



Welton Primary School

Educational Visits Policy Statement

Introduction

All offsite visits and activities (apart from work experience or college placements which are dealt with separately) that are organised and undertaken by the school are regarded as “educational visits”. Whenever pupils leave the school site under the direct supervision of school staff, they are undertaking an educational visit. This includes visits to local areas such as the park and the housing estate the school is situated in and near.

Aims and Objectives

The school aims to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. Welton School’s Head Teacher and governors recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum and enhance the learning and development of our pupils.

Types of visits organised by the school

The school offers a wide range of educational visits, taking place, on average, every half term by every class, with whole school visits to the church twice a year. During Year 5, pupils get the opportunity to attend a residential visit.

Compliance

The school’s policy is to comply with the LA’s Educational Visit Code of Practice and Safety Guidelines. The school’s Educational Visits policy should also be read in conjunction with the other relevant school policy documents, such as the following:

- Health and Safety policy statement
- Charging policy
- Equal Opportunities/Inclusion/SEN
- Safeguarding Policy

Access to Policies and Guidelines

Staff involved in the leadership and management of visits should be familiar with all relevant guidelines and policy documents, and should know how/where this information can be accessed. The LA Educational Code of Practice and Visits Guidelines are accessible via the LA Educational Visits webpage http://www.eriding.net/educ_visits/index.shtml and also via ROVER Online <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/eforms> (user name: smillar, password: welton). Hard copies of these documents can be accessed in the Head Teacher’s office.

Roles and responsibilities (for details see LA Educational Visits Code of Practice)

The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for all the school’s educational visits.

If the Headteacher is absent or unavailable, the Deputy Head Teacher will fulfil the same responsibilities regarding the management and approval of educational visits.

The School's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mark Dyson

The EVC oversees the planning and organisation of the school's visits, and provides advice and guidance to staff and Head Teacher, including recommendations regarding the approval of visits. New EVCs should access training from the LA during their first term regarding their responsibilities with respect to the management and approval of educational visits, and should attend refresher/update training at least every 3 years.

The EVC role has admin support provided by Jayne Patrick – this role involves sending out letters to parents, obtaining medical details and consent forms etc.

The Governing Body representative for educational visits is encouraged to take advantage of specific governor training provided by the LA.

The LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant is Mr. Taff Bowles (tel 01482 392417 email taff.bowles@eastriding.gov.uk).

Advice and Guidance

Staff should seek advice and guidance regarding educational visits from:

- the school EVC
- the Head Teacher
- the LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant (Taff Bowles)
- other experts with specialist/local knowledge (e.g. National Park ranger)

Training

The LA provides a range of training opportunities for staff involved in the management, organisation, and leadership of educational visits. A record of all training provided is maintained by Jayne Patrick and stored on the computer.

The school ensures the following training opportunities with regard to educational visits are made available:

- Training for Head Teachers – LA provide every 3 years
- Training for EVC - including update courses, every 3 years
- Training for Visit Organisers and Group Leaders, NQT's, TAs etc – by the EVC, update annually in whole school training session
- Training for NQTs and new staff – by the EVC as necessary.

Monitoring

To assure quality of standards on educational visits:

- The Head Teacher and/or the EVC will accompany at least one visit per year to monitor real practice, and to assist with the review of policies and procedures?
- Records of these monitoring visits are stored in the EVC folder in the Head Teacher's office

The following should be read in conjunction with the corresponding chapters in the LA Educational Visits Guidelines, and provide additional information and policy statements that are specific to the school:

1. Planning and approval procedures

Visits should be recorded, checked, and approved in accordance with the following procedures:

Category 1 - DAY VISITS (ROUTINE)

Visits that take place on a regular basis throughout the year, or over a specific period of time (e.g. a series of six weekly visits) e.g. visits to local library/swim pool/away sports matches. At Welton these include visits to Welton Church and walks around the immediate environment (Welton, Melton, Brough and Elloughton).

Category 1 visits should be recorded using:

- In-house form (to be collected from ROVER)
- LA Day Visits form (to be collected from ROVER)

Category 1 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Head Teacher (with EVC support)

Category 1 visits should be submitted for approval:

- at the beginning of the academic year to obtain “blanket approval” for the year and/or
- at least 2 weeks in advance of the first of a series of visits.

Category 2 – DAY VISITS (NON ROUTINE)

One-off or occasional visits e.g. day visit to York Minster/Scarborough Sea Life Centre.

Category 2 visits should be recorded using:

- In-house form (to be collected from ROVER)
- LA Day Visits form (to be collected from ROVER)

Category 2 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher (with EVC support)

In addition, the Governing Body will be informed of visits that have taken place. This shall be part of the Head Teachers termly report to governors.

