



Successful Learners; Success for Life

Offsite Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

St Andrew's CE School and Nursery adopts the Worcestershire County Council Policy document:

'The Management of Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom Activities Policy'

The Establishments Arrangements section for this school is linked to the above Policy.

1. Policy Scope

The stated aim of Worcestershire County Council is to maximise the opportunities for children to learn through well planned visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. All children (up to 18) either at school or under the partial or full care of the council are covered by this policy. To ensure that visits and LOtC activities are run by competent staff, maximise learning and are properly planned the council has adopted the Outdoor Education Activities Panel (OEAP) National Guidance as the standard; employees organising visits and LOtC activities for young people will follow the National Guidance (<http://oeapng.info/>).

External providers commissioned to deliver visits and LOtC activities will be expected to be appropriately licensed, qualified and hold a recognised quality standard such as the LOtC badge. Procurement tenders and contracts will explicitly state a requirement for providers to provide evidence of their competence and adherence to national guidance as a prerequisite to any provision of services.

This policy applies to all visits and LOtC activities whether or not they occur during normal school / working hours, at weekends or during the holidays.

2. Guidance being adopted

St Andrew's CE First School adopts the OEAP National Guidance as sited within the WCC Corporate Policy document. All staff involved in Offsite visits and LOtC activities must follow this guidance unless WCC has provided alternative guidance either as a whole or in parts of the OEAP National Guidance. Clarification of the schools' guidance must be sought from your Education Visits Coordinator - EVC.

WCC has facilitated visits and LOtC activities by the provision of an Off-site Visits Advisor (a panel member of the OEAP), the electronic management system EVOLVE and OEAP accredited training provision.

3. Clarification of the roles (see The Managements of Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom Activities Policy for responsibilities within these roles)

The normal responsibilities and duties of the following, relating to offsite visits:

3.1 Governors

Members of a Management Board or Governing Body should view their main role as being "to enable and ensure"; otherwise described as being a "critical friend".

3.2 Head Teacher

Visits and LOtC activities will be notified to the Headteacher through the EVOLVE management system and approval given electronically. The Headteacher will specifically check:

- Staff competence (VL, EVC, activity specific qualifications, vetting and CRB);
- Provider or travel company details (e.g. do they meet required standards);
- Insurance(s);
- Emergency plans and contact details;
- That any adult who is acting in a supervisory capacity as a volunteer, assistant or helper and is authorised by the Participating School to undertake the visit or LOtC activity.

3.3 Education Visits coordinator (EVC)

The EVC has a key role in the approval and management of visits and LOtC activities for schools / services. The EVC will be a trained and competent Visit Leader (VL) who has a senior position in a school.

3.4 Visit Leaders

The Visit Leader has the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, a single Visit Leader should be designated. If this role changes during a visit, a clear handover should be made. An Activity Leader is responsible for a particular activity during a visit.

4. Procedural requirements

- Staff attend Visit Leader and EVC training every 3 years using Employer approved providers

- Approved staff to lead activities and visits
- Emergency contacts to be trained
- Use the **EVOLVE** system to manage the whole visit including: notification, planning, risk assessment, monitoring and evaluation and the approval process of any planned visit.
- Risk assessments – produce own risk assessment for each visit and assess external providers risk assessments
- Use the Trip Request Form to share information of the visit with parents.
- Collect medical (care plans, medication needs etc), special needs (care plans, medical needs etc), behavioural information on all participants prior to the visit
- First aid provision by qualified first aiders and first aid boxes and/or specialist containers for medication such as epi-pens, diabetic, Ritalin etc. Record any incidents in the accident.
- Members of staff to carry out a pre-visit the proposed venue to ensure that it is suitable for the age, ability and experience of the pupils in their class.
- Emergency contact (Joel Turvey) to be identified when uploading visit on to Evolve. 24 hour contact number to be used on overnight and residential visits.
- VL to monitor participants during and after a visit
- VL evaluate the visit, with staff participants, EVC and on EVOLVE

5. Monitoring

Monitoring of trips are carried out by the EVC and the Head through Evolve Educational Visits Approval System.

