



# Castle Newnham School

TRADITIONAL VALUES, BRIGHT FUTURES, ONE JOURNEY

## Educational Visits & Outdoor Activities Policy

Governors' Committee:	Curriculum Design & Development
Adopted by the Governing Body on:	4th July 2023
Signed: (Chair of Committee)	
Signed: (Headteacher)	
Proposed date of review:	June 2025

## A. RATIONALE

Castle Newnham School has a positive attitude towards educational trips and visits and encourages staff to make use of off-site educational opportunities and sporting fixtures.

Pupils can derive considerable educational benefits from taking part in trips. They have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom; visits help to develop a pupil's investigative skills and also encourage greater independence. They also provide pupils with knowledge and awareness of the world around them and encourage personal and social development.

## B. AIM

We aim to ensure that pupils:

- To proactively include pupils who may be disadvantaged so they can experience independent opportunities which will expand and enrich their life experiences.
- Develop the ability to integrate socially;
- Develop leadership skills, self-reliance, a sense of responsibility, initiative and resourcefulness;
- Increase their self-confidence, dignity and feelings of self-worth;
- Learn to work purposefully in a team with unselfishness and good fellowship;
- Gain the necessary insight, skills and knowledge to pursue outdoor education in adult life;
- Are enabled to meet challenges that are beyond their normal experiences;
- Develop mentally, spiritually and physically, appreciating all that community life within the town and countryside can offer.

## C. PRINCIPLES

Visits need to be carefully planned in order to meet Safeguarding and Health and Safety requirements and achieve the desired educational and social outcomes.

It is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to reduce them. Wherever possible, a pre visit to the site of the trip should be made to help identify potential risks beforehand.

The group leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

The group leader/trip organiser should take the following factors into consideration:

- The type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location, routes and modes of transport.
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff.
- The ratios of teachers to pupils.
- The group members' fitness, competence and temperament and the suitability of the activity.
- The special educational or medical needs of pupils.
- The value for money and inclusivity of the trip.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions.
- Emergency procedures.

- How to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

Other considerations which should form part of the planning stage include:

- Communication arrangements.
- Supervision ratios.
- Contingency measures for enforced change of plan or late return.
- Information to parents.
- Preparing pupils.
- Emergency arrangements.
- Arrangements for sending pupils home early.

## D. PROCESSES

Every attempt is made to encourage and support staff who wish to take pupils on field trips and educational visits. It is clearly recognised that in many cases these trips form an essential part of pupils' studies and support work completed in the classroom. At the same time it is necessary to ensure that pupils are not withdrawn from timetabled classes too frequently.

Parents and carers are informed in good time when pupils will be leaving site to attend a visit by circular letter or Parents' Newsletter to enable planning and saving schemes to operate. All dates will also be placed on the school calendar to keep parents and carers informed.

Almost invariably, when our children are taken on visits they are complimented upon their behaviour and good manners. This is a source of pride to parents and teachers, and we intend that it shall continue.

### Approval

Before planning the visit in detail the leader should have the proposed visit agreed by SLT. This will then be added to the school calendar and the EVC will be informed, once agreed.

In the case of visits incorporating overnight stays and/or hazardous activities this should be at least a term before and in all other cases at least a month before.

The Heads of School/Federation Vice Principal will decide whether the visit should proceed on the grounds of safety according to the policies and procedures provided by the School. **No visit may proceed without the permission of the Heads of School/Federation Vice Principal-**

All visits involving absence on one or more nights, all journeys involving travel by air or sea and any to which particular risks are attached will require the approval of the governing body.

Overseas journeys must obtain permission from the governing body at least 3 months in advance, earlier if possible to enable financial stage payment to be made.

Once permission has been granted then the leader must:

- i. Complete the Educational Visits form which includes the necessary documents that should be included, such as the risk assessment form and action plan, which must be passed by the Governing Body
- ii. gain parental consent

When the risk assessment has been concluded and all forms completed, copies must be sent to the Risk Assessment Adviser of the Local Authority for approval via Evolve.

### **Insurance Guidelines**

Visits fall into a number of categories:

- Regular sporting activities (fixtures, visits to swimming pools etc.) will automatically be covered by the school's general insurance policy. Notification to Bedford Borough is not necessary and no separate payment needs be made.
- Low risk activities, which do not include an overnight stay, will be covered by the school's existing policy. No separate payment needs be made.
- Visits, which involve special hazards or where there is an overnight stay, may need additional insurance cover. The leader should obtain the advice of the Business Manager. The cost of this cover must be included in the cost of the visit and the leader must ensure that the insurance cover has been provided.
- Visits or journeys, which require approval by governors should have the position on insurance, made clear in writing. Organisers must satisfy themselves that appropriate insurance exists.