Category 2 visits should be submitted for approval at least 2 weeks in advance.

Category 3 – UK RESIDENTIAL VISITS

These include visits that involve one or more nights away from home in UK or Overseas.

Category 3 visits should be recorded using ROVER Online (see EVC to request username/password)

Category 3 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Head Teacher (with EVC and Governor support), and
Externally – by the LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant

Category 3 visits should be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks in advance of the first of the visit.

Category 4 – OVERSEAS VISITS

Residential or day visits to any place outside England/Scotland/Wales.

Category 4 visits should be recorded using ROVER Online (see EVC to request username/password)

Category 4 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Head Teacher (with EVC and Governor support), and
Externally – by the LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant

Category 4 visits should be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks in advance of the first of the visit.

For visits with significant financial commitment, “Outline Approval” should be obtained before firm bookings are made.

If any of the above 4 types of visit involve what may be regarded as “High risk activities or environments” they MUST be given an additional subcategory “A” classification:

Sub Category “A” – HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES and ENVIRONMENTS

All day visits, or residential or overseas visits that involve hazards that are significantly different or more serious (in terms of severity and/or likelihood) than might normally be encountered in everyday or school life.

e.g. a weekly climbing day visit = 1A, a day visit to dry ski slope = 2A, a residential stay at outdoor centre = 3A, an overseas trekking expedition = 4A

All Sub Category “A” visits should be recorded using ROVER Online (see EVC to request username/password)

All Sub Category “A” visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the Headteacher (with EVC and Governor support), and
Externally – by the LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant

All Sub Category “A” visits should be submitted for approval at least 6 weeks in advance of the visit.

For visits with significant financial commitment, “Outline Approval” should be obtained before firm bookings are made.

All staff who lead visits are required to input their own information and assurances on ROVER Online.

2. Visit objectives

All educational visits should have a defined purpose, with clearly stated, justifiable educational objectives, or else they may not be approved, and may not be covered by the LA insurance.

3. Selection of young people

Every effort is made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

Teachers leave registers in the school office. Teaching Assistants are assigned a year group to accompany throughout the year. However, if the adults medical requirement/needs mean they are unable to fulfil their role professionally and safely, this will be changed after proper assessment with the School Business Manager and EVC.

4. The Overall Group Leader/Visit Organiser

The Overall Group Leader must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their role and responsibilities by the Head Teacher. Overall Group Leaders should normally have been an Assistant or Deputy Leader on at least 5 similar visits, and been a Deputy Leader on at least 1 of those visits.

5. Deputy, Assistant and Volunteer Leaders

Visits normally require a Deputy Leader who is able to deputise, and take full responsibility for the Overall Group Leader, if necessary.

Assistant Leaders should be chosen carefully, and must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities by the Head Teacher, EVC and Overall Group Leader.

Leaders should consider carefully the implications of family members being present, and the possible complications that might arise.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that all adults involved in the supervision of children during school-related activities (including visits) are suitable people to work with children, and pose no threat to the young people in their care.

Concerns about possible child abuse or poor practice by a member of staff, volunteer or other adult should be reported immediately.

Young people on educational visits should at all times have ready access to a competent adult who has an appropriate level of first aid training. This normally requires at least one of the group's leaders to have an appropriate and current first aid qualification (6-8 hours of emergency aid training is the minimum training recommended for leaders on educational visits)

6. Staffing selection and supervision ratios

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of the children on educational visits.

The LA Educational Visits Guidelines provide recommended minimum staffing ratios, but the choice of staff and the decision regarding ratios is still a matter of judgement for the Head Teacher, after consultation with the EVC and Overall Group Leader

(and LA Ed Visits Consultant, if necessary), as part of the risk assessment and management process.

At least two adults will accompany any off-site experience so that there is some flexibility and reserve capacity if things go wrong.

For overseas visits, at least 3 adults will accompany the group, as additional reserve capacity and flexibility are often vital in these circumstances.

Staffing ratios will be in line with LA guidelines – 2 members of staff minimum.

7. Selection and suitability of accommodation or venues to be visited

As part of the overall risk assessment process, and in keeping with their legal duty of care, the Overall Group Leader must take reasonable steps to check that any accommodation (e.g. youth hostel) that is used, and any venues (e.g. castles or museums) that the group plans to visit, are suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe.

