



Offsite Visits Policy

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Role	Deputy Headteacher
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Next review date	Reviewed Date	Reviewed By	Changes made to the policy	Date and Minute number	Chair of Governors signature
March 2024	March 2023	JL		27/03/2023 - 945	<i>R D'Angelsis</i>

Offsite Visits Policy For Brackenfield SEND School

1. Introduction

Brackenfield SEND School acknowledges the immense value and many benefits of outdoor learning and is committed to supporting off-site visits and activities that enrich the learning opportunities of children and young people.

Brackenfield SEND School (and any contracted external providers where an activity has been commissioned) works within the requirements set out in Derbyshire County Council's Offsite Visits and Adventure Activities Guidance and the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel 'National Guidance' (both accessible via EVOLVE).

All establishment staff will be made aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed.






Overview of Procedures

This policy contains all the information and legislation regarding off-site visits. Below is a summary of what is required for any visit.

The [off-site sheet](#) has a pre-sign off by the designated SLT lead and an on the day sign off by an EVC.

The on the day sign off must include a conversation between the visit leader and the EVC to ascertain whether all pupils are safe to leave school site.

The offsite visits sheet is moved from each section depending on what point in the process the trip is at.

 0. Waiting for SLT Pre-Approval
 1. On the day EVC sign off
 2. EVC approved -waiting to go
 3. Current Trips
 4. Returned Trips

Before leaving school site the visit leader and accompanying staff must ensure:

1. All paperwork has been completed
2. The EVC or Headteacher has signed off the visit
3. All pupils and staff are on the offsite visit sheet
4. Vehicles have been booked if required
5. The offsite visit sheet is in the Trip Out Folder
6. Any pupil who is in the class but not going on the trip has been catered for
7. The green bag is equipped with first aid; personal care and the Off-Site CIMP
8. Each staff member has a working mobile phone and the numbers are on the on-site sheet
9. The correct monies are taken
10. The EVC or Headteacher has signed off the visit
11. Each staff member signs out on the app on leaving the school building

On return to school the visit leader and accompanying staff must ensure:

1. The EVC or Headteacher is notified the trip has returned and of any issues
2. Money and receipt returned to the front office
3. Offsite Sheet moved in Trip In folder
4. All staff to sign back in on entry to the building
5. Inform premises manager if the vehicle fuel is less than a ¼ of tank full

2. Roles and Responsibilities

For all visits it is important that each person involved understands their specific roles and responsibilities as detailed in this section.

Employer: LA, via the School Visits Service for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. Academies, Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools the Governing Body/Trust

Under Health & Safety law the employer has primary responsibility for Health, Safety & Welfare of employees and students, this overall responsibility cannot be delegated. In establishments where the LA is not the employer the Governors or Management board will normally hold this responsibility and should be fully aware of the responsibility this entails.

The employer will ensure that its employees are provided with appropriate guidance, that there are training regimes in place to support it and that the guidance is understood. The School Visits Service (SVS) team will provide Derbyshire County Council visit guidance. The SVS team has a huge breadth of knowledge and experience and can provide support with any visit from a walk to the park through to extended overseas expeditions. SVS provides training courses for Educational Visits Coordinators (EVCs) and Visit Leaders. SVS monitors visits through EVOLVE and through sample monitoring 'in the field'.

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring off-site activities and visits comply with the LA Guidance and this Visit Policy and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required, that all visits approved can be accommodated within the planned provision and that the ethos of each visit is one with which the Establishment wishes to be associated.

The Headteacher will ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC), Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits.

The nominated deputy to approve offsite visits in the absence of the Head/Manager is Sophie Evitts and Jessica Lacey.

Educational Visit Co-ordinator

The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is a staff member who has received relevant training and induction and is delegated with the following tasks: -

- To grant verbal permission that a leader may plan a visit after deciding that the timetabling and ethos of the visit are acceptable.
- To check and approve that the planning and risk management for visits follows employer policy and guidance, and to liaise with the LA as required.
- To ensure that there is sample monitoring of visits in keeping with the recommendations of employer policy and guidance

The EVC should be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment

The designated EVCs are:

Jon Hardy
Rebecca Freely
David Conlon
Peter Csizmadia
Andrea Davies
Maxine Ursell
Janine Rivers
Chloe Lawrence
Jessica Lacey
Sophie Evitts

They received training in the role and complete refresher training every three years or sooner if required.

