



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

2019-2020

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Chester-le-Street CE 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 practising 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. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and in a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced meaningful opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts; for example, encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- 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, Chester-le-Street CE 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, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities and on site adventures.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with the Chester-le-Street CE Primary Educational Visits Policy, Local Authority policy and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

All visits are entered on evolve and include those listed below.

- 1. All visits within the UK that do not involve a residential or adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Headteacher for approval.
- 2. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the Headteacher 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 Headteacher can approve – see Evolve for the most up to date list.

Roles and Responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Headteacher prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for safeguarding and ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mrs Sian Atkinson, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities to ensure the visit has educational or other benefits. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice. The EVC will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Headteacher for approval. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

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 Interim Executive Board's role is that of a 'critical friend'. There is no requirement for members to approve visits but they will be informed at regular Interim Executive Board meetings what visits have taken place and what is planned. Individual members 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.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Headteacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Relevant training.
- The prospective visit leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, take appropriate action and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Age, knowledge of the pupils, the venue and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency Procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts. If the visit is off site for only the duration of the school day the school telephone number is sufficient to give as an emergency contact. However, if the visit is of a residential nature **two** 24hr contact numbers will be identified (i.e. mobile and/or home phone number). The emergency contacts will have a copy of the Emergency Card (EV8) with the relevant emergency contact details on. They will also have access to all the relevant medical and next of kin information. The visit leader will have a completed Emergency Card (EV7) with them at all times (this will detail the contact details for the emergency contacts).

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 1). All staff on visits must be familiar with this plan and it will be tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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 via the Headteacher in the first instance.

Educational Visits Checklist

Chester-le-Street CE 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'. Chester-le-Street CE Primary School Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. However, 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. 'one-off' consent will be signed by parents when their child enrolls at school. This will cover costs related to 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

Chester-le-Street CE Primary School will make reasonable adjustments to avoid pupils with disabilities being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act 2010 does not require us to place employees or participants at risk of injury or ill health in order to make reasonable adjustments.

The school 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 needs and safety or the safety of others on a visit due the specific needs of a pupil we will seek advice from the DCC Health & Safety Team.

Charging / funding for visits

Where appropriate, Chester-le-Street CE 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.

Those pupils who receive specific benefits may be entitled to attend the visit with no charge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Transport

Where a bus is required, the school will arrange hire with a Local Authority approved company. The school does not have its own transport

Where the parent transports their own child to a sport activity after school the responsibility for safe and lawful transport remains with the parent and not the school.

When transporting pupils in private vehicles Chester-le-Street CE Primary School will ensure the relevant car seats are used as required by law and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

Insurance

Chester-le-Street CE Primary School is covered by DCC 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 in accordance with DCC advice/requirements.

Swimming Lessons

Our school's swimming lessons take place at Chester-le-Street Leisure Centre. Children are supervised in the changing area. No children would be left unaccompanied.

Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

KS1 All children are collected by an adult from after school activities.

KS2 Children are collected by an adult from after school activities unless parental permission has been given for a child to walk home.

Appendix 1 – 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 be identified before the visit and 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. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card (EV7).
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.