An educational visit can be seen as any aspect of a pupil’s education that takes place off the main school site and should include visits to such places as parks, museums, swimming pools etc. as well as residential trips and visits abroad.

The school has adopted the guidance provided by Halton Borough Council in the document ‘Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom’.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Role of the Governors:**
- To ensure that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the guidelines contained within the 'Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom'.
- To ensure that residential visits and adventurous activities, are approved as necessary by the LA via Evolve before bookings are confirmed.
- To ensure that all aspects of risk management have been considered and that risk assessments for travel, accommodation and activities have been carried out prior to departure.
- It is not expected that Governors should become directly involved in risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.
- Ask questions about a visit’s educational objectives and how they will be met. Are the objectives appropriate to the age and abilities of the pupil group? Why is a particular venue being used? Is the visit inclusive for all students? Is the visit value for money?
- To ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information, to investigate parental complaints.
- To review annually the EV policy and procedures including incident and emergency management systems.

**Role of the Head Teacher:**
- To ensure that visits comply with the guidelines and to the guidelines contained within the 'Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom’ and the Schools own Health and Safety Policy.
- To ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent to oversee the co ordination of all off-site education, and support the EVC in attending relevant training courses.
- To ensure that the EVC keeps him or her informed of the progress of the visit and that this information is relayed to Governors (and to parents as necessary).
- To ensure that the activity leader is competent (experience and training) to undertake the activity.
To check that the EVC has designated an appropriately competent group leader who will meet the LA’s criteria. For less routine visits, the Head Teacher will need to ensure that the EVC can obtain advice from an appropriate technical adviser as necessary.

To ensure that in the event of a major incident or accident, LEA guidelines are adhered to in terms of informing, parents, staff and the media. Help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near-accidents are investigated.

Role of the Educational Visit Co-ordinator:

The EVC’s role is to support the Head Teacher in ensuring that all visits follow LEA regulations and guidance and all of the schools relevant policies and procedures and will act on behalf of the Head Teacher:

- To approve educational visits as agreed by the Head Teacher and Governing Body.
- To provide adequate documentation to support planning of all trips and visits.
- To ensure all off-site visits are thoroughly planned using standardised whole-school documentation.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the guidelines available through to the guidelines contained within the ‘Policy for the Management of Learning Outside the Classroom’ concerning their particular visit.
- To assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit. Competence of other adults proposed to provide support or lead activities within a visit will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body and/or previous experience and on the job training.
- To ensure visits have appropriate support ratios and adequate cover for health and safety, first aid, medication and behaviour management.
- To work with the visit leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.
- To organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit.
- To keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and ‘near accidents’ (sometimes known as ‘near misses’).
- To ensure that arrangements are in place for the Governing Body to be made aware of visits so that questions can be asked as necessary.
- To ensure that LA Approval has been sought via Evolve for a residential visit at least 6 weeks before the visit is due to depart.
- To arrange for the recording of accidents and the reporting of serious injuries as required. Accident and incident records should be reviewed regularly, and this information used to inform future visits.
- To review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.
Role of the Visit Leader:
The Visit Leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including pre-planning and following guidance and ensuring all participants are aware of their roles. To achieve this, the Visit Leader will:

- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of the visit.
- Complete visit documentation and obtain EVC approval for any visit off-site, no matter how short its duration.
- Plan the itinerary in such a way as to account for all times on the visit including meal and 'down' times particularly on residential trips.
- Have prior knowledge of the venue - the visit leader should normally have made an exploratory pre-visit.
- Inform parents and seek permission/consent, detailing the nature, purpose and related activities involved in the visit.
- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils and ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for. To ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them and that all adults understand that they are responsible to the visit leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them.
- To ensure that all adults involved in supervising the visit are aware of the risk assessments including 'Plan B' and the expected standards of behaviour.
- To continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions.

Role of the Pupil

- To be aware of the risk assessments including ‘Plan B’.
- To know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her and to alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties.
- To understand the need to have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated.
- To understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

When the visit is authorised:

- Letters can be sent home to parents as necessary. Parents must always be made aware when their children are undertaking a visit and will be off school premises.
- Collect reply slips (bearing in mind some pupils in care of social services may also need additional permission from them) - No pupil will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission.
- Liaise with the EVC over any changes to the approved itinerary and arrangements.
• Pre-visits. In most cases it is very important to undertake a pre visit. The need for a pre-visit should be discussed with the EVC. If a pre-visit is considered as not being necessary the reasons must be noted on the visit risk assessment.

