

St. Leonard's Primary School

Off-Site Educational Visits Policy

2025



Date of Approval:	Autumn 2025
Date of Next Review:	Autumn 2026

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Off-Site Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

At St. Leonard's Primary School, our curriculum is designed and evolving to reflect the needs of our school and its community. This is with the aim of achieving our vision and ensuring the children of St. Leonard's Primary School, have a wide range of experiences that prepare them for life beyond school. Educational visits and off-site experiences are considered part of our curriculum. They enrich and enhance every child's on-site learning and are an integral part of the curriculum.

For the purpose of this policy, an educational visit must have a clearly defined educational purpose and can be seen as any aspect of a child's education that takes place off the main school site. This encompasses residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities and adventurous activities to develop their awareness of the local and wider area.

The purpose of these activities are to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broaden horizons • be fun • increase self-esteem • facilitate decision-making • develop relationship building • facilitate risk taking • enable a greater understanding of risk to be achieved • experience new cultures • raise aspirations • take personal and collective responsibility for actions • inspire and provide motivation • support inclusion • enable pupils to have a chance to share 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inspire lifelong leisure activities • develop creativity • develop children's cultural capital • develop independence • support citizens • provide hands on, 'real' life learning with links to future careers • facilitate team building • build on successes • learn to cope with failure • live and work with others • bring the curriculum alive • catch those magic moments – creating memories for life
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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 at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available and accessible to all pupils regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability.

The value of off-site educational visits is recognised by the Local Authority and fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised.

This policy outlines the specific policies and procedures for our school. It is written in line with the advice and guidance set out in [The Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel](#) (OEAP) and [Department for Education](#) (DfE).

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. The safety of our children and staff is always the overriding priority. With rigorous organisation and control, the visit should provide a rich learning experience for the children. The purpose of this policy is to clarify the roles, responsibilities and procedures for all concerned when organising an educational visit.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is delegated to approve all off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature. The Headteacher will sign off all risk assessments. When the Headteacher authorises a visit, they are confirming that the visit complies with school and local authority policy, and that in their opinion the visit leader and any accompanying staff are competent to supervise the visit. Final approval is delegated to the Headteacher for all visits.

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure that an Evolve visit form is completed for all off-site activities
- Ensure that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety arrangements are in place that a risk is proportionate
- Ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- Approve all visits and activities in line with Staffordshire County Council's current code of practice
- Ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- Verify that the level of supervision is suitable for each visit
- Ensure visit leaders have access to planning resources such as a planning checklist, event specific plan, OEAP National Guidance and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the school
- Bring significant issues to the attention of the Governors at meetings or via a formal report

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) ensures that all off-site activities follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will support the Headteacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and will approve the visit leader for every visit and written risk assessments to ensure good practice. The EVC will sign off each risk assessment prior to the final signing off by the Headteacher. The EVC must ensure that a policy is in place for educational and off-site visits, and that this is updated as necessary. The EVC will check and approve forms that are submitted on the EVOLVE* platform and provide staff support where needed. The EVC will attend regular training to keep informed of changes and updates to EVOLVE.

The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for managing the visit, including for the health and safety of the participants and staff and the supervision, welfare, learning and development of the participants. They are also responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit. The Visit Leader is responsible for the overall supervision of the visit. A risk assessment is necessary for all off-site visits. The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring a pre-visit is carried out, where necessary, and that a Risk Assessment is completed and approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator and Headteacher at least 2 weeks in advance of the visit, for residential trips this should be at least 6 weeks. The Risk Assessment will include the ratio of adult to children supervision and the number of first aiders or appointed persons

needed. The Visit Leader will brief all staff and helpers involved in the visit who will be given a copy of the Risk Assessment. They will ensure the children are suitably briefed on safety and behavioural expectations. The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring all necessary items, including a mobile phone, first aid kit and pupil medication are taken on the visit. The visit leader is responsible for adding any day visits or any adventurous, residential or overseas visits to EVOLVE to be managed by Entrust and checked by the EVC and Headteacher.

An ECT cannot be named as a visit leader.

The Headteacher ensures appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed.

The Class teacher(s) (one of whom is the Visit Leader) is responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit. They liaise with the venue and administrative staff to arrange the visit (if necessary), and follow the checklist (below). A risk assessment is necessary for all off-site visits.

