



Fulston Manor School

Educational Visits and Offsite Activities Policy

Version (Date):

September 2023

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Member of Staff Responsible:

**Mr S Bendon
Assistant Headteacher**

OUTLINE AND PURPOSE

“It has long been acknowledged that students can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their schools. In particular they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom.”

Health and Safety of Students on Educational Visits – DfES 1998

“Outdoor learning supports academic achievement, for example through fieldwork projects, as well as the development of ‘soft’ skills and social skills, particularly in hard to reach children. It can take place on school trips, on visits in the local community or in the school grounds.

House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee – February 2005

Outdoor Education gives depth to the curriculum and makes an important contribution to students physical, personal and social education

Outdoor Education- Aspects of good practice – OfSTED – Sept 2004

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.

Learning Outside the Classroom – KCC - 2012

An educational visit can therefore be seen as any aspect of a student’s education that takes place off the main school site and should include visits to such places as parks, museums, swimming pools etc. as well as residential trips and visits abroad.

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 and other media 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 full range of activities being organised in support of the educational aims of the school:

REGULATION, GUIDANCE & ADVICE

The school has adopted the guidance in 3 key publications and all guidance within this policy **MUST** be read in conjunction with the detailed advice contained within them and also the **School's Health and Safety Policy**. These are:

- ❖ **Health and Safety: Advice on legal duties and powers – DfE June 2013** (updated Feb 2014)
- ❖ **National Guidance – Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom. (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel- OEAP)**
- ❖ **KCC Regulations and Guidance for Safe Practice of Offsite Activities**

These can all be readily found and as such form part of the policy itself. Links to the websites are listed below:-

DfE publications at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>

The National Guidance (Outdoor Education Advisors Panel- OEAP) publications at <http://oeapng.info/>

The KCC publications can be found at:- <https://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/outdoor-education/about-the-outdoor-education-unit>

If there appears to be a conflict between any of the policies or guidance then clarification must be sought from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Stewart Bendon, Assistant Headteacher.

TYPES OF SCHOOL VISIT

Within this policy and associated documentation for educational visits, Visits will be classified in the following ways.

Local – non hazardous	A visit within 20 miles of the school that does not include any hazardous activities.
Local - hazardous	A visit within 20 miles of the school that does include any hazardous activities
Non-Local - Day	A visit that is more than 20 miles from the school.
Residential	A visit that includes an overnight stay or is more than 24 hours

APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

When staff are seeking approval for a trip they follow the processes and timeframes below. The time frame specifies the time that a trip proposal form should be with the EVC before the date of the trip.

Type of trip	Time frame	Approval by:
Local – non hazardous	10 Days	EVC
Local - hazardous	28 Days	SLT with external vetting of provider
Non-Local - Day	28 Days	SLT with external vetting of provider if required
Residential	6 Months	SLT with external vetting of provider

External vetting will be determined through the use a nationally recognised approval process for example the LOtC Badge, AALA Licence or Adventuremark. Holding one of these is a credible assurance of appropriate Health & Safety management systems, and no further verification should be necessary.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE OF THE EMPLOYER/GOVERNORS:

- ❖ To ensure that the Headteacher and the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) have adhered to the guidelines and regulations provided by the DfE, the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel, KCC and the School's Health & Safety Policy.
- ❖ To ensure that there is an EVC in place and that the EVC is equipped to assess the competence of a visit leader.
- ❖ To ensure that all residential visits, trips abroad and those involving outdoor and adventurous activities are approved by the Headteacher and that Governors are informed.

- ❖ To ensure that all other visits are approved by the EVC.
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ To ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information, to investigate parental complaints.
- ❖ To ensure that there appropriate emergency planning procedures in place to support the school in the event of a critical incident.
- ❖ To ensure that there is an annual monitoring check made to ensure that the guidance, policy and procedures are being followed. The results of this check to be fed back to the Governing Body.
- ❖ To review the Educational Visits Policy and Procedures annually.

ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER:

- ❖ To ensure that visits comply with the guidelines and regulations provided by the DfE, the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel, KCC and the School's Health & Safety Policy.
- ❖ To ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent to oversee the coordination 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 a visit.
- ❖ To check that the EVC has designated an appropriately competent group leader. For less routine visits, the Headteacher 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, the relevant 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 (EVC):

The EVC's role is to support the Headteacher in ensuring that all visits follow DfE, the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel, KCC regulations and guidance and all of the schools relevant policies & procedures and will act on behalf of the Headteacher;

- ❖ To approve educational visits as agreed by the Headteacher.
- ❖ 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 the DfE, the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel and KCC concerning their particular visit.
- ❖ To ensure that the activity leader is competent (experience and training) to undertake the activity.

- ❖ 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.
- ❖ To ensure that a 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 to monitor practice.

