

Chalk Ridge Primary School



Reviewed in May 2024 by the Full Governing Body

Next review May 2027

Headteacher: Miss Sue Jackson

This is a school policy using the Hampshire Off-Site Visit Guidance March 23

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. Educational visits provide a context for learning, requiring children to use their skills, knowledge and understanding in real situations. This helps them to understand and remember what they are learning about. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

Aim

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 to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day, and on occasions, take place after school. Our school adopts the national and local authority guidance and uses their proforma when planning educational visits.

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.

Policies and National Guidance

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Chalk Ridge Primary School:

1. adopts the National Guidance (<https://oeapng.info/>) and the supplementary guidance from the local authority on EVOLVE (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE)
2. uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, and monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school Education Visits Policy, local authority and national guidelines. Staff should be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- School Charging Policy
- Schools' Emergency Response Plan

The Governing Body

The Governing Body should ensure that:

- There is a trained EVC who meets the employer's requirements, with a sufficient time allowance to fulfil the role and training to support the planning and delivery of visits and outdoor learning.
- Are aware of the responsibilities as explained in the National Guidance (<https://oeapng.info/>) and the school policy.
- They have access to training to ensure they understand the guidance provided.
- Robust systems support implementation of the guidance.
- They challenge in order to be clear how outdoor learning and visits lead to a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards enriching the school curriculum.
- Visits are included in meeting agendas.
- Governing body to be involved in the visit approval process to ensure approval and notification procedures operate effectively.
 - a) That there are monitoring procedures in place, activity is evaluated, good practice is shared and any issues are followed up to comply with statutory and employer's requirements.
 - b) That there are clear written policies about changes and remissions for visits and these meet legal requirements.

Staff Competence

As a school 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:

- A mentor 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.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher should:

- Ensure the arrangements are in place for informing the Governing Body about visits.
- Ensure that the Governing Body has approved the visits policy and receives supports on visits as appropriate.
- Ensure that visit arrangements and outcomes are evaluated to inform future visits and staff training needs.
- Arrange for the reporting of accidents and incidents as required. Records of these should be reviewed regularly, and the information used to inform future visits.
- Ensure that the proper support systems are in place to cope with the incidents, emergencies and critical incidents including means of contacting the relevant emergency team for support.
- Provide a rich and varied programme of opportunities for young people to learn outside the classroom.
- Make sufficient time and resources available for the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to arrange induction training for staff and volunteers.
- Check the EVC has designated an appropriately competent visit leader.
- Ensure the appropriate provider assurances are in place.
- Check the visit leader or another visit leader is familiar with the location of the visit.
- Ensure that educational objectives of the visit are fully inclusive, are set out in the documentation and are made known to all the relevant parties.
- Ensure the charges procedures for visits are implemented and comply with the schools' policy and legal requirements.
- Ensure that the visit emergency contacts are part of the critical incident team and are clear about their roles.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The EVC should:

- Liaise with the teachers to ensure the educational visits meet their requirements.
- Support the Headteacher and Governors with the approval of decisions.
- Assign competent people to lead or supervise visits.
- Assess the general competence and supervisory ability of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit.
- Where a provider is being used ensure that the appropriate checks have been undertaken and ensure that there is a clear contract or agreement in place.
- Carry out occasional monitoring of visit leaders to identify further training needs.
- Organise the induction, monitoring and further training of leaders in the school.
- Work with the visit leader to provide parents with the information about the visit and obtain the consent or refusal of parents for their child to take part in the visit where appropriate.
- Keep records of individual visits including what worked well, what didn't and any accident/incident reports.

The Visit Leader

The Visit Leader should:

- Ensure the planned visit and activities are suitable for the year group.
- Obtain the Head/EVC approval for the visit according to the policy.
- Ensure the ratio of staff to young people is appropriate for the environment, activities or needs of the group.
- Have enough information about the children to assess their suitability for the visit.
- Carry out dynamic risk management while the visit takes place. Consider modifying or stopping the visit if the risk of the health and safety of the children is unacceptable and have in place alternative plans for such an eventuality.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of the group members/parents and carers.
- Identify and record significant hazards and the safety measures required to reduce risk to a tolerable level. Make known the level of risk to parents, Headteacher and other adults.
- Make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies in conjunction with the EVC and ensure that all accompanying leaders are familiar with these procedures.

Considerations when taking pupils off site

Points to consider are as follows:

- Purpose of the visit
- Staffing and any other adults involved (parents helpers should not be accompanied by any children other than those involved in the visit)
- Staff 'off-site' qualifications
- Children involved
- Adult/child ratio (see guidance) & current DBS checks for adult helpers in place
- Any costing/financial requirements
- Date and timings
- Meal arrangements
- Mode of travel/coach details and insurance information. If staff and parents are using their own cars then this needs to be noted and they have to have the appropriate insurance cover - recorded on county form)
- Details of intended pre-visit for risk assessment
- Draft letter to parents
- Briefing meetings/all communication to staff, parents and children concerned.

Approval

When planning to take children off site during the school day or for a residential visit, the group leader must follow the school approval process.

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Day visits that do not involve an adventurous activity are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least two weeks in advance, and then forwarded to the Head for approval.
2. Visits that are, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity are entered on EVOLVE (see local authority guidance for definition of 'adventurous') and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least four weeks in advance, and are then submitted by the Head to the LA for approval.

Parental Consent

The school obtains specific parental consent for all visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. Parents' consent for a school trip on the school Arbor system.

Charging / funding for visits

Parents and carers will be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of a coach, venue or other costs of any educational visit. See school Charging Policy.

Inclusion

At Chalk Ridge Primary School we will risk assess each visit and consider the ratio of adults to pupils and any extra support we may need to put in place for particular pupils. We will make every effort to ensure that all pupils attend educational visits and will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the safety of all pupils.

We may need to ask a child's parent to accompany them on a trip where their child has a documented history of challenging behaviour in order to keep all other pupils safe. It may be necessary to exclude a child if we have a history of facts (recorded incidents) and substantial evidence to demonstrate that the child disobeys instructions and could therefore put others at risk.

If a child has mobility difficulties or is a wheelchair user alternative activities will be planned to ensure that the child is included in the visit, the activities will be modified for the child but may not be changed for the whole class.

Emergency Procedures

Definitions of a critical incident:

- An incident which meets any criteria laid down by the Employer's Critical Incident Plan or
- An incident which goes beyond the coping mechanisms of the visit leadership team and the Establishment.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit. 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.

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 leader 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 and the school 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 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry either:
 - An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card