



Educational Visits Policy

Approval Level:	Governing Body
Date Agreed:	Summer Term 2021
Next Review:	Summer Term 2022



Contents

1.	Overarching Principles	4
2.	Roles and Responsibilities	4
3.	Competencies of Key Personnel	6
4.	Visit Type and Approval	7
5.	Preparation and Procedures	8
6.	First Aid, Health and Medical Needs	11
7.	Risk Management	15
8.	Insurance	18
9.	Emergencies	20



At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones:

- Integrity** We recognise that we lead by example and if we want children to grow up to behave appropriately and with integrity then we must model this behaviour.
- Responsibility** We act judiciously with sensitivity and care. We don't make excuses, but mindfully answer for actions and continually seek to make improvements.
- Inclusion** We acknowledge and celebrate that all people are different and can play a role in the REAch2 family whatever their background or learning style.
- Enjoyment** Providing learning that is relevant, motivating and engaging releases a child's curiosity and fun, so that a task can be tackled and their goals achieved.
- Inspiration** Inspiration breathes life into our schools. Introducing children to influential experiences of people and place, motivates them to live their lives to the full.
- Learning** Children and adults will flourish in their learning and through learning discover a future that is worth pursuing.
- Leadership** REAch2 aspires for high quality leadership by seeking out talent, developing potential and spotting the possible in people as well as the actual.

1. Overarching Principles

All schools and educational establishments have the ambition to provide excellent education in which all parents have confidence. There is a commitment to maximise opportunities for all pupils to raise standards. A broad programme of visits and journeys enriches and extends pupils' experience 'beyond the school gate'.

This part of the school curriculum can be extremely demanding, starting with meticulous preparation and planning through to completion. This policy is designed to underpin this process and ensure the highest standards are achieved.

The Governing Body ensures there are guidelines on school journeys and visits to ensure the highest standards are met. This document provides a framework for governors to consider in the context of their own procedures to inform their decision. More importantly, the guidance will need to be communicated effectively and monitored by governors to safeguard pupils and staff.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The **Governors** will:

- Establish a policy for the school, including procedures for the approval of visits and journeys.
- Assist the Head Teacher and Educational Visits Co-ordinator with school journey assessments and approval of trips.

The **Head Teacher** will:

- Manage all visits and journeys in accordance with the policy.
- Ensure there is an appropriate system in place to approve all trips set at an appropriate level, typically a member of the Senior Leadership Team and to ensure all journeys are adequately managed.

The **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** will:

- Support the Head Teacher and Governors with approval and decisions.
- Assign competent people to lead or otherwise undertake this role.

- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for a visit. This will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body. It may include practical observations or verification of experience.
- Organise the training of leaders and other adults going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as first aid, hazard awareness, etc.
- Organise induction of leaders and other adults taking pupils on a specific visit / journey.
- Ensure DBS disclosures are in place as necessary.
- Work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.
- Organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit / journey.
- Keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and near misses.
- Review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice.

The **Journey Organiser** will:

- Prepare and plan the school visit, trip or journey.
- Undertake completion of the journey / visit risk assessments.
- Establish emergency procedures for journeys / visits.
- Submit for approval school journey risk assessments and other supporting information within appropriate timescales.
- Brief teachers and supervisors in risk management procedures and controls.
- Liaise with parents where necessary.
- Ensure that all parent consent forms are completed and returned.
- Pass key information to the Head Teacher, Educational Visits Co-ordinator and Governors.

The **Party Leader** will:

- Actively lead and manage school journeys / visits.

- Brief pupils about tasks and behaviour expectations.
- Report and record all accidents on the journey / visits.
- Implement the controls identified within the risk assessment and to report any shortcomings to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator / Organiser immediately.
- Instruct and share the content of the risk assessment with other adult's / staff members attending the journey / visits.

