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## POLICY STATEMENT

## OFF-SITE VISITS

APPROVED BY GOVERNORS	September 2023
TO BE REVIEWED BY	September 2026

## FAIRLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

### OFF SITE VISITS POLICY

#### INTRODUCTION

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

#### AIMS

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience during Key Stage 2.

#### CURRICULUM LINKS

**Suggested programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists). All these activities are in line with guidance published by the local authority:**

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets, and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to museums, workshops;
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork;
- Art and Design – use of the locality;
- PE (Physical Education) – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- Design and Technology – use of the locality;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc;
- RE (Religious Education) – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers.

## RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITIES

Children in Year 4 and Year 6 can take part in a residential visit. We do make a charge for board and lodging, insurance, and specialist instruction for certain activities.

The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the local governing body. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

### TYPE OF VISIT

Level	Type of visit	Authorisation	Further Checks
1	Activities that would not expose those taking part to a greater risk than that experienced on a day-to-day basis (swimming, theatre trips, environmental studies)	Single, annual authorisation, using evolve online notifications and approval system.  Annual parental consent	Risk assessment to be reviewed annually by group leader
2	Non-routine activities and residential stays.	Each visit, using evolve online notifications and approval system.  Parental consent required for each visit.	Risk assessment to be reviewed by visit leader before, during and after the visit.
3	High-risk adventurous activities/overseas stays	Each visit, using evolve online notifications and approval system.  Parental consent required for each visit.	Risk assessment to be reviewed by visit leader before, during and after the visit.  Providers of adventurous and hazardous activities must meet the standards laid down in Part F, Section 2 of the Offsite Visits manual.

## **HOW VISITS MAY BE AUTHORISED**

The headteacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

The school's educational visits coordinator will be involved in the management of off-site visits.

They will:

- Support group leaders in completing Off-site visit online application:  
[https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome\\_public.asp?domain=offsitevisits.thegrid.org.uk](https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome_public.asp?domain=offsitevisits.thegrid.org.uk)
- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- support the headteacher and governing body in their decisions on approval;

- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company assures us their drivers too have had police checks;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures adopted by trust board, which are the model provided by the local authority. (available on the EVOLVE website). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with these instructions.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the headteacher will seek the approval of the local governing body before permitting the activity to take place.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

The school does not undertake trips abroad, as these are not covered by our insurance arrangements.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT (OV4 FORM)**

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to consider the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability regarding the age and any needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The local governing body will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors, and their risk assessment procedures.

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be considered when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the visit plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
- 1 adult to 5 pupils in Early Years.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may *not* provide adequate supervision in all cases.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue.

## **TRANSPORT**

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks. (Staff may not use their own cars to transport children and may not arrange transport between parents.)

The school makes a charge to parents if their children are transported by means of transport provided by the school. The charge covers the expenses of the journey only; we do not make any profit from this.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities. For regular, low-risk visits this will take the form of an annual, general consent.

Funding for off-site activities is provided by parental contributions. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to contribute. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to decide about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

## **FURTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children, and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and ensuring that children's medical needs are met.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained on the EVOLVE website.

## **REVIEW**

The local governing body will review this policy in line with its schedule for policy review.



## APPENDIX:

### Off-site visits at a glance

#### Level 1 visits

- Covered by annual parental consent.
- Inform parents (at least the day before) via notice on classroom door/noticeboard/slip note home/newsletter

Examples:

- Walking in and around the local area

#### Level 2 visits

- Need parental consent for each visit
- Inform parents well in advance

Examples:

- Day trips requiring transport
- Residential trips

#### All visits:

- Complete evolve
- Attach all relevant documents
- Ensure list of participants is completed
- Carry relevant paperwork and emergency contact information

#### **Evolve**

[https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome\\_public.asp?domain=offsitevisits.thegrid.org.uk](https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome_public.asp?domain=offsitevisits.thegrid.org.uk)

#### Insurer

Insurance is arranged via the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA). This is a voluntary arrangement for academies and free schools. It is an alternative to insurance through which the cost of risks that materialise will be covered by government funds.

Member no: 143785

- Teachers are not to use own cars to transport children.
- Teachers are not to arrange transport between parents.
- Teachers need to know providers have relevant risk assessments and insurance but should not ask to see them.
- Supervision ratios are a minimum – it is up to the visit leader to ensure supervision is adequate for the need of the pupils.
- Visit evaluations must be completed.
- Accidents and 'near misses' must be recorded
- Look for 'Learning Outside the Classroom' Badge for accredited providers.
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) – somebody who has regular access to children (within a 3month period) or is going to be left alone with children
- No alcohol to be consumed during off site visits, including residential visits.