Visit Leader

Visit Leaders will have over-all charge of the visits they lead. They are also responsible for and must demonstrate the following;

- Competence, including where necessary verification, to lead the visit
- Awareness of potential hazards, dangers and competence when completing the necessary risk assessments and introducing measures to control risks to an acceptable levels.
- Informing the Headteacher of the identified risks
- Sound judgement of what constitutes a dangerous situation and preventing access to dangerous situations
- Ability to undertake dynamic risk assessments
- Arrangement of adequate supervision
- Knowledge of where to get information about the area they are travelling to which could include such things as tide tables and weather forecasts.
- Ensure relevant visit information is shared with parents/carers and informed consent is sought where necessary.

Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers will be appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits.

Details related to a visit and its participants (including staff) will be accessible to a designated 24/7 emergency contact in case of emergencies.

3. Procedures

Staff wishing to plan and undertake a visit (prospective Visit Leaders) will first seek permission from the Headteacher/Manager or EVC.

Finance

The Headteacher, EVC and Visit Leaders should take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449-462 of the Education Act.

The establishment charging policy for off-site visits is based on that a distinction is made between trips mainly during school hours or as an essential part of the curriculum and those outside school hours and not essential. The following applies:

a. Mainly during school hours and /or essential to the curriculum

The school will ask parents for a voluntary contribution in advance but pupils will not be disadvantaged by a parent's inability or unwillingness to pay. However, if a number of parents fail to contribute and the costs of the activity cannot be recovered, the activity will be cancelled and contributions returned.

b. Residential courses in school time - board and lodgings only

Parents are required to meet the full costs. The school will endeavour to assist with contributions from Pupil Premium/School Private Fund where possible.

c. Outside school hours and not essential to the curriculum

Trips of this sort are mainly of a recreational nature and if pupils are to participate in them they must be willing and able to meet the full costs. The school will endeavour to assist with contributions from Pupil Premium/School Private Fund where possible.

Balances of less than £5 per pupil will not be refunded to pupils.

Staff Induction and Training

All new staff will as part of their induction into the establishment, be familiar with the local policy for off-site visits and activities and understand their role in managing, planning, leading or assisting with organising off-site visits. All staff will have access to County and national guidance.

The EVC will identify any specific training needs and requirements and ensure staff can access relevant learning and development opportunities as appropriate and as required by Derbyshire County Council School Visits Service.

Visit Approval

Brackenfield SEND School has adopted the Derbyshire County Council system for approval of visits which is based on these being categorised into three broad types:

1. Local low risk single day visits that are regular and routine
2. Day visits and programmes that require enhanced planning
3. Higher risk visits, further field that require detailed planning and leader competence

Category 1:

These visits will be regular, routine day activities that are organised in and around the locality, usually on foot.

Regularly repeated visits can be covered by a block annual consent subject to parents/carers being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal day.

Visits and activities included in this category for this establishment are:

On-site activity (excluding adventurous activities and Forest School listed in category 3)
Transporting young people between multi-site establishments or other local schools/venues
Regular curriculum delivery at off-site learning provider venues (14-19)
Visits in and around your base setting on foot (churches, parks, urban centres)
Sports fixtures (involving transport)
DCC Primary curriculum swimming programme

These visits should be planned using the establishment All Visits risk assessment and with approval by the EVC and Head/Manager. Activities can be covered by an annual blanket parental consent.

Where there are local activities that are a planned part of the curriculum/routine programme but are dependent upon the right conditions on the day, then the visit leader will sign out before departure leaving relevant information with the base contact.

The specific establishment off-site All Visits Risk Assessment (that may also include road transport) covers general supervision of these visits. A review will be required rather than completed a new document each time. Any additions can be documented using the Event Specific Notes form.

All other visits: All other visit must be planned and submitted using EVOLVE.

Based on the visit types, EVOLVE automatically directs the flow of approval for Category 2 and 3 visits.

Category 2:

These visits are single “one off” day visits or a programme of visits that take place off-site but further field than your base locality and with no element of adventurous activities (as defined in Category 3). These opportunities will usually require transport and could also require some enhanced planning and risk assessment. Example visits are:

Visits requiring use of transport (urban areas, theatres, social events, places of interest)

Swimming in public lifeguarded pools (excluding open water)

Fieldwork visits (not in open/remote country)

Activities at Water Margins (coastal locations & inland waters)

Farm visits

Forest school programmes

These activities will be entered onto EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC 2 weeks prior to departure. Approval is delegated to Trish Turner and visits should be covered by a specific parental consent. Consent should be ‘informed’ consent.

