

Policy for the Management of Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom



September 2019

Thorpe Primary School welcomes our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, ethnicity, gender (including issues of transgender, and of maternity and pregnancy), religion and belief, and sexual identity.

We welcome our duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to promote community cohesion.

We recognise that these duties reflect international human rights standards as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

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Learning Outside the Classroom**

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Guidance	OEAP National Guidance www.oeapng.info Advice from Stephen Brown (Outdoor Education Adviser)
Approved/Ratified by	Governing Body Date
Distribution	Staff Handbook Website Evolve website library Staff IT network

Rationale

Thorpe Primary School provides a rich and varied programme of opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom - on the school site, the local area and further afield. The programme of visits is structured and progressive to gradually develop young peoples' confidence, independence, responsibility and specific learning objectives.

We believe that children and staff involvement in residential and non-residential visits adds significant value to school life and enhances our core values and ethos. First-hand experience adds breadth and depth to the curriculum and enhances social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

We aim to:

- Provide a broad programme of visits;
- Ensure access for all students including those with additional needs;
- Develop continuity and progression throughout a child's school experience;
- Enable children to discover a sense of community, social responsibility, initiative, resourcefulness and self-reliance.

Guidance

Thorpe Primary School has formally adopted the OEAP National Guidance (NG) as found on the following web site: www.oeapng.info

It is a legal expectation that employees **must** work within the requirements of their employer's guidance; therefore Thorpe Primary School employees must follow the requirements of the National Guidance, as well as the requirements of this Policy.

Specific Arrangements

The academy has a service level agreement for specialist advice from the Outdoor Education Adviser. The school has a Educational Visit Coordinator who is trained and updated. There is a clear process for planning and approval of visits, using Evolve software for Zone 2 and 3 visits. There is a defined process in place for Zone 1 visits.

Insurance

The academy has insurance policies in place to cover this area of work. Specific activity may require further cover which should normally be with the insurers.

Managing Risks

The Academy has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level. This requires that proportional (suitable and sufficient) risk management systems are in place, requiring the school to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. A "Risk-Benefit Assessment" approach is adopted. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is "acceptable". As part of learning, young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

Emergencies and Critical Incidents

The School Critical Incident plan has been updated and reviewed. It covers the possibility of having to manage an offsite visit emergency. Senior staff who may have to implement the plan are trained and briefed. The Adviser service provides support and information, linked to the Visit Emergency Support Network, (VESN).

Charging

The school will take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996.

Staff

The Academy works to the principle that staff have been assessed as competent to undertake such responsibilities as they have been assigned, for leading or assisting on visits. This assessment may include a review of previous visits, leadership experience from other areas and for certain activities a formal qualification. The EVC will lead on this process but may involve other senior staff.

Appendix 1 covers the qualifications required to lead Duke of Edinburgh Award

Staff Roles are defined on the NG website and staff taking on a specific role should read and understand the advice contained within defined documents associated with the role. Roles include, visit leader, assistant leader, EVC, Head and Governing Body and voluntary helpers.

Vetting

Staff deployed onto visits are subject to the schools safeguarding processes and arrangements. Volunteers are also included.

Effective Supervision

The academy follows national guidance in that there are no specific and defined ratios for visits, but that the staff on the visit work to the principle of effective supervision at all times.

The following factors should be considered:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;

Each group must be led by a qualified teacher or PKAT employee approved by the headteacher.

Staff and volunteers accompanying their own family members on a visit might be considered as 'half' an adult, and it is preferred that they do not lead a group with their own children in.

On residentials, it is essential that there is at least one male and one female adult

Suggested ratios are as follows:

Pupil age	Nursery	Reception	Years 1 – 3	Years 4 – 6
Adult : Pupil Ratios	1 : 2 - 3	1 : 3 - 5	1 : 6 – 10	1 : 10 – 15

All staff and volunteers on a visit should wear a school fleece or high visibility jacket. These can be signed out from the school office.

