



## Millfield Primary School Educational Visits Policy

### Introduction

Millfield Primary School is committed to the provision of high quality educational visits that support and extend learning. The school recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities that take place away from the immediate school environment and seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement.

Educational visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas. They encourage co-operation, teamwork and the application of problem solving skills, and develop independence and self-confidence.

Residential opportunities, physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people. Outdoor education helps young people to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The school adopts the guidance and procedures issued in the County Council Education Service document Educational Visits and, where relevant, the 1998 DfES document Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) and Departmental advice on health and safety for schools (2011)

This is to ensure consideration for the health and safety of all those involved and to maintain the educational quality and value for money of educational visits.

### Definition of Educational Visits

For the purpose of this policy the term 'Educational Visit' refers to any activity occurring beyond the boundaries of Millfield Primary School grounds.

### EVOLVE

Throughout this policy reference is made to Evolve. This is the online system used by the school for the notification and approval of educational visits. Visits and activities may be viewed, sampled or monitored using this system. This system enables users to complete the relevant documents for those activities which require approval from the educational authority to be submitted (EVC1 for adventurous activities / EVC2 for residential activities).

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## **Procedures for arranging Educational Visits**

All educational visits require approval by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) following a notification process. In working through notification to approval, the following process should be followed:

- Identify the purpose and learning objectives of the visit.
- Identify the key arrangements of the visit including location to be visited, activities to be completed on the visit and potential risks, distance, staffing levels required and transport arrangements.
- Clear identification and delegation of roles for the visit including naming of emergency contacts.

Completion of the EVOLVE process including:

- Identification of key factors as outlined above
- Pre visit to site (if required)
- Risk assessment completed, recorded and submitted via EVOLVE
- Notification to local authority (if required)

Once the EVOLVE process is completed and submitted the EVC will either:

- give approval for the visit
- ask for further information or clarification
- refuse permission for the visit to take place stating clear reasons for this refusal.

Once a visit has been approved visit leaders should make parents / carers aware of the arrangements for the visit as soon as possible and begin the process of gaining consent for pupils to take part.

Regularly repeated visits may receive block annual approval subject to parents being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal school day.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

In order to provide the highest possible care to our pupils whilst on educational visits it is vital that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and that staff and other adults leading visits understand their responsibilities. The following definitions provide an overview of delegated roles and responsibilities which must be fulfilled by named persons during the visit.

### **Head teacher**

- To ensure that an EVC is identified within the school and that they are given the suitable training for the post.
- To monitor the work of the EVC to ensure that all educational visits and off site activities are notified or submitted for formal approval as required.
- To ensure that robust child protection procedures are in place to ensure safeguarding of pupils on educational visits.
- To provide suitable support for EVC to carry out their delegated role.

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- To ensure that there are contingency plans in place should a visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled
- To report to the Board of Governors on the educational visits completed across the school and provide an evaluation of these visits
- Where charges are made to ensure that these are in line with the school's Charging and Remissions Policy.
- To ensure that proper procedures are in place to account for the finance of visits and activities.
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

### **Educational Visits Coordinator**

- To undertake relevant training and ensure that understanding is relevant and up to date
- LOtC, off site activities and visits meet employer guidance requirements
- Visit leaders, leaders, assisting staff and volunteers understand that all staff involved in LOtC, off site activities and visits are aware of and understand employer guidance and establishment procedures
- The Educational Visits policy is relevant and up to date, fulfilling the requirements of the employer (Staffordshire County Council) guidance. This should be reviewed on a regular basis and following any serious incident or operational issue. Risk assessment documentation must be updated if necessary.
- To support the head teacher with approval and other decisions relating to educational visits.
- To monitor Visit Leader planning and sample monitoring of visits impact on outcomes.
- To ensure there are robust safeguards in place to ensure the safety of individual learners and that individual DBS checks are in place as required
- To ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed
- To ensure that emergency arrangements including emergency contact access to all relevant records are available.
- To ensure that individual activities and visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process including reporting of accidents and incidents, complying with employer requirements an Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

### **Visit Leader**

- To be formally approved to lead the visit by the EVC (therefore being deemed competent to be visit leader - i.e. demonstrating the ability to operate to the current standard of recognised good practise for that role).
- To plan and prepare for the visit taking the lead on risk assessment.
- To define the roles and responsibilities of other staff to ensure effective supervision appointing an assistant wherever possible.