3. Competencies of Key Personnel

It is recommended that the member of the school staff designated as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator should be specifically competent. This also applies to anyone planning or reviewing school journeys. The level of competence required will relate to the size of the school and the types of educational visits / journeys proposed. Evidence of competence may be through qualification and/or the experience of practical leadership over many years of outdoor education.

It is clear that each trip or journey carries its own unique risks and requirements. For low risk trips you may wish to look for the following attributes in school journey leaders / organisers:

- Experience in running similar activities;
- Knowledge of the children's specific needs;
- Understanding of the school journey management system;
- A positive leader with the correct aptitude for school journey management.

For higher risk activities and some school journeys you may require the additional attributes:

- Qualifications in activities to be undertaken;
- Thorough knowledge of activity;
- Comprehensive experience;
- Strong leadership skills;

- Be adept at dealing with emergency situations;
- Effective communicator;
- Multi lingual abilities for journeys abroad.

In addition to the general competencies of staff undertaking school journey leadership, the role of party leader is crucial to a successful and safe journey / visit. The choice of a Party Leader is, therefore, a key decision.

- A party leader will be a qualified staff member with experience and training appropriate for the journeys / visits.
- A deputy party leader should be nominated at the start so that they can, if necessary, take over from the party leader either during the planning stage or during the journey / visit itself, and be fully knowledgeable of all aspects of the journey.
- If a party is split into groups, it must be clear who is in charge of each group. This also applies for multi-school or cross borough activities.

4. Visit Type and Approval

The school purchases Evolve as an online tool for planning and managing journeys / visits.

Evolve will automatically categorise a visit based on the answers to the five questions below.

- Is this an on-site activity?
- Is this an overseas visit?
- Is this a residential visit/activity?
- Will this visit/activity include an adventurous activity led by an external provider?
- Will this visit/activity include an adventurous activity led by a member of staff?

Depending on the answers as well as the schools preferred approval route, the final approval will rest with the Lead Approver, Head Teacher or Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

Category A Journeys / Visits

These tend to include:

- Journeys involving an overnight stay either at or away from the school, in this country or abroad.
- Any day trip outside of the United Kingdom.
- Visits to activity centres.
- Day visits involving activities near water (e.g. river, lake, canal), coastal or high risk areas i.e. mountainous areas or other such adventurous activities.
- Swimming in swimming pools where lifeguard cover is **not** provided.

Category B Journeys / Visits

The school should actively manage category B visits, completing risk assessments in the same manner as they would for category A journeys. The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring all risk assessments have been completed. If the approval and review role is designated to the Educational Visit Co-ordinator or competent planner it must be ensured the Head Teacher monitor risk assessment standards on a regular basis.

Category B trips tend to include:

- Trips to museums / galleries
- Visits to local places of worship
- Seminars / talks at other educational establishments
- Bowling alley / cinema
- Swimming in swimming pools where lifeguard cover is provided

5. Preparation and Procedures

Staffing ratios will need to be set for each visit or journey. The level of cover required is based on risk the assessment and takes into account:

- the nature and duration of the activity;

- the ages and characteristics of the pupils; particular regard will need to be given to very young pupils and pupils with special educational needs;
- the skills and experience of the teachers;
- the nature of any activities being undertaken and their suitability;
- the availability of external assistance;
- the competence and behaviour of children;
- particular factors arising from preliminary visits and risk assessments.

It is not possible to set staffing ratios which cover all situations, however, established indicative ratios for visits and journeys which should normally be regarded as **minimum** requirements and should be considered as part of the risk assessment.

Organisers need to exercise flexibility and professional judgement on all occasions; this applies particularly in the areas of risk assessment. High standards of safety remain paramount and if an activity cannot be appropriately staffed it should not take place.

The ratios, set out below, comprise staff members and other adults who can be teachers or responsible adults such as non-teaching staff, parents and students undergoing initial teacher training.

