Orchard Lea Federation

Off Site Activities & Educational Visits

Date agreed: January 2024

Date for renewal: January 2026

1. Aims and Scope

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our Federation, which require pupils to leave the premises, having been authorised to do so by the Head of School or Executive Head.

Educational visits are a valuable way to supplement and enhance the curriculum, expand pupils' education and provide enriching social and cultural experiences, teach life skills and promote independence. Educational visits form an integral part of our approach to furthering our pupils' education and personal growth.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area.
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions.
- Sporting activities.
- Adventurous and recreational activities.
- Residential trips organised by the junior school including a two night residential in Year 4 and a 4 night residential in Year 6.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

3. Roles and responsibilities

Head of School and Executive Headteacher

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours.
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training.
- Working with the governing body to approve residential trips of more than 24 hours.

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff have the training to plan and carry out safe trips/visits.
- Ensuring that the Heads of School carry out their dutites and that the trips/visits are risk assessed.
- Providing advice and making key decisions. For example, deciding when to cancel a trip.
- Acting on behalf of the Head of Schools if they are not present to approve trips.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

An EVC is appointed at each of our schools. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits.
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit.
- Assess outside activity providers.
- Advise the Head of Schools or Executive Headteacher when they’re approving trips.
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance.
- Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements.

Trip Lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the Trip Lead. The Trip Lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers.
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed.
- Make sure the schools have accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments.
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed.
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party.
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour.
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others.

Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the Head of School or in their absence the Executive Headteacher.
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the Trip Lead.
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs.
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them.
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit.
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate.

Parents and Carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable.
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner.
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip in a timely manner.

Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly.
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils.
- Report any concerns to the Trip Lead or other staff present as soon as possible.
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible.

Pupils

Our Federation behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip.
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip.
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor.

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the behaviour policy at all times.

4. Planning and preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Executive Head, based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers).
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes.
- Educational purpose and value.
- Disruption to the normal running of the schools.
- Health and safety considerations.
- Staff-to-pupil ratio.

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance.
- Travel plans or options.
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available.
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies.
- Accommodation options, where needed.
- Insurance detailed, where needed.
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision.
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks.

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the Head of School following a discussion with the Executive Headteacher will seek approval of the governing body.

Once the risk assessment has been uploaded to Evolve and approved by the relevant Head of School, and the governing body where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

5. Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips and 6 weeks before a residential.

This will be completed using the Evolve risk assessment template and uploaded to Evolve Hampshire. This will be approved by the EVC and Head of School. Existing risk assessments or those provided by the destination itself might also be used to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff should make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the Head of School and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the EVC and Head of School, and a copy taken on the visit and another copy left with the EVC.

Any concerns about the risk assessment or managing any particular risk will be discussed with the Executive Headteacher.

Staff Ratios and First Aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required using Evolve guidance. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed pupil groups)on a residential.
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips.
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be take on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip.
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time.
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls.
- 1 paediatric first aider must go on a trip with children aged 5 and under.

Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our Hampshire guidance. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity are approved by Hampshire.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on health and safety on educational visits to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity. We will also ask for a copy of the organisation's risk assessment.

6. Volunteers

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

- The needs of the pupils going on the trip.
- The setting and circumstances of the trip.
- Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience.

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

7. Communication and Consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit via letter or email, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location.
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school.

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

8. Emergency Procedures and Incident Reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk.
- Serious and life-threatening injury.
- Individuals going missing.
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations.

The Trip Leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the Trip Leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office. If a trip occurs out of hours, then the Trip Leader will contact the Executive Headteacher and/or Head of School using the contact numbers on the trip risk assessments.The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the Trip Leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the Trip Leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The Trip Leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Hampshire, Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

9. Charging and Insurance

We will follow our school's charging and remissions policy at all times.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

10. Residential Visits

The Head of School, Executive Headteacher, together with the governing body, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- Staff have received any necessary training including a pre-visit to the site.
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip.

- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils – this will include relevant DBS checks.

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school.
- The full address and contact details of the destination.
- Planned activities and options.
- Meal provision.
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions).
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves.
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations.
- Accommodation options and arrangements.
- The names of staff attending.

11. Complaints

Any complaints about the way a trip has been planned or carried out need to be raised in accordance with our Complaints Policy which can be found on our website.