



Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Primary School
Educational Visits Policy

ISSUE DATE: September 2018

REVIEW DATE : September 2019

ELECTRONIC

A. M. Phillips

SIGNATURE

HEADTEACHER

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

1. General Statement of Policy

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Primary School recognises the value of off-site visits to pupils as an enrichment to their studies, and to their personal and social development. Such visits can improve the individual's affiliation to the school and help generate positive relationships with their teachers.

- 1.1. EVOLVE visit notifications will, as a minimum, state
 - the educational purpose of the visit,
 - its aims and objectives and
 - how it conforms to the school's curriculum aims.
- 1.2 EVOLVE will be used to provide assurance that each visit is methodically and suitably planned.
- 1.3 Approval of visits will be outlined within the arrangements section of this policy.
- 1.4 Competencies required for the nominated Visit Leader and supervisors will be clearly defined.
- 1.5 Where the school uses external providers, the visit leader must satisfy themselves that they will deliver quality; have public liability insurance; and meet health & safety standards. This can be done by consulting Evolve; KADDI; and/or the use of E2 & E3 provider forms.
- 1.6 Risk assessments and procedures for managing risks will be in place for all risks that are reasonably foreseeable.
- 1.7 The timescales for the proposal, approval and departure of each visit will be included in the arrangements section of this policy in line with EVOLVE.
- 1.8 Suitable and sufficient information will be provided to parents to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether their child should accompany the trip.
- 1.9 No child will be allowed to embark on any visit without producing a consent form signed by their parent/guardian.
- 1.10 Every trip or visit will be subject to a review on EVOLVE.

2. Organisation

Responsibility for educational visits rests with the Governing Body and Headteacher. The respective roles of each are outlined within the Policy Handbook for Educational Visits available on Evolve and OEAP National Guidance web site.

2.1 Governing Body

2.1.1 Approval of visits in category 3 will be undertaken by (*Dependent on own establishment Policy – the LA no longer requires Chair of governing Body signature on risk assessments*).

2.1.2 The person named above will be the nominated governor for Educational Visits, as outlined in the OEAP National Guidance for Managing Educational Visits at www.oeapng.info. (A governor 'read only' Evolve account is available.)

2.1.3 The Headteacher's report outlining visits planned and the results of the reviews of visits undertaken will be submitted annually.

2.1.4 An evaluation of the visit will be available to view on EVOLVE. This should be completed within a 28 day window following the visit. After 28 days this option is not available on Evolve.

2.2 Headteacher

2.2.1 The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that Educational Visits are planned in accordance with Leeds City Council's policies and procedures, that the supervisors are competent, physically and mentally fit and that governor assent has been given if required.

2.2.2 The Headteacher will authorise all visits via EVOLVE.

2.2.3 The Headteacher will report visits planned and the results of the reviews of visits undertaken to the Governing Body annually.

2.3 Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

2.3.1 The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator is:

2.3.2 They will undertake duties as agreed between them and the Headteacher in line with the responsibilities listed in the Policy Handbook for Educational Visits.

2.3.3 The EVC will be trained and fully conversant with the Policy Handbook for Educational Visits ; OEAP National Guidance web site; and have access to the afPE Safe practice in Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity.

2.3.4

2.4 Visit Leader

2.4.1 The Visit Leader will comply with the requirements outlined in the Policy Handbook for Educational Visits and their role as defined in the OEAP National Guidance.

- 2.4.2 The Visit Leader will ensure that the notification is completed on EVOLVE within time scales and that any activities or events that may place staff or pupils at significant risk are assessed and that safety measures are in place prior to the trip taking place.
- 2.4.3 The Visit Leader will ensure that all parents of children on their trip are provided with all information required and that any questions raised are answered prior to the trip taking place.
- 2.4.4 The Visit Leader named for each visit will have overall responsibility for the visit whilst it is underway.
- 2.4.5 The Visit Leader will liaise with the EVC throughout the planning and preparation of their trip.
- 2.4.6 The Visit Leader will evaluate their trip on EVOLVE.

