



Educational Visits Policy

Updated: June 2024

Review Required: June 2025

Introduction

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 Jordans 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:

- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- 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. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- 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. I.e. 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.
- 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, Jordans School:

1. Follows the Government Guidance 'Health and Safety on Educational Visits' November 2018.
2. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Bucks Requirements and Guidance**' in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
3. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
4. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out 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. (Enrichment)**
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 the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for 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 entering these on EVOLVE (where required) or liaising with the EVC who will update EVC. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head or 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 Coordinators (EVC)** are Mrs Delnevo and Mrs H Swain who will support, mentor 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 before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.
- **The Head Teacher** 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'. The Governors are informed of visits that are occurring. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE. Jordans School has an Emergency Plan in place relating to Off-Site Visits is appropriate to the full range of visits undertaken. This plan should be tested rigorously and regularly and should be supported by appropriate training for relevant staff. Governors should provide support and challenge to ensure that:
 1. The plan exists.
 2. It is up to date and effective.
 3. Any training needed to support the plan is provided.
 4. Appropriate scenario-based testing occurs on an annual basis.
 5. The plan complies with any requirements from an Employer (e.g. the Local Authority where this is relevant).
- **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 ready to be a visit leader, the Head 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

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious 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.

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. visits to Jordans Village or Seer Green churches. Parents have the option of consenting online, or through a traditional 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, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online or through a traditional paper consent form. Parents will be advised through the information letter that unless they are part of the pre-arranged volunteers attending the trip, that they are unable to attend or join in with the trip- for safeguarding / confusion over who takes responsibility reasons.

Inclusion

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.

Transport

Jordans School follows Bucks Requirements and Guidance which reflects National Guidance for managing groups travelling by hired transport.

Insurance

Jordans School uses the LA insurance policy for Educational Visits.

Costing

The cost of a trip is always taken into consideration and its viability assessed. The cost of a trip should not exceed £26 per child.

Ratios and Effective Supervision

Ratios and Effective Supervision Activity and Visit Leaders must ensure that young people are supervised in accordance with the principles of “Effective Supervision”, requiring them to take account of:

- The nature of the activity (including its duration).
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place.
- The age and gender (including developmental age) of the young people to be supervised.
- The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
- Staff competence.

This means that arrangements for supervision must take into account the nature of a group and the individuals in it. It is therefore important that, when planning a repeat visit or a series of activities, the previous plan (no matter how well it worked in the past) is reviewed to ensure it meets current group needs.

Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity. Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may be appropriate only where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements. For example, the DfES publication HASPEV (1998) suggested the following “starting point”:

- School years 1 - 3, 1:6

Without special safeguards or control measures, these ratios will not be adequate to meet the needs of most residential or more complex visits. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.

Policy Review:

This policy and set of procedures will be reviewed every 3 years unless updates are required.

Further information:

Outdoor Educational Visits Advisory Panel:

<http://www.outdooreducationadvisers.co.uk/>

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
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are defined as activities that take place within school grounds, within Jordans Village or walking to Seer Green churches.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

Risk assessments are written for visits within the School Learning Area. These risks are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Headteacher must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school with the consent form.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced 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.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- 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 mobile phone is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. 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 the Headteacher or School Administrator
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 an Emergency Card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.