Many organisations now have websites or supply teacher information packs that provide all reasonable assurances regarding standards, or have obtained a Learning Outside the Classroom “Quality Badge”. However, if necessary, the Provider Assurance Form (EV2) can be sent to the manager of a place of accommodation or venue to be visited, requesting signed, written assurances regarding their safety management systems and operating procedures.

When planning a visit, the Visit Organiser (and other group leaders) should, wherever possible, undertake an exploratory visit to inspect and familiarise themselves with the accommodation to be used and venues to be visited.

8. High risk activities and environments

Leaders who organise visits that involve high-risk activities and environments must be aware that such visits normally require a greater degree of planning and preparation by virtue of their complexity and unpredictability.

All Category 1 and 2 (Day), Category 3 (UK Residential) and Category 4 (Overseas) visits that involve high risk activities and environments are classified as subcategory “A” and must be recorded on ROVER, and approved by the EVC, Headteacher, Governors, and Local Authority.

Leaders and other supervisors must be sufficiently competent to supervise pupils in the activity/environment. Competence derives from knowledge, experience, training and personal qualities and may be evidenced by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where appropriate.

The school keeps a record of staff qualifications, training and leadership experience. This is stored in the school office.

Visit organisers should plan alternative activities and venues to cater for possible changes in circumstances (e.g. worsening weather or rising river levels), and all staff should be aware of these possible contingencies. The EVC will sometimes ask to see and check these plans.

9. Risk assessments and management

The school has a legal duty of care for its young people, and must therefore give careful consideration to the hazards involved during an educational visit, and ensure that risks are managed at reasonable and acceptable levels.

The Visit Organiser should undertake an appropriate risk assessment for each visit, and this should be agreed by all visit leaders before the visit takes place. Appropriate written evidence of this process should be provided.

The process of risk assessment should be a positive means of raising awareness of hazards and prompting constructive discussion regarding the best means of risk management – it should therefore be of real practical value to the leaders and group members, not just a paper exercise.

A set of written generic risk assessments and a blank specific visit form is available on the LA's website http://www.eriding.net/educ_visits/index.shtml and a link to this site is also available via ROVER Online.

- all relevant generic risk assessment forms are reviewed, amended, and agreed at the start of each academic year by all relevant staff
- these generic forms are stored in the staff room, and staff are encouraged to reference these if unsure about agreed practice or before undertaking visits that they are less familiar with.
- new leaders/volunteers are asked to read all relevant forms and add their signed agreement before assisting with the leadership of a visit
- an additional specific visit risk assessment should be completed by the visit leaders for each visit to record and share information about potential hazards and precautions that may be particularly noteworthy for the specific group, doing particular activities, at specific sites on that visit.
- completed assessments are approved by the school EVC

10. Insurance and finance arrangements (including charging arrangements)

The Head Teacher must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place for all educational visits, and Group Leaders should check carefully that the scope and level of cover provided is adequate for each visit. Visit Organisers should also check that any external service providers have sufficient public liability cover (normally at least £5 million). The school pays annually for LA Voyager insurance which covers all school visits within the UK (providing the visits are correctly approved) - renewal of the Council insurance policy generally takes place each April. The Council also provide additional travel insurance for visits abroad, if required – contact the Council's Insurance team (01482 394195).

The Visit Organiser, the School Business Manager and EVC should ensure that:

- each visit is accurately costed and budgeted for;
- adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances;
- financial plans – especially for more complex and committing visits – are checked over and agreed first by the EVC/Head Teacher before financial commitments are made;
- for visits that involve substantial commitment financially (e.g. overseas expeditions), no firm bookings or financial commitments are made until the visit has been agreed and received “Outline Approval” by the relevant authorities;
- the costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents), including how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute;
- money collected for visits is kept in the school fund account, and secure systems are in place to ensure that money is accessed and accounted for correctly.

Charging arrangements (for more details see school charging policy)

No charge may be made in respect of any activity that is deemed to take place in school hours. An activity is deemed to take place during “school hours” if 50% or more of the activity, takes place within school hours.

If more than 50% is deemed to be outside of school hours then a charge may be made for “optional extras” only.

For residentials, a school trip is considered to have taken place within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity.

The school will not charge for:

- any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum , or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip
- transport provided in connection with an educational trip during school hours.

The school may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of these visits, but it must be clear that any contribution is genuinely voluntary.

The school may charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras (see details in the school charging policy) but any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

The costs of the visit should be clear to all concerned, stating how much will be given from other school funds and how much parents are being expected to contribute.

The school will normally make a charge for board and lodging on residential trips, and ask for a voluntary contribution towards transport and specialist instruction for certain activities.