The role of the Visit Leader

It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to:

- Liaise with the venue and administration staff for availability, costing and transport at least a term in advance;
- Check outside organisations meet nationally recognised standards if they are providing activities. They should hold the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge;
- Liaise with administration staff for booking and lunch arrangements (if necessary);
- Inform parents where necessary (letter, email, Class Dojo, Microsoft Forms);
- Undertake a pre-visit where necessary;
- Complete the risk assessment within the stated timescale and submit to the EVC for approval;
- Complete an EVOLVE form where necessary
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit;
- Ensure all dietary and medical factors have been taken into consideration;
- Liaise with the DSL/ DDSL to discuss any relevant safeguarding needs of the children taking part;
- Liaise with all group members via a briefing (staff and other adults), ensuring they understand the risk assessment and safeguarding protocols;
- Ensure that the children understand their responsibilities through a pre-trip talk;
- Ensure all adults have the risk assessment and any other information for the visit (maps etc);
- Ensure a mobile phone, pupil medication, First Aid kit, travel sickness provision etc;
- Make contact with the appropriate personnel once at site, so that in case of an emergency, they know who to address information to;
- Regularly check that the entire group is present using register;
- Consistently monitor risk to manage safety and curtail the visit or stop the activity if the risk to Health and Safety of any participant reaches an unacceptable level;
- Inform the school on arrival and when leaving the venue. If there are any delays, parents will be informed via the emergency list or e-mail.

Other members of the group involved in the visit must:

- Attend a pre-trip briefing, understand the purpose of the visit, read and understand the risk assessment;
- Carry the risk assessment and any other information for the visit (maps etc);
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;

- Care for each individual as any reasonable parent would;
- Regularly check that their entire group is present;
- Follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with managing the group;
- Consider stopping the visit or activity if they think the risk to the health and safety of the children in their charge is unacceptable;
- Have the means to contact the group leader/other supervisors if needing help but do not use a mobile for any other reason;
- Clearly understand in an emergency they do not contact anyone from school including parents, or the speak to the media;
- Have appropriate access to first aid.

Parents or carers should make an informed decision on whether their child should participate in the visit based on the information provided by the school. They should prepare their child sufficiently, including reinforcing the appropriate code of conduct. Parents or carers should ensure they provide and update emergency contact detail, sign the consent form (if applicable) and provide the school with any extra information, e.g. medical requirements, which may affect their child's participation in the visit or activity

Planning an Off-Site Visit

The processes and procedures to be followed when organising a visit are embedded in the Evolve system. The EVC manages access to the system.

An initial dialogue should take place with the EVC prior to planning an offsite visit.

Whatever the destination, it is of critical importance that formal planning is undertaken to consider the potential dangers and difficulties associated with the visit and that appropriate plans are in place to reduce the risks.

For further guidance, refer to:

- **NCC Visit Planning Checklist**
- **OEAP NG Visit Leader Guidance**

Planning-Risk Management

What we record and how?

All trips will contain a completed risk assessment using an HSF19 risk assessment form. 'Risk assessment' is a process, and not a document. HSE legislation dictates that the significant findings of the risk assessment process must be recorded but it does not state any particular format for this. The 'significant findings' are a combination of the identified issues and what is being done about them. As there is no legal requirement to document the findings of the risk assessment process in any particular format, it is up to the school and visit leadership team to decide what format works best and will be most useful for them.

It is not possible (nor is it desirable) to eliminate all risks but these should be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. An activity should only take place if, in the professional

judgement of the leader, the residual risk following implementation of any control measures is deemed to be acceptable.

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. This will be undertaken, where appropriate, however, as a minimum all participants will have the risk assessment talked through and explained to them prior to the trip/activity.

Risk assessments will be uploaded onto the Evolve system as part of the Evolve form that is completed in preparation for the school trip. This risk assessment can then be viewed by the EVC, the Headteacher and the Local Authority where necessary.

Safety during the visit and ongoing risk management

The value of off-site educational visits is well recognised by the Local Authority and our Governing Body and therefore fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. Off-site educational visits must be well managed, information communicated and responsibilities recognised.

Prior to the visit, staff must ensure that all participants understand what is expected of them. This includes any 'rules' that will be in place. These should be re-emphasised as appropriate during the visit. The on-going monitoring of all aspects of the visit by the leader and other staff is the single most important aspect in the risk management of visits, and hence safety. This also contributes towards enjoyment and learning. Where appropriate, activities must be modified or curtailed to suit changed or changing circumstances, for example: an over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc. This is primarily the responsibility of the Visit Leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate. Following the visit, the visit leader should review the risk assessment, report any significant issues to the EVC and record as a note on the risk assessment for both reference and to inform future visits.

Parent/ Carer Consent

Written consent from parents is required for any off-site activities that pupils are participating in e.g. Sports competitions, local trips. Written consent is always requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management, for example trips requiring transport, residential trips, those trips including 'adventurous activities', or those that take place outside school hours. Parents are informed of these activities in advance and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity covered by the form. The school ensures that changes to parent / carer contact details and child medical details are up-to date. Group leaders have access to children's emergency contact details, which remain at school.

