Woodcroft Primary School

Policy for Educational Visits

Date policy last reviewed: September 2026

Signed by:

Craig Tallon	Headteacher	Date:	5th October 2026
Robert Kulawik	Chair of governors	Date:	5th October 2026
Mark Russell	EVC	Date	5th October 2026

Audience: **All staff** ***Date of issue:*** **September 2026**

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 Woodcroft 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. 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
- 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 Policy for Educational Visits, *Woodcroft Primary School:*

1. Adopts 'London Borough of Barnet' document: **'Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'** (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE and the Google Team Drive/Educational Visits).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info (as recommended by Barnet).
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 this school policy, 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 two ‘types’ of visit:

1. **Non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. E.g. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, local parks, local schools, etc.**
   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.
2. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
   These follow **2**. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

Medical Lead is Jackie Hatch/Elaine Hurley, who will support Visit Leaders and named trip first aiders with preparing first aid and medical advice in preparation of the visit. It is essential that Jackie Hatch is contacted in good time before the trip to allow preparations to take place.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mark Russell*,* 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 before submitting them to the Head (Craig Tallon). 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 those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body’s role is that of a ‘critical friend’.

- Governors are aware of the employer’s responsibilities under health and safety law
- Governors ensure there is this Educational Visits Policy and procedures in place
- Ensure there are formal notification and approval procedures in place
- Governors monitor, frequency, number and purpose of trips
- Governors support visits by accompanying staff and pupils
- Individual governors may be given ‘read-only’ access to EVOLVE

Challenging and supporting visits – see National Guidance www.oeapng.info for additional information.

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.

Risk assessment

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 schools must take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and pupils are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This means when taking children off site teachers must make an assessment of any possible risks involved and take all reasonable steps to address these risks. Therefore a risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

If a visit involves outdoor adventure activities such as water sports, climbing or skiing, and is led by an external instructor, the school will check that the course organiser has an Adventure Activities Licence.

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. The group leader should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children and will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if the group leader lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve.

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the visit plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them.

The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:
one adult to 10 pupils in Years 3 to 6;
one adult to six pupils in Years 1 to 2;
one adult to three pupils in Early Years.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts;
- proper vetting of the driver by the police;
- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown procedures.

The group leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to appropriate DBS checks.

Parent Volunteers
Volunteers on school trips need only an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information if the trip is overnight or if the volunteer helps frequently.

Please see further guidance in Appendix 1 - Further health and safety considerations

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.

In the event of a terrorist threat or attack, follow guidance from The National Police Chiefs Council's, 'Run, Hide, Tell' advice. This guidance can be found on:
Google Team Drive/ Educational Visits/Visits and Threat from Terrorism

Educational Visits Checklist

Woodcroft Primary School's Educational Visits Checklists (Group Leader Checklist & VAGRA) forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from:

R:\Teaching Staff\Proformas\Educational Visits\Blank Proformas
or
Google Team Drive/ Educational Visits/Checklists.
A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. These checklists should be attached to the Evolve trip planning.

For certain trips including visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity a 'Provider Form' will need to be completed by 'external providers' used by London Borough of Barnet establishments;
R:\Teaching Staff\Proformas\Educational Visits\Blank Proformas
or
Google Team Drive/ Educational Visits/Checklists

VAGRA.doc
Group Leader check list.doc

Parental Consent

Specific, (i.e. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (letters, meetings, etc.), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, all pupils should have access to all trips. It is unlawful to discriminate against participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. The Equality Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. Adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Charging / funding for visits

- Visits will only run if sufficient voluntary contributions are received.
- All payments are to be made via Arbor

Transport

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit. On public transport, pupils will be allocated groups supervised by an adult. Staff should be strategically placed amongst the pupils throughout the coach to support them and supervise them if necessary.These groups should remain together at all times when on public transport.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils
If transport is organised using private cars, the school has a legal duty of care, and may be liable in the event of a claim following an incident. The school should ensure:

