

Loudwater Combined School Educational Visits Policy

“Loudwater Combined School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share in this commitment. Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy.”

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Loudwater Combined School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improving children's to cope with change.
- Increasing critical curiosity and resilience.
- Increasing levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improving achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhancing opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increasing risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. I.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Fostering a greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improving environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improving awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Loudwater Combined School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Bucks Requirements and Guidance'** in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment)**

These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).

- **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the head teacher for checking.
- **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the head teacher authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the head teacher prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Clare Cunnington, who will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. She is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the LA or authorising herself. The head teacher sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governors are made aware of up-coming visits as this is a standard agenda item at Curriculum and Admission Committee meetings. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is ready to be a visit leader, the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

Parental Consent

Additional consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. Parents have the option of consenting online, or through a traditional paper consent form.

Specific (i.e. one-off) parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online or through a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

During the Risk Assessment process of planning a visit additional needs will be considered and the arrangements that will need to be made to ensure the inclusion of such pupils. We will always ensure that we comply with the Equality Act 2010. See National Guidance www.oeap.info for more information.

Charging / funding for visits

Voluntary contributions are requested from parents to cover the cost of visits where necessary. Whilst these contributions are voluntary if insufficient contributions are received it may be that the visit cannot take place. Where parents advise us that they are unable to meet the costs of trips or visits every effort will be made to find the cost of the visit through alternative means. This may include using the pupil premium grant for eligible pupils or requesting additional funds from FOLS. (Also see our Charging Policy).

Transport

We follow Bucks Requirements and Guidance which reflects National Guidance.

Use of staff or parents' cars to transport pupils

Please see appendix 3 for our procedure.

Insurance

We use the Bucks County Council insurance for all school visits.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with the governors' policy review schedule and by the Curriculum and Admissions Committee

December 2017

Reviewed March 2019

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent for each visit as parents are asked to agree to their child participating in these type of activities at the start of each academic year.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- will not be recorded on EVOLVE

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are shown on the attached map (*optional*). This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: *e.g.*

- Kingsmead Park to the netball courts
- St Peters' Church
- Fennels Wood
- The area up to the London Road
- The Loudwater Orchard (Derehams Lane).

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head or Deputy Head must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Those approved to lead visits are class teachers and others with qualified teacher status.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults, however, there will be increased levels of supervision for Foundation Stage pupils and any pupils whose additional needs made increased levels of support appropriate.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Policy and Procedures for transporting children to sports matches and similar nearby visits

Aims

We believe that it is an important part of children's education and participation in school life to attend sporting events with other schools. There are times when it is necessary to transport children to matches when they are held at other venues. Often the most effective way of doing this is to utilise the willingness of parents to use their own vehicles. The purpose of this document is to ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and roles in this arrangement to manage risks which are associated with the activity.

Procedures

If a child is selected to represent the school in a sporting activity, permission will be sought from parents or carers. This letter will detail where the event is to be held, the leaving time from school and the anticipated time of return to school. On this form parents will also be asked to indicate whether they are willing to assist with transporting pupils.

If parents express willingness to transport pupils, they will be asked to complete a **Volunteer Drivers Consent form annually**. Only parents who have completed this form will be requested to assist with transportation. On completion of this form a copy will be made for the office and the original retained by the P.E. co-ordinator. On the original permission slip parents will be given details of where the parents transporting children should meet the children and teacher.

If a child is under 135cm tall a child's booster seat must be provided by parents and brought to school on the day of the match. It may be left in the school office. Children may only be carried in the front seat of a car if they are the child of the driver; unrelated children must always be seated in the back seat. The driver must check that all seatbelts are securely fastened before the start of the journey. There should be a maximum of 4 children per car.

By signing the Volunteer Drivers Consent form, teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car are making a number of undertakings:

- to ensure their passengers' safety,
- that the vehicle is roadworthy,
- that they have appropriate licence and insurance cover for carrying the pupils,
- that no adults in the car will be smoking.

If it is thought to be necessary, assurances as to the above will be requested by the headteacher.

At the present time it is not mandatory for parents transporting children in their car to have DBS clearance, **as long as parents are not alone in a car with a child who is not related to them.**

However, we consider this to be good practice and will request that parents who transport pupils on a regular basis apply for such clearance via the school.

A copy of this document must be given to all parents transporting children