



UNSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL Educational Visits Policy



Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Unsworth Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practising strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Unsworth Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'** (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by admin staff, in consultation with the visit leader and submitted to the EVC, who is also the Head Teacher, for checking and approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for arranging for entering these on EVOLVE (where required) by the administrator. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher/EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Christine Reynolds, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher (who is also the EVC) has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. *Governors should:*

- *have an understanding of how Outdoor Learning, off-site activities and visits support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people.*
- *have access to the school's policy.*
- *know there is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements.*
- *know there are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements.*
- *know the establishment visits policy supports the principles of inclusion.*
- *know there are monitoring procedures in place.*

Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE and monitor the procedures in place as part of their self-evaluation calendar of activities.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

Educational Visits Checklist

Unsworth Primary School's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. Unsworth Primary School's Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, e.g. Walks around the school or in Chadderton Fields, etc. Parents have the option of consenting through a paper consent form.

Specific, (i.e. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting through a paper consent form.

Inclusion

The Equality Act states that the responsible body of a school must not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or young person because of one of the protected characteristics (disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) in the way that it provides (or not) a benefit, facility or service. There is a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Activities should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. When a visit or activity is being planned, all reasonably practicable measures must be taken to include all young people. Every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed in policy and practice, ensuring:

- an entitlement to participate.
- accessibility through adaptation or modification, including the provision of
- auxiliary aids and services.
- integration through participation with peers.

It may be reasonable to exclude a young person where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety and welfare of either themselves, or other members of the group, or the leaders. The Equality Act protects people from discrimination and harassment based on the 'protected characteristics'. Where a young person has a behaviour difficulty that is not associated with a protected characteristic then it is unlikely that the Equality Act applies.

When a young person is excluded on these grounds, alternative ways of achieving the same learning outcomes will be considered.

Charging / funding for visits

For further information on charging / funding for visits see the Charging and Remissions Policy.

Transport

Unsworth Primary School follows LA guidance for transport and uses national regulatory requirements and guidance when considering how to transport pupils to and from visits. Visit Leaders will ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company. Only companies who are approved by the Local Authority or who have some form of third party accreditation will be used.

Travel principles include:

- Minibuses and coaches must comply with regulatory and employer guidance on licensing, speed limits, drivers' hours, weights, seating and seat belts, etc.
- The level of supervision necessary is considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey. Group members will be made aware of the position of emergency evacuation exits, first aid stations and meeting points. The Visit Leader should also be aware of alternative routes or means of travel in the event of delay or cancellation.
- When crossing roads as part of the journey, the Visit Leader should ensure that young people know how to observe the safety rules set out in the Highway Code and

the Green Cross Code and are aware of direction of traffic flow. It is good practice for all the staff, voluntary helpers and the young people to be briefed on a common approach as to how group road crossings will be managed. Where available, pedestrian crossings, traffic lights, underpasses and footbridges should be used to cross roads.

- Head counts should be carried out whenever the group is getting off or onto transport.
- It is particularly important that young people should be made aware of safety requirements and expected standards of behaviour when getting on or off transport at pick-up and drop-off points and when assembled in waiting areas.
- In the event of an accident or breakdown, the group should remain under the direct supervision of the Visit Leader or Assistant Leaders. If the vehicle is in danger of being hit while broken down (e.g. if it is on the hard shoulder of a motorway or dual carriageway, or is partially blocking a road) the visit leader or driver should contact the police to provide safety support. Whether it is safer to keep the group on board the vehicle, or to disembark and wait elsewhere, is a matter that will need to be risk assessed on the basis of the specific circumstances. If the decision is to keep the group on board the vehicle, then it is recommended that the rear seats are vacated and the young people moved forward towards the front.
- Visit Leaders should ensure that seat belts are fastened.
- Visit Leaders should consider whether it is appropriate for young people to wear a high-visibility and easily distinguished article of clothing.
- Young people should be made aware that they are not allowed access to the driving area at any time.
- Adults should sit in the front, middle and back of any coach in order to have a view of all pupils.
- Pupils should not sit on the front seats of coaches.
- When using the Metrolink, Visit Leaders will organise pupils into small groups, each one supervised by an adult. Adults will sit with their designated pupils and ensure they all enter and leave the tram together. All pupils will stand against the wall when waiting for the tram.

See specific risk assessments for coach travel, Metrolink travel and for crossing roads etc. All pupils will receive road safety training from the Road Safety Unit.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Refer to the LA's guidance document.

Transporting young people in private cars requires careful consideration. Where this occurs, there should be recorded procedures.

As a minimum, recorded procedures must address the following:

- a) Evidence that the vehicle is roadworthy, e.g. MOT certificate where relevant.
- b) Evidence that the driver holds an appropriate and valid licence
- c) Evidence that there is a valid insurance policy covering the intended use. This requires that employees have "business use" cover.
- d) Explicit parental consent to transport pupils in private cars and by specified persons.
- e) Ensuring that drivers properly understand their duty of care in this situation.

Other than in an emergency situation, or where there is a specific job requirement as a day-to-day duty, staff or volunteer adult helpers transporting young people should not be put in a position where they are alone with a young person.

Insurance

All school visits are covered by the LA insurance scheme.

Other topics

Swimming lessons-see specific risk assessments and procedures for Y4 swimming lessons.

Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

Pupils attending evening activities will be dismissed into the care of a parent or carer by school staff. No pupils will be allowed to leave the school or any venue unaccompanied.

Arrangements for evening activities will be communicated to parents and carers by text or letter so they know when and where to pick up their children.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the ‘School Learning Area’ that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent (*state if there are any situations where you would like parents to be informed in advance, e.g. via a slip sent home*).
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE (*amend if you require certain activities to be approved via EVOLVE – you may want to differentiate between planned and ad-hoc activities*).

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are listed below. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- Chadderton Fields
- Unsworth Library
- Blackley Close and surrounding streets
- Parr Lane Co-op and Martin's bakery, Sunny Bank Road
- Castlebrook High School
- St. George's and St. Michael's churches
- Total Fitness Leisure Centre
- Spurr House Residential Care Home.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
- The stream in Chadderton Fields.

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head/EVC or Deputy or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- The concept and operating procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- Groups of pupils will be accompanied by the defined ratios according to the age of pupils. Some pupils may require one to one supervision.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return. A *'Signing-out sheet'* will be completed.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office has a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles).

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
 - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources)
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Policy compiled by: Mrs. C. Reynolds (Head Teacher and EVC coordina
January 2017

Review: January 2021