For a programme of regular visits to similar destinations, one single visit form can be completed, with the relevant dates selected and can be covered by an annual blanket parental consent.

The specific establishment All Visits Risk Assessment (that also includes road transport) will cover general supervision of the visit. A review will be required rather than completed a new document each time. Any additions can be documented using the Event Specific Note form.

If a visit is planned to a higher risk environment, the appropriate risk assessments must be completed for your specific visit. This will then be attached to the EVOLVE record, prior to submitting to your EVC and Head for approval.

Certain activities will require staff to hold specific qualifications or competencies before being able to deliver sessions. e.g. forest school. Please refer to the activity qualification matrix for further information or contact SVS. Relevant qualifications will be added and uploaded to EVOLVE. These activities will not be undertaken unless there is a sufficient number of suitably qualified staff to deliver them.

Evolve: Category 2 minimum document uploads

- Itinerary
- All Visit Risk Assessment

- Specific Risk assessment / Care Plan

Category 3:

Approval from the Local Authority (LA) will be required for all overseas visits, residential visits and those which include adventurous activities, be it provider or establishment lead. The EVOLVE system will automatically pass such identified visits to the LA for approval after first being checked by an EVC and authorised by Trish Turner. Specific informed consent will be required for each visit.

Overseas visits and DofE expeditions will be submitted to the LA **four working weeks** before a visit is set to take place, and before anyone is financially committed. **Other visits requiring LA approval require two working weeks notice.** Approval notification via email will automatically be sent out (from EVOLVE) as soon as possible up to two working weeks after receipt of the visit form.

A member of staff intending to lead an adventurous activity, must be specifically approved by the LA to do so via the EVOLVE Leader Approval Request function.

When external providers are used it is a requirement for their safety management to have been verified either by completion and return of a Provider Form or verified by holding an appropriate national accreditation e.g. AALA licence, Learning Outside The Classroom Quality Badge (LOTC). Providers will not be used until they have been 'vetted' by the LA.

Evolve: Category 3 minimum document uploads

- Itinerary
- All Visit Risk Assessment

Specific Risk assessment: e.g. Activity, Transport, Residential, Oversea, Care plan etc.

4. Risk Management

The risk management of an activity is normally carried out by visit leader and assistants with the support of EVCs as required. Risks are expected to be reduced to an acceptable or tolerable level, but not necessarily eliminated.

Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is 'acceptable'. HSE endorse this approach through their 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management' and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is no legal requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control

measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual or harm several people.

Brackenfield SEND School staff will adopt and adapt the risk management materials available through EVOLVE to ease the burden of bureaucracy that might otherwise discourage leaders from making full use of educational visit learning opportunities.

5. Monitoring

To ensure policy and procedures are being followed the establishment will undertake monitoring of off-site visits. SVS will provide sample monitoring of visits 'in the field'.

6. Insurance

Appropriate insurance must be in place for all visits.

The responsibility for arranging adequate insurance cover rests with Trish Turner in conjunction with the organiser of each journey.

For visits abroad, additional journey insurance **must** be taken out.

As an employer, in addition to the standard public liability cover which all establishments will have in place, Derbyshire County Council offers LA Schools the opportunity to buy into an annual 'blanket' personal accident cover / travel insurance, covering any off-site activities and overseas travel ventures.

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher and EVC to determine whether any additional insurance should be taken out.

Insurance in Brackenfield School is provided by a DCC Policy.

7. Inclusion

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to treat a young person less favourably and/or fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Brackenfield SEND School endorses the principles of:

- a presumption of entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaption or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Adjustments made to include a disabled child or young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence.

Behaviour

Brackenfield SEND School encourage the use of codes of behaviour conduct as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young person's behaviour. Such codes will be explained to both young people and those with parental authority prior to a visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where a code is breached.

Whilst inclusion of young people and adults on offsite visits will be the norm at Brackenfield SEND School, this will not be the case where health and safety of the individual or other group members would be significantly compromised. Visit Leaders will ensure that they consult the LA and parents well in advance of the visit where inclusion is an issue.

8. Evaluation

Visit leaders must have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes they hope to achieve. Outdoor learning, off site visits and activities have the potential to deliver a very wide range of benefits and outcomes, these should be prioritised and recorded on EVOLVE.

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For a positive safety culture to exist and develop, learning from past experience, incidents and mistakes is a crucial component in any safety system. A review/evaluation of the safety management of all of the establishment's educational visits by the Senior Leadership Team on a weekly basis will take place. This should include a review of incidents, near-misses and accidents.