- If the driver is not an employee, they are as a volunteer through the establishment's normal procedures
- The driver properly understands their duty of care and any agreed responsibilities for supervision
- Parents are informed about the transport arrangements
- Evidence is obtained that:
    - The vehicle is safe. This means it holds a valid MOT certificate, where relevant; that the driver certifies it has been serviced in line with the manufacturer's schedule; and that the driver carries out any pre-use checks specified by the manufacturer
    - The driver is suitable. This means they hold a valid license for the type of vehicle and meet any employer requirements
    - There is a valid insurance policy covering the driver and the vehicle for the intended use. This may require that the employees have 'business use' cover

Tax and MOT status can be checked at www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk
Driver licence details can be checked at www.gov.uk/check-driving-information

All staff and volunteer drivers must sign a 'VOLUNTEER DRIVERS FORM'.
This can be found
R:\Teaching Staff\Proformas\Educational Visits\Blank Proformas
or
Google Team Drive/ Educational Visits / Volunteer Forms

- Voluntary Helper Form.doc
- Volunteer Drivers Form [1].doc

Insurance

Woodcroft is a member of **Risk protection arrangement (RPA) for schools**

Risk protection arrangement (RPA) for schools - GOV.UK

Communication with parents and carers

The parents and carers of children will be invited to complete an educational visit form when their child attends an off-site visit. Parents and carers do have the right to withdraw their child from the activity if they so wish.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the parent–teacher association. This must be made clear to parents and carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent or carer to make a contribution. Parents and carers will be informed of this principle through the school brochure and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Other topics

eg. ***Swimming Lessons***

Year 4 swimming

Itinerary and information for the staff who are taking the children swimming.

- Group Leader is [redacted] – if there are any problems or incidents then please inform [redacted] **07**[redacted]

	Group 1 Lead Teacher – [redacted]
Leave school	1:00
Swim	1:30 – 2:15
Leave Copthall	2:30

- Lunch is at 12:00 for whole year group
- Children need to be in pairs (swimming buddies)
- Leave school cross Goldbeaters Grove
- Adult at the front of the coach and they will count children on. **Minimum of 3 adults on coach!**
- Children sit with their swimming buddy, Adults to check children have seat belt on. Adults will need to spread themselves out across the coach
- Arrive at Copthall Leisure Centre, children leave coach and take everything with them, walk up stairs in single file
- Line up - boys and girls by the entrance, boys and girls need to separate into two lines
- Teacher signs the year group in at the front desk and is given the keys, write how many children and sign.
- Walk children to the changing room and the children get changed, wait for whole group before leaving the changing room and lock the door. **Minimum of 2 adults in changing rooms!**
- Walk quietly and sensibly to swimming pool, Children should not be wearing goggles unless they have a parent letter (see [redacted])
- Children sit by the pool side (in classes) and the register is taken
- Children are then handed over to the swimming coaches
- After the lesson walk same group back to changing room and the children get dressed back into full school uniform. They **do not** shower.
- Meet by the front desk. Leave as a group and get back on the coach with same routine as before.

- Cross the zebra crossing and walk back to school.
- Line up outside the building by front doors, then walk back to classrooms

- We will be using 1,2,3 magic to manage behaviour.
- If there is a serious incident, then please call [redacted] **07**[redacted]
- [redacted] **is our first aider** so any accidents [redacted] will need to be informed so it can be recorded (even if they are small).

eg. ***Dismissal of pupils after evening activities***

Register and ensure all pupils are collected by a responsible adult. If parents are late, send out a text using 'Arbor'. For late returning trips outside the school day, a 'Group' should be set up for ease of text, especially if all parents need to be contacted.

Appendix 1 - Further health and safety considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical forms, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can normally be obtained from the LA.

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. The visit leader will carry either:
   a) An Emergency Card (Home Contacts) - For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours. Protocols the Visit Leader should adopt following an incident.
   b) An Emergency Card (Visit Leader) - Protocols the Visit Leader should adopt following an incident
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desktop exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 3 - The Trip planning

The trip plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment;
- preliminary visit - (where possible)
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other
- relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher;
- medical forms;
- first-aid kits
- Copy of plan is left on site in the school office;

Voluntary Helper Form.doc
Volunteer Drivers Form [1].doc
VAGRA.doc
Group Leader check list.doc

Appendix 4 - Steps on How to Book a School Trip or Residential Visit

Steps on How to Book a School Trip or Residential Visit v2.docx

This guidance can be accessed by staff via ***Google Team Drive/ Educational Visits/***