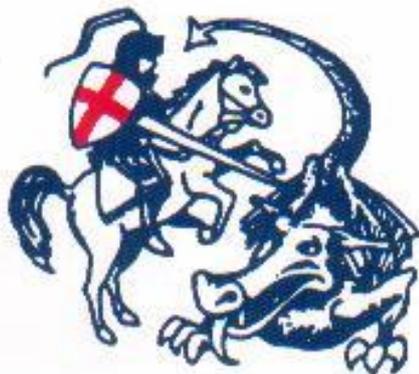


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Education Visits Policy

**Reviewed on: July 2017
To be reviewed: July 2018**

St George's CEP School Wrotham Kent



Signed by: Mrs S Chapman

Position held: Chair of Worship, Inclusion & Safeguarding

Date: 3/7/17

Signed by: Mr D Jones

Position held: Headteacher

Date: 3/7/17

Rationale

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances. These often the most memorable learning experiences, help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning.

They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside the classroom and vice versa. Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn.

The school has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Kent Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits. Further school procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

Kent Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits are available to view at: <http://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/outdoor-education> and the new Outside Education Unit website EVOLVE: www.outdoorlearningkent.co.uk/home

Aims and Purposes of Educational Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school.

The range of opportunities and activities are outlined in the school prospectus along with the criteria by which pupils are able to access them and the methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Extended Schools clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework, etc)
- School teams
- Regular nearby visits (village halls, libraries, shops, parks and woodlands, places of worship, farms)
- Day visits
- Residential visits (weekend and week)
- Overseas visits activities, which might be classed as higher risk.

These activities will be made available to children in many ways. School clubs will be arranged by the Extended Schools Leader and teachers running those clubs. Other trips will be made available to children through their class teachers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has nominated a teacher as per DfE Guidance as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities and has nominated the EVC and Headteacher in these roles, on behalf of the Governing Body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the EVC must approve the initial plan. Visits that include adventurous activities and/ or a residential element will require approval by the Local Authority via the on-line Visit Notification and Approval system. 'EVOLVE'. Usernames and Passwords will be managed by the EVC or Headteacher. Please note these activities require six school weeks prior notice for approval.

Day visits that do not include adventurous activities but involve groups travelling outside the County of Kent will be registered on the EVOLVE system.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For school teams and nearby visits, parents will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter enters the school.

Parents will be given the timetable for the extended school provision activities that pupils can sign up to and on application the parents sign their consent. They will be informed by Parent Text, letter, phone call or through their son or daughter if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more, parents will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to their son/daughter taking part. This will include a separate medical consent form. The school has a standard model letters for residential, which should be used for this purpose.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction,

apprenticeship and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

The school will ensure that appropriate screening (DBS check) is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

On residential visits the gender of the staff responsible for supervision and pastoral care will reflect the gender of the pupils.

The staff: pupil ratios will not exceed those as recommended by the Local Authority. The school does not support additional people accompanying educational visits who are not pupils at the school or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Governing Body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the conditions of booking by the parents, and will include guidance in relation to the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school.

The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Head Teacher or EVC. This permission will be based upon knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.

DBS checks should be carried out by the office on all volunteer helpers - hence much advance notice is needed and those intending to use voluntary help should liaise with the EVC as early as possible in the planning phase.

All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SLT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Visit Leader will take with them contact details of the appointed emergency school contacts.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems. The Outdoor Education Unit should also be advised of any serious incidents or accidents.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Visit Leader with the EVC. These will be made available for the Governing Body.

The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments for the visits or activities are evaluated and/or modified as a result of findings or feedback from the visit.

The Visit Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the school's procedures.