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- To share relevant information to supporting staff (and volunteers if appropriate).
- To make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level.
- Provide relevant information to parents / carers and arrange pre visit information meetings where appropriate.
- To act when any provider is deemed to run an activity in a way that causes concern giving consideration to stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment using sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in pupils being put at greater risk.
- To evaluate all aspects of the visit / activity both during and after the event.
- To ensure that staff and other adults have been appropriately informed regarding: the pupils making up the group, including age, any relevant medical conditions, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of planned activities
- Ensure that the visit and any activities are effectively supervised
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contacts and emergency procedure details.

### **Assistant Visit Leader**

- To act when any provider is deemed to run an activity in a way that causes concern giving consideration to stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment using sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in pupils being put at greater risk.
- To ensure that they have been sufficiently informed about their role and responsibilities on the visit / activity.
- To ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of the planning and preparation of the visit and have been provided with all the necessary risk assessment

### **Board of Governors**

- To ensure that there is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements
- To ensure that there is an appropriate Educational Visits policy in place with formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements.
- To ensure that the Educational Visits policy supports the principles of inclusion
- To ensure that there are monitoring procedures in place.

### **Training and development**

In making the decision to approve any visit the EVC must be certain that the Visit Leader is competent. To be deemed competent a Visit Leader or Assistant Visit Leader must be able to demonstrate the ability to the current standards of good practise for that role.

Staff participating in off-site activities must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff.

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It is preferable for at least one leader of any visit to hold a formal First Aid qualification; whilst this may not preclude a visit from proceeding it will be taken into account by the EVC when approving the visit.

All staff on educational visits should take responsibility for their competency and conduct during any educational visit. Any issues regarding competency and conduct of staff during any educational visit will be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy.

### **Risk assessment – Educational Visits**

The completion of the risk assessment process is a compulsory aspect of the notification and approval process of educational visits.

Millfield Primary School has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed – requiring them to be reduced to an 'acceptable' or 'tolerable' level – and not to eliminate risks

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. 'For educational visits the school uses a 'risk-benefit assessment' approach, whereby the starting point for any risk assessment is a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is 'acceptable'. HSE endorse this approach through their 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management' and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual or harm several people. However, Staffordshire EVC training ensures that establishments are supplied with an electronic portfolio of exemplar generic risk-benefit assessments, as well as exemplar event-specific assessments. These risk management materials can also be accessed through EVOLVE.

It is recognised that in addition to planned risk assessment it is essential that there is dynamic on going risk assessment in order to meet unexpected situations that may arise during an educational visit. Visit Leaders must be prepared for the possible need for dynamic risk assessment and be confident and competent in fulfilling aspect of their role.

### **Preliminary Visits**

It is strongly recommended that Visit Leaders carry out a preliminary visit for educational visits in order to assess the suitability of the venue and the activities offered. In certain circumstances where there is familiarity with the venue a preliminary visit may not be required and discussion with the provider regarding any changes to the site, facilities or visit arrangements may be adequate.

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## **Effective Supervision for Educational Visits**

There is no specific instruction for activity / visit staffing ratios for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils but it is advised that the level of supervision and group management is 'effective'.

Effective supervision should be determined by a proper consideration of:

- Age of pupils
- Gender considerations
- Ability of the group
- Nature and location of the activity
- Staff competence

As a general guide Visit Leaders should use the following ratios as a basis but to adapt these in line with consideration of the above and with discussion with the EVC.