It is best to avoid taking members of staff's children on a visit or journey, but if this is unavoidable, they should not be in the same group as their parent. It is also paramount that the school choose only parents it feels are suitable for the journey / visit to be undertaken and that these parents are fully briefed on their role during the trip and expected behaviours. Where possible it is best practice that no adult has their own child in their group.

Higher risk (e.g. overseas, residential, adventurous)

Key Stage	Age Range	Year Groups	Recommended Minimum Ratio
Foundation	4 - 5	Reception	1:5
Key Stage 1	5 - 7	Years 1 and 2	1:6
Key Stage 2	7 - 11	Years 3, 4, 5 and 6	1:15

The minimum number of staff members on any higher risk journey should be two.

Lower risk (e.g. museum day trip, local sports fixture)

Key Stage	Age Range	Year Groups	Recommended Minimum Ratio
Foundation	4 - 5	Reception	1:6
Key Stage 1	5 - 7	Years 1 and 2	1:10
Key Stage 2	7 - 11	Years 3, 4, 5 and 6	1:15

Journeys, sleepovers and visits abroad (Category A)

Supervision will need to cover 24 hours a day and all staff members and other adults must be aware of this fact. Providing adequate cover can be maintained, staff may have "time off". However, communication systems must ensure all staff are contactable at all times. At least one member of the on duty staff should be acting as Party Leader at that time with the necessary qualification / experience for undertaking the responsibilities of that role. It is the responsibility of the school journey leader to ensure that staffing ratios are maintained at all times, and those on duty consume no alcohol at all. Staff who are off duty should only consume amounts within the legal limit for driving a vehicle.

- There should be a minimum of two staff members on journeys involving an overnight stay. Particular attention should always be given to staffing arrangements on those journeys where it is proposed that teachers will be outnumbered by volunteers, e.g. in terms of the knowledge of and familiarity with the pupils.
- Mixed groups of boys and girls should be accompanied by male and female teachers. Where this is not possible, parents should be informed in advance.
- Staffing levels must always take into account how emergency situations will be managed and this should include the need for a pupil having to be sent home or a member of staff being unwell or injured. It should be ensured that the staffing ratios are not reduced so as to jeopardise the safety of the remaining pupils.

Special Educational Needs

The Head Teacher / Educational Visits Co-ordinator needs to agree with the journey / visit leader the ratio of adults to pupils taking into account the individual needs of the pupils, and the nature of the journey / visit.

Supervision During Transport

To ensure that the driver of a minibus or coach will be able to undertake their duties as a driver they must not be counted towards the staffing ratio during the travel period.

Pupils Not Under Direct Supervision

The proposal for any individual pupil to undertake an activity independently without direct supervision needs to be properly assessed in terms of their skills and experience. Parents should always be fully informed of the aims and objectives of this independent work and have signified their agreement to it as part of their consent to the journey / visit.

Dismissal of Pupils Off-Site

The dismissal of pupils off-site at the end of a journey / visit must be cleared in advance with parents as part of their consent to the journey / visit. No pupils must be left on their own following a visit if the parents are expected to collect their child.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

As from 12 May 2006 it is mandatory to obtain enhanced DBS disclosures for all new appointments to the school's workforce and those who have been out of the workforce for more than three months. Not all volunteers need to be DBS checked, for example those volunteering for one-off trips, as they would not be expected to be left unsupervised in charge of children: this applies to all non-regular staff. Any safeguarding concerns should be addressed to the schools internal safeguarding lead.

6. First Aid, Health and Medical Needs

First Aid

The level of first aid cover should be determined through risk assessment. The level of first aid cover should be proportional to the activities of the visit or journey.

However, it is recommended that there should be a staff member or other adult who has an up to date qualification having completed an Emergency First Aider qualification (1 day) or a full First Aid at Work Course (3 days), on all higher risk school visits and journeys. It is also recommended where reasonable to provide first aid cover for all other trips where risk of injury can be foreseen.

It is also strongly recommended that if you are taking any child with a serious medical condition that a first aider or emergency first aider be taken as a precaution.