Appendices

- 1. Roles and Responsibilities of all parties**
- 2. Procedures for planning an educational visit**
- 3. Risk Assessments**

APPENDIX 1

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the Governors:

- To ensure that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the guidelines contained within *KCC Safe Practice of Offsite Activities*.
- To ensure that visits are approved as necessary by the LEA before bookings are confirmed.
- To agree to all residential visits, trips abroad and those involving outdoor and adventurous activities. In these instances, to ensure that bookings are not completed until external providers have met all the necessary assurances. (This service is provided by the LEA Outdoor Education Unit)
- To define which type of visits should be approved by the Governing Body, and/or the Head Teacher, and/or or the Educational Visit Co-ordinator.
- To ensure that all aspects of risk management have been considered and that risk assessments for travel, accommodation and activities have been carried out prior to departure. It is not expected that Governors should become directly involved in risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.
- Ask questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met. Are the objectives appropriate to the age and abilities of the pupil group? Why is a particular venue being used? Is the visit inclusive for all students? Is the visit value for money?
- To ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information; to investigate parental complaints.
- To review annually the EV policy and procedures including incident and emergency management systems.

Role of the Head Teacher:

See HASPEV paragraphs 21-23.

- To ensure that visits comply with the guidelines and regulations provided by the LEA (*Safe Practice of Offsite Activities*) and the School's own Health and Safety Policy.

- To ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent to oversee the co ordination of all off-site education, and support the EVC in attending relevant training courses.
- To ensure that the EVC keeps him or her informed of the progress of the visit and that this information is relayed to Governors (and to parents as necessary).
- To ensure that the activity leader is competent (experience and training) to undertake the activity.
- To check that the EVC has designated an appropriately competent group leader who will meet the LEA's criteria. For less routine visits, the Head Teacher will need to ensure that the EVC can obtain advice from an appropriate technical adviser as necessary.
- To ensure that in the event of a major incident or accident, LEA guidelines are adhered to in terms of informing parents, staff and the media. Help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near-accidents are investigated.

Role of the Educational Visit Co-ordinator:

It has been identified in the HASPEV supplements as good practice for each school to have an **Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC)**. The EVC's role is to support the Head Teacher in ensuring that all visits follow LEA regulations and guidance and all of the school's relevant policies and procedures and will act on behalf of the Head Teacher;

- To approve educational visits as agreed by the Head Teacher and Governing Body.
- To provide adequate documentation to support planning of all trips and visits.
- To ensure all off-site visits are thoroughly planned using standardised whole-school documentation.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the guidelines available through *Safe Practice of Offsite Activities* concerning their particular visit.
- To assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit. Competence of other adults proposed to provide support or lead activities within a visit will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body and/or previous experience and on the job training.
- To ensure visits have appropriate support ratios and adequate cover for health and safety, first aid, medication and behaviour management.

- To work with the visit leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.
- To organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit.
- To keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents' (sometimes known as 'near misses').
- To ensure that arrangements are in place for the Governing Body to be made aware of visits so that questions can be asked as necessary.
- To ensure that LEA Approval has been completed in full and has been submitted to the Outdoor Education Unit at least 6 weeks before the visit is due to depart.
- To ensure that visit evaluation is used to inform future visits and training needs. Further staff training should be made available where a need is identified.
- To arrange for the recording of accidents and the reporting of serious injuries as required. Accident and incident records should be reviewed regularly, and this information used to inform future visits.
- To review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.

Role of the Visit Leader:

The 'Handbook for Group Leaders' (HASPEV Supplement part 3) is available for all staff leading visits off-site and is adopted by the school as 'good practice' Also available on line through Clusterweb - Outdoor Education.

The Visit Leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including pre planning and following guidance and ensuring all participants are aware of their roles. To achieve this, the Visit Leader will;

- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of the visit.
- Complete visit documentation and obtain EVC approval for any visit off-site, no matter how short its duration
- Plan the itinerary in such a way as to account for all times on the visit including meal and 'down' times particularly on residential trips

- Have prior knowledge of the venue - the visit leader should normally have made an exploratory pre visit, (*see Safe Practice of Offsite Activities - Planning Checklist Para 7*).
- Inform parents and seek permission/consent, detailing the nature, purpose and related activities involved in the visit.
- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils and ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for. To ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them and that all adults understand that they are responsible to the visit leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them.
- To ensure that all adults involved in supervising the visit are aware of the risk assessments including 'Plan B' and the expected standards of behaviour.
- To continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions.

