



Educational Visits Policy

Approved: *September 2025*

Next Review: September 2028



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Review Frequency:	Every three years
Date next review due:	September 2028
Scope of Policy:	This policy applies to all staff, students, governors and volunteers at Riverside School

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day, but on occasions, take place after school.

Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- Promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.



The aim of this policy is to ensure that the duty of care for the students of Riverside Primary School is fulfilled with full compliance to the DfE best practice on educational trips and visits as outlined in the document “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits” (DfES 2018). The procedure for planning a visit and associated documentation can be found elsewhere.

2.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1992 made under the 1974 Act require employees to:

- assess the risks of activities
- introduce measures to control those risks
- tell their employees about the measures

Also under the Health and Safety legislation employees must:

- take responsible care of their own and others safety
- co-operate with their employers over safety matters
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- inform the employer of any serious risks

These duties apply to all school visits.

2.2 Common Law

Teachers are said to have a particular duty of care for student, meaning that a teacher is expected to exercise the same standard of care as a reasonably careful and responsive parent (“in loco parentis”). Staff at Riverside School must therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure that every student under his or her care is not exposed to unacceptable risks.

3.0 APPROVAL FOR VISITS

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) responsible for co-ordinating visits should be approached, if possible, at least, 4 weeks before the proposed visit. For overnight / international trips the EVC should be approached 6 months in advance. They will then guide the Visit Leader through the approval procedures which are outlined in a separate document.



All offsite activities must be formally approved in writing by the Head teacher or the EVC, whom the Head teacher can delegate responsibility for approval to.

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Visit Leader

One teacher, the Visit Leader, has overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of each trip or visit and must take overall responsibility for the health and safety of the group.

The Visit Leader should:

- obtain the Headteacher's / EVC prior agreement in principle before any planning for an offsite visit takes place
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation for the visit, following the school's procedures, preparing and submitting all paperwork on time to the EVC, including undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range
- be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location where the activity will take place
- be aware of pupil protection issues
- ensure that appropriate trained first aider accompanies the visit and that first aid provision will be available
- clearly define each additional teacher or group supervisor's role
- where necessary, organise and run a briefing for parents
- review progress during the planning phase regularly and advise the EVC when adjustments need to be made
- ensure the ratio of pupils to teachers is appropriate
- to make parents aware of the details of the trip
- ensure that the group supervisors have details of the school contact procedures
- ensure the additional teachers and supervisors have a copy of emergency procedures
- ensure that details of pupils' SEN and medical needs are known by all staff supervising the visit

4.2 Educational Visits Coordinator

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) has responsibility for advising Visit Leaders on the planning and organisation of trips and visits, guiding them through the completion of the pre-trip



paperwork and associated activities and checking and approving that paperwork before making a recommendation for approval to the Headteacher.

The EVC should:

- guide the VL through the organisation and planning process ensuring that all procedures are adhered to
- satisfy themselves that the VL has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visits and will organise the group effectively
- ensure that the VL has understood all issues relating to health and safety as outlined in this policy and is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- ensure the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate
- ensure the competence of the staff and volunteers to lead or supervise the visit
- ensure that staff accompanying pupils have appropriate DBS checks and that adequate pupil protection measures are in place
- ensure parental consent has been obtained
- ensure that the emergency arrangements and contact systems for each visit are in place for the duration of the trip
- check that all paperwork, procedures and associated activities are compliant with school policies before making a recommendation for approval
- ensure the number of trips taking place on any given day are not too high so they do not stretch the schools resources
- ensure that the school is able to adequately cover any teachers away on a trip
- ensure upcoming trips are placed on the school calendar so all staff are aware
- keep records of individual visits including accident/incident or near-miss reports
- review systems, monitor practice and make any recommendations for changes to the Headteacher

4.3 Headteacher

The Headteacher should satisfy themselves:

- that the EVC checks all necessary paperwork and associated actions for compliance with school policies
- that risk assessments are completed and appropriate safety measures are in place for educational visits.



5.0 PLANNING THE VISIT

The process and procedures to follow when organising a visit are outlined in the document “Riverside School: Offsite Activities Approval Procedures”. Visit Leaders should begin a dialogue as early as possible with the OAC regarding compliance with these procedures.