If it is not possible for a first aider or emergency first aider to attend a visit, then there must be a first aid plan in place which should be included in the risk assessment.

In assessing the first aid requirements you will need to consider:

- the type of activities to be undertaken and anticipated injuries;
- any medical or special needs of group members;
- proximity of nearest emergency services and access to emergency services;
- past accident rates or incidents;
- potential impact on the visit / journey that an injury may have.

Foundation Age Paediatric Cover

From September 2008 any school journey or trips involving foundation aged children (aged 0-5) are required to take on the journey a paediatric first aid qualified staff member. This requirement is set out in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

Medical Needs and Information

Medical needs and information should be compiled for all visits, trips and journeys. Information on specific requirements, medication and response should be shared with all staff on the visit so they are fully aware of what actions may be required. Information on pupils with specific medical should be taken on the journey, and typically a staff member, who should be trained, confident and willing to administer the medication made responsible for overseeing the medical provision. If a school is operating presumed or annual consent, then parents should be reminded to inform teachers of any medical conditions.

Medication

Party leaders and other staff members should be familiar with the school policy and advice on the administration of medicines. Any medicine used regularly for a child should be taken on the journey.

In accordance with the school's Code of Practice for the administration of medicines if schools take any remedies, e.g. Calpol, travel sickness tablets, etc. then parental consent must be obtained for each specific item. It is suggested that the details of any such item is listed on the consent/medical form for parents to agree or not agree.

Children should be encouraged to be in charge of their own medication, but this will depend on their capabilities and on agreement between the school and parents. As a rule, children responsible for their medication at home should be responsible for it at school.

Except in very exceptional cases, e.g. insulin, epipen, and some asthmatic prescriptions, medicines, including travel sickness tablets should be handed to a named teacher or supervisor prior to the start of the journey and should be clearly labelled with the name of the medicine, the reason for its use, the name of the pupil and the amount and timings of the dose.

It is preferable for one staff member or other adult to be responsible for taking care of and administering all medicines but consideration of these arrangements will depend on the size of the group. Administrations should be entered in the journey log.

On excursions, or where pupils are split into groups, all accompanying adults should be aware of any special medical condition of individual pupils. Medication, injections and equipment (if not being carried by the individual pupil) should be carried by the leader of the group, who should know how to use them.

If a pupil's medicine is found to be missing when the destination is reached the local general practitioner or local hospital should be contacted immediately. A doctor will normally be able to arrange the issue of a prescription.

If staff members are concerned about whether they can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of other pupils on a trip because of a medical condition, they should seek general medical advice from the School Health Service or further information from the pupil's parents. For further guidance schools should refer to the DfE guidance'.

It is essential that school journey centres and instructors have the relevant information regarding the medical needs of pupils in their groups. This should be sent in advance and should be checked before each activity begins.

Nearest Doctor / Hospital

The name, address and telephone number of the nearest doctor, dentist and hospital with an accident and emergency unit needs to be known in advance of any journey.

Special Diets

Information about special diets is requested from parents on the medical form or equivalent, and should be communicated in advance to the journey centre and confirmation received that all dietary needs can be catered for.

Infectious Disease

Teachers should acquaint themselves with the infectious control procedures document held by the school.

Pupils should be closely watched on visits and any pupil showing signs of ill health should be isolated at once and the doctor called, especially if any abnormal condition of the skin appears (i.e. rash, eruption, roughness or peeling). This also applies to sickness and diarrhoea.

The doctor should be told if any infectious illness is known to be prevalent in the pupil's home district.

Emergency Treatment

Medical forms or equivalent ask parents to agree that, in the event of an emergency, pupils may be given any treatment necessary. In such an event, parents should, if possible, be contacted by telephone. It is important however that any person giving such treatment is qualified to do so.

Health Issues and the Environment

Party organisers and leaders need to be aware of the wide range of health considerations which are posed by the environment, such as heat and sunstroke. These kinds of questions are addressed particularly in the guidelines in 'Risk Assessment and Management'. However, it needs to be understood that advice on these issues cannot be, and is not intended to be, comprehensive.