2.5 Supervisory staff

- 2.5.1 All staff assisting with supervision on any trip will be conversant with their responsibilities as stated in the Policy Handbook for Educational Visits. They should feel confident to challenge any unsafe practice observed.
- 2.5.2 All staff will ensure that the requirements of any risk assessments, risk control procedures and safe systems are followed.
- 2.5.3 All staff will ensure that once the trip has started, where any previously unforeseen hazards or risks are identified they are brought to the attention of the Visit Leader.
- 2.5.4 Staff will feedback information to the Visit Leader to enable a full review of the trip to be completed.

3. Arrangements

3.1 Proposals

- 3.1.1 The Visit Leader will submit a proposal to the Headteacher before starting an Evolve notification. The Evolve notification must be submitted within the following timescale for each category of visit to the EVC. Exceptions are possible but **MUST** be cleared.

Category	Latest date for submission to the EVC
1 - regular curriculum	1 week (recommended)
2 – one offs	2 weeks (recommended)
3 - overnight, overseas, adventurous	4 weeks (mandatory)

- 3.1.2 The EVOLVE notification must be completed for all category 3 visits.
- 3.1.3 Parents should be given sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision as to whether their child should participate in the visit taking place outside school hours. They must sign the relevant consent form (s), and provide emergency contact number(s) and all relevant medical details.
- 3.1.4 Where coach or minibus travel is to be used it must be in accordance with LCC regulations.

3.2 Notification

- 3.2.1 Notification will be made using EVOLVE within the time scales in 3.1.1.
- 3.2.2 The Visit Leader is responsible for planning the visit and completing the Evolve notification.
- 3.2.3 The Headteacher will ensure that the Visit Leader carries out this task.

3.3 Undertaking the visit

- 3.3.1 Once the notification has received approval the visit will commence in accordance with the itinerary and activities planned. Any deviation from the itinerary or planned activities must be considered by the Visit Leader and a dynamic risk assessment made prior to the alteration taking place.
- 3.3.2 A record must be kept of all such instances for evaluation and review purposes.
- 3.3.3 Any accidents or near misses that occur during a visit will be reported to Leeds City Council using the forms CF50 and/or CF50a upon the return of the group to school.
- 3.3.4 Any accidents that result in a pupil or member of staff having to go to hospital must be telephoned to the school contact immediately. Upon receipt of any such calls the school contact will immediately inform the Health and Safety team in Leeds City Council.

3.4 Monitoring

- 3.4.1 The school will monitor the implementation of this policy by ensuring that the documentation required has been produced to a satisfactory standard.
- 3.4.2 On occasions the EVC, Headteacher, Senior Manager or member of the Governing Body will accompany a group.
- 3.4.3 The school may also request Leeds City Council Health and Safety Team to undertake a monitoring visit of a planned trip or conduct an audit of their educational visit process. This will be used for the school's own monitoring purposes.

3.5 Evaluation and Review

- 3.5.1 The evaluation will be completed on EVOLVE.
- 3.5.2 The Visit Leader will report any significant issues with the visit to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team.
- 3.5.3 Every visit will be reviewed by the Visit Leader.
- 3.5.4 The results of the evaluation and review process will be available to the Headteacher via EVOLVE.
- 3.5.5 The Headteacher's report to the Governing Body will include details of the evaluations and reviews for visits undertaken.

Sample Consent for Sports Fixtures.

Child's name _____

Sports team _____

For the academic year _____

Dear Parent

Your child has been selected to represent the school on the above team. As such, s/he will be given opportunities throughout the year to participate in matches/tournaments/events and sometimes these might occur at short notice, e.g. if a team member drops out, etc.

In order for us to keep you informed and to ensure the safeguarding of your child please read this consent form carefully and then sign and return it to the school. Please note that without this consent form we will be unable to allow your child to participate in the sports fixtures. Please direct any enquiries about this form to the head of PE at the school.

1. Students are the responsibility of their parent/guardian once they have left the school premises after the fixture. Unless you tell us otherwise we will allow your child to leave the premises after the fixture to make their way home.
2. Parents/guardians should be aware that only the group leader is usually present on the minibus for an away fixture and that this person is commonly also the driver.
3. For fixtures away from school, involving transportation, students are expected to remain seated with their seat belts fastened and to behave sensibly at all times.
4. Parents/guardians must ensure that we have up to date contact details.
5. In the event of a serious injury, requiring hospital treatment, parents will be contacted as soon as possible by the group leader and given all the relevant facts. The priority will always be to get treatment for the child.
6. For minor injuries, first aid treatment will be administered by an appropriate person and the student will be brought back to school with the team.
7. Dates for fixtures will be given to pupils by their coach and/or displayed on the extra curricular notice board in the PE corridor. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure these dates are written in the planner in order that you too are aware of them.

