



# Off Site & Out of Hours Educational Visits Policy

As a Rights Respecting School, our policies are all developed and reviewed taking into account UN conventions and the rights of every child. The article that relates to our Off-Site/Out of Hours Educational Visits Policy is:

*Article 31 (leisure, play and culture)*

Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Written By: Sophie Lovekin

Last Reviewed: June 2023

Adopted by Governors:

Next Review:

Highfields Primary School has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Sandwell 'Policy & Procedures for Off-Site / Out of Hours Educational Activities' [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info) and as outlined on EVOLVE [www.sandwellvisits.org.uk](http://www.sandwellvisits.org.uk). Further procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

## Philosophy

Quality offsite and out of hours education should provide pupils with the opportunity of enhancing the curriculum, enriching pupil development and provide opportunities to undergo new challenges and experiences, including leisure. The policy supports the Every Child Matters agenda:

- To stay safe
- To be healthy
- To enjoy and achieve
- To achieve economic well being
- To make a positive contribution

The school believes that all activities need to be well planned and follow set procedures. In planning activities, we aim to reduce the element of risk involved to the minimum, recognising however that all offsite and out of hours activities carry some element of risk.

## Responsibilities

The following section identifies the functions, roles and responsibilities that key people hold.

### Local Authority:

- Ensuring that EVCs (Educational Visits Co-ordinator), visit leaders and other establishment staff involved in educational/off site visits are assessed as competent in their specific tasks.
- Monitoring the work of EVCs in schools/establishments to help identify training needs and appropriate levels of delegation.

### Governors:

- Ensure that the head teacher and the EVC are supported in matters relating to educational/off site visits and that they have the appropriate time and expertise to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensure that the head teacher and the EVC have taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include participants with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit.

### Head teacher:

- Ensure teachers/leaders are made aware of and understand LA guidance on emergency planning and procedures. Training and briefing sessions must be provided for school staff.
- Ensure that the EVC briefs the leader and supervisors have ready access to them during the visit.

### Educational Visits Coordinator:

- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit and change accordingly if required.
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness etc.

### Visit Leader:

- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents.
- Ensure the ratio of supervisors to participants is appropriate for the needs of the group.

## Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

Highfields Primary School has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises. We seek to provide a broad and balanced range of learning outside the classroom opportunities for all its pupils.

Each year the school will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. The range of activities which the Governing Body has given its approval includes:

- Out of hours Clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, etc.)
- School sports teams
- Regular local visits (places of worship, swimming, other local amenities)
- Day visits for particular groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous Activities.

## Ratios (as a minimum)

Overall the law expects "effective supervision". Sandwell MBC Policy states (as a minimum starting point):

- 1 adult for every 5 children wherever there are under 5s.
- 1 adult for every 6 children in Years 1 and 2.
- 1 adult for every 10 children in Year 3.
- 1 adult for every 15 children in Years 4, 5 and 6.

A Minimum of 2 adults with a group irrespective of the number of children and any adults who are employed as 1:1 are not counted in ratio. At Highfields, we consider these ratios as a starting point and will always strive to go above and beyond to over-ratio, taking into consideration the individual needs of the children and the type of trip they are attending. We also over-ratio for residential/overseas trips and whenever possible – stand by adults of mixed genders are also available.

## Approval Procedure

The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of Off-site and Out of Hours Educational activities to the Head teacher, Sarah Garratt. The Head teacher has nominated Sophie Lovekin as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment and the EVC has received training by the LA.

The following procedures will reflect the Sandwell guidelines whilst also taking into account the context of the school, its population and ensuring that the procedures are both manageable and stringent, in particular those which are mandatory.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head teacher and EVC will approve the initial plan. The Headteacher/EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk management for the visit before departure.

This will be undertaken using EVOLVE as the planning and approval system.

The School has agreed a policy for categorising its visits in line with Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities i.e.:

### Overseas, Residential or Adventurous Activities -

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Visit Leader | - Record application on EVOLVE  |
| EVC          | - Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.                    |
| Head         | - Check application and either request additional information or Authorise for onward submission to the LA. |

LA - Check application and either request additional information or Approve

An exception to the above is where a Sandwell Residential Centre is being used AND centre staff are running the activities, in these circumstances delegated approval has been given to the Head and the visit does not need to be submitted to the LA.

### **Local regular day visits -**

Visit Leader - Record application on EVOLVE

EVC - Check application and either request additional information or Submit through to Head.

Head - Check application and either request additional information or Approve.

Approval for this type of visit has been delegated. This visit does not need to be submitted to the LA for approval.

### **Evaluation of the visit or activity**

Following the visit or activity a mandatory evaluation form must be completed on EVOLVE. This must include any injuries, unforeseen events, changes of plan and any 'near misses'. Possible outcomes and injuries include: -

- Falling of objects or people
- Collisions
- Cuts, open wounds
- Sprains and strains
- Burns and scalds
- Stings, bites and allergies
- Getting lost

As well as more severe injuries and events such as drowning, head injuries, poisoning and internal injuries.

### **Staffing**

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. There will be a system within the school to allow less experienced members of staff to work alongside more experienced colleagues on visits. The selection of staff for Educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent helpers assisting with Educational activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the Head and Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the School and on the EVOLVE online system. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where possible, all parent volunteers will be DBS checked except for certain exceptions that have been discussed with the Head and EVC.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments. The Visit Leader will have received Visit Leader training endorsed by the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP).

## **Staff Conduct**

While on an educational visit/off site activity staff will remain professional and act as role models at all times. While on residential visits it is the staff's responsibility to ensure an adequate number of adults are on duty at all times. This includes ensuring that the appropriate ratios are met and staffs do not leave the site if these are not met.

