



Educational Visits Policy

A12

Dolphin School Trust
inc. Noah's Ark Nurseries

Reviewed by:	Lucy Price (Headteacher)
Last reviewed:	August 2025
Next review:	August 2027

Educational Visits Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, 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. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching the children's learning experiences and developing knowledge / character.
- 1.2** 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, although residential trips are also offered.

2 Aims

- 2.1** The aims of our off-site visits are to:
- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
 - Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
 - Promote the independence of our children as learners, encourage team work and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions in the Early Years, and progress to residential experiences in Upper School.

3 Curriculum Links

- 3.1** The programme will link to curriculum subjects or the outdoor strand or the annual theme:
- English – theatre/cinema visits; visits by authors, poets and theatre groups; internal and external workshops.
 - Science – use of the local common; visits to museums, wetlands and other areas; residential trips.
 - Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment.
 - History – study of local area, museums and historical sites; visits by theatre groups.
 - Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, orienteering, exploring other areas of Britain; residential trips.
 - Art and Design – art gallery visits, use of the locality in practical work.
 - Physical Education – a range of sporting fixtures and extra-curricular activities, including adventure camps with abseiling, climbing, canoeing, kayaking.
 - Music – visits extending knowledge of a wider variety of musical instruments from other areas of the world eg. Djembe drums.
 - Dance – visiting experts to teach eg. Soca/Flamenco.
 - Languages – visiting experts.
 - Technology – projects outside classroom eg. boat design, weaving, thatching, outside cookery classes.
 - Annual theme – various.

4 Residential activities

Children in Upper School have the opportunity to take part in residential visits. These are a part of the outdoor curriculum and are designed to extend children's experience of physical activities, to enhance their knowledge of the natural world and to build team work and mutual trust.

5 EYFS Visits

- For children in the EYFS, statutory requirements apply on all outings.
- Ratios will always meet or exceed EYFS statutory requirements, and at least one accompanying member of staff will hold a current Paediatric First Aid certificate.
- Written parental consent is obtained for all EYFS off-site activities, and parents are informed in advance.
- Leaders ensure a headcount before departure, on arrival, during the visit, and on return.
- Children and staff wear high-visibility clothing.
- Staff take a designated mobile phone for emergencies
- Medication and care plans accompany any child who needs them, with a trained adult assigned responsibility.
- Dynamic risk assessment continues throughout the outing, and supervision levels are adjusted if circumstances change.

6 How visits are authorised

6.1 Teachers research and plan the visits, discussing details with the Senior Team, who will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed;
- Assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- Organise related staff training;
- Verify that all accompanying adults have had suitable vetting/DBS where legally required;
- When using external providers (e.g., coach companies), obtain written assurance that they meet legal and safeguarding requirements (including, where applicable, appropriate DBS checks) and hold suitable insurance. We prefer LOTC Quality Badge holders and, for licensable adventurous activities, we require a current AALA licence;
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- Keep records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues eg. Wandsworth Common.

6.2 Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with this policy.

The Head appoints an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to oversee systems, advise colleagues and monitor compliance.

Approval levels are:

- Routine/local curriculum visits – Visit Leader → EVC → Senior Team sign-off.
- Enhanced visits (residential, adventurous, overseas, or out-of-hours) – EVC → Senior Team review → Head/Governor approval.

Leader competence is checked in line with OEAP 3.2d/4.4a.

6.3 Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of a member of the Senior Team by using the appropriate detailed planning form.

6.4 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. We plan for inclusion and make reasonable adjustments so pupils with SEND or medical needs can participate safely (OEAP 4.4i; DfE medical

conditions guidance). We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

7 Risk assessment

- 7.1** Risk management is proportionate and recorded per OEAP 4.3c/4.3g (key significant risks and controls, dynamic updates on the day). Pre-visit recces are done where reasonable; otherwise we adopt/verify competent provider RAs.
- 7.2** A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the member of staff arranging the visit. This must be checked and signed by a member of the Senior Team. He/she 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?
- 7.3** 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. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They 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 s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgments about the risks involved.
- 7.4** 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 risk assessment form 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.
- 7.5** Supervision is set by risk assessment (SAGE: Staffing, Activity, Group, Environment) in line with OEAP 4.3b. Indicative starting points may be: KS2 1:10–15; KS1 1:6–10; adjust up for water, remote locations, SEND, behaviour, or medical needs. EYFS outings maintain statutory EYFS ratios and are accompanied by a paediatric first aider.
- 7.6** A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. When transport companies are selected appropriate checks are made of vetting procedures for drivers, seat belts, first aid and other health and safety considerations. When using external providers (e.g., coach companies), we obtain written assurance that they meet legal and safeguarding requirements (including, where applicable, appropriate DBS checks) and hold suitable insurance. We prefer LOfC Quality Badge holders and, for licensable adventurous activities, we require a current AALA licence.
- 7.7** It is normal practice to use only school staff on off-site visits. The group leader will check that any adults other than school staff helping to supervise the trip have been subject to suitable vetting/DBS where legally required

- 7.8 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to a member of the Senior Team

8 Transport

- 8.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:
- Transport;
 - Entrance fees;
 - Provision of any special resources or equipment;
 - Costs related to adult helpers;
 - Any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.
- 8.2 Where private cars are used for transport, parental permission is always sought if a parent/teacher is taking a child other than his/her own, and appropriate checks made.
- 8.3 We follow OEAP transport guidance on seat belts/child restraints, safe pick-up/drop-off, supervision (drivers do not supervise while driving), and minibuss licensing/permits

9 Communication with parents

- 9.1 We obtain written consent for nursery-age children for all off-site activities. For pupils above nursery age, routine curriculum-time visits normally do not require written consent; parents are informed and may withdraw. We obtain specific informed consent for residential, adventurous, overseas or out-of-hours visits. (DfE EV guidance; OEAP 4.3d). An individual letter always precedes a trip.
- 9.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions. This is made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

10 Further health and safety considerations

- 10.1 Each visit has suitable first aid provision for the activity and environment (OEAP 4.4b). Emergency medication (e.g., AAls, inhalers) travels with the child and a trained adult; leaders know care plans and emergency procedures (OEAP 4.4d; DfE *Supporting pupils with medical conditions*).
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 Before a party leaves school, the school office should be made aware of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with departure and arrival times.
- 10.4 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 is upheld. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 10.5 We operate a **24/7 school-based emergency contact** during visits. Leaders carry the incident flowchart, contact tree and media guidance; serious

incidents are recorded, reviewed and reported per policy and legal duties.(see Critical Incidents Plan)

11 Insurance

We check that school insurance covers the visit activities, locations and volunteers, and arrange travel insurance for residential/overseas visits. Where using providers, we verify their public liability cover. (OEAP 4.4c).