Accident Reports

An accident report form should be completed online as soon as possible for any accident which occurs on a visit or journey. You must also ensure that you report any accidents to the venue / centre where they occur.

7. Risk Management

Organisers and everyone concerned with visits and journeys should always give prime consideration to matters of safety and follow guidance in statutory, Local Authority and school health and safety policies. The safe completion of an activity requires the identification and assessment of potential dangers and the management of activities to eliminate or minimise risk.

Key elements of this approach include:

- The sensible and pragmatic application of guidelines;
- The experience and training of organisers and supervisors;
- The exercise of sound judgement in relation to individual circumstances;
- The use of safety checklists;
- An effective system of communication between all staff members and other adults e.g. a list of all relevant mobile and essential telephone numbers given to all prior to the journey/visit.

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people. It can then be decided whether everything reasonably practicable has been done to prevent harm.

The organisers of each visit and journey should assess risks when planning journeys and visits. The risk assessment should be an ongoing process undertaken by accompanying staff, in liaison with staff providing any services throughout the journey / visit. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards;
- Who might be affected by them;
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level;

- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place;
- What steps will be taken in an emergency, e.g. road traffic accident, member of staff being admitted to hospital etc.

Organisers need to list all the activities that are part of the entire journey or visit e.g. travel; sleeping arrangements etc. and complete an assessment for each.

Risks should be assessed **LOW**, **MEDIUM** and **HIGH**.

LOW	No additional action required only basic controls. Monitoring required ensuring that controls are maintained.
MEDIUM	Action should be taken to reduce the risk through improved control measures.
HIGH	The activity should not take place until the risk has been reduced.

Considerations should include:

- Type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- Location;
- Competence, experience and qualifications of school supervisory staff;
- Ratio of competent, experienced and qualified centre staff to pupils;
- Age, competence, fitness and temperament of the pupils;
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- Controls put in place.

Other factors to consider:

- It should be ensured that issues identified by the preliminary visit have been resolved within the risk assessment.
- Organisers carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teachers/supervisors on the visits/journeys, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risk. The LA, head teacher and governing body should also be given a copy as appropriate to the category of the visit/journey.
- Frequent visits to local venues such as swimming pools may not need a new risk assessment every time. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be made at regular intervals and careful monitoring should take place.

- It is the duty of the provider (e.g. activity centre) to issue risk assessments for specific activities and on-site arrangements. However, the journey organiser should ensure they are familiar with the arrangements and raise any concerns or questions with the provider.

Preliminary Visit

Accurate knowledge of accommodation, facilities and the local environment are essential if the destination has potential hazards such as the sea, lakes and waterways, uplands and mountains, etc. Where a school has not had previous experience of a particular venue, the Head Teacher is likely to consider a preliminary visit to be particularly important. It may also be necessary where a venue has been used previously but where a journey has a new leader. Preliminary visits can also be used to consult local support agencies such as coastguards, mountain rescue and the police. In cases where a preliminary visit is impracticable, e.g. a location abroad, planning will need to be done using the most authoritative information available.

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001

Organisers should make all reasonable adjustments to the journey/visit plans to enable all pupils to participate even if this means using a different venue to one they have used for many years. It is important, particularly with journeys that this is anticipated well in advance so that advice can be sought from specialists early in the planning process to enable maximum participation. It should be noted that if such adjustments are not made then a school could be liable if they are found to be discriminating against an individual pupil who could be deemed to have a disability.

Record Keeping

Residential Visits

- The leader should maintain a school journey log which should be submitted to the Head Teacher on return. As well as simple diary entries and administration of medicines, all incidents, including accidents, illness and individual problems, should be recorded. Whilst on the journey a list of all current emergency contacts for every pupil and staff member should be kept with the log.
- All records in relation to a journey should be kept by the school for a minimum of three years. This includes risk assessments, itineraries, letters to parents, consent forms and financial records.