8. I know how frustrating it can be for parents when matches have been cancelled at the last minute because of weather conditions or staffing problems, and I apologise for any inconvenience in advance. When matches are cancelled we do try to rearrange them as soon as possible and students are made aware of the dates at training sessions or from their captains.

9. We realise that for many students being part of a team is an important aspect of their school life. It is highly likely that students will, at some point, have to miss their normal timetabled lessons to participate in some sporting events. For this reason it is important that the student understands that his/her behaviour in lessons can influence their place on the team. They should be aware that failure to regularly do homework diligently may result in a temporary suspension from the team or that the class tutor prevents the student from missing their lesson.

Yours faithfully

Mrs E X Ample
Curriculum Leader for Physical Education

I am the parent/guardian of _____ in class _____ .

I have read this blanket consent form carefully and understand that I am giving my consent for my child to participate in the specified sports team.

I understand the procedures detailed above and will regularly check my child's planner for details of fixtures dates and times.

Signed _____ Print _____ Date _____.

Health and Safety Bulletin

2/2011

Leeds City Council Insurance cover in relation to school trips and visits

Introduction

We have received information from Zurich Insurance; the City Council insurance providers; in relation to the level / type of cover provided to schools for trips and visits. The information is in relation to staff and pupils attending trips and visits who have pre existing medical conditions. Below are details of the information Zurich have provided :-

“In line with many Travel insurance policies, Zurich has an exclusion in its Business Travel and School Journey policies referring to “travel against medical advice”, usually stating the following:

5. Travelling Against Medical Advice

excluding any expenses incurred if an Insured Person is travelling or intending to travel against the advice of a Medical Practitioner

We strongly recommend that if there is any doubt over a current or recent medical condition that the traveller visits their doctor to make sure they are fit to travel and are not invalidating their cover. This will help to avoid potential difficulties should the need to claim arise later for cancellation, or sickness happening during the trip.

The person insured should get a written statement from their GP or other medical practitioner at most 7 days before the trip starts stating that they are fit to travel having regard to (a) the condition itself and (b) the following features of the trip :

- destination; activities; duration ; methods of travel*

The person insured should tell the medical professional that the required statement is for specific insurance purposes and that it may be relied upon to substantiate the validity of a Medical Expenses claim should it later need to be made.

Please note that for longer trips (usually beyond 6 months) different considerations will usually apply, so please contact us should such a trip be planned.”

Schools should obtain as much information as possible in relation to pre existing medical conditions of proposed travellers and if needs be obtain a “fit to travel” note from the travellers GP / medical adviser.

Bulletins available on Evolve

- 4 2015 Educational Visits – notified to all EVCs on Evolve September 2015
- 4 2016 Farm Visits
- 5 2016 Educational Visits – notified to all EVCs on Evolve September 2016 & School Governors via the Governors Unit.
- 4 2017 Educational Visits - notified to all EVCs on Evolve September 2017; Heads & School Governors via the Governors Unit.

Visits in category 1

Definition	<p>Curriculum based activities that take place on a regular basis, occur largely within working hours and are not classed as Category 3 visits.</p> <p>These will be lessons, activities and experiences that parents would consider being a part of the school day and will include visits to swimming pools, playing fields, sports halls, field study sites, split site lessons, work placements and visits to other schools.</p> <p>Sporting activities after the end of normal school hours will be included where such an event is a natural extension of the school day and it is unreasonable to expect parental consent to be sought for each event, for example a regular school sports club.</p>
EVOLVE	These visits should be planned on EVOLVE.
School/ Centre Approval	By the Head of School/Centre– this may be implicit within the school timetable.
LA Approval	These do not need LA approval. Schools can request that a visit form is checked by adding a note to that effect. Some Category 1 visits will be monitored by Leeds City Council to fulfil the LA’s statutory monitoring role.
Parental Consent	Written parental consent may be provided on an annual or termly basis for certain types of visit, where it is deemed prudent to seek such consent. Some schools may wish to seek parental consent for all trips, to ensure that home contact numbers are up to date or because of the special educational or medical needs of the pupils involved. Visits taking place during school hours do not require consent. Your own establishment educational visits policy may require parental permission though.
Risk Assessments	<p>Activities will need to be assessed – e.g. crossing the road, maintaining suitable levels of supervision etc. These should be undertaken prior to the visit taking place.</p> <p>There are sample risk assessments for a range of activities on EVOLVE.</p>

