

Educational Visits Policy



Bourn Church of England Primary Academy

Approved by:

Laura Latham /
Standards Committee

Date: March 2021

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

March 2023

1. Introduction

Educational visits are a key part of the enrichment of education for pupils and are central to the philosophy of developing and challenging pupils. Bourn Primary Academy has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside of the classroom and beyond the school premises. It will seek to provide a broad and balanced range of learning outside the classroom opportunities for all its pupils ranging from walks around the locality to residential visits of several days' duration including outdoor and adventurous activities. Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site (possibly out of school hours), which support the aims and values of Bourn. The school has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the 'Guidance for Offsite Visits' (www.oeapng.info) and the Cambridgeshire County Council's Evolve Service. The range of activities include:

- Out of hours clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc.)
- School sports teams
- Regular local visits (places of worship, other local amenities)
- Day visits for particular groups/classes
- Residential visits (including Outdoor and Adventurous Activities)

Through these activities, we aim to:

- Encourage pupils to enjoy, appreciate and learn about their local community
- Excite and enthuse pupils through a range of first-hand experiences
- Develop an understanding of environments and cultures beyond the local area
- Challenge pupils in a range of outdoor education and cultural experiences
- Provide opportunities for sporting fixtures and competitions
- Ensure that all such visits are conducted in a safe manner

2. Definitions

Adventure Activities: Activities that take place in challenging environments that can present technical or environmental complexity in the organisation or delivery of the activity. Many adventure activities have well-established National Governing Bodies that train, assess and validate the competency of staff to lead in the activity.

Educational Visits: All visits with a group of pupils that leave a school site, to journey to another location, either during the school day, or for extended periods beyond the school day. This usually does not include work experience or activity in schools on split sites. The activity is planned and organised by the school.

Off-Site Activities: Activities that occur away from the base of regular work with children or pupils organised by staff who work within Children's Services.

Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC): Activity that takes place on the schools site, and further afield. Some of this work will be covered by Educational Visits.

3. Links to regulations and national guidance

This policy has been developed to ensure that Bourn Primary Academy is compliant with statutory regulations and good practice guidance, including:

- Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP)
- DfE – Health and Safety on Educational Visits
- DfE – Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for Schools.

A policy such as this cannot cover all eventualities which might arise but seeks to put in place a framework within which Visit Leaders and/or the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) can seek to apply their own decision-making processes. The policy also incorporates aspects of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

4. Approval Procedure

The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of offsite visits and activities to the Headteacher, Laura Latham. The Headteacher has nominated Helen Culley as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and the EVC has received training from Cambridgeshire County Council's Evolve Service.

Before a visit is advertised to parents, the Head teacher and the EVC will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher/EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit before departure. This will be undertaken using EVOLVE as the planning and approval system.

The school has agreed a policy for categorising visits in line with NCC guidance:

Level 3 visits (**overseas, residential or adventurous visits**) must be approved via Evolve and the Local Authority approval gained.

Level 2 visits (**day visits not in level 1 list**) approved at school level on Evolve by EVC and Headteacher

Level 1 visits (**local and regular visits that have generic risk assessments and standard operating procedures**) to be approved by EVC and Headteacher

5. Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenging and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits alongside a system within the school that allows less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for offsite visits is a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with offsite activities and visits. Any volunteer will be appropriately vetted and careful consideration will be given as to whether voluntary helpers are engaged in regulated activity. Voluntary helpers will be approved by both the Head and Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the school and on Evolve. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate, the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteers. Regulated activity includes taking sole responsibility for a group of children or participating on a regular basis.

The appointed Visit Leader will be supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, conducting an exploratory visit, briefing parents, teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. When completing risk assessments, the Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in the risk assessments.

The following staff/pupil ratios are recommended by OEAP. They should, however, be carefully considered in light of the activity which is taking place. Risk assessments should take in to account whether the class will be together at all times, the level of risk in the activity being undertaken and the needs of the pupil in the group. Where groups separate within a location, these ratios should be strictly followed:

Early Years Foundation Stage- 1:4 as a minimum

Key Stage 1- 1:6

Key Stage 2- 1:10

6. Transport Arrangements

Transport arrangements should be indicated with the parental letter and parent consent sought.

7. External Activity Providers

Where external providers are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the My Child at School (MCAS) App. Makes appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. These will include seeking assurances about health and safety and any accreditation and licensing. Wherever possible, the school will work to use holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, for which no Providers Contracts or other assurance checks are required.

8. Parental Consent and Communication

All offsite visits and activities that take place outside of school hours or require a high level of risk management require the consent of a parent. Parents must be given the full details of a visit in order to be able to give consent. Written consent can only be given by an adult with parental responsibility – this consent can be given via the School's MIS System (Bromcom). We will seek specific consent from parents for any visit which:

- Involves travelling by coach, minibus or car
- Takes place outside of the school day
- Involves adventurous activities

As part of the parent consent, they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For all residential visits, parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they will be provided with details of the itinerary, accommodation and organisation of the visit and have an opportunity to ask questions for clarification.

During residential visits, the Visit Leader will provide daily updates. Such updates will only be provided within school working hours and will be channelled via the school office and then sent to parents via Bromcom.

9. Minibus, Coach, Private Cars

On all forms of transport, it is the responsibility of the Visit Leader and accompanying staff to ensure that pupils follow all safety regulations, including the use of seatbelts. Where private cars are used, the adult driver should produce in advance of the trip:

- Proof of insurance
- A valid driving licence (any endorsements should be made known to the Headteacher, who will risk assess the suitability of the driver)

10. Medical Conditions and Additional Needs

The Visit Leader must collate information on Medical Conditions and Additional Needs. This includes Special Educational needs and pupils with challenging behaviour. All information provided must be used to inform the Risk Assessment document. Pupils with additional needs should be included within school visits and should be planned for. Where a medical need might lead to risk, this should be incorporated into the risk assessment.

