



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Overview

The Governors and staff of All Saints First School acknowledge the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st 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 DfE requirements and LEA guidelines.

Our current EVC is Mrs Lesley Flannagan

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the regularly updated information provided by Staffordshire County Council on the EVOLVE website (https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco4/evchome_public.asp?domain=staffordshireshirevisits.com)

School visits benefit young people in many ways, including:

- being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom
- enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the curriculum, experimental (first hand) and memorable learning
- assessing and managing risks (safety)
- developing latent talents, abilities and interests, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance.

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC.

Approval of day visits will usually be at the discretion of the EVC (in consultation with the Headteacher if necessary). However, visits which are either:

- overseas
- residential
- involving an adventurous activity
- go anywhere near water e.g. pond dipping or river investigations, will require the additional approval of the LEA; Staffordshire County Council

Forms must be requested 'at least a month prior to the residential visit and 2 months for overseas visits'. Approval of the Governing Body is also required for visits of this type. It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to complete the necessary online forms and the accompanying risk assessment paperwork. It is the EVC's responsibility to check that all the necessary paperwork has been completed before submitting the online forms to the Headteacher for approval. The Headteacher then forwards the forms to county for final approval.

Planning a Visit

Firstly,

1. Make provisional bookings for your trip – place, transport etc
2. Log onto EVOLVE and follow the onscreen prompts to record the details of your visit. This should be completed and sent to the EVC at least 3 weeks before a day visit; at least 10 weeks before a residential or 3 months before an overseas visit to allow the EVC time to check the paperwork.
3. Complete the necessary paper risk assessments (downloadable from EVOLVE) and give to the EVC. **THE EVC CANNOT APPROVE A TRIP ONLINE UNTIL THESE RISK ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND SIGNED.**
4. Keep an eye on EVOLVE so you can see when your trip has been approved (it will turn green in your inbox).
5. Once it has been approved, please print off the summary form, obtainable by clicking the 'view' button, and give to the person you've nominated as the 'Home Contact' for your visit.
6. Confirm your provisional bookings.
7. Obtain parental permissions for the visit (including medical permissions for residential visits)

On the Day of the Visit

1. Collect first aid kit(s) and accident forms.
 2. Collect or send pupils for asthma inhalers
 3. Brief supervising adults
 4. Give supervising adults their group list (if not previously done)
 5. Ensure that at least one supervising adult is contactable by mobile phone and that the school office has the number.
 6. Count pupils before you leave school and at regular intervals during the day.
- Mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire visit, including outward and homeward journeys.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit an evaluation takes place. Part of this evaluation may involve updating the information on EVOLVE to include any last minute changes that were made to staffing or the itinerary. This should happen within a week of the visit date and should involve the Group Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate the other supervising adults. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify what went well and what could be improved or changed in order to inform future planning.

Once the evaluation has taken place, copies of all completed risk assessments and any accident forms should be forwarded to the EVC to be kept on file.

Teachers, volunteers, pupils and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating.

Governing Body

The Governing body needs

- To ensure that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the LEA guidelines.
 - To ensure that residential and overseas visits are approved as necessary by the LEA.
 - 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.

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- To ensure that 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.

Headteacher should ensure that:

- 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.
- Visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LEA, schools governing body and the schools own health and safety policy
- The group leader is competent to monitor risks and supervise the trip throughout the visit
- Adequate child protection procedures are in place
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- Ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- The LEA or governing body has approved the visit if necessary
- Parents have signed consent forms
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- Adequate first aid provision will be in place
- The mode of transport is appropriate
- Travel times out and back are known in school
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- They have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- The group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures
- The group leader, helpers and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers and other helpers next of kin.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments for school visits have three levels:

1. Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity whenever it takes place.
2. Visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group.
3. Ongoing risk assessments that take account of e.g. illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activities.

All risk assessment forms are available from EVOLVE. It's advisable to print them off as you are completing the online visit record. The site is continually being updated and therefore Group leaders should download the relevant forms from here rather than relying on previously printed paper copies.

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If staff need any support completing the risk assessments, they should arrange a meeting with the EVC.

Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be preferable in most cases to undertake a pre-visit, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account.

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- the previous experience of the group undertaking off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year
- the travel arrangements
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience and quality of staff and volunteers
- the nature of the activities
- the special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal weather conditions
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

Duties and Responsibilities

All staff must:

- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- inform the visit leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them
- recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.
- report to the visit leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and well-being during the visit.

Greater levels of responsibilities will normally be assigned to teachers than to adult helpers and a higher standard of care is expected of them.