- The policy and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to remain current and in line with good practice.
- Staff have easy access to the Health and Safety Policy, the OEAP National Guidance where adopted, the Visit Procedures and any forms or online system.
- Staff have access to relevant training that supports the implementation of procedures e.g. EVC training, Visit Leader training.
- The setting has access to advice and further information to clarify the Procedures.
- EVCs are appointed, trained and revalidated in accordance with the Procedures.
- Practice, including any notification and approval procedure, complies with the Procedures.
- EVCs through Evolve keep proper records.
- The EVC monitors and approves all visits with the final approval being given by the Head

The school EVC will ensure that the VL who organised a visit or LOtC activity performs an evaluation to determine:

- What went well;

- What went less well; and,
- How the visit or LOTC activity could be improved.

6. Induction, training and succession planning

- Educational Visits Coordinator keeps up to date with current procedures and practices through relevant training and/or courses, and by reading relevant documents.
- Visit leaders share risk assessment, visit objectives and any other relevant details with all volunteers before they accompany each visit.
- Formal staff training requirements e.g. nationally accredited EVC or Visit Leader Training Course attendance
- Informal staff training requirements e.g. an in-house course
- Details of any requirement to keep records associated with visits e.g. accident or incident details, evaluations etc.

7. Risk Management and Risk Benefits Procedure

All visits, beyond those which form part of the regular school day (e.g. swimming), leaving school grounds must have completed risk benefit assessments uploaded on to Evolve which will be approved by the Head Teacher or EVC. The risk assessment will identify hazards and risks and control measures put in place to minimise these.

Pupils are made aware of expectations and needed equipment in advance of visits. Pupils who are unable to maintain an acceptable 'safe' code of conduct within school will not be eligible to participate on school visits. Preliminary visits should be undertaken to new venues.

Transport

- The school uses certified and established coach companies.
- Staff will not transport children in their private vehicles unless they are fully insured for this purpose (business insurance).

Supervision/ratios

These ratios are a general guide;

- 1 adult to 6-10 pupils in years 1 to 3 (under 5s need a higher ratio);
- 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils in years 4 to 5.

Class teachers to use their professional judgment. If the trip is more adventurous and with higher risk activities, more adults will be needed.

8. Providers

- Website - Visit the providers website or seek its official literature
- Quality badge - Find out what if any quality badge they have and what it actually assesses/inspects to gain the quality badge, check out if the provider actually holds the quality badge stated (WCC recognise LOTC, Adventure Mark, AALS)
- Engage with the provider – talk to them, get risk assessments from them and any other information they can provide e.g. plans, maps directions, car parking etc

- Past visit – Check using EVOLVE (WCC requirement if maintained school) if other schools have used this provider or look at own past school visits and feedback after the visit
- Preliminary Visits - Carry out a preliminary visit if possible, if not try to seek a contact from another school who have used the provider by using the EVOLVE system.
- Governing Bodies – Check if any of the activities planned are affiliated to a governing body e.g. rugby – Rugby Football Union, canoeing – British Canoe Union
- Off-site Visits Advisor – consult with WCC Off-site Visits Advisor Rachel Whiteley.

9. Volunteers

Volunteers will be:

- Subject to an appropriate vetting decision by the Head Teacher;
- Used appropriately and not used to replace a visit leader;
- Suitably competent and confident to be able to carry out the duties they are assigned;
- Confident in their understanding of the role and responsibilities that they have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff;
- Enabled to contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit;
- Appropriately briefed on:
 - Relevant establishment and visit procedures;
 - Group characteristics, including age, health, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other relevant matters in the context of the visit;
 - Nature and location of the activity.

Where the volunteer is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship with a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise group management, particularly if there is a serious incident. There is a probability that the volunteer may be distracted by the needs of their own child, rather than looking to the needs of the whole group. This means that the Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the risk-benefit assessment and not assign a volunteer to a leadership role which gives them a direct responsibility for their own child, other than where this is a risk managed part of the visit plan.

