



## **EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

### **Introduction**

All offsite visits and activities that are organised and undertaken by the school are regarded as “educational visits”. Whenever pupils leave the school site under the direct or indirect supervision of school staff, they are undertaking an educational visit.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The school aims to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. The school’s Headteacher and governors recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum and enhance the learning and development of our pupils.

### **Types of visits organised by the school**

The school offers a wide range of educational visits, including:

- Walks in the local area
- Visits to local places of interest eg. shops, businesses, services
- Visits to the local library
- Visits to local churches
- Visits to places of interest such as theatres & museums
- Visits to a forest school

### **Compliance**

The school’s policy is to comply with the LA’s “Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits”. The school’s Educational Visits policy should also be read in conjunction with the other relevant school policy documents, such as the following:

- Health & Safety and Policy
- Charging Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SEN Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Medical Needs Policy

### **Access to Policies and Guidelines**

Staff involved in the leadership and management of visits should be familiar with all relevant guidelines and policy documents, and should know how/where this information can be accessed.

The LA’s “Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits” are accessible via the LA Educational Visits webpage [http://www.eriding.net/educ\\_visits/index.shtml](http://www.eriding.net/educ_visits/index.shtml) and also via ROVER

Online <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/eforms> (username/password required from the LA Educational Visits Officer).

### **Roles and responsibilities (for details see LA Offsite Visits Code of Practice)**

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for all the school's educational visits. New/Acting Headteachers should contact the LA for guidance on taking up the position, and should access training from the LA as soon as possible during their first term regarding their responsibilities with respect to the management and approval of educational visits. If the Headteacher is absent or unavailable, Mrs Haskey will act as the appointed deputy, and fulfil the same responsibilities regarding the management and approval of educational visits.

The School's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is *Mrs Kay-Wood (trained 2011)*. The EVC oversees the planning and organisation of the school's visits, and provides advice and guidance to staff and Headteacher, including recommendations regarding the approval of visits. New EVCs should access training from the LA during their first term regarding their responsibilities with respect to the management and approval of educational visits, and should attend refresher/update training at least every 3 years.

The EVC role has admin support provided by the Admin team. This role involves sending out parent letters, obtaining medical details and consent forms etc.

The Governing Body representative who is responsible for overseeing educational visits is Mr Graham Clarke. The LA Educational Visits Officer is Mr.Taff Bowles (tel 01482 392417 e. [taff.bowles@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:taff.bowles@eastriding.gov.uk)).

### **Advice and Guidance**

Staff should seek advice and guidance regarding educational visits from:

- the Headteacher / EVC
- the LA Educational Visits Officer
- other experts with specialist/local knowledge (e.g. forest school ranger)

### **Training**

The LA provides a range of training opportunities for staff involved in the management, organisation, and leadership of educational visits. A record of all training provided is maintained by the Admin team and stored in the school office in the Health & Safety box file.

The school ensures the following training opportunities with regard to educational visits are made available:

- Training for Headteacher / EVC (including update courses every 3 years)
- Training for Visit Organisers and Group Leaders through EVC training & in-house training
- Training for NQTs and new staff through LA courses
- Training for TAs/others through in-house training

### **Monitoring**

To assure quality of standards on educational visits:

- the school's Headteacher / EVC will accompany at least one visit per year to monitor real practice, and to assist with the review of policies and procedures
- Records of these monitoring visits are stored in the Health & Safety Box file
- The school's Headteacher/EVC will complete the Manager Review (an online audit of our school's educational visits policies and procedures that is accessible for managers via the front page of ROVER online) and share the findings with the Governors and the LA Educational Visits Officer. This will be completed at least every 3 years or whenever a new Headteacher is appointed. Proposed actions in response to the review will be carried out in accordance with the target completion dates stated on the Review form, and will be reviewed annually by the EVC / Headteacher & Safeguarding & Buildings Committee.

The following should be read in conjunction with the corresponding chapters in the LA “Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits”, and provide additional information and policy statements that are specific to the school:

### **1. Planning and approval procedures**

Visits should be recorded, checked, and approved in accordance with the following procedures:

#### **Category 1 - DAY VISITS (ROUTINE)**

These are local visits that take place frequently or regularly throughout the year, or over a specific period of time (e.g. a series of six weekly visits) e.g. visits to local library, church. Category 1 visits should be recorded using LA Day Visits form on ROVER online and should be checked and approved by the Headteacher. They should be submitted for approval at the beginning of the academic year to obtain “blanket approval” for the year and/or at least 2 weeks in advance of the first of a series of visits.