Role of the Pupil:

- To be aware of the risk assessments including 'Plan B'.
- To know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her and to alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties.
- To understand the need to have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated.
- To understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

APPENDIX 2

PROCEDURES

See HASPEV (Chapters 1 - 10)

KCC and HASPEV provide detailed guidelines on procedures in a range of specific situations likely to be encountered/undertaken on visits off-site. Visit leaders will need to be aware of the relevant sections before undertaking the trip.

The school has in place a clear process to be adhered to in planning and organising an educational visit or trip.

Planning

For all visits off site refer to Planning Checklist - *see KCC Safe Practice of Offsite Activities - Para 7;*

- Pre-visits. In most cases it is very important to undertake a pre visit. The need for a pre-visit should be discussed with the EVC. If a pre-visit is considered as not being necessary the reasons must be noted on the visit risk assessment.
- Complete a **risk assessment** to cover all aspects of the trip.
- **Confirm details** with, and **obtain approval** for the trip with the EVC.
- Ensure that all visits have been entered into the **school diary**.
- ***When the visit is authorised***, letters can be sent home to parents as necessary.
- Parents must always be made aware when their children are undertaking a visit and will be off school premises.
- Collect reply slips (bearing in mind some pupils in care of social services may also need additional permission from them) - No pupil will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission.
- Liaise with the EVC over any changes to the approved itinerary and arrangements.

In planning and organising a residential trip or visit involving outdoor and adventurous activities the above process remains relevant with the following additions.

- All visits involving a residential (overnight stay) and/or adventurous activities must be approved in principle by KCC **before** a contract is made with a Provider. Check through your EVC
- Confirm details with, and obtain approval for, the trip with the EVC ***at least 2 months prior to the visit*** to enable Governors to be informed.
- Obtain approval from the EVC for the overall management of visits. This will allow the date to be entered into the school diary ***at least 6 weeks prior to the visit.***
- ***When the visit is authorised,*** letters can be sent home to parents as necessary.
- Collect reply slips (bearing in mind some pupils in care of social services may also need additional permission from them) - No pupil will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission. Authorisation for the visit leader to act for the child in the event of a medical emergency should be implicit within the permission.
- Collect pupil donations using the procedures requested by the finance secretary in the office.
- Liaise with the EVC over any changes to the approved itinerary and arrangements.
- Wherever possible and practical a First-aider should accompany each visit offsite. There should always be an appropriate first aid box available for use. Your Risk Assessment will identify when a qualified First Aider is not necessary.

During the day

- The school documentation identifies many of the issues that school staff need to be aware of during the supervision of a visit off-site. These include the Behaviour Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy and Medication Policy. This contains permission for emergency medication should the need arise and details of specific medical plans for individual children. Where specific medical plans exist the visit leader is responsible for ensuring all staff and accompanying adults are aware of the plan.
- One of the key features of all visits is the need for all staff to be involved in on going risk assessments. Visit Leaders need to make decisions on an on going basis regarding the safety of the visit (see 'Risk Assessments'). This includes the support ratios and pupil groupings dependent upon social interactions and behavioural issues presented during the day. All members of staff need to be aware of the plans and procedures identified for dealing with pupils with specific behaviour plans.

- Visit Leaders must take a mobile phone in order to remain in contact with the school (and visa versa) during the time off-site. In the event of an emergency the school must be contacted immediately (or as soon as is practical) in order that the Head Teacher can take charge of the management of the incident. This procedure will follow the school's Emergency/Crisis Plan.

Review

- All journeys and visits off-site must be reviewed and evaluated in relation to the visit aims and purpose in order to aid future planning. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to inform the EVC of any specific issues affecting future visits concerning the venue, the transport or the group.
- In the case of a residential or outdoor or adventurous activity, this will take the form of a formal meeting in the week following the trip.

APPENDIX 3

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from.