Following the trip and on return the Group Leader must evaluate and update the risk assessment before sharing with the EVC. A general evaluation of the visit will inform future visits and may be a useful check on the value of the risk assessments undertaken.

Risk Assessment forms should be completed and uploaded to Evolve so they can be viewed by the EVC and the headteacher as well as the Local Authority if necessary. External providers will have their own risk assessment documents that can be used to help in this process. Staffing and Supervision St. Leonard's Primary School is committed to ensuring that all educational visits are staffed appropriately to provide safe and effective supervision.

Staffing levels are determined through careful risk assessment, taking into account the type of activity,

location, group size

- **Staffing:** availability, qualifications and experience of staff
- **Timing:** impact of time of day, time of year or whether the visit is within or outside of normal working hours
- **Activities:** the nature and risk level of planned activities
- **Group:** specific needs and dynamics of the student group
- **Environment:** physical setting and potential hazards (urban, rural, remote etc.)
- **Remoteness:** proximity to the school, communication availability and access to emergency services.

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

A DSL will always attend residential trips.

There should always be enough adults to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits involve activities with a higher risk, supervision ratios are set accordingly.

These are the ratios that the school follows based on the Department for Education and Skills guidelines for levels of supervision:

Reception	1:4
Key Stage 1	1:6
Key Stage 2	1:10

It may at times be appropriate for a ratio of 1:1 to be necessary.

There will be a minimum of 2 adults on every trip.

In addition to the teacher in charge, there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Approval and the Use of Evolve

A web-based system (EVOLVE) is used to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval and evaluation of trips. All staff that lead or accompany trips can access their own account which is set up by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

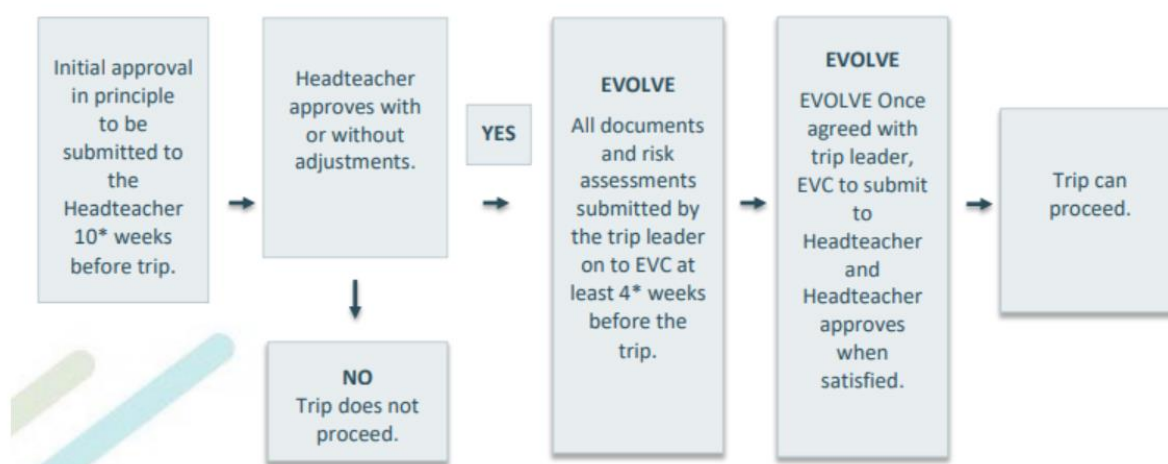
The default option is a day visit within the United Kingdom. Trips can be further categorized as follows:

- On-site or local learning area
- Off-site (non-residential, non-adventurous)
- Overseas
- Residential – where a trip involves an overnight stay
- Adventurous (provider led) – normally sporting or ‘outward bound’ (such as: skiing, kayaking, climbing, caving, orienteering). Provided by a competent and qualified person.
- Adventurous (self-led) – e.g. Duke of Edinburgh or any water-based activity even if on the water margins including, paddling, fishing, walking

Approval of trips will be made as detailed in the flow charts below as required in accordance OEAP guidance and in-line with Local Authority procedures. Initial approval in principle will also be gained.

Routine trips such as sports fixtures, weekly swimming lessons, routine local walks to low-risk areas still need to be appropriately managed, with risk assessments and suitable and sufficient controls in place. However, the school may choose to manage these outside the Evolve system with the consent and knowledge of the EVC and the Headteacher, following an approved standard operating procedure.

St. Leonard's Primary School retains accountability for school trips. Approval of educational trips is delegated to the Headteacher of the school. To provide additional assurance, trips that are residential or adventurous in nature must be approved by the Local Authority (using the Evolve system). Any advice or comments from the Educational Visits Advisors at the Local Authority must be actioned before the trip can take place.