In planning and organising a residential trip or visit involving outdoor and adventurous activities the above process remains relevant with the following additions.

• All visits involving a residential (overnight stay) and/or adventurous activities must be approved in principle by the LA via Evolve before a contract is made with a Provider.

• Wherever possible and practical a First-aider should accompany each visit offsite.

• There should always be an appropriate first aid box available for use. Your Risk Assessment will identify when a qualified First Aider is not necessary.

During the day

• The school documentation identifies many of the issues that school staff need to be aware of during the supervision of a visit off-site. These include the Behaviour policy, Equal Opportunities policy and the Medication in schools policy. This contains permission for emergency medication should the need arise and details of specific medical plans for individual children (within the ‘Administration of Medicines in School’ policy, details are given for ‘out of school activities’). Where specific medical plans exist the visit leader is responsible for ensuring all staff and accompanying adults are aware of the plan.

• One of the key features of all visits is the need for all staff to be involved in on going risk assessments. Visit Leaders need to make decisions on an on going basis regarding the safety of the visit. (see ‘Risk Assessments’). This includes the support ratios and pupil groupings dependant upon social interactions and behavioural issues presented during the day.

• All members of staff need to be aware of the plans and procedures identified for dealing with pupils with specific behaviour plans.

• Visit Leaders must take a mobile phone in order to remain in contact with the school (and visa versa) during the time off-site. In the event of an emergency the school must be contacted immediately (or as soon as is practical) in order that the Head Teacher can take charge of the management of the incident. This procedure will follow the schools Emergency/Crisis Plan.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill.
The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from.

- **Generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. These are usually prepared by the LA/employer or by the school. Examples of generic risk assessment include travel in the school minibus, coach travel and visits to coastal venues. School staff will not normally prepare them unless they have accumulated specific experience or other expertise.

- **Visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group. These are usually undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared or agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks, such as the EVC.

- Activities such as swimming, crossing roads and curricular partnerships with other schools are examples of these site specific risk assessments where the same venue is used each week and barring any changes to the nature of that venue, our prime concern on a weekly basis is the risk presented by the group of pupils undertaking the visit.

- However for visits which are ‘one offs’ a specific risk assessment for the venue itself as well as for the pupils is required. Examples of this would be visits to farms, galleries, museums, public parks, garden centres etc. For both of these the EVC will direct the visit leader to the relevant sections of LA/employer and national guidelines covering the type of visit.

**Ongoing risk assessments** are those that take account of unplanned and unexpected changes, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity. The visit leader is responsible for making decisions on an ongoing basis during the visit as to the appropriateness of continuing the visit in the light of prevailing conditions.

- **All staff and pupils should be aware of a “PLAN B” in the event of the planned agenda needing to change.** Visit leaders are always in charge.

- They should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the visit leader’s knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if they feel uncomfortable or believe that it has become too hazardous.

- Where it is considered unsafe to include a particular pupil because there is serious doubts concerning their behaviour or it is felt that they represent a significant risk to themselves or others within the group (including staff), the Head Teacher will make the final decision on whether the pupil should access the trip and suitable alternatives that will meet the educational needs of the visit will be planned.
LICENSED ACTIVITIES
- Most Providers who offer adventurous activities require an Adventurous Activity Licence. The adventurous activities that fall within the scope of the Licencing Authority are: Caving, Climbing, Trekking and Watersports.

INSURANCE
- When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail.
- The visit leader must check the need for additional travel insurance depending upon the nature of the activity to be undertaken.
- When a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance cover being used should be ascertained. All Providers must hold £5 million Public Liability Insurance.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS
*Please refer to the ‘Charges and Remissions Policy’ for this information.*

VOLUNTARY HELP
- The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Head Teacher or EVC.
- This permission will be based upon knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.
- DBS checks should be carried out by the office on all volunteer helpers - hence much advance notice is needed and those intending to use voluntary help should liaise with the EVC as early as possible in the planning phase.
- All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

TRANSPORT
- Parents should always be informed of the type of transport to be used and risk assessments carried out.
- Hired transport - The school should ensure appropriate levels of supervisory staff are available to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils.
- Public transport - Close supervision should be ensured.
- Use of private cars - Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties. Parents must always be informed if members of staff intend to use private transport. School will not reimburse parents for the use of their cars.

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