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **Generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. These are usually prepared by the LEA/ employer or by the school. Examples of generic risk assessment include travel by train, coach travel and visits to the church. School staff will not normally prepare them unless they have accumulated specific experience or other expertise.
- **Visit/site specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group. These are usually undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared or agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks, such as the EVC.
- Activities such as swimming, crossing roads and curricular partnerships with other schools are examples of these site specific risk assessments where the same venue is used each week and barring any changes to the nature of that venue, our prime concern on a weekly basis is the risk presented by the group of pupils undertaking the visit.
- However for visits which are 'one offs', a specific risk assessment for the venue itself as well as for the pupils is required. Examples of this would be visits to farms, galleries, museums, public parks, garden centres etc. as part of a specific curriculum module for a specific class group
- For both of these the EVC will direct the visit leader to the relevant sections of LEA/employer and national guidelines covering the type of visit.
- **Ongoing risk assessments** are those that take account of unplanned and unexpected changes, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity. The visit leader is responsible for making decisions on an on going basis during the visit as to the appropriateness of continuing the visit in the light of prevailing conditions.
- **All staff and pupils should be aware of a "PLAN B" in the event of the**

planned agenda needing to change. Visit leaders are always in charge. They should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the visit leader's knowledge of the group is superior or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if they feel uncomfortable or believe that that it has become too hazardous.

- Where it is considered unsafe to include a particular pupil because there are serious doubts concerning their behaviour or it is felt that they represent a significant risk to themselves or others within the group (including staff), the Head Teacher will make the final decision on whether the pupil should access the trip and suitable alternatives that will meet the educational needs of the visit will be planned.

VETTING OF PROVIDERS

When a residential or visit that includes adventurous activities (see * LEA Approval System and Procedures Guidance Notes) is being considered, the Providers of such services will be vetted by the LEA on our behalf to ensure that it meets the LEA requirements. This is why the Outdoor Education Unit must be contacted prior (Pre Check) to any contracts being established. It is important that this check is made even if the chosen Provider is one that the school has used on previous occasions.

LICENSED ACTIVITIES

Most Providers who offer adventurous activities require an Adventurous Activity Licence. The adventurous activities that fall within the scope of the Licencing Authority are; Caving, Climbing, Trekking and Watersports.

The status of a Provider in terms of licencing will be confirmed during the Pre Check process. The Outdoor Education Unit will confirm if any Provider requires a licence and will check if a Provider's licence is current.

INSURANCE

- When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail.
- The visit leader must check the need for additional travel insurance depending upon the nature of the activity to be undertaken. (*See Safe Practice of Educational Visits*)
- When a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance cover being used should be ascertained. All Providers must hold £5 million Public Liability Insurance. As part of the LEA vetting process the Outdoor Education Unit will

check that this level of Insurance is in place. This can be confirmed when contacting the Outdoor Education Unit as part of the visit Pre Check.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

- The basic principle underlying the charging provisions of the 1988 Act (ERA 1988) is that education provided by any maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours.
- There is also the principle that an educational visit mainly outside the school day should be free of charge if it contributes to the delivery of the National Curriculum.
- Charges may be made for residential accommodation.
- Visits that are non-educational should not take place during school time denying access to full programmes of study.
- All visits during the school day should therefore be deemed to be educational.
- Voluntary contributions can be requested for any educational visit that takes place during the school day; however a pupil cannot be prevented from taking part in the visit on the basis of a family not making any or sufficient contribution.
- Where the visit is non-educational the charge cannot exceed the actual costs to be incurred. Costs can be calculated against transport, board and lodging, admission costs, costs of appropriate non-teaching staff, incidental costs of staff, materials and equipment and insurance costs.
- Accounts related to off-site activities should be kept by the visit leader and checked by the school finance secretary.

VOLUNTARY HELP

- The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Head Teacher or EVC This permission will be based upon knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.
- DBS checks should be carried out by the office on all volunteer helpers - hence much advance notice is needed and those intending to use voluntary help should liaise with the EVC as early as possible in the planning phase.
- All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

TRANSPORT

- Parents should always be informed of the type of transport to be used and risk assessments carried out.
- Hired transport - The school should ensure appropriate levels of supervisory staff are available to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils.
- Public transport - Close supervision should be ensured.
- Use of private cars - Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties. Parents must always be informed if members of staff intend to use private transport. School will not reimburse parents for the use of their cars.

REVIEW

- ❖ Visit Leaders will need to evaluate the success of each trip with the EVC who can oversee the need for changes in arrangements for subsequent visits to the venue or with the particular group.
- ❖ In the event of a visit that involves a residential and/or adventurous activities, a formal review meeting between the EVC and the Visit Leader must take place.