Those pupils in receipt of free school meals are exempt from the cost of board and lodging during residential visits.

11. Transport

As part of the overall risk assessment process, the Visit Organiser must take reasonable steps to check that any transport used during the visit is suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe, and that any specific Local Authority or legal requirements are met.

Leaders should refer to the Local Authority’s generic risk assessments that give detailed recommendations for all standard forms of transport.

The school hires coaches/buses from:

- Companies that have already been checked and approved by the Council’s Transport Services team? and/or
- Companies whose safety management systems and operating procedures have been checked using the “Coach/minibus hire company enquiry EV3 form”

For the safe supervision of pupils on coaches/buses, group leaders are required to:

- sit in various locations, spread throughout the coach
- sit near emergency exits
- carry a first aid kit and the school mobile phone

For visits that require the use of staff cars, drivers must:

- have business insurance
- be assessed as competent and suitable by the Head Teacher (using the Driver validation form)

For visits that require the use of parents' cars. Drivers must:

- be assessed as competent and suitable by the Head Teacher (using the Driver validation form)
- sign to say their car is roadworthy, taxed and insured
- be CRB checked
- be part of a recorded pool of drivers who have been assessed and approved

13. Parent information and consent

The Overall Group Leader and EVC must ensure that parents/guardians are provided with appropriate and sufficient information about all visits. The amount of information and method of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned and the assessed level of risk involved.

Parents/guardians of each pupil on a visit are asked to complete and sign a written consent form, whether it be an annual "rolling" consent for routine visits, or specific consent for a particular visit/activity.

There is no legal requirement to obtain parental consent for visits/activities during normal school hours but it is nonetheless good practice to inform parents and seek consent for any activities that parents might be particularly concerned about.

Any special/medical needs of pupils are collated by Sandra Mullins and supervising staff are briefed and trained accordingly.

Parents are asked to give written consent to the administration of plasters and off-the-shelf first aid/medication, if deemed necessary.

Medical information and consent forms can be obtained from the school website – **www.weltonprimaryschool.com**.

Parents should be clearly informed of the arrangements and responsibilities for collecting a pupil after a visit.

The Visit Organiser must obtain parent contact details for all pupils on the visit.

- parental consent – blanket for year for whole school visits to the church and walking in the local environment
- gathering up to date information regarding special/medical needs – updated every visit
- parental consent – medication including the use of plasters and off-the-shelf medication
- obtaining up to date parent contact details – once a year and updated as requested
- informing parents of late returns to school will be made via the school or website, and incidents on visits will be informed in writing.

14. Staff briefing and emergency procedures

It is important that all staff (including volunteers) involved in the leadership of a visit are fully briefed about each visit.

Staff should be aware of their expected roles and responsibilities before, during and after a visit. Group leaders should be aware of emergency procedures and how to obtain outside assistance or contact the emergency services if required.

Part of the planning for emergencies must involve the recording of one or more Emergency Home Contact(s) who should be available at any time during the visit.

The Visit Organiser must ensure that group leaders have immediate access to the emergency contact details of the school managers and the parents of those on the visit.

A properly equipped first aid kit is always available to staff during school visits and must be checked and taken on all visits. The school first aid kits are stored in the first aid room/disabled toilet.

All staff should be made aware of the conduct and behaviour expected of them during the visit, particularly in regard to issues such as smoking and alcohol use.

15. Briefing and preparation of young people

Providing relevant information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for all school visits.

Pupils should be briefed about safety arrangements and what clothing/equipment should be brought.

Leaders must ensure that pupils clearly understand what will be considered unacceptable behaviour or conduct, and the consequences of non-compliance.

“Buddy systems” are an effective means of promoting safety and welfare within the group.

During any time that remote supervision takes place the visit leader must ensure that pupils are aware of the supervision and emergency contact arrangements, and that they have the necessary skills, maturity, responsibility, knowledge and equipment to operate safely as an independent individual/group.

Pupils should be briefed what to do in an emergency, or if they become separated from the rest of the group.

It is good practice to teach pupils how to recognise dangers and manage risks sensibly.

Asthma inhalers will be kept with the pupil. All other medication should be kept by the adult in charge of the group the child is in.

Pupils to wear school uniform at all times except on residential visits.

16. Documentation (and visit records)

The ROVER database will store key elements of Category 3,4 and “A” visit details securely and indefinitely. Other visit details are also to be kept on ROVER. Hard copies of other supporting documentation (e.g. risk assessments) are stored and retained in the school’s central “Educational Visits” file for one year.

