

Sheringham Woodfields School



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EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Approved by SMT: 21st January 2026

Approved by Governors: 29th January 2026

Next Review date: Spring 2028

Person(s) responsible for review: Head Teacher / Visits Co-ordinator

Sheringham Woodfields School has formally adopted, through its Governing Body the Norfolk 'Guidance for Offsite Visits'. www.oepng.info and uses both the school's Pro-Form e-form and EVOLVE www.norfolkvisits.org.uk to record and approve visits. Monitoring procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to.

This policy clarifies the reasons for participating in educational visits, the aims and the procedures for ensuring safety, maximising educational benefit and providing effective organisation and administration.

The **definition** of an educational visit is any activity which takes the pupils outside campus boundaries.

Rationale

Both pupils and staff benefit from sharing experiences which take place off site, particularly many of our pupils who need direct experiences to access effective learning. The memories of such activities can last a lifetime. Visits actively support both our planned curricular targets and individual targets, particularly within Personal Development and Preparing for Adult Life (PFAL).

Educational visits are an important means of providing a comprehensive range of SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) experiences.

Visits are planned to be safe, educational and enjoyable. We see them as an essential part of our pupils' educational life in practising real skills.

Aims

To improve achievement through:

- Stimulation, inspiration and motivation
- Keeping pupils safe
- Learning about the community and acting as a bridge to further learning opportunities
- Learning for real life, including using facilities and being safe. Having opportunities to take acceptable risk and learning to deal with the challenge of uncertainty
- Relevant and engaging activities as part of curriculum access or to reinforce class based learning, particularly in Geography, History, Science, Physical Education and Art, nurturing creativity and bringing learning alive
- Becoming active citizens who:
 - Practice socially acceptable skills.
 - Share more about our culture and others.
 - Make a positive contribution to the community
 - Share a social life with others
- Increasing communication skills

- Increasing self-esteem
- Increasing independence
- Encountering the unfamiliar
- Generalising learning, by developing skills in wider settings
- Having opportunities for informal and unplanned learning
- Build on pupils' strengths, interests and experiences
- Provide opportunities for enjoyment and fun

Roles and Responsibilities

The school will comply with the DfE and LA guidance for Educational Visits & Journeys.

The **Group Leader** is expected to do the detailed planning and letters to be sent to parents/carers,

The **Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC)** or **Head Teacher** will give approval for all off-site activities.

The **Educational Visits Coordinators** or **Head Teacher** will check the detailed planning.

The **Governors** will be consulted if the visit involves residential or adventurous activities (level 3 visits), in addition these visits will need to be approved by the Local Authority (LA). The Head Teacher will approve all adventurous activities and residential.

In addition and once the Educational Visitor's Co-ordinator has completed all necessary checks, the Head Teacher should:

- Assess the suitability of the activity.
- Assess the competence of staff leading and taking part.
- Ensure the leader is aware of their role and is competent. (using criteria in appendix 1)
- Ensure finances are dealt with properly and costs are recovered (not breaking charging policy)

Approval Procedures and Consent

Staff leads submit their application for visits via the school's Pro-Form e-form. The form submission must include all necessary details and attachments (letters home, risk assessment(s) etc). The EVC will then approve the detailed planning.

Educational Visits fall into two categories, level 2 and level 3.

Parents/Carers complete a form in September giving consent in principle for all level 2 visits in that academic year.

When a visit is advertised to parents they have the option to withdraw their child from that visit.

Parents/carers will need to give specific consent for all level 3 visits, including swimming.

The school has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose.

Level 2 visits can include regular visits to the same/similar venue, e.g. local shops or one off specific visits.

Level 3 visits involve swimming lessons, residential visits and more adventurous activities, e.g. riding.

Level 3 visits must be approved by the LA via the EVOLVE website with 6 weeks notice.

Staffing

- There must be provision for safe levels at all times. Sickness/absences on the day of an approved visit need to be reviewed and approved.
- Leaders must take into account the venue, time of year, conditions, type, duration and level of activity.
- They must also take into account the requirements of the group and the competence of the staff.
- Volunteers or work experience students are only classed as helpers if they are over eighteen years of age.

Parental Information

- Parents/carers will be informed of all visits prior to them being undertaken and consent received where required.
- This will be done through the office so that management are aware of information that has gone home.
- For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the visit, e.g. provide 'kit lists', contact details, information on pocket money etc.