Visits in category 2

Definition	<p>Day visits, school trips and activities that parents would not regard as a part of the normal school day and which are not classed as Category 3 visits.</p> <p>Such activities will extend beyond normal working hours but do not involve any overnight stay. They may include visits to a museum, theatre, sporting events elsewhere in the country – e.g. London, Scotland, that can be reached and returned within the same day avoiding the period between 2am and 6am..</p>
EVOLVE	These visits should be planned through EVOLVE to allow consistency of standards in the school and throughout Leeds City Council.
School/Centre Approval	Head of School/Centre
LA Approval	These do not need LA approval. Schools can request that a visit form is checked by adding a note to that effect. Some Category 2 visits will be monitored by Leeds City Council to fulfil the LA's statutory monitoring role.
Parental Consent	Parents must be informed of the nature of any such visit taking place outside school hours and consent will be required in writing or by secure eConsent.
Risk Assessments	<p>Activities will need to be assessed – e.g. crossing the road, maintaining suitable levels of supervision, use of road transport, etc.</p> <p>Risk assessments should be undertaken prior to a Category 2 visit being undertaken to enable the EVC to decide whether the visit can be approved or not.</p>

Visits in Category 3

Definition	<p>Visits which are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight, i.e. residential or active between 2am and 6am • Overseas, i.e. outside of the borders of the UK • Adventurous, i.e. any activity requiring an AALA license or a national qualification to undertake, e.g. canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, archery, etc.
EVOLVE	All visits in this category MUST be notified to the LA using EVOLVE
School Approval	Head of School/Centre

<p>LA Approval</p>	<p>The notification should be submitted to the HSWT no later than 4 weeks prior to the visit taking place.</p> <p>Where no further information is required approval will be given via EVOLVE for the visit to go ahead.</p> <p>Where further information is required or there are other issues to address, approval will only be given once the responses have been received.</p>
<p>Parental Consent</p>	<p>Parental consent must be given for any person in full time education. Consent will be required in writing or by secure eConsent.</p>
<p>Risk Assessments</p>	<p>Risk assessments should be completed for all aspects of the visit, including methods for supervising whilst undertaking activities, means of transport to and from the location, use of the accommodation etc.</p>

The Approval Process

For category 1 and 2 visits.

1. The EVOLVE notification is completed by the Visit Leader.
2. Risk Assessment and supporting information is attached.
3. The notification is submitted to the EVC.
4. The EVC reviews the information on the notification and, if it is appropriately planned in accordance to the standards outlined in this document, submits the notification to the HT/HOC/HOS.
5. The HT/HOC/HOS reviews the form and authorises the visit if it meets the standards outlined in this document.

For category 3 visits, the HT/HOC/HOS should have the consent of their nominated governor/trustee to authorise the visit.

6. The notification is automatically sent to the HSWT for approval.



Roles and Responsibilities- The LA

The Local Authority (Leeds City Council) has a responsibility to ensure that the following is provided:

- Written guidelines for schools, which include advice on risk assessment, competencies, training and school policies.
- A means of assessing proposals for visits in Category 3 (EVOLVE) and advice regarding visits in other categories.
- Emergency telephone contact for the duration of the visit, where necessary.
- Access is available to specified staff for advice.
- Appropriate insurance cover (Zurich) is maintained.
- Procedures to monitor and review safety during off-site visits are in place.

Leeds City Council' Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team is responsible for:

- Managing the EVOLVE system
- Notification and approval of school visits.
- Maintenance of the Handbook for Educational Visits.
- The issue of advice and instruction for visits.
- Dissemination of national guidance for school visits.
- Monitoring and provision of advice on the health and safety aspects of training and Continuous Professional Development.
- Monitoring school visits.
- Delivering EVC and Visit Leader Awareness Training.

Roles and Responsibilities- The Governing Body – SEE ALSO page 46

The Governing Body should ensure that the school / establishment has a policy relating to Educational Visits. There is a sample policy in this handbook. Exemplars are available from HSWT.

