



Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School

Offsite Visits Policy (also known as Educational Visits)

Version	Last Review	Reviewed by	Next review	Comments
1	November 2022	L. McIntosh	September 2023	Based on DCC model policy. To be viewed also with the Health and Safety Policy, Critical Incident Management Plan, Charging and Remissions Policy and the Behaviour Policy. Further statutory guidance regarding legislation can be found here: health and safety on educational visits , Equality Act 2010 SEND Code of Practice Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage .
2	August 23	L/McIntosh	September 2024	Minor amendment to reference above
3	August 24	L/McIntosh	September 25	Minor amendments to ensure consistency of language
4	August 25	K. Burton/S Marbrow	August 27	No changes

Perseverance

Enjoyment

Awe and Wonder

Compassion

Excellence

	Contents	Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Roles and Responsibilities	3
3	Procedures	5
	3.1.Finance	5
	3.2 Staff induction and training	5
	3.3 Visit approval and types of visits	6
4	Risk management	7
5	Monitoring	8
6	Insurance	8
7	Transport	8
8	Inclusion	9
9	Behaviour	9
10	Evaluation	9
11	Emergency Procedures	9
12	Accident Reporting	10
13	Emergencies on Educational Visits	10
	Appendix 1 - Checklist	12

1. Introduction

Coton-in-the-Elms C of E Primary School acknowledges the immense value and many benefits of outdoor learning and is committed to supporting off-site visits and activities that enrich the learning opportunities of children and young people. Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher or other designated member of staff.

The school works within the requirements set out in Derbyshire County Council's Offsite Visits and Adventure Activities Guidance and the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance' (both accessible via EVOLVE). This is to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

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

2. Roles and Responsibilities

For all visits it is important that each person involved understands their specific roles and responsibilities as detailed in this section.

Employer of Coton-in-the-Elms Primary School is Derbyshire Local Authority.

Under Health & Safety law the employer has primary responsibility for Health, Safety & Welfare of employees and pupils, this overall responsibility cannot be delegated.

The employer will ensure that its employees are provided with appropriate guidance, that there are training regimes in place to support it and that the guidance is understood.

The School Visits Service (SVS) team will provide Derbyshire County Council visit guidance. The SVS team has a huge breadth of knowledge and experience and can provide support with any visit from a walk to the park through to extended overseas expeditions.

SVS provides training courses for Educational Visits Coordinators (EVCs) and Visit Leaders. SVS monitors visits through EVOLVE and through sample monitoring 'in the field'. The school ensures that at least one staff member, one of whom being the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, is fully trained. Refresher training is completed every 3 years or as required.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring off-site activities and visits comply with the LA Guidance and this Visit Policy and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required, that all visits approved can be accommodated within the planned provision and that the ethos of each visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated.

The Headteacher will ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC), Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits.

The nominated deputy to approve offsite visits in the absence of the Head is the Assistant Headteacher, who is also an experienced EVC.

Educational Visit Co-ordinator

The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is a staff member who has received relevant training and induction and is delegated with the following tasks: -

- To grant verbal permission that a leader may plan a visit after deciding that the timetabling and ethos of the visit are acceptable.
- To check and approve that the planning and risk management for visits follows employer policy and guidance, and to liaise with the LA as required.
- To ensure that there is sample monitoring of visits in keeping with the recommendations of employer policy and guidance

The EVC should be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment.

The designated EVC is the Headteacher who received training in the role on 17th November 2022. A three-year update will be completed from this date. The EVC will ensure that evaluations are completed after a visit or residential. These will be completed on EVOLVE and available for all staff to view.

Visit Leader

Visit Leaders will have over-all charge of the visits they lead. They are also responsible for and must demonstrate the following;

- Competence, including where necessary verification, to lead the visit
- Awareness of potential hazards, dangers and competence when completing the necessary risk assessments and introducing measures to control risks to acceptable levels.
- Informing the Headteacher of the identified risks
- Sound judgement of what constitutes a dangerous situation and preventing access to dangerous situations
- Ability to undertake dynamic risk assessments
- Arrangement of adequate supervision
- Knowledge of where to get information about the area they are travelling to which could include such things as tide tables and weather forecasts.
- Ensure relevant visit information is shared with parents/carers and informed consent is sought where necessary.

Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff 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. Staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the Visit leader
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips 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
- Share any concerns or worries with the Visit leader 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
- If asked, contribute to costs as requested by the school.

Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the Visit leader or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

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 staff member or Visit Leader

Refer also to section 9. Behaviour

Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers will be appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits.

Details related to a visit and its participants (including staff) will be accessible to a designated 24/7 emergency contact in case of emergencies.

3. Procedures

Staff wishing to plan and undertake a visit (prospective Visit Leaders) will first seek permission from the Headteacher/ EVC.

3.1 Finance

The Headteacher, EVC and Visit Leaders should take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act. The school will ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the visit. The voluntary contribution will be to cover the cost of the visit and will not provide any profit for the school.

For residential visits, a deposit will be requested to secure a child's place. The request for contributions for the residential will be spread over time, enabling parents/ carers to make smaller payments over time.

