;
- g. Cost and methods of payment;
- h. Pocket money and any arrangements for giving it out;
- i. Address and telephone number of venue;
- j. Type of accommodation, eg. bunks, shared facilities, etc;
- k. Clothing requirements via a kit list (clothing and possessions should be named);

I. Emergency contact telephone number and how they will receive information e.g. changes to arrival times

This information is confirmed in writing and parents/guardians complete and sign:

- a. A consent form;
- b. A medical and special diets form
- c. A contact form

Supervisory Ratio – Accompanying Adults

☑The Visit Leader should be an identified, experienced teacher and should be satisfied that there is sufficient experience and expertise in the staff team. A named Deputy Leader will be involved with the planning and organisation of the visit and will take responsibility for the group in case of emergency. Minimum Recommended Ratios – (must include a female adult). These ratios are a guideline and may need to be altered to take account of the type of activity, surroundings and children's needs.

Age range Adult: child ratio Age 5 - Y3 1:6 Years 4-6 1: 12-15

Where the residential centre requires a lower ratio, or when specific circumstances require more adults, then the school will pay for the extra accompanying adults. At least two members of staff should accompany any residential visit. A mixed group must be accompanied by male and female adults. The Visit Leader and staff remain responsible for their group at all times, although the centre staff will take some responsibilities particularly during activities. The Visit Leader will ensure sufficient staff are available for supervision at all times. All adults' roles, duties and responsibilities will be identified, understood and accepted. The Visit Leader will hold regular meetings and check on group supervisors throughout the visit to aid communication and ensure prompt solutions to any problems

On Arrival at the Residential Centre:

The Visit Leader will meet the centre staff

The Visit Leader will ensure that any requests or stipulations agreed in writing prior to the journey still apply.

Boundaries/limitations will be explained to the children with both the on site staff and group leaders.

Duty rotas and procedures will be explained.

This policy will reviewed every three years The date of the next annual review will be May 2019

APPENDIX

Initial Meeting with Parents (and children)

Possible Outline Agenda

1. Justification of Educational Experience Explain why you are organising the visit. Study of area to be visited and way of life Travel Corporate living Self reliance
2. Centre Show location of centre /Type of town/village Description
3. Accommodation Description Bedrooms Recreation facilities Dining facilities
4. Activities
5. Staff Staff and AoTs Centre instructions Medical arrangements at centre Arrangements for communicating with parents in case of emergency
6. Itinerary Date of departure and return Outline mode of travel including name of Coach Company Journey route Outline proposed programme including any potentially hazardous activity
7. Kit List Special clothing required Luggage type and labelling
8. Behaviour Policy, sanctions etc
9. Cost Package cost and essential extras and non-essential extras How payments should be made including statement of a school's policy on charging and remission where applicable Dates for ☐ Payment of deposits(non-returnable) Payment of balance Date of final payment ☐ Payment of pocket money
10. Insurance Details of insurance cover
11. Arrangements Arrangements for departure and collection on return from the journey
12. Commitment Names accepted on payment of first deposit

NOTE: films of previous visits will be of interest and can be a suitable beginning to the meeting.

Emergency Procedures

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergencies which will require an on the spot response by the leaders. These cannot be comprehensively defined but range from temporarily lost children, minor injuries and food poisoning to more serious injury or fatality.

Activity centres have their own emergency procedures. Visit leaders will request a copy of these in advance of the visit and compare them with this framework. If the centre procedures are significantly different or are deficient by comparison, organisers shall agree with the centre management exactly what procedures will be followed BEFORE the visit. Centre staff and school staff supervising the party should be made fully aware of what is agreed. If there is any doubt about the safety arrangements, the trip will not take place.

For all journeys the school must identify a Duty Officer. For residential journeys there should also be a home-based contact.

Duty Officer The Duty Officer (DO) is the person who will support the Visit Leader and group in the event of a serious incident, accident or emergency, or on any occasion where there might be media interest. The DO must be an experienced, senior member of staff who has sufficient authority to be

able to offer support and guidance in difficult circumstances. The DO must have full and complete details of the journey, including contact details for participants and staff. The DO must be available for the Visits Leader until the group has returned safely. In the event of a serious incident, the Duty Officer should immediately seek advice and support from the LEA. A serious accident or incident is defined as:

- an accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury;
- circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk or subject to serious illness;
- any situation in which the press or media might be involved.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Precautions:

The Visit Leader will Check all premises with fire certificates have fire routine notices

Ensure all group supervisors understand fire routines and knows where the nearest call point is located in relation to his/her room– do not take it for granted that they will read them without prompting.

Investigate ALL means of escape to ensure that they are adequate, unobstructed and can be readily opened from the inside.

All exit routes from dormitories are clearly indicated and all parties are familiar with emergency procedures and escape routes for night time evacuation

The arrangements for calling the fire brigade are adequate and understood and that someone has the duty to make such a call on hearing the alarm where there is no member of the permanent staff already holding this duty. This person knows the location of the nearest telephones and the full address of the building to enable prompt response by the fire brigade.

Supervisory staff should have rooms next to or very close to the children.

Fire Drill A fire drill must be conducted as soon as possible after arrival using the alarm systems available. This drill must be taken seriously and the Visit Leader must be confident that every member of the group would:

Recognise the alarm;

Know the most suitable escape route;

Be aware of emergency fire procedures relating to those particular premises;

Proceed to the assembly point in an orderly manner.