Planning

The academy works with the principle that educational visits are both successful and have risk managed, not solely through risk assessments, but by good planning from the very start of the visit planning process.

Appendix 1 sets out specific arrangements for planning for each Zone.

Working with outside providers

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. This is a vital dimension of risk management. It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Examples of such schemes include:

- The LOtC Quality Badge
- AALS licensing
- Adventuremark
- NGB centre approval schemes

Planning for Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every *reasonable* effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

The Academy takes all *reasonably practicable* measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and outdoor learning thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate;
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- integration through participation with peers.

Good Practices

All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities. National Guidance sets a clear standard to which the visit leaders **must** work. The guidance states:

“a competent Visit /Activity Leader (or an Assistant Leader where they may take sole responsibility for a sub-group) requires:

- *Knowledge and understanding of their employer’s guidance supported by establishment-led training.*
- *Knowledge and understanding of the staff, the activity, the group and the venue.*
- *Appropriate experience*
- *In some circumstances (e.g. first aid, adventurous activities) a formally accredited qualification.”*

Staff participating in off-site activities and visits must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues are applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff.

Good planning for a visit should include a consideration of all the variable factors:

- **Staffing requirements** – trained? experienced? competent? ratios?
- **Activity characteristics** – specialist? insurance issues? licensable?
- **Group characteristics** – prior experience? ability? behaviour? learning, and other additional needs? medical needs?
- **Environmental conditions** – like last time? impact of weather? water levels? social factors?

- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport? residential?

Transport

Careful consideration should be given to this area. This policy supports groups travelling by the most appropriate means which can include, walking, public transport – buses, trains and tube, taxi and private cars, coach and aircraft. The NG website contains details to assist in planning for transport.

Parent / Carer Consent

Annual written consent from parents will be gained for all off site activities where no financial contribution is required and take place within the school day.

Separate permission will be requested for activities that take place outside school hours.

We will always inform parents when a visit is to take place.

Approval for visits

Day visits will be approved by the EVC within school.

All **residential**s require approval from PCC. The Visit Leader should complete Evolve and submit to the EVC at least 4 weeks prior to the visit. The EVC will then submit to PCC for approval.

Some activities are regarded as '**adventurous**' and require PCC approval. This includes climbing walls, archery, off road cycling, canoeing and high rope courses (refer to section 21 of PCC guidelines for the definitive list).

If these activities are to take place during a day trip, then the EVOLVE process must be submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the event so that PCC approval may be gained. If the activities take place as part of a residential, they must be listed on EVOLVE.

First Aid

For all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid.

'Basic Skills' is a level which may be suitable for certain visits. Based on the nature of the particular visit, the EVC or visit leader should make a professional judgement regarding the level of first aid required.

A first aid kit appropriate to the visit should be carried.

Children's medication and inhalers must be taken on all visits.

Any accidents or injuries should be recorded in school.

Procedures Checklist

The checklist of procedures (Appendix 2) should be referred to by Visit Leaders. This outlines the planning and booking procedures for all visits.

Appendix 1

Planning for Visits

Zone 1 Activity

Zone 1 activity is defined as a non-complex visit to a regular venue that is walkable. Staff know the venue and activity well and therefore risks are more easily managed.

For Zone 1 activities, the visit lead will complete an Educational Visits Plan and email them to the EVC two weeks in advance of the visit for it to be authorised.

Zone 2 Activity

Zone 2 activities are more complex, may require transport or may be to an unfamiliar venue or for a less familiar activity.

Evolve should be used to plan all Zone 2 activities. It should be completed and submitted 2 weeks prior to the visit taking place, with the Educational Visits Plan attached.

Residential and adventurous activities

All **residential** require approval from PCC.

'Adventurous' activities also require PCC approval. This includes climbing walls, archery, rowing, off road cycling, canoeing and high rope courses (refer to section 21 of PCC guidelines for the definitive list).

The Visit Leader should complete Evolve for both residential and adventurous activities and submit to the EVC at least 4 weeks prior to the visit. The EVC will then submit to PCC for approval.