Responsibilities of Nominated Group Leader

Group leaders, who must be a member of the teaching staff, but not an NQT, have a common law duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. Group leaders must recognise their responsibilities:

- Obtain the EVC's prior agreement before any off-site visit
- Follow LEA and governing body guidelines
- Appoint a deputy (preferably another teacher, but definitely another member of school staff)
- Have ownership of the risk assessments
- Pre-visit the site if possible
- Evaluate the trip after the event and forward all paperwork to the EVC to be kept on file.
- Clearly define each helpers role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age group
- Be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity takes place

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- Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- Review all undertaken visits/activities
- Ensure that teachers and helpers are fully aware of what the proposed visit entails
- Have enough information on the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed
- Ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an emergency
- Ensure all helpers have details of the school contact
- Ensure that all helpers have details of the medical or special needs of the pupils
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers

Teachers

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances.

They should

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is too great

Adult Volunteers

Additional adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

They must

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisor and help with the control and discipline
- Speak to the group leader or teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

Pupils

The group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader or helpers about it

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

If the group leader feels that such action may be necessary, first speak to the school EVC or the Headteacher.

Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and invited to any briefing sessions. The group leader should also tell parents how they could help prepare their child for the visit, e.g. reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and need to understand that they would be expected to pay any costs involved.

Parents will need to:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers
- Sign the consent form
- Provide the group leader any information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit.

Records and Communications

Records of a visit can provide a very useful and informative way of demonstrating the accountability of the school towards its pupils. Pre visit risk assessments and after visit reports should be given to the EVC to keep on file. Reports of any accidents or incidents should also be kept on file by the EVC. It is the responsibility of the staff to give such documentation to the EVC.

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. Even for a local walk, which is theoretically covered under the consent form parents sign when their child starts school, parents should be sent a brief note explaining the offsite activity. Parents may exercise their right not to allow their children to take part in a visit. Under these circumstances the school must make alternative arrangements to educate that child. **The refusal of the parent not to allow the pupil to go on the visit does not offer the opportunity for the child to be kept off school for the day.**

First Aid

There should be a qualified first aider on every visit. A first aid kit should be taken on every visit.

Staff/Pupil Ratios

Staffordshire guidelines on staff pupil ratio should be adhered to on all school visits. These are currently:

Foundation Stage = higher than 1 adult for every 6 pupils

Years 1 to 3 = 1 adult to every 6 pupils

Years 4 to 6 = 1 adult to every 8 pupils

These ratios should take into account

- Sex, age and ability of the group
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of pupils
- First aid cover

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Where there is more than one teacher on the visit a group leader should be appointed who has the authority over the whole group. When parents are taken on visits they should be carefully selected and be List 99 checked before the visit. They must be fully briefed before the visit. It should also be noted that for the protection of both adults and pupils. All adults should ensure that they are not alone with a pupil whenever possible. All adults on a visit should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It should always be clear that the teacher is responsible for the group at all times.

Head counts

Whatever the length of the visit, regular head counts should be taken of the children, particularly before leaving any venue. All adults should carry a list of all the pupils and adults involved in the visit. Pupils, especially R to year 3, should be easily identifiable. The group leader should identify rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they get separated from the group.

Insurance

All Saints First School has a 'Personal Injury and Travel Insurance group policy'. The schedule of benefits is held on file, and a copy can be obtained from the Headteacher on request.

Emergency Procedures

Teachers in charge of visits have a duty of care to make sure that their pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

If an accident happens the priorities are

- To assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform school or the home contact
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised.
- Notify the police if needed
- Ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- No one in the group should speak to the media and no names should be provided
- No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties

In an emergency the group leader would usually take control of the situation. The home contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school and to provide assistance as necessary. This named person should have all the information about the visit.

Transport

The group leader should consider

- Passenger safety
- Type of journey
- Traffic conditions

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- Insurance cover
- Weather
- Journey time and distance
- Stopping points on longer journeys
- Supervision

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.

Supervision on visits

If possible, the EVC or the class teacher should visit a trip (especially a residential one) at some point to check that all is going to plan. Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult. This is referred to as 'remote supervision'. The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account such things as:

- prior experience of pupils
- age of pupils
- responsibility of pupils
- competence/experience of staff
- environment/venue

If remote supervision is deemed safe then a meeting place must be staffed at all times and pupils should be made aware of its location.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment

- Level of supervision on coaches
- Safety when crossing roads
- Safety of pupils at dropping off points
- Head counts when getting on and leaving transport
- Responsibility for checking seat belts

The sex of the accompanying adults needs also to be considered, particularly where there is a mixed group of pupils.

Use of cars

This should generally be discouraged but if used, the following should be adhered to

- the car should be roadworthy
- the driver has the appropriate licence
- the driver has the appropriate insurance
- drivers ensure pupils wear seat belts and sit in booster seats if necessary.
- parents or any other adults should never be in a position where they are left alone in a car with a child and a central dropping off place is arranged.