9. Emergency Procedures

The risk management for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For any off-site visit a home contact will be designating by the establishment who may be needed as a link between the party, the parents/carers, the establishment and the County Council in the event of an emergency. The home contact must be an employee, be unrelated to anyone attending the visit and be confident in providing support in a crisis.

For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours:

- A completed Emergency Card for Visit Leaders (or equivalent) must be with the Visit Leader at all times
- A completed Emergency Action Card (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times, where access to EVOLVE is not possible.
- A First Contact Emergency Action Card can be used when taking an initial a call from a Visit Leader in an emergency.

In the event of a delay in returning (of more than 1 hour), or of an incident resulting in harm to any attending participant, staff member or volunteer, then the establishment must be contacted as soon as possible to inform Trish Turner or designated deputy so that they can

decide: -

- A. If the incident is of a less serious nature then the next of kin or parents of those affected will be informed about what has happened (e.g. that the party will be returning late or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the Visit Leader will be designated to undertake this task.
- B. If the incident is very serious to contact Derbyshire County Council using the emergency contact phone number and details given below:

The emergency contact phone number for Derbyshire County Council during office hours is 00-44-1629-538364 or outside office hours 00-44-1629-533085. Upon connection, please ask for the Emergency Planning Duty Officer. Please note that calls to the numbers above are to be used only in extreme circumstances, such as serious injuries and/or fatalities. Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people or to their parents or guardians.

10. Accident Reporting

All accidents will be handled in line with Derbyshire's County Council's Accident Reporting Procedures.

Academies must ensure they have equivalent procedures to meet the requirements of the law and good practice.

Where an incident or accident occurs on an activity led by a Provider, please ensure this is reported to the LA Visits Team.

Brackenfield School Off-Site Visit Sheet

Information:

Date:			
Trip location – (in full)			
Trip on calendar	yes/no		
Category of Trip: (Highlight as appropriate)	Level 1 (no Evolve) Local area Regular visit	Level 2 (Evolve complete) Water Distance Once/ twice a year	Level 3 (Evolve/HT approval) Adventurous Residential
Trip contains planned indirect supervision: <i>If yes this trip must have written parental consent and be signed off by the headteacher</i>			
Time Leaving School:			
Expected Time of Return:			
Vehicles and Driver: (if a taxi, please provide contact details)			

Parental communication:

Is check list complete?			
Parental Communication: All parents contacted by BOOP/Email/face to face			
Category 1 local area (opt out) please circle options used:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOOP • Home school diary • Phone calls • Text 			
Category 2 or 3			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written consent received via forms • Written consent received via paper based slips 			

Pre-planning:

<i>(Brief itinerary of trip and rationale)</i>
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Risk assessment:

	What could go wrong	What will you do	On Site contact (SLT/ family support/ PWL)
Accident/ injury			

Group get split up			
Behaviour incident			
Bad weather			
Transport issues			
Dietary needs			

Covid control measures:

Requirement:	Control measures:
Maintain good hand hygiene at all times	

Staff:

Off-site Visit Leader:	
Assistant Leader:	
Competent First Aider:	
Other staff members:	

Pupils: (all pupils required an assigned adult)

Pupil Name	Vigilance Please RAG	Assigned staff Add staff initials	Additional Information: Medical, Intimate Care, PBS etc

Pre-planning approved by:

SLT Staff Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

Delete if not needed

Car Seating Plan:

Driver:		

Minibus Seating Plan:

			Driver:

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On the day

Items:

First Aid Kit assigned to:	
Copy of CIP with team:	
Parent contact details with team:	
Care plans screenshots if required:	
Mobile Phones (including personal numbers if required):	

Refreshments:			
Soft play:	Staff drinks must be travel mugs or in take away mugs with lids. Brackenfield staff will man the exits and gates	Trip Leader initials confirming you will follow these rules:	

Medication Out:	Staff who will have meds and administer if required	Pupil to receive meds	Name of Medication

I confirm all staff have read the offsite sheet, signed:

EVC confirms:
All staff are aware of the procedures and details on the off-site sheet.
All pupils are safe to go on the trip

Name:	Role:	Date:
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On return:

Any issues or problems:

Lessons learned, actions or additional measures for next time:
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If there has been issues with the trip a copy of the offsite sheet must be emailed to the SLT link and Kim Maycock detailing the incident.

Medication In:	Staff	Pupil	Medication