Whatever the destination of the visit it is of primary importance that formal planning is undertaken to consider the potential dangers and difficulties, with plans drawn up to minimise any risks.

5.1 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments must be undertaken by the Visit Leader. Students must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level?
- Can the visit leader put the safety measures into place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The person who conducts the risk assessment should give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to reduce the risk.

For all pupils with a Educational Health Care Plan an individual risk assessment for off-site visits, updated each full term, is recorded in their personal file.

Visit leaders will ensure that the individual risk assessments have been updated to take account of the planned activities during the proposed visit and that all leaders hold a copy for each student in their group.

Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools do not have to be done each time – a generic risk assessment being made annually.



The visit leader should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action when necessary

5.2 Initial Visits

For a venue which has not been used before, the Visit Leader should carry out a preparatory visit in order to:

- ensure the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the educational experience
- assess potential areas and levels of risk
- become familiar with the area before accompanying pupils

5.3 First Aid

Before undertaking any offsite activities the Visit Leader should assess the level of first aid which might be needed. On all visits the visit leader should ensure that a first aider accompanies them and that a first aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits the risk assessment may identify the need to have a trained first aider, sometimes with specialist knowledge e.g. first aid for mountain leaders. In addition, all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

5.4 Types of Visit

Visits may be classified as follows:

- Category A visits – these comprise activities which present no significant risk
- Category B visits – higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and or location
- Category C visits – higher risk activities

5.5 Competence to Lead

- For activities with no significant risk (e.g. walking in parks, museum visits, field studies in benign situations) any competent teacher may lead the visit. All permanent members of teaching staff will be deemed competent. Newly qualified teachers will need to be accompanied by a senior member of staff.



- For activities involving some higher risk activities (e.g. residential visits, walking in non remote areas, camping, low level initiative challenge) the leader will need to have been specifically inducted in the activity or location by a suitably qualified or experienced leader.
- For more demanding activities (trekking in remote areas, water sports, exchange visits) the leader will need to have attended a recognised course of training or recorded relevant experience or have his/her competence assessed by an appropriate technical adviser, depending on the activity.

5.6 Supervision

The factors which need to be considered when calculating the ratio for supervision are:

- Age and ability of the group
- SEN and pupils with medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults
- Duration and nature of visit
- Competence and behaviour of students
- First aid requirements.

Staffing ratios may vary according to the factors noted above and must be agreed with the EVC as part of the planning process. However, the minimum, appropriate for for local Category A visits would be:

Activity	Year Group	Ratio
Category A and B1 i.e. visits in the UK but not:- residential adventurous	Nursery	1:3 (minimum 2 staff)
	Reception	1:6 (minimum 2 staff)
	Years 1-3	1:6 (minimum 2 staff)
	Years 4-6	1:10 (minimum 2 staff)
Category B2 and C i.e. Visits abroad or adventurous and residential visits	All Years	1:6 (minimum 2 staff)



In addition to the teacher in charge there should be sufficient supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are in Category B and C the level of supervision will need to be greater.

Supervisors must either be employees of Riverside Primary School or volunteer supervisors appointed under the requirements of 5.8 below.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit staff must check pupils regularly. All staff must carry lists of pupils at all times. Pupils must be identifiable and known to the person/s supervising them.

5.7 Pupils with Medical Needs

For pupils with medical needs, additional safety measures will need to be taken to those already in place for all students. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All teachers accompanying students with medical needs must carry copies of the Pupils Health Care Plan and be fully aware of the pupil's medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. Summary sheets must be held by all teachers containing details of each student's needs.

If a student's safety cannot be guaranteed then the student may be withdrawn from the activity. The Headteacher's decision is final in this matter.

Parental information on the following must be obtained:

- current medical conditions
- emergency contact details
- GP's name, address and phone number
- written details of medication required
- parental permission for student self administration or agreement for staff member to administer
- information on allergies or phobias
- special dietary requirements
- toileting difficulties.

If the staff member is concerned about whether they can provide for a student's safety or the safety of other students on the visit they must discuss this with the EVC. The EVC will discuss this with parents and the school health service or the pupil's GP.