- If there has been an incident on the journey which could give rise to a claim it is essential that the records be kept until the child concerned reaches the age of 21 as a claim can be made up until that time. This will include all documents listed above.

Day Trips

- No formal log is required for visits, although the Head Teacher would want to have an immediate written account from the leader of any particular incident(s) and risk assessments should be updated to inform future visits if it is a regular trip.
- All records in relation to visits should be retained in the same way as for journeys if there is an incident which could give rise to a claim.

8. Insurance

The school should have an agreed policy on insurance for different types of visits and journeys to guide party organisers.

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher and Governors to ensure that adequate insurance cover exists for all visits and journeys.

Clear information should be provided for parents, teachers and supervisors about the insurance cover being provided. Individuals may wish to consider taking out additional cover to that provided by the school.

Teachers may have additional insurance cover through their membership of professional organisations.

Adventure Centres

Where journeys / visits involve an activity at an adventure centre, the school must verify that the establishment has adequate public liability insurance cover. It is strongly recommended that the cover should be for a minimum of £5m for each and every claim while their instructors are in charge of the pupils.

Commercial Transport

Where a commercial concern is providing transport for a journey / visit, their vehicle insurance will cover pupils / teachers while they are on the vehicle.

Teachers and Supervisors Using Own Vehicles

There should be cover within the school's insurance policy for teachers and supervisors to use their vehicles in an emergency, e.g. taking a pupil to hospital. For use of their vehicles on other occasions, whether or not expenses are being claimed, they must have informed their insurance company that their vehicle is being used for business purposes otherwise any claim made which relates to the use of the vehicle on school business may be disallowed. Head Teachers should consider whether consent should be obtained before pupils can be carried in a teacher's private vehicle.

Parents Using Own Vehicles

Provided parents have third party insurance cover (and this is a legal requirement on all drivers) and are not making a charge for the service, they may transport pupils to sports matches, visits or other school activities. Anyone who is injured in an accident can make a claim against the driver under the third party insurance cover but to succeed they would have to establish that someone involved in the accident had been negligent. Before such transport is provided however, parental consent should be obtained specifically for the transporting of pupils in the private vehicles of a non-teacher adult.

Parents involved in transport of this nature should be DBS checked, however, if it is an isolated occasion then standard risk assessment procedures must be adhered to.

It is best practice ask to see a copy of the driver's licence and insurance certificate to verify that they can legally drive and they are insured for the particular vehicle that they are using.

Safe Use of Vehicles

The number of people in a vehicle must not exceed that permitted by the law and where seat belts are fitted they must be used. Under no circumstances should a child be transported without using a seat belt.

When assessing staffing ratios, the driver cannot be counted as a staff member whilst on driving duties.

9. Emergencies

Critical Incident Management

In the event of an emergency on a visit or journey, the procedure is to notify immediately the Head Teacher or their nominated representative as documented on the application form. It is strongly recommended that two or three emergency contact telephone numbers are taken on school journeys. It is good practice for these numbers to be prepared on a card to be carried by all teachers / supervisors. These numbers would normally include:

- School telephone number
- Head Teacher mobile telephone number
- Chair of Governors mobile telephone number
- Other nominated emergency contact number(s)

The school's critical incident plan can then be implemented as required. A summary of this should be included in the journey leader's paperwork which is carried on the trip.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

On any trip there is always the potential for things to be different from that which was anticipated even when pre-visits have been made, for example emergency road works mean that coaches cannot drop off where planned. Trip leaders need to be aware that plans may have to change and dynamic risk assessments carried out to accommodate the changed circumstances.

It is important in these circumstances to take the time to consider all options and not be rushed into hasty decisions. This does not need to be documented at the time but it is worth remembering or noting why you made that decision at the time. After the trip it may be worth updating risk assessments or making notes to inform others who could find themselves in a similar position.