Please note: no insurance for personal accident benefits are in place for pupils attending the Borough's schools, whether on the establishment premises or taking part in recognised activities off-site.

### **Health & Safety**

The leader is responsible for ensuring the safety of all members of the group. They must be fully conversant with the Emergency Procedures as laid down in the School Visits and Journeys Procedures. The leader should take a copy with them on the visit.

All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure the Health and Safety of all pupils and staff participating in school visits, journeys and outdoor education ventures.

A risk assessment must be carried out for **all** off-site activities.

Instructors will be appointed as required to ensure that appropriate safety instruction is given at all times, the cost to be included in the costing of the venture.

All ventures will follow:

- i. the Educational Visits, Journeys and Outdoor Education Policy;
- ii. the School Procedures for all School Visits and Journeys;
- iii. the Health and Safety Policy.

### **Management**

Members of the Senior Leadership Team will:

- oversee the School Visits, Journeys & Outdoor Education Policy and report to the Head of School/Federation Principal;
- monitor the planning of all School Visits, Journeys and Outdoor Education Ventures and advise the Head of School/Federation Principal on whether to allow them to proceed;
- monitor the outcome of all outdoor education ventures;
- make recommendations of possible future outdoor education ventures

### **Planning the Visit**

To be undertaken by the leader and deputy leader at an early stage.

1. Discuss with staff to ascertain support and feasibility;
2. Discuss preliminary plans with the Senior Leadership Team using the Initial enquiry form - Primary or The Blue and Green Form - Secondary.
3. If finance is authorised and permission is granted in principle,
4. make a pre visit to identify potential risks or liaise with a staff member who has previously organised this activity/trip
5. then proceed in planning
6. Investigate sources of financial support. Confirm insurance cover is adequate for the activity/trip you are planning.
7. Book facility and obtain copy's of contracts and relevant correspondence from independent providers. Check details such as; times, facilities for refreshments, toilets, hazardous areas, special clothing or equipment required. Arrange transportation. Ensure a risk assessment is carried out for travel, activity and down time.
8. Distribute a circular letter via parentmail to targeted pupil's parents including the following information:
  - a. Parental Consent Forms to be signed and returned
  - b. Destination with full address and telephone number
  - c. Dates and times of departure and return
  - d. Method of travel (travel company/coach company)
  - e. Names of leader, deputy leader
  - f. Cost and what it covers
9. On receipt of Parental Consent Form:
  - a. Compile a register of pupils
  - b. Check staff student ratio
  - c. Ensure an adult in the party has working first aid knowledge and a current first aid certificate. For best practice there should be a first aider on every coach when there are multiple coaches.
10. A further letter to the parents via parentmail should include:
  - a. Payment details
  - b. Date after which any deposit cannot be returned if cancelling
  - c. Medical information form to be completed, signed and returned
  - d. Kit list/ equipment required
  - e. Amount of money advised to take, staff responsible if applicable
  - f. Rules, including mobile phone use, the taking of photographs, safety and emergency procedures relevant to the trip
  - g. Emergency telephone contact number of parents/guardian in the event of an emergency

Alternatively some of the information is more effectively given and received during an evening meeting for parents. For a long residential or overseas visit a meeting is essential.

### **Preparing for the Visit/Journey**

1. Arrange the School contact - Federation Vice Principal/Heads of School prepared to be accessible by phone during the visit if out of school hours. This is also captured on the Emergency Card School Contacts form, which accompanies each trip.
2. A comprehensive itinerary of the journey/visit including contact details, must be compiled by the leader and issued to the:
  - a. Primary Headteacher/Federation Principal - only for residential/international trips
  - b. School Office
3. Compile a field file which will contain a planning checklist and a checklist of field file contents.

4. A copy of the field file should be passed to the named school contact who will inform the leader of the emergency contact arrangements at the school. The leader will inform parents, participants and staff of the procedures in the case of an emergency.
5. A school mobile phone will need to be carried by the leader. This number should be shared with all adults attending the trip.
6. A first aid kit, medical information and any medication should also be carried by the designated first aider to be distributed to group leaders as required depending on the nature of the visit, which is available from the school offices on both sites.

## **SAFETY AND SUPERVISION**

### **Effective supervision**

Effective supervision is of primary importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of young people during offsite visits. The Federation Principal / Primary Headteacher has the overall responsibility and duty of care to ensure that groups are adequately and effectively supervised at all times by an appropriate number of responsible adults, who have been assessed and approved as suitable and competent to carry out their roles. **The legal framework does not lay down specific staffing ratios for offsite visits, but the overall responsibility for deciding appropriate staffing levels rests with the Federation Principal / Primary Headteacher.**

### **Category 1 - Low risk/ local/routine**

#### **Staffing ratios**

The following ratios are recommended minimum staffing levels, but in many cases, groups may need a much higher ratio (sometimes even 1:1), depending upon the risk assessment carried out.