These timescales are an absolute minimum. Trips should be thoroughly planned and all information processed on EVOLVE to allow timely approval as soon as practical. For more complex or costly trips, the lead in time will be much longer – for instance to secure early bookings and allow for a payment plan to be put in place.

Guidance Notes for Off-Site Educational Visits

To ensure proper good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

All visit leaders will familiarise themselves with the [OEAP National Guidance](#), published advice and guidance.

In order to plan an off-site activity, the EVC should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. Routine or local visits such as sports matches or tournaments also need to be planned ahead. It may be possible to approve a series of events on a termly basis, for example swimming. No financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved.

Inclusion

We want all children to benefit from our educational visits. Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. St. Leonard's Primary School believes that educational visits should be made available to all pupils, including those with educational, physical, medical or behavioural needs.

How can children's individual needs be accommodated?

The class teachers, EVC, DSL and SENCO (where necessary), review the list of participating pupils. Consideration will be given to what reasonable adjustments need to be made to enable all pupils to participate fully and safely on school trips, visits and sporting activities. Risk assessments will be carried out so that planning arrangements take account of any steps needed to ensure that all pupils are included and the visit is a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team will make any necessary communication with parents/carers regarding the ability of a pupil to participate in a trip and other staff should not discuss this directly with pupils or parents/carers.

Safeguarding

The school's safeguarding procedures are followed on educational visits.

Additional measures to safeguard the children:

- the Visit Leader will meet with the DSL/ DDSL to share the list of children taking part in the trip so any safeguarding needs can be highlighted
- all adults within the adult to child ratios will be school staff with an enhanced DBS check with barred list check as part of their recruitment process. Any additional 'one off' volunteers will always be in the company of a member of school staff and will never be unsupervised with the children. This will be referenced on the risk assessment and appropriate control measures will be taken. Additional adults will be made aware of what to do if they are concerned about a child or another adult in the trip briefing.
- if an outside organisation is providing an activity for an educational visit, only organizations awarded the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge will be used. This will ensure they meet nationally recognised standards of safety and liability insurance. This includes having a clear and robust safeguarding and child protection policy that staff comply with and confirms all eligible staff are subject to the appropriate criminal record check.

Behaviour

What are the expectations of behaviour on a school visit?

The school behaviour policy will be reinforced on all school visits. Clear boundaries and high expectations will be set. However, should an incident of unacceptable behaviour occur during the visit, and the Group Leader perceives it as putting the individual, other children or adult helpers at a high level of risk, the parents/guardians will be contacted to arrange collection of their child. Should the parents/guardians be uncontactable or unable to collect their child, school will be contacted and an alternative arrangement will be made.

Volunteers

All adults included in the adult to child ratios, will be taken from the staff and therefore have an enhanced DBS check with barred list check as part of their recruitment process. Any additional 'one

off' volunteers will not be considered as part of the ratios. They will always be in the company of a member of school staff and will never be unsupervised with the children. This will be referenced on the risk assessment and appropriate control measures will be taken.

First Aid

For all visits, there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment. At least 2 members of staff will have undertaken First Aid training provided by the school within the last 3 years. For Reception, at least one member of staff on the visit should hold a current Paediatric First Aid certificate.

A first aid kit appropriate to the visit will be carried by staff on the trip.

Insurance

The school has appropriate insurance through the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) from the DfE.

Transport

Trips will always use LA approved coach companies.

Rarely, a private car (staff) may be used to transport young people. If this occurs then it must be approved by the Headteacher, and the individual staff member must hold the appropriate business insurance cover on their vehicle, a copy of which is held by the School Business Manager. If a parent chooses to allow their child to be transported by another parent (for example to a local sports match) then they do so at their own arrangement and risk.

* EVOLVE is the online platform managed by Entrust. They provide support and guidance for any off-site trips that involve transportation or adventurous/hazardous elements and any on-site activities that involve adventurous/hazardous elements.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review is an invaluable part of risk management as it facilitates learning and improvement of arrangements and control measures. The organisations conducts monitoring both actively and reactively.

Active monitoring and review will be facilitated at an operational level by:

- infield observations
- completion of Evolve form evaluations
- Post-visit briefings conducted by the Visit Leader

Active monitoring and review will be facilitated at strategic managerial level by:

- Continual monitoring by the EVC of Evolve forms at point of approval, review of Evolve for evaluations and feedback from in-field observations.
- Termly visit report generated by Evolve that is reviewed by Senior Leadership team
- Policy review by governors every 2 years or at such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of educational visits and off-site activities.

Reactive monitoring is conducted through the process of providing feedback following visit activity and the reporting and incidents noted above.

