

*Winchelsea*



*All Individuals Matter*

**WINCHELSEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**RUSKINGTON**

**EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

## **Part 1: Introduction**

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. Educational visits enrich the curriculum and enable children to experience learning in new environments and develop life skills in the wider world.

## **Part 2: Aims and Objectives**

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

- Out of hours clubs
- Inter school team sports, such as football and netball
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship)
- Day visits for particular year groups (theatres, museums, art galleries, environmental activities)
- Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous.

## **Part 3: Organisation and planning**

### Procedures for organising an Educational Visit – guidance to staff

Please follow the procedure below to ensure that

- you are supported in planning the visit
- you receive information to enable you to plan a safe and effective visit
- risks are minimised or eliminated
- communication between all interested parties (office, head, LA, parents, governors, children) is effective and efficient.

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:

- Head teacher
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

### Procedures

1. Inform the Head teacher, check that proposed dates are convenient and put in diary.
2. Complete the requirements on the EVOLVE database in respect of risk assessment.
3. Liaise with the office with regards to booking transport, cost, letter to parents and, if necessary, additional insurance.
4. Inform parents in written letter form (Where own letter is used, email a copy to the office to be put on the school website).
5. Carry out pre-visit if possible and necessary.
6. Keep record of contributions made by parents using class list, ensuring money is checked and then send to office for safekeeping/banking.

### On the day of the Visit

- Register pupils and allocate to groups with adult supervision as necessary.
- Ensure adults have checklists, medical information and contact details for the children in their charge.
- Collect first aid kit(s).
- Take asthma pumps and EpiPens as necessary.
- Brief supervising adults, including parents.
- Ensure mobile phones are working, that the office has the number(s) and that they are switched on during the whole visit.
- Count numbers of pupils regularly and always when changing locations.
- Ensure a sweep of school is carried out prior to leaving the premises initially and then at each location.
- Check numbers on transport and complete a total headcount to ensure full registration before leaving.

### After the Visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents. The purpose of the debrief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning. In addition to this an evaluation needs to be completed on EVOLVE and has to be carried out no later than two weeks after the visit. The debrief and evaluation can be completed at the same time.

If the Head teacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**

### Approval Procedure

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the Head teacher and EVC. The Governing Body has access to copies of letters to parents about educational visits, so they are kept informed of all visits.

In addition, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential or
- Involving adventurous activity

will require the additional approval of the LA. Further approval will also be required from the governing body for visits of these types.

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims.

### Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis.

The letter to parents should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements, and ensure that the detail of other incidental activities is included. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

Where written consent has not been received, verbal consent to two members of staff can be accepted (for example teacher and office staff), for day visits only.

## Staffing

### a) Competence

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the Head teacher. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities, the school always works with agencies that already have risk assessments, procedures and staff training in place (e.g. PGL).

### b) Ratio

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult /child ratio as set out in county guidelines should be:

Foundation Stage	1:6
Key Stage 1	2:15 (1:8 thereafter)
Key Stage 2	2:24 (1:10 thereafter)

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the Visit leader, EVC and Head teacher, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group – medical, SEN, behaviour
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of venue
- Weather conditions at that time of year
- Nature of transport involved

The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

### c) Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils
- Age of pupils
- Responsibility of pupils
- Competence/experience of staff
- Environment/venue

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care.

## Risk Assessment

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks - normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by reference to the 'Educational Visits Checklist', and the school's generic self-assessment.
- Event Specific Risk - any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity that is not covered in the generic policies. These should be recorded on the county documentation.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Staff must be aware of the needs and risks associated with individual pupils and not adopt a complacent attitude as a result of previous risk free visits.

Pupils should be involved in risk assessment and management. This may include identifying potential risks and discussing their role in reducing risks. Through this they will develop risk awareness – an educational issue as well as a safety issue. It is an essential life skill.

Any risk assessment where the visit involves walking along the seashore, collecting samples in ponds or rivers, or paddling in shallow water should identify potential hazards and minimise risk thoroughly.

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality.

### Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the LA's policy may drive the minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed/hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the Head teacher or SMT. Additional checks should be made for longer journeys and each half term by the member of SMT with responsibility for the minibus.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete a Private Car Form. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

### First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

First aid kits are available from the medical room. If the visit involves the party splitting up, a kit should be taken for each group.

### Emergency Procedure

Visit leaders must take with them a list of all contact details to be used in the case of an emergency.

For visits that take place in school time, the office and EVC hold visit information including itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. For visits outside school hours, the school contacts must also hold this information or be able to access it quickly.

## **Part 4: Roles and Responsibilities of Headteacher, staff and governors**

Under the statutory guidance which came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfES requirements and LA guidelines. The named member of staff is Mrs

Ruth Rowlands. EVOLVE training has been completed and all visit risk assessments will be entered via this database.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Local Authority – to approve overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Head teacher – to approve visits and assesses competence of visit leaders
- EVC – to approve visits, maintain records, provide advice and documentation, assess competence, produce and monitor a school policy, liaise with LA
- Visit leader – to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, including liaising with the office and EVC, completing risk assessments and relevant forms and continually assess risks
- Supervising teachers and other adults – to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment
- Pupils – to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment.

As long as the school and local authority guidance is adhered to, any problem resulting in injury will normally be considered an accident.

The **Head teacher** will ensure that:

- The policy is implemented and monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

**Teaching and non-teaching staff** will ensure that:

- The policy is implemented and adhered to so that there is a consistency of approach by all staff.

The **governing body** will ensure that:

- The policy is implemented and monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

The **governing body** must take into account the guidelines for monitoring excessive teacher workload and therefore they agree to the use of teaching assistants' time under the direction of teachers to support planning and preparation for visits as appropriate.

### **Part 5: Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation**

A system of monitoring and evaluation will be carried out by staff under the direction of the Head teacher to assess the standard of educational visits planned and delivered and to ensure that safety guidelines are adhered to.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_