A minimum of two adults must be present. EYFS groups require at least one who is a teacher and one with a current paediatric first aid certificate

Children aged 3/4 = 1 adult for every 5 children.

School years 1 to 3 (approximate age 5-7) = 1 adult for every 6-8 children.

School years 4 to 6 (approximate age 8-10) = 1 adult for every 10-15 children.

School years 7 to 11 (approximate age 11-15) = 1 adult for every 15-20 children.

**Each group must have sufficient 'additional' supervisors to cover any emergency or unforeseen circumstance. The trip lead is not counted in the ratio so as to support in the case of an emergency.**

**These are the recommended ratios but the group leader may alter the ratio depending on the nature of the risks associated with different activities.**

### **Category 2 and 3 Visits involving higher risk activities or environments.**

#### **Staffing ratios - dependent on the cohort**

A minimum of two adults and all young people have access to at least one supervisor who is well known to them.

For EYFS, Years 1 to 3 (under 8)

It is not usual practice to take this age group on overnight visits and they rarely happen, however the supervisory ratio should be one supervisor for every five children, depending on the nature of the visit.

For Years 4 to 6 (aged 8-11)

One supervisor for every eight children, depending on the nature of the visit.

For Years 7 to 13 (12-18)

One supervisor for every ten children, depending on the nature of the visit.

**Each group must have sufficient 'additional' supervisors to cover any emergency or unforeseen circumstance. The trip lead is not counted in the ratios so as to support in the case of an emergency. For hazardous activities, staffing ratios often need to be higher than the standard ratios above, and should normally comply with the ratios recommended by each activity's national body.**

### **Category 3 Residential Visits**

A minimum of two adults and all young people have access to at least one supervisor who is well known to them.

Mixed gender groups should normally have one male and one female leader

### **Category 3 Overseas Visits**

A minimum of three adults.

One adult for every ten children.

Mixed gender groups should normally have one male and one female leader

**These are the recommended ratios but the group leader may alter the ratio depending on the nature of the risks associated with different activities. The trip lead is not counted in the ratios so as to support in the case of an emergency. Ratios should be adjusted bearing the following points below in mind.**

- age, sex, special needs
- nature of activities, high or low risk
- experience and expertise of adults
- Duration - If residential, what type of accommodation?

Where a party is sub-divided each division must have a nominated supervisor. They must have clear, well-defined, written instructions clarifying their role and detailed arrangements.

### **During the trip**

- Regular counting of pupils should take place.
- Primary Pupils should wear high visibility jackets if their trip involves walking on main roads
- The group leader should establish a rendezvous place and explain to pupils what they should do if they get separated from the group. Secondary pupils
- For the protection of pupils and staff, all teachers should ensure that they are not alone with pupils wherever possible.
- All adult helpers, including teachers and volunteers, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. They should be briefed about expectations and the itinerary before the trip commences. They will also be given the school mobile phone number that they can call if there is an emergency.
- Teachers will take responsibility for the groups at all times.
- Reasonable steps must be taken to include and support children with special needs and/or medical needs.

- Group leaders must know the health needs/problems of the group and have sufficient competent adults to deal with any medical issues. There must also be contingency measures in place for the group to be adequately supervised if an adult has to accompany a child to hospital.
- The group leader will be a staff member from the school, even when an additional group has been appointed by the venue i.e. PGL. The group leader will manage the conduct of the children in these instances.
- Group leaders must make sure that all allergies/illness information is available to all adults on the trip

### **Preparing pupils**

Pupils who are well informed and prepared before the trip/visit, will make more informed decisions and will be less at risk. Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school trip. Pupils should clearly understand what is expected of them and what the trip will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them, why rules must be followed and any consequences that may follow.

### **Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment should be carried out for all off-site activities. A pre-visit to venues is desirable and sites that are frequently visited should be re-assessed on a regular basis, at least annually or trip leads are to have had a conversation with previous trip lead regarding site changes etc. The frequency of assessment will depend upon a number of factors (e.g. weather, nature of group, experience of staff, location). The process is quite simple and should involve the following:

- identify the hazards;
- identify who is at risk;
- decide the possible outcomes and their likelihood;
- identify existing controls. Where these are seen to be inadequate, note the actions required to bring them to the necessary standard.

A proforma for the previsit check can be found on the EVOLVE website.

The pro-forma for Risk Assessment can be found on Evolve and should be completed as part of the EVOLVE process.

### **Transport and Pupils**

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- Arrive on time and wait for transport in a safe place.
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives.
- Wear your seatbelt and stay seated whilst travelling on transport.
- Never tamper with any of the vehicle's equipment or driving controls.
- Bags must not block aisles or cause obstructions.
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport.
- Never lean out of or throw things from the window of the transport.
- Never kneel or stand on seats.
- Never disturb or distract the driver.
- If you feel unwell, tell a teacher or supervisor.