The Governing Body should satisfy itself that suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been carried out and that appropriate safety measures are in place, including appropriate levels of supervision and appropriate levels of competency, before approving any visits. These details have to be entered on EVOLVE and therefore the nominated governor can read the information relating to the visit on EVOLVE to satisfy themselves that there are sufficient safeguards in place.

Training and support can be provided to the governing body by the HSW team and by the Governor Support Service.

The governing body may be informed in writing by the HSW team if a notifiable visit goes without approval.

Category 1 and 2 visits

The Governing Body should require the Headteacher to report Category 1 and 2 visits and activities undertaken at a frequency agreed by the Governing Body.

Category 3 visits

The Governing Body may be required to approve Category 3 depending on own school policy. The LA no longer requires governor approval. Governors should ensure the LA is notified of these visits within the time scales in 3.1.1. On EVOLVE, a nominated governor (this does not have to be the chair) can add a note to the visit form to give approval.

Roles and Responsibilities- The EVC

The EVC is the person responsible for the organisation of visits in an establishment. It is highly recommended that the EVC is not the headteacher/head of service but has the necessary experience to undertake this role. Training for this role is mandatory.

With the introduction of EVOLVE, it is expected that the administrative burden will be reduced for EVCs and all staff involved in planning a visit.

EVOLVE automatically undertakes a significant proportion of the checks that were manually assessed by the EVC previously, including ratios, transport arrangements, etc. A notification can only be submitted to the EVC by the Visit Leader once all the sections are complete and correct and therefore the assessment of the notification should be a much simpler and shorter process.

- To give advice and guidance on the organisation of educational visits and the use of EVOLVE.
- To manage EVOLVE for the establishment including managing users, uploading documents and approving notifications.
- To provide or arrange training for educational visits where required.
- To monitor a selection of visits for internal monitoring.
- To act as a liaison between the HSW team and the establishment.
- To be conversant with both the OEAP National Guidance and this policy handbook.

Roles and Responsibilities- The Head of School/Centre/Service

The Head of School/Centre/Service is responsible for ensuring that:

- The establishment's policy for visits is implemented.
- Guidance from the LA, as detailed in this handbook and OEAP National Guidance, is followed and that the arrangements for any visit are thoroughly scrutinised prior to approval being sought or given.
- Time scales are adhered to.

Roles and Responsibilities- The Visit Leader

One person per visit should be identified as having overall responsibility for planning the visit and the welfare of the group. This person will be known as the Visit Leader. They must have the necessary experience and competencies to lead the visit. Training for this role is available and recommended.

- The establishment's policy for visits is implemented.
- Guidance from the LA, as detailed in this handbook and OEAP National Guidance, is followed and that the arrangements for any visit are thoroughly scrutinised prior to approval being sought or given.
- Time scales are adhered to.

Roles and Responsibilities- Teachers, Youth Leaders and other adult helpers

All other adult helpers, whether teachers, youth leaders, non-teaching staff or volunteers will act “*in loco parentis*” and will also have a duty of care towards anyone they are supervising. Their duty of care will require them to do everything a ‘*prudent parent*’ would do to reasonably ensure the safety and welfare of the young persons. Visit leader training is available for all school staff.

They must follow the Visit Leader’s instructions at all times. If, however, they feel that risks to participants and colleagues are not acceptable they must inform the Visit Leader of their concerns. If they believe that their concerns are justified but are not being considered they must report the matter to the school immediately. Such instances may include where the conditions outlined within a risk assessment have changed significantly enough for the assessment to become invalid, requiring a new assessment to be carried out, but where the Visit Leader, for whatever reason, chooses not to re-assess the risk.

Non-employee adults acting as supervisors must not be left in sole charge of the participants.

Participant Responsibilities

Participants must:

- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and other supervisors at all times during a visit.
- Not take unnecessary risks or undertake activities that have not been assessed or are not included within the visit programme.
- Inform the Visit Leader or other supervisors of anything they feel might hurt themselves or others in the group.
- When abroad, be sensitive to local codes and customs, and should be informed of these prior to the visit.

Parent/ Carer Responsibilities

Parents must be informed of the rules and procedures to be followed during the trip and should ensure that their children are aware of and will follow them.