#### **Category 2 – DAY VISITS (NON ROUTINE)**

These are one-off or occasional visits e.g. day visit to York Minster/Scarborough Sea Life Centre. Category 2 visits should be recorded using LA Day Visits form on ROVER online and should be checked and approved by the Headteacher. In addition, the Governing Body should be informed of visits that will take/have taken place. Category 2 visits should be submitted for approval at least 2 weeks in advance.

Category 3 (residential) and 4 (overseas) visits do not take place at this school due to the age of the children.

Permission for visit must be sought by the Visit Leader on the school’s in-house “Visit Approval” form. These forms must be submitted to the Headteacher / EVC at least two weeks before the visit unless there are extenuating circumstances.

### **2. Visit objectives**

All educational visits should have a defined purpose, with clearly stated, justifiable educational objectives, or else they may not be approved, and may not be covered by the LA insurance.

### **3. Selection of young people**

Every effort is made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

### **4. The Overall Group Leader/Visit Organiser**

The Overall Group Leader must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their role and responsibilities by the Headteacher.

### **5. Deputy, Assistant and Volunteer Leaders**

Visits normally require a Deputy Leader who is able to deputise, and take full responsibility for the Overall Group Leader, if necessary. Assistant Leaders should be chosen carefully, and must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities by the Headteacher / EVC and Overall Group Leader.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that all adults involved in the supervision of children during school-related activities (including visits) are suitable people to work with children, and pose no threat to the young people in their care. Concerns about possible child abuse or poor practice by a member of staff, volunteer or other adult should be reported immediately. Young people on educational visits should at all times have ready access to a competent adult who has an appropriate level of first aid training. This normally requires at least one of the group’s leaders to have an appropriate and current first aid qualification (6-8 hours of emergency aid training is the minimum training recommended for leaders on educational visits).

### **6. Staffing selection and supervision ratios**

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of the children on educational visits. The LA’s “Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits” provide recommended minimum staffing ratios, but the choice of staff and the decision regarding ratios is still a

matter of judgement for the Headteacher, after consultation with the EVC and Overall Group Leader (and LA Ed Visits Officer, if necessary), as part of the risk assessment and management process. It is generally good practice to have at least two adults accompanying any off-site experience so that there is some flexibility and reserve capacity if things go wrong.

If volunteers are taken on trips, these are usually regular school helpers and are already DBS cleared. The school normally staffs trips with school staff or school helpers. Permission from the Headteacher must be sought if non-DBS cleared adults are planned to be used in any respect.

## **7. Selection and suitability of accommodation or venues to be visited**

As part of the overall risk assessment process, and in keeping with their legal duty of care, the Overall Group Leader must take reasonable steps to check that any venue (e.g. castles or museums) that the group plans to visit, are suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe. Many organisations now have websites or supply teacher information packs that provide all reasonable assurances regarding standards, or have obtained a Learning Outside the Classroom “Quality Badge”. However, if necessary, the Provider Assurance Form (EV2) can be sent to the manager of a place of accommodation or venue to be visited, requesting signed, written assurances regarding their safety management systems and operating procedures. When planning a visit, the Visit Organiser (and other group leaders) should, wherever possible, undertake an exploratory visit to inspect and familiarise themselves with the accommodation to be used and venues to be visited.

## **8. Risk assessments and management**

The school has a legal duty of care for its young people, and must therefore give careful consideration to the hazards involved during an educational visit, and ensure that risks are managed at reasonable and acceptable levels. The Visit Organiser should undertake an appropriate risk assessment for each visit, and this should be shared/discussed/agreed by all visit leaders before the visit takes place. Appropriate written evidence of this process should be provided.

The process of risk assessment should be a positive means of raising awareness of hazards and prompting constructive discussion regarding the best means of risk management – it should therefore be of real practical value to the leaders and group members, not just a paper exercise. A set of written generic risk assessments and a blank specific visit form is available on the Local Authority’s Educational Visits website [http://www.eriding.net/educ\\_visits/index.shtml](http://www.eriding.net/educ_visits/index.shtml) and a link to this site is also available via ROVER Online.

All relevant generic risk assessment forms are reviewed, amended, and agreed at the start of each academic year by all relevant staff. These are stored in a clearly marked box file (labelled as Health & Safety) in the school office and staff are encouraged to reference these if unsure about agreed practice or before undertaking visits that they are less familiar with. New leaders/volunteers are asked to read all relevant forms and add their signed agreement before assisting with the leadership of a visit.

An additional specific visit risk assessment should be completed by the visit leaders for each visit to record and share information about potential hazards and precautions that may be particularly noteworthy for that specific group, doing particular activities, at specific sites on that visit. Completed assessments are approved by the school Headteacher/EVC.

