



Educational Visits Policy

2024-25

Approved by: [Full Governing Board] **Date:** [October 2024]

Last reviewed on: [September 2024]

Next review due by: [September 2026]

At Stockton Wood Primary School, we believe that trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the school curriculum. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance the children's education. The school is committed to providing educational visits as a positive tool to develop pupils' independent, investigative learning, and to build their experience of the local and wider world.

Within school, responsibility for educational visits rests with the Governing Body, Headteacher and the Educational Visits Coordinator (E.V.C.), however all school employees have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- co-operate with their employer
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction
- inform the employer of any serious risk.

This policy been produced to offer school employees advice and support in the planning and organising of all off-site activities in order to ensure the health and safety of pupils and school employees.

Definition

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher. This may include the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Sporting activities (during or outside of school hours) including swimming sessions
- Outward bound and adventurous activities.

E.V.C.

The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC), Gemma Jones, is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and a designate suitable trip lead for each visit
- Advise the headteacher and governing board when they're approving trips
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements.

Visit leader

Every educational visit will have one school employee designated as the visit lead. The visit lead will:

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, school employees and volunteers
- Complete a pre-visit to the venue/s to ascertain risks
- Use EVOLVE to plan and risk assess their visit. Risk assessments are to be completed 7 days before day visits and 28 days before residential visits

- Assign school employees' and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the visit destination, to be used in risk assessments
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents and carers are given detailed and accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to school employees, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Make sure school employees are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others
- Ensure plans are in place for lost children (see below), accidents during travel and communication between groups if the whole group is not staying together for the entirety of the visit
- Complete the visit evaluation form on EVOLVE.

School Employees

School employees have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and adults who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part.

School employees will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead and E.V.C.
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure visits are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- Share any concerns or worries with the visit lead and others, as appropriate.

Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip.

Volunteers

Volunteers attending educational visits, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of school employees and act accordingly

- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other school employees present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with school employees as soon as possible.

Volunteers should be accompanied by a school employee at all times.

Pupils

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the visit
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the visit
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a school employee or on-site supervisor.

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability, statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the visit programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all school employees and pupils.

Ratios

All visits are individually risk assessed to ascertain the safe level of adult supervision required. Below are the recommended minimum adult to pupil ratios that our school is committed to implement. These are adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances and/or permission has been given by the Headteacher following an assessment of risk taking into consideration the nature of the trip. A minimum of one first aider must attend every visit. The name of the first aider must be clear on the risk assessment. EYFS classes must have a paediatric First Aider during each educational visit.

- Reception classes - 1:5
- Years 1 – 3 - 1:6
- Years 4 – 6 - 1:10/ 1:15
- Adventurous activities -1:10
- Residential visits – 1:10

If a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health Care Plan is participating in the visit, this pupil must have the same support that is ordinarily available to them during the school day.

A useful framework for assessing requirements for ratios and effective supervision is **SAGE**:

- **Staffing:** who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.
- **Activities to be undertaken:** what do you want the group to do and what is possible?
- **Group characteristics:** prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, any specific or medical/dietary needs.
- **Environment:** indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance; and the ease of communications between the group and base. Do not overlook environments to be passed through between venues. For residential visits consider the accommodation and surrounding area. For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions.
- **Distance:** how far are you away from school or emergency support?

Emergency procedures

Planning for emergencies is the role of the visit lead.

Lost children

In the unlikely event that a child becomes separated from their group, follow the steps below, about which all adults, including volunteers, will have been briefed prior to departure:

- The visit leader and one other school employee will search the immediate vicinity. Another school employee will assume overall responsibility for the rest of the group, who stay together in one place, during the absence of the trip leader to maintain the safety and well-being of the other children.
- If the child is not found after approximately 20 minutes, the trip leader will phone the school office to notify them and ascertain whether they have any information. The school will notify the parents.
- The visit leader will contact the police after 30 minutes of the child going missing and inform school that they have done so. Once the police arrive, all relevant information about the child will be given, so that the police can take over the search. The visit leader will remain with the police to comfort the child when found and maintain regular contact with the school. The remaining school employees and adult helpers will return to the school with the rest of the children if it is deemed necessary by the Headteacher.

When the situation has been resolved, the Headteacher will conduct a full investigation to ascertain how the incident occurred and revise the school's procedures where appropriate.