Risk Assessment

- All staff have a duty of care, which is defined as showing the level of care of a reasonable parent.
- Visits can never be risk free, but with good planning and organisation risk can be minimised.
- Once visits are planned they should stick to the itinerary unless there is a good reason not to.
- Risk assessments are a preventative measure to ensure that the activity takes place in a safe manner and in a controlled environment.
- It is a process, not a document which can be broken down into three parts:
 - Generic: concerning transporting students, medical issues, traffic, absconding
 - Specific to activity
 - Ongoing

The first two are recorded using our Risk Assessment adapted from the NCC form, they involve:

- Identifying hazards.
- Assessing the likelihood of it happening (high/medium/low).
- Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk.
- Check if anything further is needed.

The third is what the staff and helpers do continually during the activity. It involves asking two questions:

- What can go wrong?
- What can we do about it to minimise the risk?

If staff have concern about an activity they should stop. Forms for risk assessments are attached to the approval form.

Risk assessment needs to be shared with all staff, volunteers and pupils before the visit to ensure all staff are aware of the risks and their responsibilities to reduce them. Last minute changes in staffing or newly assigned staff also need to see said assessments.

Good practice would include checking/double checking pupils are present, assigning pupils to staff or helpers, establishing rendezvous points.

Level 3 Visits: Residential, Outdoor and Adventurous Activities

Visits classified by the LA need to be approved by the Head Teacher and LA. At least six weeks notice is required by the LA to process the application. Level 3 visits are shared with Governors via GovernorHub

- The credentials of staff should be checked with the relevant governing bodies of any providers we use.
- A Provider's Contract must be completed as part of the approval of the visit.
- If staff are organising adventurous activities they must have appropriate qualifications.
- At all times it is the group leader in charge and they can stop the activity if they are concerned.
- Account must be taken of variable conditions.
- It is useful to have a named person to liaise with.
- Don't be complacent, take stock on a regular basis.

Finance

The financial procedures outlines what can be charged for. Leaders need to plan how their visit will be financed and outline this for approval. See the schools charging policy.

The DfE guidance on charging for School Activities is on the server in Visits/Guidance and Advice.

Medication

If pupils need medication on a visit it will be issued by the member of staff responsible in school and signed for. When given to the pupil it will be signed and countersigned by a witness.

Red medicine / emergency red burn bags are available from the office. Emergency meds must travel with the pupils assigned member of staff at all times.

Before a visit takes place

Classes must complete checklist at reception before departing.

Ensure necessary trained staff are present before leaving.

Information needed on a visit

On all visits, staff will take the red emergency file with pupil and staff information, contact details, outline of the visit, risk assessments, emergency procedures and critical incident procedures (known as the red book).

Equipment needed on a visit

- Mobile telephone, although the school cannot guarantee a signal. Class teams need to consider where their nearest land line could be located.
- Medication and record sheet as required
- First aid kit
- Some money/change

- Class emergency file.

Transport

Buses must be booked when planning the outing and any cost implications planned for. Any driver must have an LA driving qualification, or if a private company is being used their credentials should be checked via the Trained Person List.

If staff are using their own car then evidence that they have business insurance is required and agree to a Driver check. Said staff must have undergone a driver assessment course, see trained person list.

Travel safety guidelines apply - all passengers should have seatbelts.

If a pupil travels in a wheelchair this must be secured. If staff use their own car they need to ensure their own insurance covers taking students (business cover which is often at no extra cost) and parents are made aware that staff cars are being used.

All staff will read this policy and be familiar with the procedures.

Other Supporting documents

- Educational Visits Information for Parents letter
- Parental/Guardian Consent and Medical Information Form for Overnight Stays and Outdoor and Adventurous Activities
- Application for Educational Visit (specific/ regular/ residential) on Pro-Forms
- School policy in connection with charging for School Activities
- School policy in connection with First Aid and Incident Reporting

APPENDIX 1

The Head Teacher will assess the competence of the leader on the following criteria:

- The leader's reasons for undertaking the visit.
- Their sense of responsibility.
- They have the necessary organising skills.
- They are competent in risk assessment.
- They know the pupils and staff/helpers.
- They have experience in leading or supporting activities.
- They know the area/destination of visit
- Their level of skill and fitness.
- They have the appropriate qualification(s).