Parents will need to:

- Provide emergency contact details to the school/service.
- Sign the parental consent form if the visit is taking place outside school hours.
- Provide details regarding their child’s emotional, psychological and physical health that may be relevant to the visit.

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England

April 2014

Day trips, residential visits and sporting activities

40. Governing bodies should ensure that their arrangements are clear and unambiguous about the need to support actively pupils with medical conditions to participate in school trips and visits, or in sporting activities, and not prevent them from doing so. Teachers should be aware of how a child's medical condition will impact on their participation, but there should be enough flexibility for all children to participate according to their own abilities and with any reasonable adjustments. Schools should make arrangements for the inclusion of pupils in such activities with any adjustments as required unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP states that this is not possible.

41. Schools should consider what reasonable adjustments they might make to enable children with medical needs to participate fully and safely on visits. It is best practice to carry out a risk assessment so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are included. This will require consultation with parents and pupils and advice from the relevant healthcare professional to ensure that pupils can participate safely. Please also see Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance on school trips.

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▪ asthma inhalers – once regulations are changed, schools will be able to hold asthma inhalers for emergency use. This is entirely voluntary, and the Department of Health is producing a protocol which will provide further information.

Unacceptable practice

43. Governing bodies should ensure that the school's policy is explicit about what practice is not acceptable. Although school staff should use their discretion and judge each case on its merits with reference to the child's individual healthcare plan, it is not generally acceptable practice to:

- prevent children from participating, or create unnecessary barriers to children participating in any aspect of school life, including school trips, eg by requiring parents to accompany the child.

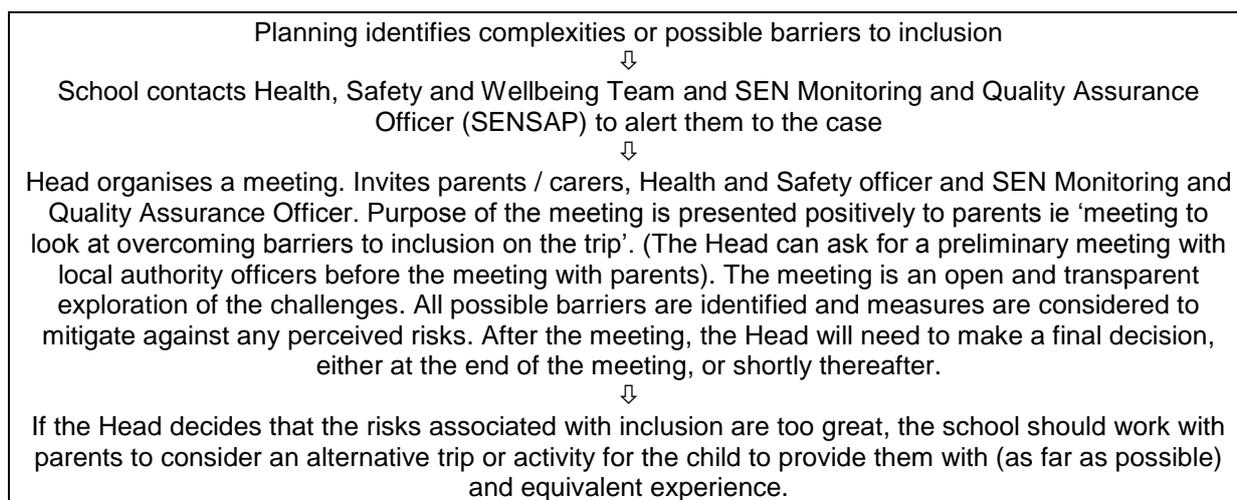
The inclusion of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) on trips and other out-of-school activities.

1. The Anticipatory Duty

There is an 'anticipatory duty' under the Equality Act 2010 which necessitates that schools '*should not wait until a disabled person wants to use its services, but must think in advance (and on an ongoing basis) about what disabled people might reasonably need*'. In relation to trips and other activities, this means that all considerations around accessibility are made and addressed at the planning stage and in good time for the necessary arrangements to be made.

2. Complex cases

In the vast majority of cases, schools will not need to make great efforts to include disabled children in making the necessary arrangements. In the case of children with complex needs, or concerns that a trip may not be accessible to them, it is important to follow a rigorous, collaborative process:



Parents are more likely to accept a decision (even if it not the decision they were hoping for) if they have been party to genuine and strenuous efforts for overcome barriers. Indeed, including parents in such meetings is also a good way of demonstrating how seriously the school takes its responsibility to disabled children.