## **9. Insurance and finance arrangements (including charging arrangements)**

The Headteacher/EVC/Overall Group Leader must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place for all educational visits, and Group Leaders should check carefully that the scope and level of cover provided is adequate for each visit. Visit Organisers should also check that any external service providers have sufficient public liability cover (normally at least £5 million). The school pays annually for LA Voyager insurance which covers all school visits within the UK (providing the visits are correctly approved).

The Visit Organiser and school EVC should ensure that:

- each visit is accurately costed and budgeted for;
- adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances;
- financial plans – especially for more complex and committing visits – are checked over and agreed first by the EVC/Headteacher before financial commitments are made;
- the costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents), including how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute;
- money collected for visits is kept in a separate school account, and secure systems are in place to ensure that money is accessed and accounted for correctly.

### **Charging arrangements (for more details see school charging policy)**

No charge may be made in respect of any activity that is deemed to take place in school hours. An activity is deemed to take place during “school hours” if 50% or more of the activity, takes place within school hours. If more than 50% is deemed to be outside of school hours then a charge may be made for “optional extras” only. The school will not charge for:

- any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum , or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip during school hours.

**However, the school may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of these visits, but it must be clear that any contribution is genuinely voluntary.**

Where it is not permissible to charge parents, any subsidy will come from school funds / voluntary fund raising or voluntary parental contribution.

The school may charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras (see details in the school charging policy) but any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. The costs of the visit should be clear to all concerned, stating how much will be given from other school funds and how much parents are being expected to contribute.

## **10. Transport**

As part of the overall risk assessment process, the Visit Organiser must take reasonable steps to check that any transport used during the visit is suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe, and that any specific Local Authority or legal requirements are met. Leaders should refer to the Local Authority’s generic risk assessments that give detailed recommendations for all standard forms of transport.

The school hires coaches/buses from companies that have already been checked and approved by the Council’s Transport Services team.

For the safe supervision of pupils on coaches/buses, group leaders are required to sit in various locations, spread throughout the coach; sit near emergency exits and carry a first aid kit and mobile phone.

The Headteacher must ensure the safety of pupils travelling by private car, and should:

- assess and decide if the driver is suitably qualified, experienced and competent;
- inform parents and obtain their written consent (this may not be possible in emergencies);
- gain assurance on main points of reference – insurance, licence, roadworthy, seatbelts, etc;
- carry out suitable Child Protection checks (Council policy requires all drivers carrying young people to be DBS cleared);
- ensure that drivers are aware of any specific requirements (e.g. compulsory use of seatbelts – individual school policies may require the use only of full 3-point seatbelts)
- ensure that drivers are aware of their responsibilities and school procedures (e.g. use of seat belts, keeping to speed limits etc).

- drivers have appropriate insurance – inc business cover for employees

For visits that require the use of staff cars, drivers must have business insurance and be assessed as competent and suitable by the headteacher (using the Driver validation form).

For visits that require the use of parents' cars. Drivers must:

- be assessed as competent and suitable by the headteacher (using the Driver validation form)
- sign to say their car is roadworthy, taxed and insured
- be DBS checked
- be part of a recorded pool of drivers who have been assessed and approved.

The school does not have use of a mini-bus.

## **11. Parent/Guardian information and consent**

The Overall Group Leader and EVC must ensure that parents/guardians are provided with appropriate and sufficient information about all visits. The amount of information and method of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned and the assessed level of risk involved. Parents/guardians of each pupil on a visit are asked to complete and sign a written consent form, whether it be an annual "rolling" consent for routine visits, or specific consent for a particular visit/activity. There is no legal requirement to obtain parental consent for visits/activities during normal school hours but it is nonetheless good practice to inform parents and seek consent for any activities that parents might be particularly concerned about.

Any special/medical needs of pupils are collated by the Year Group Leader and supervising staff are briefed and trained accordingly. Parents are asked to give written consent to the administration of plasters and off-the-shelf first aid/medication, if deemed necessary. Medical information and consent forms can be obtained from the school office. Parents should be clearly informed of the arrangements and responsibilities for collecting a pupil after a visit. The Visit Organiser/EVC must obtain parent contact details for all pupils on the visit.

In this school, parents sign a blanket consent form on entry to school which gives permission for visits into the local area (ie. when transport is not needed). A separate letter with permission slip is sent for all other visits. Parental consent for first aid is obtained on the school Admission Form as well as medical details. Asthma forms are filled in by parents for children with asthma. These are all kept in the school office. Teachers have to ensure that inhalers are taken on any school educational visit.