The school's charging policy can be viewed on the school website or upon request from the school office.

3.2 Staff Induction and Training

All new staff will as part of their induction into the school, be familiar with the local policy for off-site visits and activities and understand their role in managing, planning, leading or assisting with organising off-site visits. All staff will have access to County and national guidance.

The EVC will identify any specific training needs and requirements and ensure staff can access relevant learning and development opportunities as appropriate and as required by Derbyshire County Council School Visits Service.

3.3 Visit Approval

The school has adopted the Derbyshire County Council system for approval of visits which is based on these being categorised into three broad types:

1. Local low risk single day visits that are regular and routine
2. Day visits and programmes that require enhanced planning
3. Higher risk visits, visits held further afield that require detailed planning and leader competence

Category 1:

These visits will be regular, routine day activities that are organised in and around the locality, usually on foot.

Regularly repeated visits can be covered by a block annual consent subject to parents/carers being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal day.

Visits and activities included in this category for this establishment are:

On-site activity (excluding adventurous activities and Forest School listed in category 3)
Transporting young people between multi-site school's or other local schools/venues
Regular curriculum delivery at off-site learning provider venues
Visits in and around our school e.g., churches, parks, urban centres
Sports fixtures (involving transport)
DCC Primary curriculum swimming programme

These visits should be planned using the school's All Visits risk assessment and with approval by the EVC and Headteacher/Deputy. Activities can be covered by an annual blanket parental consent.

Where there are local activities that are a planned part of the curriculum/routine programme but are dependent upon the right conditions on the day, then the visit leader will sign out before departure leaving relevant information with the base contact.

The specific establishment off-site All Visits Risk Assessment (that may also include road transport) covers general supervision of these visits. A review will be required rather than completing a new document each time. Any additions can be documented using the Event Specific Notes form.

All other visits: All other visit must be planned and submitted using EVOLVE.

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow of approval for Category 2 and 3 visits.

Category 2:

These visits are single "one off" day visits or a programme of visits that take place off-site but further afield than our school locality and with no element of adventurous activities (as defined in Category 3). These opportunities will usually require transport and could also require some enhanced planning and risk assessment. Example visits are:

Visits requiring use of transport (urban areas, theatres, social events, places of interest)
Swimming in public lifeguarded pools (excluding open water)
Fieldwork visits (not in open/remote country)
Activities at Water Margins (coastal locations & inland waters)
Farm visits
Forest school programmes

These activities will be entered onto EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC prior to departure. Approval is delegated to the headteacher and visits should be covered by a specific parental consent. Consent should be 'informed' consent.

For a programme of regular visits to similar destinations, one single visit form can be completed, with the relevant dates selected and can be covered by an annual blanket parental consent.

The specific school's All Visits Risk Assessment (that also includes road transport) will cover general supervision of the visit. A review will be required rather than completing a new document each time. Any additions can be documented using the Event Specific Note form.

If a visit is planned to a higher risk environment, the appropriate risk assessments must be completed for your specific visit. This will then be attached to the EVOLVE record, prior to submitting to your EVC and Headteacher for approval.

Certain activities will require staff to hold specific qualifications or competencies before being able to deliver sessions. e.g. forest school. Please refer to the activity qualification matrix for further information or contact SVS. Relevant qualifications will be added and uploaded to EVOLVE. These activities will not be undertaken unless there is a sufficient number of suitably qualified staff to deliver them.

Evolve: Category 2 minimum document uploads

- Itinerary
- All Visit Risk Assessment
- Specific Risk assessment / Care Plan

Category 3:

Approval from the Local Authority (LA) will be required for all overseas visits, residential visits and those which include adventurous activities, be it provider or school lead. The EVOLVE system will automatically pass such identified visits to the LA for approval after first being checked by the school and authorised by the Headteacher. Specific informed consent will be required for each visit.

Overseas visits and DofE expeditions will be submitted to the LA **four working weeks** before a visit is set to take place, and before anyone is financially committed. **Other visits requiring LA approval require two working weeks' notice.** Approval notification via email will automatically be sent out (from EVOLVE) as soon as possible up to two working weeks after receipt of the visit form.

A member of staff intending to lead an adventurous activity, must be specifically approved by the LA to do so via the EVOLVE Leader Approval Request function.

When external providers are used it is a requirement for their safety management to have been verified either by completion and return of a Provider Form or verified by holding an appropriate national accreditation e.g. AALA licence, Learning Outside The Classroom Quality Badge (LOTC). Providers will not be used until they have been 'vetted' by the LA.

Evolve: Category 3 minimum document uploads

- Itinerary
- All Visit Risk Assessment
- Specific Risk assessment: e.g. Activity, Transport, Residential, Oversea, Care plan etc.

4. Risk Management

The risk management of an activity is normally carried out by visit leader and assistants with the support of EVCs as required. Risks are expected to be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level, but not necessarily eliminated.

Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is 'acceptable'. HSE endorse this approach through their 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management' and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the site destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Visit leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

There is no legal requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual or harm several people.