Accident/Illness/Incident

In the case of an incident or illness:

- Visit leader informed
- Medical, physical and emotional conditions of the child or adult checked by first aider and visit leader

- Any pre-determined and prescribed medication given and recorded (time, type and amount)
- Visit leader contacts school to discuss - is further medical advice needed? Does the adult or child need to return to school?
- Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher in absence of Headteacher) is informed and makes the decision as to whether the individual and visit lead should return to school and how, and if the visit is continue for the rest of the group or if they should return to school
- Visit leader to stay with injured or ill pupil/adult at all times (including hospital visits) and act in Loco Parentis
- Supervision of the rest of the group to be given to a school employee, not a volunteer
- Parents and carers informed of incident by the school.

Emergency Planning and Critical Incidents

A critical incident is an incident where any participant in a visit:

- has suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality
- is at serious risk
- has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

Services and establishments should follow their code of practice on responding to crises and critical incidents. Visit leader to inform Headteacher as soon as it is safe to do so and advice taken from the emergency services. Headteacher to inform parents and guardians, manage any press involvement etc. The safety of the children and adults on the visit is the primary concern of the visit leader.

Local visits

These are within 30 minutes walking distance from school and no transport is required.

All guidance above applies.

Crossing Roads

Technically within the UK only the police, traffic wardens and officially designated crossing patrols have the right under law to control traffic. It is therefore important that there is a clear and agreed procedure that can be applied to reduce the risks. If possible there should be three supervisors present if crossing any group across a main road.

- Where possible pre-visit the location; map out the intended walk route, so as to avoid the need to cross busy roads as far as is practicable.
- Where crossing a road is unavoidable, a safe crossing site must be chosen; where visibility is good in both directions (at least 100 metres) and there is a suitable collection point on both sides of the road; an area off the road preferably a pavement area.
- Gather the group on the inside of the pavement area at least one metre from the kerb.
- A wave of group members in controlled numbers crossing the road is recommended over the "crocodile approach".
- Visit lead states on the risk assessment the number of children that can cross in a controlled line at a time, line them up parallel to the kerb.

- One Group Supervisor should be positioned over the road before crossing the group. The group should approach the roadside on a suitable signal or command.
- If there are three Supervisors present, one should remain in control of the group at the set off point, one should remain at the collection point and one should cross the road with the group. Where there are two Supervisors, one supervisor should walk the group half way across the road to be met by the other supervisor who will continue walking the group to the collection point. The first supervisor will return to the remainder of the group at the set off point.

Residential visits

The headteacher, together with the governing body, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours. All guidance above applies.

The visit lead will make sure that:

- School employees and volunteers have received any necessary training
- Details of night time supervision are indicated on the risk assessment
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. No volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils at any time
- No alcohol is to be consumed by school employees or volunteers at anytime for the duration of the residential visit
- Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

The dates and time of departure and return to school

The full address and contact details of the destination

Planned activities and their risks

Meal provision

Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)

Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves

Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations

Accommodation options and arrangements

The names of staff attending

Transport

Hiring Of Coaches

The primary consideration in the carriage of children is safety.

Legislation requires that coaches have seat belts.

Staff supervising on coaches should check that all group members are all wearing their seat belts. There is no requirement for younger children travelling on a coach to be held in a child car seat or booster seat. They should use the existing seat belt system. School will ensure that a reputable coach company with proven maintenance checks and policies such as a tyre aging policy will be used at all times.

The visit leader will ensure that the coach does not move at the beginning or end of the visit until they have checked that every child's seatbelt is securely fastened and will instruct the children that they must not unfasten their belt until instructed to do so.

The use of Private Cars for Visits Out of School Hours

It is possible for the Visit Leaders, supervisors, other school employees and adult volunteers to use their own cars, for transporting group members providing that: -

- The Headteacher has agreed the use of private cars as part of their overall transport policy.
- Any money paid for its use is not more than the vehicle's running costs (no hire or reward) and arrangements for any payments are made or agreed before the journey.
- Evidence is provided that the vehicle is insured fully comprehensively and for business use.
- The driver recognises they have a duty of care to passengers, road users and others and are known to be responsible adults.
- Simple checks have been made by the Headteacher to confirm the vehicle's road-worthy condition such as MOT.
- Evidence of driving ability should be drawn on and if necessary simple checks made.
- Cars must not be overloaded.
- Each passenger should have their own seat and suitable seatbelt.
- If private cars are to be used for long journeys there should be arrangements made (RAC, AA etc.) for breakdown assistance and recovery.
- The names of the children/young people being transported in each car should be kept by the visit leader so that in the event of an accident the school is aware of the children who are involved.
- Parents/volunteers are never alone with any child.
- Driver's licences should be checked by the Headteacher.
- Seat belts are working and if applicable correctly fitted child seats are used.

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's Child Protection Policy.

(Some parents may not want their child/children to travel with other parents, or with particular parents. They should be given the opportunity to make their views known.)

Review date: September 2025