In the event of fire:

Give priority to the evacuation of persons in your group

If it is safe to do so, check that those in your group have heard the alarm and are evacuating the premises

Do not use lifts

Do not collect baggage, valuables, etc.

Carry out a roll call. Sub-groups are particularly useful for carrying this out accurately and speedily.

If any members of the group are missing, report them to the Fire Officer.

On no account should you or any member of your group re-enter the premises to locate or attempt to rescue missing persons after carrying out the procedure above.

Duty Officer/ Head Teacher Guidance following a Serious Accident or Incident

1. Be prepared: You must have immediate access to these procedures, and the information and means to use them, at all times, including comprehensive details about the group and the journey. contact and medical details for all involved (including staff and volunteers) full details of the itinerary, addresses, travel/coach company, etc. Make sure you are familiar with all the County Guidelines for off-site activities

2. Answering the Emergency Call: You will need to gain and record the following:

(a) Name of Party Leader/Caller (b) Telephone number the caller is speaking from (c) What happened (d) To whom it may concern (e) Where (f) When (g) What has happened since

If a fatality is involved or suspected:

(a) Has this been confirmed? (b) By whom? (c) Which emergency services are involved? (d) Have any next of kin been informed? [NB: In the event of a fatality it will normally be the Police who contact the next of kin.]

3. Advice:

Advise the party leader to follow instructions from local police/emergency services but unless they specifically request otherwise, your advice to the party leader should be to;

(a) Keep the party together; (b) Co-ordinate any contact with parents or any outside bodies; (c) Refer media attention to the police or County Public Relations Unit – do not answer questions; (d) Remain available: if it is necessary for the party to change location they must advise you of the new telephone number.

4. Next Steps for Duty Officer/Head Teacher: Contact the Senior Education Officer and explain this is an “Education Visits Emergency”, giving all details, including your telephone number.

Use the information telephone numbers below

Emergency Contact Numbers

Give your name and telephone number,

where you are calling from and details of what has happened and where, & details of those involved.

Emergency services (including Mountain rescue)

UK: 999

Europe: 112

For support from WSCC:

In hours (8am-6pm Mon-Fri)

+44 (0) 1243 642104

Out of hours:

+44 (0) 1444 411738

Consult with the Senior Education Officer how best parents might be informed if the local emergency services have not already undertaken to do this. It may be better for the Senior Officer or another colleague to do this as you must remain available for the Visits Leader to contact.

Maintain a written record of events including the times of telephone calls etc.

Visit Leader's Pack

1. Consent form
2. 2. Initial Proposal
3. 3. Visit Checklist
4. 4. Agreement Form for Trip Helpers
5. West Sussex EVO Forms
6. Visit Leader Guidance - Immediate Action following a Serious Accident or Incident
7. Emergency Contact form
8. Telephone Pyramids for Year Group if necessary
9. Risk Assessment Form
10. West Sussex emergency Cards
11. VISIT CHECK LIST
12. Advanced Planning Check dates, staffing and nature of trip with head Teacher ☑ Submit completed Initial Proposal form to EVC. Inform the office staff/ bursar as soon as details are known about the visit. In conjunction with the bursar, monitor the viability of funds to support the visit. Complete school visit Proforma and return to the office. Communicate information of intended trips for the academic year to parents/carers. Ensure you have taken all reasonable and practical measures to include all children. Preliminary visit to assess risks where possible and ensure issues identified are satisfactorily resolved within the risk assessment.
13. At least 4 weeks before _(insert date)_____ Complete a risk assessment form on staff share and cc to EVC for submission. Ensure risk assessments from venue have been received, read and queries made. Check minimum 1 teacher and adult: pupil ratio is appropriate. (Check with the Head Teacher if you want to take a lunch time supervisor.) Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and AoTs. Ensure at least 1

party member is first aid trained or provision is provided by the site. Inform parents by letter of all arrangements including arrangements for collection of children after the visit (office staff have exemplar letters). Ensure coaches have been booked and seating arrangements are appropriate. Inform office staff of the number of children requiring a packed lunch as soon as completed forms are returned to school

14. By the day of the trip. Check parents have signed consent forms (no child may make the visit unless a consent form has been obtained). Leave a list in the Office of adults and children who are out of school. Take a first aid kit, a bucket if travelling by coach and individual children's medicines e.g. inhalers. Children possibly requiring medical intervention are supervised by trained adults. Take a mobile phone and the school number. Ensure other staff have mobile phones and share numbers. Ensure all adults have read and fully understand Risk Assessment and Emergency Procedures including NOT USING personal mobile phones. All staff on the trip are aware of West Sussex emergency guidance. Ensure all class teachers have a completed telephone pyramid for their class/party for communication including ALL telephone numbers and that parents are aware that this will be used as the main method of communication. Ensure children wear seat belts. Check pupil numbers before, during and after the trip including ensuring they have the correct named children not just the correct number. Visit Leader to count adults as well as children on coaches. ☑ Continue ongoing risk assessment. Operation Duke cards to be completed (identifying Duty Officer and contact details) and taken.
15. After the trip. Evaluate visit on the risk assessment form and inform EVC. Inform the office of any part of the first aid pack that must be replenished