5.8 Voluntary Help

Volunteer supervisors should normally be people well known to the school, for instance as either parents or governors. Volunteers will be told that they have the responsibility to follow instructions of the Visit Leader who retains overall responsibility for the visit. The Visit Leader will ensure that each volunteer knows precisely what their role is and understands that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.

Where pupils are organised in small groups, a pupil will not generally be placed in a group for which his/her parent is responsible.

The EVC retains the right to make the final decision as to which volunteers are permitted accompany the visit.

Volunteers/parents who are volunteering to help supervise trips they must be subject to appropriate DBS checks.

Volunteers/parents should not normally be used as supervisors on trips involving overnight stays. Any such proposals would need explicit written approval from the Headteacher.

5.9 Travel and Transport

Arrangements for booking coaches should be done via the school finance team.

Parents should be informed as to the type of transport being provided for an educational visit.

Coach travel

Seat belts will be provided and it is school policy that these must be worn whilst travelling on a school visit. Staff must check before the vehicle is in motion that belts are fastened and remind pupils that these must be worn throughout the journey.

Public transport

If using public transport the teacher to student ratio will be as outlined in 5.6. If using TFL a member of admin will ensure the free school group tickets are applied for at least 2 weeks before the trip.



On Foot

Pupils should walk in controlled groups. One member of staff should be at the front in control of the group, another at the back or aware of any individuals who are behind. The degree of control will depend upon the nature of the group (age, ability) and the location.

5.10 Briefing for Pupils Prior to the Visit

As part of their preparation for the visit pupils should be made aware of the educational benefits of the visit.

Prior to the visit the pupils will be made aware of the standards expected of them - this will be appropriate for the age group going on the visit.

The Visit Leader should make it clear to students that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow instructions given by any member of staff or volunteer supervisor
- be sensitive to people in the local environment
- watch for anything which might hurt or threaten themselves and anyone else in the group and advise a supervisor immediately

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be stopped from attending the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these students should be fulfilled in other ways where possible. The Headteacher's decision will be final in this matter.

5.11 Parents

Parent/guardian approval must be obtained for all categories of visit. When joining the school parents will be asked to give consent for all local school trips, however for all trips that involve payment or are further than a local visit, or where pupils are away outside normal school hours further permission will be asked. In some cases a series of short off-site visits may take place over a term - in this case blanket approval should be sought from the parent, which gives details of the activity and the means of transport. Model letters are held by the school office and should be appropriately modified and then approved by the EVC. In order that parents may make a reasoned judgement, written information about the visit should be sent with the approval form.

In cases where the visit is residential, parents should be invited to a meeting where information is given about the nature of the activity and emergency procedures. For residential visits, parents should be notified of, and requested to agree to, an appropriate Code of Conduct.



Arrangements must be put in place to inform parents if significant changes occur during a visit - e.g. a change in return time.

5.12 Accidents and Incidents

All accidents and incidents taking place during school visits and journeys must be reported and recorded in accordance with the Riverside School Health and Safety Policy. Accidents and incidents will be reviewed to identify learning points which will be shared, as appropriate, with others.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit or an offsite activity. If an accident occurs the priorities are:

- Assess the situation and safeguard the rest of the party
- Attend to the casualties
- Inform the emergency services.
- Inform the Senior Leadership Team contact back at school

For minor injuries:

- Trained First Aider to give appropriate assistance using First Aid box
- Visit Leader to phone SLT contact so they can inform the parent of the injury
- Visit Leader to fill in an accident form on return to school

For anything other than minor injuries:

- First Aider to give appropriate immediate assistance within their capabilities
- Call for an ambulance – ensure information is obtained as to which hospital the ambulance will be taking the injured student to
- Supervisor to accompany pupil to hospital if needed and if the Visit Leader judges that this will not leave the remaining level of supervision unsafe
- Visit Leader to phone SLT contact so they can inform the parent of the injury and the hospital to which the pupil has been taken
- SLT contact to phone the parents (under no circumstances should a supervisor call the parents directly)



PARTNERSHIP LEARNING

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- SLT contact to go to hospital to be with the injured pupil and take over the responsibility from the accompanying supervisor, unless parent/guardian is able to do this promptly
- Supervisor to remain with the injured pupils in hospital until SLT or parent/guardian arrives
- Visit Leader to fill in an accident form on return to school