If no significant incidents occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork after a period of 1 year. If a significant incident occurs during a visit that could be investigated at a later date, all relevant details are retained until the young person becomes 21 years of age, and will be kept in the school office.

Records of visits are stored in the Head Teachers Office. They are kept for at least one year unless an incident occurred on the visit. The Head Teacher makes decisions regarding the storage/disposal of records.

17. Visit Approval

Low risk day visits (Cat 1 and 2) are approved in-house by the Headteacher (with EVC guidance and support) using ROVER online.

Day visits involving high-risk activities or environments (Cat 1A or 2A) are approved by EVC/ Governors/ Head Teacher/ LA, using ROVER online.

UK and overseas residential visits (Cat 3 and 4) including those involving high risk activities or environments (Cat 3A and 4A) are approved by EVC/Governors/Head Teacher/LA using ROVER Online

The Visit Organiser must carefully check all visit forms before submitting for approval. When required, Governor Approval for a visit is given by the Chair of Governors.

The procedure for Governor Approval involves:

- For low risk day visits (Cat 1 and 2) - not required
- For high-risk day visits (Cat 1A and 2A) – email (via ROVER online) to the governor with specific responsibility for overseeing educational visits
- For residential/overseas visits (Cat 3 and 4) and those involving high-risk activities/environments (Cat 3A and 4A) - email (via ROVER online) to the governor with specific responsibility for overseeing educational visits. A hard copy of the visit form is given to and signed by the Chair of Governors

18. Visit approval status and feedback

The procedure for Managers (Head Teacher/EVC) to notify the Visit Organiser of approval decisions and to give feedback involves:

- For low risk day visits (Cat 1 and 2) – by email
- For high-risk day visits (Cat 1A and 2A) – an email is automatically generated via ROVER Online and sent to the visit organiser after the LA approval decision has been given. At any time, the visit organiser can access and view all approval decisions and any feedback given by accessing ROVER Online (see “View All Visits”)
- For residential/overseas visits (Cat 3 and 4) and those involving high-risk activities/environments (Cat 3A and 4A) - an email is automatically generated via ROVER Online and sent to the visit organiser after the LA approval decision has been given. At any time, the visit organiser can access and view all approval decisions and any feedback given by accessing ROVER Online (see “View All Visits”)
- If a visit is not approved or only given “Outline Approval” by a manager, they must give reasons for their decision and state clearly any changes that would be necessary

If a visit does not obtain the correct level of approval, it may not be covered by LA insurance and support.

19. Amendments to visits

If there are significant late changes to visit plans that have already been approved or submitted for approval, the Visit Organiser must notify all relevant approving authorities (EVC/Head Teacher/ Governors/ Local Authority) of these changes, and ensure that their additional consent is given.

There should be a clear system for the notification and approval of amendments to visit plans, so that there can be no misunderstanding or confusion by any parties involved.

- For low risk day visits (Cat 1 and 2) –by email.
- For all visits recorded on ROVER, there is a clear procedure for recording minor amendments that do not need further approval in 19.1 “Late Minor amendments”. For significant amendments that require further consideration and approval, the ROVER system requires visit organisers to access section 19 (by clicking “Amend” in right hand column of visit summary in “View All Visits”) and superseding the original submitted form by clicking on 19.2 “Significant Amendments” to create an unlocked version of the form that will need resubmitting after the amendments have been completed. Once carried out on ROVER, the hard copy must be signed by the EVC and Head Teacher.

20. Post visit review and evaluation

It is good practice for Visit Organisers, on return from a visit, to review the visit and to record any examples of good practice and lessons learned that might assist with the planning and leadership of future visits.

In particular, it is important to record and review any accidents, incidents, or near-misses (i.e. dangerous incidents that nearly happened, but fortunately didn’t).

It is important that details are recorded as soon as possible after an incident whilst they are still fresh in the memory, preferably with signed witness accounts.

Visit Organisers should record any accidents in the school accident book upon their return to school.

Serious incidents must be notified to RIDDOR (HSE’s “Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995), and to the Local Authority using the procedures and standard forms. Managers should discuss this with the School Business Manager.

Post visit reviews and accident/near misses records are reviewed termly by the EVC. Any lessons learned are shared with all relevant staff, and any necessary changes to procedures made.

After any major accident, the school will undertake a review of the incident and their emergency procedures, and will share the findings with the Local Authority for the benefit of other schools.

Staff are encouraged to express any concerns regarding the organisation and management of visits in writing to the Head Teacher, and these will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence. If necessary, issues will be considered further by the Governing Body.

Significant incidents and issues of concern should also be brought immediately to the attention of the LA Educational Visits Consultant.