Coton-in-the-Elms' staff will adopt and adapt the risk management materials available through EVOLVE to ease the burden of bureaucracy that might otherwise discourage leaders from making full use of educational visit learning opportunities.

5. Monitoring

To ensure policy and procedures are being followed the school will undertake monitoring of off-site visits SVS will provide sample monitoring of visits 'in the field'.

6. Insurance

Appropriate insurance must be in place for all visits.

The responsibility for arranging adequate insurance cover rests with the Headteacher in conjunction with the organiser of each journey.

For visits abroad, additional journey insurance **must** be taken out.

As an employer, in addition to the standard public liability cover which all establishments will have in place, Derbyshire County Council offers LA Schools the opportunity to buy into an annual 'blanket' personal accident cover / travel insurance, covering any off-site activities and overseas travel ventures.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher and visits leader to determine whether any additional insurance should be taken out.

Academies and other non-school based establishments must make their own insurance arrangements.

School insurance is in place. The details can be found in the school office.

7. Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site. Staff to also refer to Transport Guidance on EVOLVE. The use of transport will be risk assessed.

8. Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to treat a young person less favourably and/or fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Coton-in-the-Elms endorses the principles of:

- a presumption of entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaption or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Adjustments made to include a disabled child or young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence.

9. Behaviour

Coton-in-the-Elms School encourages the use of codes of behaviour conduct as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young person's behaviour. Such codes will be explained to both young people and those with parental authority prior to a visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where a code is breached.

Whilst inclusion of young people and adults on offsite visits will be the norm at school, this will not be the case where health and safety of the individual or other group members would be significantly compromised. Visit Leaders will ensure that they consult the LA and parents well in advance of the visit where inclusion is an issue.

10. Evaluation

Visit leaders must have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes they hope to achieve. Outdoor learning, off site visits and activities have the potential to deliver a very wide range of benefits and outcomes, these should be prioritised and recorded on EVOLVE.

For a positive safety culture to exist and develop, learning from past experience, incidents and mistakes is a crucial component in any safety system. A review/evaluation of the safety management of all of the educational visits will be undertaken by the staff involved in the visit. This should include a review of incidents, near-misses and accidents.

11. Emergency Procedures

The risk management for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For any off-site visit a home contact will be designating by the establishment who may be needed as a link between the party, the parents/carers, the school and the County Council in the event of an emergency. The home contact must be an employee, be unrelated to anyone attending the visit and be confident in providing support in a crisis.

For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours:

- A completed Emergency Card (or equivalent) for Visit Leaders must be with the Visit Leader at all times

- A completed Emergency Action Card (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times, where access to EVOLVE is not possible.
- A First Contact Emergency Action Card can be used when taking an initial call from a Visit Leader in an emergency.

In the event of a delay in retuning (of more than 1 hour), or of an incident resulting in harm to any attending young person, staff member or volunteer, then the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the headteacher or another senior leader in school should the headteacher not be available. This is so that they can decide: -

- A. If the incident is of a less serious nature then the next of kin or parents of those affected will be informed about what has happened (e.g. that the party will be returning late or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the Visit Leader will be designated to undertake this task.
- B. If the incident is very serious to contact Derbyshire County Council using the emergency contact phone number and details given below:

The emergency contact phone number for Derbyshire County Council during office hours is 00-44-1629-538364 or outside office hours 00-44-1629-533085. Upon connection, please ask for the Emergency Planning Duty Officer. Please note that calls to the numbers above are to be used only in extreme circumstances, such as serious injuries and/or fatalities. Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people or to their parents or guardians.

12. Accident Reporting

All accidents will be handled in line with Derbyshire's County Council's Accident Reporting Procedures. Where an incident or accident occurs on an activity led by a Provider, please ensure this is reported to the LA Visits Team.

13. Emergencies on Education Visits

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The visit leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the visit leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of visits and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the visit leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the visit leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The visit leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

The evaluation after the visit will include information about any incidents/ accidents that occurred and uploaded to EVOLVE.

The following extract has been taken from the school's Critical Incident Management Plan

The headteacher or his/her pre-agreed nominee should be immediately informed of any incident by the visit leader.

Initial Action by Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher in her absence

- Maintain a written record of your actions using this check list and attached log sheet
- Offer reassurance and support.
- Be aware that all involved in the incident, those at the school and you, may be suffering from shock or may panic.
- Find out what has happened. Obtain as clear a picture as you can - who informed you of the incident? (Usually the visit leader)
- Remind the visit leader to follow the checklist for visit leaders on educational visits (see Appendix 1)
- Record the details of the off-site activity/visit during which incident occurred

Checklist For Visit Leaders

Location and nature of activity/visit			
Name of person in charge of visit			
Telephone number(s)			
Number of people on the visit	Pupils		
	Teachers		
	Other adults		
Date and time of incident			
Location			
What has happened?			
People affected	Name	Injury	Where they are / will be taken
Emergency Services involved and advice they have given			
Names and locations of hospitals involved			
Arrangements for pupils not directly involved in the incident			
Name of person in charge of your group of children at the incident			
Telephone Number(s)			