### **Duty of Care**

When teachers take a party away from school, they are 'in loco parentis'. The duty of Care expected is that of a reasonably careful and prudent parent applying his or her mind to the school situation. This duty is continuous during the whole period of the visit and cannot be



delegated to anyone else. This applies to young people under the age of 18 and parental consent is required for off-site ventures for people under that age.

### **Volunteers**

The role of the helper, whether parent or specialist instructor, must be considered. In addition, the responsibility delegated to accompanying adults should be clearly understood by all. Thorough briefings to accompanying adults are vital.

When a volunteer assumes the role of instructor, it is essential that he/she is appropriately approved for the activity and relevant insurance's are in place.

### **Protection of Children**

The planning and organisation of all ventures, and particularly those of a residential nature, must include precautions to protect young people from abuses such as racial, sexual or physical harassment from either adults or other young people in the group. Staff should remember that the law now requires all adults who have significant contact with young people to disclose any cautions, bind overs, and convictions or pending convictions of a criminal nature. Whilst those adults who are already in the employment of the Borough Council will have made a declaration at the time of their appointment, it is essential that any voluntary adults who may be assisting are List 99 checked.

If a caution or conviction is disclosed, then the Federation Principal / Primary Headteacher must be informed and a decision made on the suitability of the adult to take part in the ventures with young people.

### **Remote Supervision**

The aim of remote supervision (e.g. Duke of Edinburgh expeditions) is to encourage young people to assume degrees of personal and group responsibility and thereby gain confidence in their own ability to work with others. This may be achieved in activities in both familiar and unfamiliar potentially hazardous situations. Therefore particular attention must be given to the detailed briefing of such activities (e.g. to include risk factors, appropriate emergency procedures, telephone numbers and meeting points).

For high-risk activities, to reach the stage of acting independently, young people must have acquired the necessary techniques, with sufficient experience, confidence, physical ability and judgement. The training given, therefore, must be sound and thorough, with careful judgement being necessary before the leader can withdraw. Even then, withdrawal from direct supervision should be a gradual and progressive process. A staged progression may develop from:-

- accompanying groups;
- shadowing groups;
- checking at various times and venues;
- occasional contact via pre-arranged locations and methods.

It is important to emphasise that the leader remains responsible for the group when its members are operating from a distance from the leader.

Governor approval is essential for leaders operating independently in high-risk activities or in potentially hazardous environments.

Where equipment is loaned to young people for activities subsequently and independently managed by those young people, an element of supervision is implied. People involved in

loaning equipment must seek to ensure with the users that the nature of the activities to be undertaken is within their competencies.

### **First Aid**

Make sure there are adults in the party with a working knowledge of first aid and a current first aid certificate and that sufficient, well stocked, in date first aid kits are carried, i.e. one per vehicle or one per sub-group.

First aid kits are available from the medical areas on both sites and may be loaned for the duration of the activity.

### **Medical Details**

Medical details of any person participating in the activity who may require some form of medical treatment or first aid during the activity must be recorded on the Administration of Medicines Form and retained by the group leader. These details must include type and dosage of medication, which may be required during the duration of the activity.

Sufficient medication for the visit must accompany the group and be in the custody of the leader or pupils as appropriate.

Advice and information regarding medical details of pupils may be obtained from the school's main office administrators.

### **Use of Transport**

When journeys are planned by road the organiser should be aware of the need for two drivers for long journeys, the need to break the journey at regular intervals and the need for a responsible adult in addition to the driver to help supervise a group unless the journey is local. An example of this might be where a leader is prepared to drive and supervise a small group of pupils in a minibus on a short journey. For best practice there should be a driver and a first aider on every journey. Transport to PE fixtures have slightly different guidelines. I

The number of passengers carried on a coach or minibus, whether operated under a minibus permit or not, must not exceed the seating capacity indicated on the vehicle. Where seat belts are fitted they must be worn. The number of persons seated must not exceed the number of seat belts provided.

It is recommended that, where possible, pupils should be transported in a coach, minibus or by public transport.

Private cars should only be used in extreme circumstances and there must be an accompanying adult.

NB Before a member of staff uses their own car, a photocopy of their Driving Licence and fully comprehensive insurance policy (which indicates the car may be used for this purpose) must be given to the Business Manager.

### **This document should be read in conjunction with:**

- the LA guidance on Educational Visits, School Journeys and Outdoor education information - <https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/>
- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/education/visits.htm>

- <https://www.gov.uk/health-safety-school-children>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>

## **E. MONITORING, ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION**

The policy will be monitored by the schools EVC and SLT in line with the Bedford Borough Council's guidance for educational visits and journeys.

The Policy will be reviewed biennially by the Governing Body.