Visit staff **will not** be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs while on the trip or residential to ensure full safety of the children in their responsibility. In addition to this, visit staff will not smoke at any point while they're on any trip.

Staff who are supervising children on a trip will also need to dress appropriately for the task and activities in hand. If the children are asked to be in school uniform, then staff should dress as they would for a usual school day.

## **Risk Management**

Highfields Primary School does more than the Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Visits by completing a written risk assessment for **all** visits. This will ensure all risks have been considered and anticipated for any situation.

The Visit Leader will seek to identify any significant risks from any activity that is under their control and take appropriate steps to ensure all participants are safe. Where possible, a pre-visit to the trip venue will be made to ensure the Visit Leader is fully aware of the risks that could be there. Good practice precautions and safety measures will be taken.

Full names of children who are attending the trip are written on the back page of the risk assessment. Any of these children who don't attend the trip will be added as a note onto EVOLVE to in-form EVC.

## **High – Visibility Waistcoats**

On every school trip, where possible, the children will wear orange high-visibility waistcoats with the school trip telephones numbers on. This way, all the children are more visible and if there were to be an unfortunate event/emergency, relevant phone numbers for staff on the trip and staff at school are printed onto the waistcoat. In addition, where possible, adults on the trip will also wear the same colour waistcoat, so the children can clearly see where their adult is too. If for any reason, more than two year groups are out at a time and there are not enough waistcoats for all children, badges will be worn by the oldest year group with the school and trip numbers on also.

## **Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge**

The LOtC Quality badge is the only national award assessing both the quality of risk management and educational provision across all types of learning outside the classroom providers including museums and castles, botanical gardens and city farms, theme parks and zoos, field study and adventure centres, and expeditions and study cultural tours abroad. It is recognised by the Department of Education and Welsh Government, and therefore by schools as an indication of quality.

As a Sandwell school, we ensure any trips we organise are, where possible, providers that have the badge. If a provider doesn't have this badge, when first initiating the visit, the visit leader will send a provider statement form for the provider to complete. This provider statement can then be used in following years, as long as the information on the form has stayed the same. This is checked by the visit leader each time the provider is used in the future.

## **First Aiders**

Highfields Primary School ensures that every school trip has at least one qualified first aider and Early Years to have a paediatric trained member of staff on every trip. Names of these adults will be stated in the EVOLVE form and amended via a note on the system if the staff member needs to change for any reason.

## **Contents of Adults Paperwork Packs**

Prior to each Educational Visit, each Visit Leader ensures that a pack of relevant paper work is put together for each adult attending the trip. As a minimum each pack includes: -

- EVOLVE form
- Risk assessment
- Groupings
- Outline of the day
- A range of school Staff members' mobile numbers in case of emergency

Additional documents that are relevant to each individual trip (i.e. maps, booking forms etc.)

All packs are returned to the Visit Leader at the end of the trip so that relevant information can be shredded.

### **External Activity Providers**

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school accounts.

The Visit Leader will make appropriate checks before committing the school to the contract. This will include seeking assurances about health and safety, and any accreditation and licensing. Wherever possible the school will seek to use holders of the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge for which no Providers Contracts or other assurance checks are required.

### **Parental Consents**

Highfields Primary school require one-off parental consent form available within the Sandwell Policy & Procedure for Offsite and out of Hours Educational Activities. This form will be sent to parent(s) (or those with parental responsibility) at the beginning of Year 1. This will then follow through with them throughout their time at Highfields.

For visits which contain any element of the following:

- Adventurous activities
- Residential visits
- Visits abroad

Additional consent will be requested in the form of a Specific Consent form which parent(s) (or those with parental responsibility) will need to complete prior to the activity/visit.

As well as this, at Highfields, we also pride ourselves in ensuring parents are fully aware of all expectations, itinerary and purpose of each visit. Therefore, alongside the parental letter outlining the trip and detailing payments, a specific consent form is also sent to confirm parents are happy for their child to attend the trip and any additional requirements they have for their child.

For the children in Early Years (Nursery and Reception), a blue specific consent form is sent out for all trips and out of school experiences.

The school has policies for Charging and Remissions, Behaviour and Inclusion, which applies to all visits.

### **The expectations of Pupils and Parents**

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents. Pupils, whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. The Visit Leader will consider whether such pupils should be sent home early and parents will be expected to cover any costs of the journey home early.

## **Emergency Procedures**

Where possible, the school will appoint **two** members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as the emergency contact for each visit. Office staff are also appointed if two members of SLT are not available for appropriate reasons. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to one of these people, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

## **Charging for Activities and Visits**

The school may invite, but not require, parents to make voluntary contributions for school activities in order to enhance what is otherwise provided. There is no obligation to contribute and pupils will not be treated any differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution.

The level of contribution will be calculated for each activity and may include, for example, an element to cover the participation by young people from low-income families or the cost of travel for accompanying teachers. Some activities may not take place if parents are reluctant to support it.

The school will comply with the law in relation to charges that may be made for the cost of activities provided outside school hours, within school hours and for board and lodging on residential courses.

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring of educational visits will take place on a regular basis. This is so that the head teacher is confident in knowing that pupils are safe at all times and that proposed outcomes are met. Monitoring will be the responsibility of the head teacher and the EVC.

The following areas will be monitored:

- The planning and approval process.
- Evaluations of visits.
- Observation of visit leaders in action (field monitoring)
- Accidents/incidents

## **General Data Protection Regulation**

The General Data Protection Regulation provides a framework to ensure that personal information is handled properly. Personal information in school is managed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For further details of how we manage personal data, please see our privacy notice, which can be found on our school website. School's Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy can also be found on our website.