3. Valid reasons for non-inclusion

There are certain circumstances wherein Head teachers may conclude that it will not be possible to include a child on a trip. Eg:

- Tensions between the duty to include a child under the Equality Act, and other statutory duties such as the duty to ensure their safety, or the safety of others (in terms of Health and Safety or Safeguarding)
- Prohibitive costs (see note 7 below)

It is important that Heads do not place children with disabilities (or other pupils, staff or members of the public) at unacceptable risk in allowing them to take part in a trip or activity. Whilst the duty to work on addressing barriers is compelling, it is not as compelling as the duty to ensure safety.

4. The risk assessment

Head teachers should be guided in their decision making by the risk assessment which identifies all possible barriers and includes measures to mitigate against them. It is not necessary for all risks to be entirely removed for the child to be included, but the risks must be within an acceptable range.

It is crucial that the risk assessment process is rigorous. In the event of a formal (even legal) challenge from parents under the Equality Act, the rigour of the risk assessment will be closely scrutinised. For this reason, Head teachers are advised to involve Health, Safety and Wellbeing professionals in the process, to act as

critical friends. Decisions relating to the exclusion of disabled children from trips should never be made 'behind closed doors' without consultation as this is unlikely to be considered sufficiently rigorous.

5. The definition of 'disability'

You are disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have 'a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' (over 12 months) negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities'.

Because this definition is so broad, we would advise against neglecting to follow these recommendations on the basis that you do not consider the child to be disabled. It is not necessary to have a formal diagnosis to be considered disabled under the Act, and the definition includes mental health difficulties.

6. Parental support

In some cases, schools may request that parents / carers accompany their disabled children on a trip. It is acceptable to make such an offer / request, but it is important that this is not seen as a condition of the child's inclusion on the trip. In the event that the parent / carer is unable to offer their time, the school will need to make other arrangements through their staffing resource.

7. Prohibitive costs

In some circumstances, Head teachers may deem that the costs associated with including a disabled child on a trip are prohibitive. The Equality Act recognises that some costs may be 'unreasonable', but ultimately, the reasonableness of any costs are calculated in terms of the school's overall budget. It should also be noted that schools are, under the 'anticipatory duty' required to retain contingency funding in the event that costs associated with inclusion arising during the financial year. Heads should only conclude that costs are prohibitive if they are confident of being able to demonstrate why this is the case.

Schools should not ask parents or carers of disabled children to contribute to the additional costs associated with the inclusion of their child. Any additional costs must be distributed amongst all participants in the trip, or absorbed by the school.

8. The final decision

The final decision on whether or not to include a disabled child on a trip rests with the Head, and should not be delegated to a less senior member of staff. The Health and Safety and SEN professionals called in to support the school with the process may be able to provide opinions on certain aspects of the case (the rigour of the risk assessment, the appropriateness of support arrangements etc), but will not be able to provide the Head with guidance on the decision he / she should make. It is important to understand that there is often no 'right or wrong' answer in such cases, and different people calculate risks in different ways. It is important that the process leading up to the decision has been rigorous and genuine, and the Head can demonstrate that the decision has been made in the child's best interests. . It should be noted that legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 ultimately rests with the governing body.

9. Equivalent experience

In the event that the Head has deemed the risks associated with the disabled child's inclusion unacceptable, the school should either provide the child with an alternative experience on the same trip or consider what can be done to provide the child with a separate activity that is, as far as possible, equivalent to the trip or activity they have missed. This 'equivalence' should be considered in terms of both the educational and experiential aspects of the trip and should be a shared experience (ie involving friends and peers). The Head should involve the child's parents in the decision making and planning process around this separate activity. Any reasonable costs associated with this should be borne by the school.

10. Behaviour

There are particular challenges associated with children whose needs manifest themselves in potentially harmful, or aggressive behaviour. Heads can encounter requests from parents (of other children), pupils or staff not to include a child whose behaviour might affect the enjoyment of the other participants. Whilst such concerns are understandable, they should not be considered factors in the final decision making process, which should be focussed solely on the objective risk assessment and the conclusions drawn from it.