



## **Educational Visits Policy**

**Approved by:** PDBW Committee  
**Date:** February 2021

**Next review due:** February 2024

## 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 independence skills, and so form a key part of what makes Parayhouse 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:

- Providing valuable insight into the community and offering opportunities of structured independence.
- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for life experiences, 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' 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. i.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for social experiences including enhanced communication and social 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, Parayhouse School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'**.
2. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## 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 that do not involve an adventurous activity. E.g. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**  
These are written entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Heads for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**  
These follow 2. above, but these are reported to the Governing Body.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for filling out the paperwork and entering these on EVOLVE. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Heads Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is Kimicha Comrie Carson, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC 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 Heads. The EVC keeps records of all trips including individual risk assessments/sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head Teachers** have responsibility for final authorisation of all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the governors for approval.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. Educational Visits will be a standing item at the Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare sub-committee meetings and updates will be provided. Any incidents related to Educational Visits will be raised immediately with the Governing Body. The school's designated governors for Safeguarding and H&S may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The school's **Administrative Assistant** may provide support with travel booking or financial arrangements as necessary.

## 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:

- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits as necessary

- Staff will not take on a Visit Lead role unless Senior Leaders deem their training and experience to be sufficient
- 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 Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

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

### **Safety**

Safety is of paramount importance when organising any visits. For types of visits 1 and 2 (above) risk assessments are completed in advance and reviewed by the EVC. Risk assessments will also be sought from any locations to be visited and individual assessments are created for students who may require specific support e.g. complex medical needs, known absconding etc.

Visits to the School Learning Area do not require additional risk assessments but are subject to the operating procedures outlined in Annex 1

Ratios will vary dependent on the specific trip and individuals attending so staffing will always be reviewed by the EVC in advance and raised with Headteachers if necessary.

### **Emergency procedures**

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 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

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 governing body.

### **Educational Visits Checklist**

Parayhouse School's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

### **Parental Consent**

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, e.g. swimming, etc. Parents may be asked to consent via Ping surveys or paper forms.

Specific, (i.e. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. Parents may be asked to consent via Ping surveys or paper forms.

## **Inclusion**

Our school provides an inclusive, safe and caring environment in which to learn. We are committed to complying with our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations
- Ensure that those with protected characteristics are not discriminated against and are given equality of opportunity

This applies to our attitude to educational trips and visits and inclusion and equality is considered in their planning.

The school aims to allow all students to access the educational visits we organise and will make all reasonable adjustments for those who have additional needs that may presents barriers to attending.

In the event that a student cannot attend a trip due to significant health or behavioural challenges the school will look to provide an alternative experience which offers similar learning outcomes.

## **Transport**

Transport to and from trips may be either:

- School minibus (please see minibus policy for information)
- Public transport
- On foot

On occasion, it may be necessary to transport a student/students using staff members' private vehicles. This is only ever permitted with two staff members in attendance.

In these instances, the school is responsible for ensuring that:

The driver properly understands their duty of care and any agreed responsibilities for supervision

- Parents are informed about the transport arrangements.
- Evidence is obtained that:

- The vehicle is safe. This means that it holds a valid MOT certificate, where relevant, that the driver certifies it has been serviced in line with the manufacturer's schedule, and that the driver carries out any pre-use checks specified by the manufacturer.
- The driver is suitable. This means that they hold a valid licence for the type of vehicle and meet any employer requirements.

Consideration must be given to the potential distraction of the driver and the supervision of the passengers so a judgement will be made about the likely behaviour and individual needs of the passengers.

### **Insurance**

All educational visits and trips are covered by the school's business insurance policy. For more information please contact the School Business Manager,

### **Payment**

The school does not expect parents to pay for school trips however may ask for a voluntary contribution towards the cost. Students would not be disadvantaged in any way if their parents are unable to or do not wish to contribute.

The school's annual residential lifeskills trip is included in student fees paid by local authorities.

## 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 follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent (unless pre agreed)
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, e.g. swimming lessons
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- *Hammersmith Broadway*
- *Hammersmith Library*
- *Brook Green Park*
- *Fulham Pools*
- *The Lyric Theatre Hammersmith*

### 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 (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Headteachers or EVC should be notified before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school by the Family Support Manager.

- Ratios will vary dependent on the specific students attending and nature of trip and the lead staff member is responsible for ensuring sufficient staffing. They should consult with the EVC where they are unsure.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been supported and have practiced standard 'going out into the community' safety such as crossing the road or stranger danger etc.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will fill confirm with the office which students are attending, expected time of return and proposed route.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.



## **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 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 a copy of the risk assessment including contact details for the local hospital.