Medications such as inhalers, epipens etc. and details of use are held in a medical file in the school office and in the classroom for specific pupils. These must be carried by the adult responsible for the group on any external visits. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are identified and that this information is shared on a need-to-know basis with those who might be taking responsibility for the pupil. On residential visits, parents are required to complete a detailed medical form, which staff take with them, for

details of any other medication pupils may require during their time away (antihistamines etc.)

The Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken and this will be recorded in the risk assessments.

11. Risk Management and Risk Assessment

Risk management is part of the Health and Safety Law. The term 'risk assessment' is used to describe the process of thinking about the risks of any activity and the steps taken to counter them.

All offsite visits require a Risk Assessment and Visit Leaders may need additional training/support to complete this task. The Risk Assessment should identify all risks during the visits. These may be pupil specific (e.g. referring to an individual medical condition), site specific or trip specific.

The Visit Leader can refer to an external Risk Assessment for any aspect for a visit for which there is a charge. This could include, for example, a hotel, a climbing activity or a theatre.

A generic Risk Assessment can be used for a series of local and linked activities within one academic year. An example may be the same group of pupils visiting a local museum or church several times to complete a project.

12. Charging Policy for Activities and Visits

The school may invite, but not require, parents to make voluntary contributions for school activities in order to enhance what is otherwise provided. There is no obligation to contribute and pupils will not be treated any differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

The level of contribution will be calculated for each activity and may include, for example, an element to cover the participation by pupils from low-income families or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers. Some activities may not take place if parents are reluctant to support it.

The school will comply with the law in relation to charges that may be made for the cost of activities provided outside school hours, within school hours and for board and lodging on residential courses.

13. The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's Behaviour Policy. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by parents. Pupils whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their

safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such pupils should be sent home early and parents may be expected to cover the costs of the early journey home.

14. Staff Training

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) must be appropriately trained and hold a valid EVC qualification.

All staff with the designated role of Home Based Emergency Contact (HBEC) must undergo additional training (HBEC training). The content of this training must ensure staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of serious incident of fatality during an offsite visit.

15. Withdrawal from a Trip

Once a place has been assigned to a pupil, there is a contract between the school and the parents that payments will be completed. If a student has a medical condition that means they are not able to attend the visit, a doctor's or hospital note will be required and the matter will be dealt with by the Finance Department.

The Headteacher reserves the right to withdraw pupils from educational visits on the grounds of behaviour. This is not a sanction, and would usually only be made where the young person's behaviour is likely to create Health and Safety issues on the visit and endanger their own, or the safety, of others. Advice should be sought from the Headteacher and/or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to ensure that any decision to withdraw a young person is appropriate and proportional.

If the school decides to do this, it should inform the pupil and parents as soon as possible. Whilst every effort will be made to refund as much of the cost as possible, which may have already been paid by the parents, there is no guarantee that some or all of the amount already paid can be refunded. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis. The Headteacher will make the final decision in such cases.

16. First Aid

First Aid should always be planned for. This should take in to account:

- The nature of the activity
- The nature of the group
- The possible injuries associated with the activity

First aid equipment should be taken on all visits.

17. Emergency Procedures, Home-Based Emergency Contact and Incident Reporting

The school will appoint a member of the Senior Leadership Team as the home based emergency contact (HBEC) for each visit. The HBEC should be given additional training including practical advice on how to respond in a serious situation on a visit, including dealing with a fatality, road accident or trip curtailment. All major incidents should be immediately relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention. During a visit, the HBEC should be contactable 24 hours a day. On arrival at the trip's destination, the Visit Leader should contact the HBEC to indicate that they have arrived safely. During the visit, the Visit Leader should keep the HBEC up to date on any significant incidents that occur. This would include any hospital visits or breaches of Safeguarding Policy. The HBEC can stand down from the role once the Visit Leader has made contact to state that the group has arrived back safely and the trip has ended.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin as appropriate.

Prior to a visit, all staff should collect an Emergency Procedures Action Plan for Off-Site Visits (provided by the Outdoor Education Adviser Service from Cambridgeshire County Council) from the EVC.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents. For any reported incident, the parents of the student must also be informed. Discretion should be used as to the nature of the incident and it will be the Visit Leader, the Headteacher or Home-Based Emergency Contact who will take the lead in communicating with parents. For some incidents, it may be appropriate to contact some, or all, parents, including those of pupils not directly involved in an incident, to reassure that their child(ren) has not been involved. After the visit, on return to school, the Visit Leader must complete an Accident Form for any incidents during the visit, which involved:

- A pupil being taken from the scene of the accident to a hospital for treatment
- Contagious diseases
- Dangerous occurrences – where an incident did not result in an injury, but could have done.

18. Safeguarding

All offsite visits require staff to follow the school's Safeguarding Policy and the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff on offsite visits must be particularly vigilant when working in residential situations.

The Visit Leader is required to ensure all pupils are briefed on the issues of fire drills and the access to staff supervision during the night.

19. Evaluating a Visit

The Visit Leader is asked to continually and informally evaluate a visit during the event. Any concerns regarding Health and Safety or Safeguarding must be sent through to the EVC. In addition, any views regarding value for money, strengths or areas of development should also be sent to the EVC and should be taken into consideration during the planning of future visits.

The Educational Visits policy will be reviewed every two years and ratified by the Standards Committee.

Other school policies that this Educational Visits Policy relates to are:

- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEN Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct