



# Merridale Primary School

## Educational Visits Policy

**Policy reviewed by Governors: September 2024**

**Date for next review: September 2026**

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### **1. Aims and scope**

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Educational visits are a valuable way to supplement and enhance the curriculum, expand pupils' education and provide enriching social and cultural experiences, teach life skills and promote independent learning, provide a foundation for lifelong learning, and form an integral part of our approach to furthering our pupils' education and personal growth.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

Visits to places of interest in the local area

Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions

Sporting activities

Adventurous and recreational activities

Residential trips organised by the school

### **2. Legislation and guidance**

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

> [Equality Act 2010](#)

- > [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- > [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Sections of this policy are also based on the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours

Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training

Working with the governing board to approve residential trips of more than 24 hours

**1.2 The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC)** [Your school should appoint an educational visits co-ordinator who's an experienced visits leader. If not, the headteacher has this duty.

Mrs L Towle is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits

Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit

Assess outside activity providers

Advise the headteacher and governing board when they're approving trips

Access the necessary training, advice and guidance

Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

#### **3.2 Trip lead**

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers

Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed

Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments

Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed

Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party

Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour

Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others

### **3.3 Staff**

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher

Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead

Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs

Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them

Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit

Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

### **3.4 Parents and carers**

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable

Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner

Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

### **3.5 Volunteers**

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly

Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils

Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible

Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

### **3.6 Pupils**

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

Follow instructions given to them while on the trip

Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip

Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

#### **4. Planning and preparation**

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, and based on factors including:

Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)

Timing in the school year and any potential clashes

Educational purpose and value

Disruption to the normal running of the school

Health and safety considerations

Staff-to-pupil ratio

Inclusion and accessibility

Any other factors deemed appropriate and relevant

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

Location and travel distance

Travel plans or options

Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available

Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies

Accommodation options, where needed

Insurance detailed, where needed

Risk assessment plans and first aid provision

What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks

Add any additional minimum standards, depending on the age of the children

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the headteacher will seek approval of the governing board.

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the headteacher, and the governing board where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

##### **4.1. Inclusion**

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

## **SEND**

If a pupil with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

## **Challenging behaviour**

In some cases, it may be reasonable and necessary to prevent a pupil with challenging behaviour from coming on a trip to protect their safety and the safety of the other pupils attending.

We will consider all reasonable options to help the pupil go on the trip safely, such as adapting the trip itinerary and increasing staffing numbers so the pupil can be supervised on a 1:1 basis.

## **5. Risk assessment**

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template and approved by the headteacher/EVC. A risk assessment will also be uploaded onto the Evolve system and approved by the Headteacher/EVC before a visit can take place.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the headteacher, and a copy taken on the visit and another copy uploaded to Evolve.

### **5.1 Staff ratios and first aid**

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips

At least 1 qualified paediatric first aider is present on all trips

Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies.

All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip

Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time

The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls

## 5.2 Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

## 5.3 Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

## 6. Volunteers

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

The needs of the pupils going on the trip

The setting and circumstances of the trip

Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed at least 2 weeks ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance in writing. They will also be asked to confirm they agree with the expected behaviour. See **appendix 1** for our volunteer code of conduct for educational visits.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

## 7. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 1 month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via letter [insert if any other means

in addition, e.g. email], and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will also communicate:

Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location

Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant

Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school

Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

We will always get written consent before taking nursery-age children off-site.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

## **8. Emergency procedures and incident reporting**

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

Serious and unexpected risk

Serious and life-threatening injury

Individuals going missing

A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

## **9. Charging and insurance**

We will follow our school's charging and remissions policy at all times.

Parents/carers won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place during school hours. They also won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place outside of school hours **if** it is part of the National Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, or religious education.

Where necessary, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the trip.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

## **10. Residential visits**

The headteacher, together with the governing board, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

Staff have received any necessary training

All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip

All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils – this will include relevant DBS checks

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

The dates and time of departure and return to school

The full address and contact details of the destination

Planned activities and options

Meal provision

Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)

Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves



Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations

Accommodation options and arrangements

The names of staff attending

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities holds the LOTC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance](#) and [foreign travel advice](#) when organising these visits.

## **11. Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years] by the governing body.

## **12. Links with other policies**

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

Health and safety policy

Charging and remissions policy

Behaviour policy

Safeguarding and Child protection policy

First aid policy

Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy

Special educational needs (SEN) policy

Equality information and objectives

Accessibility plan

## Appendix 1: volunteer behaviour and code of conduct

This code of conduct sets out the expected behaviour for volunteers attending school trips. Volunteers should read and sign this form, showing that they understand and agree to follow this code while acting on behalf of the school. If you feel you cannot agree with this code, please speak to the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from the trip.

A copy of this form will be kept in the school office, and you may ask for a photocopy to keep for yourself.

Volunteers agree to:

- Remain professional and respectful with staff and pupils at all times
- Listen to and act on instructions from staff
- Dress appropriately for the trip
- Arrive at the agreed time and remain until the trip is concluded and they are told they may leave by staff
- Pay attention to potential dangers and raise concerns with staff
- Act responsibly and demonstrate good behaviour to pupils
- Report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a pupil to staff as soon as possible

Volunteers agree **not** to:

- Exchange contact details with pupils unless told to by a member of staff
- Engage in physical contact with pupils unless appropriate or required
- Share inappropriate personal information (i.e. personal beliefs, religious views, relationship status)
- Use demeaning, offensive, abusive or insensitive language
- Smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) for the duration of the visit
- Allow themselves to be left alone with a pupil unless previously agreed with staff
- Take photographs or record pupils without the permission of pupils and staff

As a volunteer, I have read and agree to this code of conduct, and will follow the rules set out above.

**Signed:**

**Date:**