Swimming pools

A minimum supervision level of 1 adult to every 12 pupils is recommended. The following checks should be made

- is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified staff?
- is the water temperature appropriate?
- where there is no lifeguard the leader should stay on the pool side at a raised location and the group leader should have the relevant life saving award
- is the water clear?
- are there signs indicating depth of water?
- does the pool cater for children with disabilities?

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- does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment and is there someone trained to use them?
- is there a changing room for each sex?
- are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- can clothes be stored safely?
- have the pupils been instructed how to behave around water?

Residential visits

Staff ratio should be **at least** 1 member of staff for every 10 pupils.

- There must be at least one adult from each sex for mixed groups
- There should be a member of staff on standby who is able to join the trip if someone on the trip is needed elsewhere e.g. repatriation
- A telephone tree of contact numbers should be established prior to the visit in case of emergency.
- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils rooms – the leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the groups use in advance;
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults
- There should be appropriate and safe heating and ventilation
- The whole group should be aware of the lay out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routines, and everyone can identify key personnel
- Where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- All staff employed at the centre should be checked on their suitability for working with young people
- Locks on doors should work in the groups rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times
- There should be drying facilities
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment
- There should be adequate lighting
- There should be provision for children with special needs and for those who fall sick
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, electrical connections safe
- Where possible pupils should not be lodged on ground floor rooms
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the whole accommodation
- There should be recreational facilities for the group
- There should be an appropriate number of supervisors on duty during the night
- As soon as possible after arrival a fire drill should take place

'Plan B'

Despite the most detailed pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, weather is unsuitable, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some thinking is done in advance, in order to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This comprises 'Plan B'

Appendix A – staff training on new procedures

1. Make provisional bookings for your trip – place, transport etc
2. Log onto EVOLVE and follow the onscreen prompts to record the details of your visit. This should be completed and sent to the EVC at least 3 weeks before a day visit. Complete the necessary paper risk assessments (downloadable from EVOLVE) and give to the EVC.
THE EVC CANNOT APPROVE A TRIP ONLINE UNTIL THESE RISK ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND SIGNED.
3. Keep an eye on EVOLVE so you can see when your trip has been approved (it will turn green in your inbox).
4. Once it has been approved, please print off the summary form, obtainable by clicking the 'view' button, and give to the person you've nominated as the 'Home Contact' for your visit.
5. Confirm your provisional bookings.
6. Obtain parental permissions for the visit

On the Day of the Visit

5. Collect first aid kit(s) and accident forms.
6. Collect or send pupils for asthma inhalers
7. Brief supervising adults
8. Give supervising adults their group list (if not previously done)
9. Ensure that at least one supervising adult is contactable by mobile phone and that the school office has the number.
10. Count pupils before you leave school and at regular intervals during the day.
11. Evaluate the visit. Complete the risk assessments and forward to the EVC along with any accident forms.

Residential Visits

1. Make provisional bookings for the trip.
2. Send letter home (this should be done asap before the planned date of the visit to allow for payment plans).
3. Fill in the EVOLVE online forms to apply for approval and submit to EVC. Send the necessary risk assessments on paper to the EVC.
THE EVC CANNOT APPROVE A TRIP ONLINE UNTIL THESE RISK ASSESSMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED AND SIGNED.
This needs to be done at least 10 weeks before the residential visit.
The EVC will then check the documentation through and forward it to the Headteacher who then forwards it to County (at least 8 weeks/2 months before the trip).
3. Keep an eye on EVOLVE so you can see when your trip has been approved (it will turn green in your inbox).
4. Once it has been approved, please print off the summary form, obtainable by clicking the 'view' button, and give to the person you've nominated as the 'Home Contact' for your visit.
5. Confirm your provisional bookings.
6. Obtain parental and medical permissions for the visit

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Prior to the visit:

- 5. The Group Leader should hold a parents' meeting to inform them of the trip itinerary and emergency procedures and to issue medical consent forms for medication etc. All other accompanying adults and the EVC should be present if possible.
- 6. The Group Leader should ensure they have all the necessary emergency contact lists and telephone cascade.
- 7. Evaluate the visit
Complete the risk assessments and forward to the EVC along with any accident forms
- 8. During the visit
Continually refer to the risk assessments and carry out dynamic, on-the-spot, risk assessments for all activities.

Date of Review: Reviewed and Approved – Autumn 2021

Signed:.....*R W Snowden*.....Chair of Governors

Signed:.....*A Kenny*.....Headteacher

Next Review: Autumn 2023