**Years 1 to 3:** 1 adult for every 6 pupils

**Years 4 to 6:** 1 adult for every 10 to 15 pupils

There is also no specific guidance for ratios for pupils in Reception classes of the EYFS. Leaders planning visits for pupils in Reception class should be mindful of the higher needs of these young pupils on educational visits and seek to always ensure that there is a ratio of **1 adult for every 4 pupils** on educational visits.

## **Transport**

Careful thought must be given to planning transport for educational visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is more likely for an accident to occur during travel to and from an activity rather than to engage it. All visits must follow national and local requirements and the specialist guidance contained in local authority transport policy.

The Visit Leader should always ensure that transport is hired from a reputable company.

## **Use of private cars**

Transporting pupils in private cars requires careful consideration. The following procedures should be followed:

- Drivers should have a valid driving license and appropriate insurances (including business use for staff).
- Booster seats and seat belt requirements must be met
- Cars must be roadworthy and have a valid MOT certificate
- Careful consideration of the number of pupils travelling in a car should form part of the risk assessment process – taking account of specific needs, age and background of pupils.
- Only in exceptional circumstances – for example an emergency situation – should a child travel alone in a car with a member of staff
- Explicit parental consent is required for any use of private cars for transport.

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## **Emergency Procedures**

The risk assessment for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For visits extending beyond the school day this includes designating a home contact from the school who may be needed as a link between the party, the parents, the school and the County Council in the event of an emergency.

In the event of an incident resulting in harm to any attending participant, staff member or volunteer, then the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the head teacher or designated deputy so that they can decide the appropriate course of action:

If the incident is of a less serious nature then the next of kin or parents of those affected will be informed about what has happened (e.g. that the party will be returning late or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the visit leader will be designated to undertake this task.

However, if the incident is very serious (e.g. involves a disabling or life threatening accident, or a fatality) then the head teacher, deputy or the home contact will inform the designated senior officer of the Education Service (Director or Deputy Director) and the school will instigate its critical incident plan (as identified in **Coping with a Crisis**, produced by Pupil and Student Services). Officers of the authority will be allocated to support the school with the immediate incident and any necessary follow up or inquiry.

If there is a delay in pupils returning to school of over 30 minutes then the school must be contacted so that parents can be informed.

In the event of a party being overdue and without contact by more than 1 hour, the school, or the home contact, must investigate the reason and may, where appropriate, need to involve the police.

## **Inclusion**

As part of its inclusion policy Millfield Primary School works hard to ensure that all educational visits and activities are available and accessible to all regardless of special educational needs, medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation of Visits**

To ensure the ongoing quality of educational visits at our school it is essential that effective monitoring and evaluation takes place. The monitoring and evaluation of visits will take place in a variety of ways:

Informal monitoring: *for example through discussion with Visit Leader, staff, volunteers or pupils*

Formative formal monitoring: *through monitoring EVOLVE and other visit application forms*

Summative formal: *for example through attendance on visits to observe practise*

The level of monitoring will be dependent on the activity undertaken and staff competency.

Following each visit the leader will undertake an evaluation of the visit. Any incidents or accidents will be reported in accordance with the reporting requirements.

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Leaders of visits that have involved considerable time or financial resources, such as residential visits, will produce a short evaluation of the travel and transport, facilities, quality of any providers and the success and value of the visit and submit this to the Head teacher / EVC

### **Governing Body**

The governing body will be informed about the following categories of visit prior to them taking place (if any): -

School Residential Visits or visits which have a degree of physical risk or visits.

The governing board will receive reports of educational visits at full governing board meetings in the Head teacher report.

### **Monitoring and review of policy**

The Governor Body will review this policy:

- Every two years.
- At such time as there are significant changes to guidance from the LA.
- Should significant issues be brought to the Governor's attention through the report of the Head Teacher.

Mr. S. Kelly

Updated - April 2016

Date of next review: April 2018

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator for Millfield Primary School is: Mr S Kelly (Head Teacher)

The EVC completed Staffordshire EVC training on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

All school staff will be made aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed.

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