10. Emergency Procedure and Incident Reporting

When looking at how things can go wrong on an Off-Site Visit, it is possible to consider emergencies in four categories, depending upon the nature of the incident. Planning and preparation for Off-Site Visits should ensure an appropriate response to an emergency in any of these categories, at any time of day or night.

- Incident: a situation that is dealt with by the Visit Leadership Team. This may, perhaps, involve some communication back to school or to parents,

and some support from the EVC/Headteacher but the visit Leader remains in control and is able to cope.

- Emergency: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of the Visit Leadership Team and which requires the School's Emergency Plan for Off-Site Visits to be initiated. This may involve some communication with WCC and support from it, but the school takes control of the situation and is able to cope. An incident is an emergency where:
 - A group member has suffered a serious injury
 - A group member is at risk
 - A group member has gone missing for a significant period
 - Any other incident beyond normal coping mechanism of the visit leader
- Critical Incident: an incident which overwhelms the coping mechanisms of both the Visit Leadership Team and the school. WCC takes control of the situation and supports the school and the visit staff/participants.
Responding to a critical incident:
 - The Visit Leadership Team should stabilise the situation as far as possible.
 - The Visit Leadership Team should alert the School Emergency Contact.
 - The School Emergency Contact should decide the level of response required and, when necessary, initiate the Emergency Plan and alert the Employer's Emergency Contact.
 - The Employer's Emergency Contact should initiate the Employer's Critical Incident Plan for Off-Site Visits.
- Major Incident: an incident which is declared as a major incident by the Police, who will take control, and where the relevant Local Authority's Major Incident Plan is initiated.

Key points:

- All staff should carry information of who to contact in case of an emergency;
- Staff should carry a mobile phone. They should also ensure school has all necessary up to date contact numbers;
- In cases of incidents and emergencies, staff will contact the school office during the day or the agreed emergency contact (24 hours) in case of residential visits;
- School will then respond in line with WCC Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits, and if necessary WCC Guidance for Critical Incidents;
- If necessary emergency services will be called, e.g. ambulance by the leader and/or school;
- School will contact parents in case of any emergency and the designated emergency contact will be responsible for this. The Emergency Contact will hold all the relevant information, including contacts, close at hand at all times the visit is in progress;
- All adults on the visit should know who the visit leader is and young people should also know what to do in case of an emergency;
- For residential visits, plans must take into account the possibility of an incident occurring out of normal working hours;
- All staff hold emergency basic first aid training and will follow procedures, as necessary;
- All information about incidents will be recorded, in line with WCC policy.

11. Behaviour of staff, volunteers and pupils

- Staff to model appropriate behaviour - no alcohol or smoking.
- Parents to sign that they understand the school can remove a young person from the visit if he/she does not comply with the set codes of conduct.
- Supervision requirements by staff at all times during the visit including down time and night time; the expectation of staff to be acting in a supervisory role even when in their own 'down time'.
- The expectation of staff to ensure a suitable ratio of supervision is in place at all times.
- Provision and clarity on discipline and sanctions on visits for non-compliance before the visit.
- Any specific rules relevant to the visit to be set out by VL's and agreed before the visit e.g. no mobile phones or other electronic devices etc.
- Supervisory role in unexpected circumstances towards a victim or perpetrator, where the individual is a member of your party.

12. Exclusion and Inclusion

It is unlawful to treat a disabled person less favourably or fail to take steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable and within their own competency to provide inclusion of a young person.

This policy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integrations through participation with peers

13. Insurance

The school is covered by the LA insurance and all visits are covered by the Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance.

14. Finance

- See the charging policy for information.
- When arranging a visit, the cost effectiveness and value for money that the activity offers will be part of the planning process.
- Parents will be asked for contributions towards the cost and can use the John Martin Trust to support them with payment of visits.
- Visits will only be cancelled if the majority of costs cannot be met or supported by school funds.
- No pupils will be excluded from visits (other than residential or those outside of school hours) if parents cannot pay.