ROLE OF THE VISIT LEADER:

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.
- ❖ Ensure that they are aware of, and comply with, the advice, guidelines and regulations from the DfE, the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel, KCC, this policy and other school policies concerning their particular 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 and make an exploratory pre-visit whenever necessary.
- ❖ 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 students and ensure that each

adult knows which students they are responsible for. To ensure that each student 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 students 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 Schools Visit Administrator

Schools Visit Administrator is there to support with administrative aspects of the trip:

- ❖ Ensure trip is on wisepay.
- ❖ Provide the trip leader with reports on uptake of trips
- ❖ Monitor payment plans and report to trip leader
- ❖ Support the trip leader to contact parents who have missed payments
- ❖ Guide the trip leader on the content of letters.
- ❖ Support trip leader in production of medical consent form if required
- ❖ Help trip leader sources prices and booking tickets for trips if required

ROLE OF THE STUDENT:

- ❖ 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.

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 wherever possible that 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 assessments should be completed in consultation with all staff on the visit and passed to the EVC within 10 Days of the trip being approved.

- ❖ **All trips will need itinerary based risk assessments based on the risk assessment template.**
- ❖ **Only activities identified on the itinerary can take place during the trip**
- ❖ **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. Most venues have risk assessment documents and copies of these should be passed to 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 students undertaking the visit.
- ❖ However for visits which are 'one offs' a specific risk assessment for the venue itself as well as for the students 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 students, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity. The visit leader is responsible for making decisions on an ongoing basis during the visit as to the appropriateness of continuing the visit in the light of prevailing conditions.
- ❖ **All staff and students 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 student because there is 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 Headteacher will make the final decision on whether the student 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 may be vetted by the LEA on our behalf to ensure that it meets the LEA requirements. This is why the Outdoor Education Unit should 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. * See the EVC or KELSI (Kent Education Learning & Skills Information) – Educational and Offsite Visits

Some providers may have the LOTC Quality Badge, AALA Licence or Adventuremark. Holding one of these is a credible assurance of appropriate Health & Safety management systems, and no further verification should be necessary.

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 include; Caving, Climbing, Trekking and Watersports. See above.

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 Providers 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.
- ❖ 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 and be members of ABTA and ATOL if appropriate.

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 students 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 student 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.

FIRST AID ON TRIP

All school visits should have a member of staff that holds a current first aid certificate. This member of staff should be identified on the trip proposal form.

MOBILE PHONES

Student mobile phones – Students can take mobile phones on school trips if this has been agreed by the trip leader. On residential trips students will be required to hand phones in to staff 30 minutes before lights out time, trip leaders can make exceptions to this if health or religious reasons require the students to have a phone. Trip leader will have to ensure they have a system to collect and return them to students in place.

Staff mobile phones – staff should have personal mobile phones with them to allow communication between themselves, the emergency contact and tour operator representatives. If staff need to contact students or students parents they should use the 3CX app. The app should be installed before the trip with guidance from the ICT support team, they will be given the phone number they can share at this point. The app will allow them to use a school phone number on their personal device.

DRINKING AND SMOKING/VAPING

Students should not consume alcohol, smoke, or vape on school trips even if they are old enough to on residential trips in countries with different age restrictions to the UK.

Staff should not consume alcohol whilst on school trips. In line with the latest OEAP guidance

If staff need to smoke or vape this should be done in locations away from students at a time when it does not compromise supervision ratios.

VOLUNTARY HELP

- ❖ The use of voluntary helpers (ie non FMAT employees) should only be permitted by the Headteacher 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.
- ❖ CRB/DBS checks may need to be carried out through the HR office on adult helpers or adults participating on school visits (they are required for all residential/overnight visits) – 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 students. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the students.
- ❖ School Minibus – The advice and guidance provided by the DfE in the document “Advice on Driving School Minibuses” (April 2013) must be adhered to at all times. As must “The KCC Minibus Code of Practice” (December 2011). The only exception to the KCC document is that members of staff passing the driving test after 1st January 1997 may drive minibuses not exceeding a maximum authorised mass (MAM) of 3.5 tonnes*. Risk assessment will inform staff if it is acceptable not to have a second adult in the vehicle supervising the group. The School has its own vehicle insurance and minibus use is not covered by the KCC insurance policy. * see conditions below:-

a) If you passed your category B (car) driving test before 1 January 1997, you can drive a minibus that is not being used for *hire or reward* as these licences automatically include category D1 -101 (not for hire or reward) entitlement². This means school staff with such a licence can drive a minibus carrying up to 16 passengers with no maximum weight restriction on the vehicle as long as they do not tow a trailer.

b) If you passed your category B driving test on or after 1 January 1997, you may drive a minibus that is not being used for *hire and reward* if the following conditions are met:

- you are over 21 and have held a category B licence for at least 2 years;
- the minibus is used by a non-commercial body³ for *social purposes*;
- you receive no payment other than the recovery of your *out of pocket expenses* (e.g. fuel and parking costs);
- you provide the service on a *voluntary basis*;
- the maximum unladen weight of the minibus is not more than 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if including any specialist equipment to carry disabled passengers); and
- you do not tow a trailer.

The school maintains a list of approved minibus drivers.

- ❖ Public transport – Close supervision should be ensured.
- ❖ Use of private cars – Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying students during the course of their professional duties. The School has business use insurance cover for staff cars. However, staff should check the details with the Finance Office before travel. 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 activity, a formal review meeting between the EVC and the Visit Leader must take place.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body in conjunction with the EVC.