## **12. Staff briefing and emergency procedures**

It is important that all staff (including volunteers) involved in the leadership of a visit are fully briefed about each visit. Staff should be aware of their expected roles and responsibilities before, during and after a visit. Group leaders should be aware of emergency procedures and how to obtain outside assistance or contact the emergency services if required. Part of the planning for emergencies must involve the recording of one or more Emergency Home Contact(s) who should be available at any time during the visit. The Visit Organiser must ensure that group leaders have immediate access to the emergency contact details of the school managers and the parents of those on the visit. A properly equipped first aid kit is always available to staff during school visits and must be checked and taken on all visits. The school first aid kits are stored in the Physical Management Room. All staff should be made aware of the conduct and behaviour expected of them during the visit, particularly in regard to issues such as smoking and alcohol use. Teachers may use their own mobile phones when needing to contact the school & the school office must have these numbers.

## **13. Briefing and preparation of young people**

Providing relevant information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for all school visits. Pupils should be briefed about safety arrangements and what clothing/equipment should be brought. Leaders must ensure that pupils clearly understand what will be considered unacceptable behaviour or conduct, and the consequences of non-compliance. "Buddy systems" are an effective means of promoting safety and welfare within the group. Pupils should be briefed what to do in an emergency, or if they become separated from the rest of the group. It is good practice to teach pupils how to recognize dangers and manage risks sensibly.

#### **14. Documentation (and visit records)**

The ROVER database will store key elements of visit details securely and indefinitely. Hard copies of other supporting documentation (e.g. risk assessments) are stored and retained in the school's central "Health & Safety" box file under "Educational Visits". This is located in the school office. This information is stored until such time that the Headteacher decides that all issues/ incidents arising from the visit have been dealt with fully. If no significant incidents occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork at the end of the academic year unless it is helpful to keep for future visits. If a minor incident occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork after a period of 6 years. If a significant incident occurs during a visit that could be investigated at a later date, all relevant details are retained until the young person becomes 21 in the Accident Investigation file. This is located in the school office.

#### **16. Visit approval status and feedback**

Low risk day visits (Cat 1 and 2) are approved in-house by the Headteacher using ROVER Online.

Visit Organisers must complete a Visit Approval Form and present it to the Headteacher / EVC. Before the visit can go ahead, the form must be signed by the Headteacher to say that the visit has been approved. If a visit is not approved or only given "Outline Approval" by a manager, they must give reasons for their decision and state clearly any changes that would be necessary. If a visit does not obtain the correct level of approval, it may not be covered by LA insurance and support.

#### **17. Amendments to visits**

If there are significant late changes to visit plans that have already been approved or submitted for approval, the Visit Organiser must notify the Headteacher / EVC) of these changes, and ensure that additional consent is given. There should be a clear system for the notification and approval of amendments to visit plans, so that there can be no misunderstanding or confusion by any parties involved. This will involve amending the Visit Approval Form and re-submitting it to the Headteacher / EVC.

#### **20. Post visit review and evaluation**

It is good practice for Visit Organisers, on return from a visit, to review the visit with the Headteacher / EVC, and to record any examples of good practice and lessons learned that might assist with the planning and leadership of future visits. In particular, it is important to record and review any accidents, incidents, or near-misses (i.e. dangerous incidents that nearly happened, but fortunately didn't). It is important that details are recorded as soon as possible after an incident whilst they are still fresh in the memory, preferably with signed witness accounts.

Visit Organisers should take several blank photocopied pages from the school's accident book to record details of any incidents. These can then be copied or added to the school accident book on return home. Serious incidents must be notified to RIDDOR (HSE's "Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995), and to the Local Authority using the procedures and standard forms available from the Headteacher.

Post-visit reviews and evaluations should be recorded and stored on ROVER in section 20 or using the downloadable form (VGA 20.1) in the LA's "Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits". Post visit reviews and accident/near misses records are reviewed annually by the Safeguarding and Buildings Governor's Committee unless the Headteacher deems that an incident should be brought to their attention earlier. Any lessons learned are shared with all relevant staff, and any necessary changes to procedures made.

After any major accident, the school will undertake a review of the incident and their emergency procedures, and will share the findings with the Local Authority for the benefit of other schools. Staff are encouraged to express any concerns regarding the organisation and management of visits in writing to the Headteacher, and these will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence. If necessary, issues will be

considered further by the Governing Body. Significant incidents and issues of concern should also be brought immediately to the attention of the LA Educational Visits Officer.

This policy has been reviewed and revised by:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
S Kay-Wood	Headteacher		01/03/15

This policy has been agreed by:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Safeguarding & Buildings Committee			
Staff			

To be reviewed: Summer Term 2018