

Ouston Primary School

Educational Visits Policy



Review Date: Autumn 2025

Reviewed by: Curriculum Committee

Next Review date: Autumn 2026



This Policy is adopted from Durham County Council Children and Adults Services

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Well-planned visits enhance learning, support safeguarding priorities, and contribute to pupils' cultural capital and so form a key part of what makes *Ouston 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 practicing 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.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context'.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding.
- 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 Educational Visits Policy, *Ouston Primary School* –

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Durham County Council Educational Visits, Off-Site Activities and On-Site Adventures Policy and Guidance**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE for planning, notification, approval, and monitoring.

All visits must comply with the school's Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

Visit leaders must check updated LA and OEAP guidance annually (Visit update staff meeting – Autumn Term)

EVOLVE submissions must include all documentation before approval is sought.

No visit may be advertised to parents until outline approval is granted by the Headteacher.

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.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (**Appendix 1**).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK.**
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. Note that there are a number of venues which have been given delegated approval so the Head can approve – see Evolve for the most up to date list.

Roles and Responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for:-

- Planning visits, completing detailed risk assessments and ensuring compliance.
- Sharing the risk assessments with all accompanying adults prior to the visit. Accompanying adults sign the risk assessment to evidence sight of it.
- Entering visit details and risk assessments on EVOLVE.
- Ensuring visits comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

Safeguarding Responsibilities:

- Report concerns immediately.
- Ensure safe supervision in toilets and changing areas.
- Follow procedures for managing disclosures off-site.
- Provide a safeguarding briefing to all adults.

Volunteers must follow the same conduct expectations as staff.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is *Mrs Annette Tyrrell* who:-

- supports and challenges colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities;
- 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;
- sets up and manages staff accounts on EVOLVE;
- stores documents relating to school visits online.

EVC training is completed every 3 years. Latest training - May 2026.

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'. Governors receive termly updates on visits. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

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, (risk assessment training; Safeguarding refresher; First aid (where appropriate)).

The EVC maintains a training log and reviews competence annually.

Competence is assessed, not assumed.

Emergency Procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts.

Visit leaders must rehearse emergency procedures with accompanying adults before departure.

Staff must know how to contact the DSL during a visit.

Emergency contacts must be available for the entire duration, including travel. (new)

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. Visit leaders will contact the emergency contacts for support in seeking LA assistance.

Educational Visits Checklist

Ouston Primary School Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. Ouston Primary School Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

Parents will always be informed of the detail when their child is undertaking an educational visit.

Written consent is only requested for activities which need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside of school hours. A 'one off' consent will be signed by parents

when their child enrolls at school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school.

However, specific parental consent will be obtained for visits of a residential, overseas or adventurous nature. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

Ouston Primary School will make reasonable adjustments to ensure participation for all pupils, including those with additional needs. Visit leaders must consult the SENCO during planning.

If appropriate, we may ask the parent/carer of a particular pupil to accompany them on the visit. If there are any concerns about whether school can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of others on a visit due to the specific needs of a pupil we will seek advice from the DCC Health & Safety Team.

Charging / funding for visits

Ouston Primary School will arrange payment for visits on an individual visit basis. Visits such as residential trips, which will be more expensive, will have arrangements in place for payment to be made gradually over a period of time leading up to the visit.

Pupils from families who receive specific benefits may be entitled to attend the visit with no charge or reduced charge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Transport

Ouston Primary School follows the Local Authority advice in regard to the use of staff cars to transport pupils.

Seatbelt checks and headcounts must occur at every transition point.

Volunteers must never transport pupils alone.

When transporting pupils in private vehicles, there will be relevant car seats, as required by law, and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

Insurance

Ouston Primary School is covered by RPA Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance for activities when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the community within the UK. We are not covered for personal accident benefits or loss of personal property while on educational visits. If necessary, we can arrange this insurance for individual visits. For overseas visits separate insurance will be taken out.

Supervision & Staffing Ratios

The following ratios are only a guide and do not overrule or replace the professional judgement of the group leader, EVC, and head teacher.

Ratios must be adjusted based on:

- SEND needs
- Behaviour considerations
- Environmental risks

Low risk activities (where the risk is similar to everyday life)

- Nursery and Foundation Stage Pupils - 1 adult to every 4 – 6 pupils
- Key Stage 1 pupils - 1 adult to every 4 – 6 pupils
- Key Stage 2 pupils - 1 adult to every 10 – 15 pupils

Higher risk/adventurous/Residential Visits

- Key Stage 1 pupils - 1 adult to every 2 pupils
- Key Stage 2 pupils - 1 adult to every 6 – 10 pupils

A named first aider is required on all visits.

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 (For example museums, libraries, farms etc) follow the Operating Procedure below.

:

- School will always inform parents/carers prior to a visit. Parental permission is not required.
- Visit information will be uploaded to Evolve for all visits/trips planned for out of school.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head Teacher, must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- 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 pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff leading the visit have a mobile phone and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (for example 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 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. This Emergency Procedure is discussed during safeguarding staff meetings to ensure staff knowledge is thorough and up to date.