



S	Successful
H	Happy
A	Aspiring
P	Purposeful
E	Exciting
D	Diverse

Marshfields School Educational Visits Policy

June 2016

Review as necessary and keep up to date

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 Marshfields School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to students 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 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. Students are active participants' not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- 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. ie. encouraging students 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, Marshfields School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (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.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school 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

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. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

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 Head 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.

Visit Leaders should complete the following paperwork:

- The visit checklist. – This should include generic Risk Assessments, plus any Event Specific Notes.
- Student Risk Assessments.
- Student groups and allocated staff.
- Any additional risk assessment for this activity.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Dave Musson, 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 Deputy Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Deputy Head Teacher, Amanda Anderson, has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

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 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) 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 students, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

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 and it is 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.

Educational Visits Checklist

Marshfields 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. 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'.

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 for students when they start Marshfields for certain other routine activities, eg. school PE fixtures, shopping etc. Parents have the option to consent by a traditional paper consent form.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents via letters, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting by a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

All students are given various opportunities to learn outside the classroom to raise self-esteem and social skills required in life beyond schools.

Transport

The school has 3 minibus checked weekly by the caretaker, and checked prior to each use by the driver. Coaches are hired as and when required.

Use of staff cars to transport students – See Appendix 3.

Insurance

Marshfields uses the LA's insurance for visits. See LA guidance for further information.

Other topics

*eg. **Swimming Lessons** (explain changing room supervision, etc).*

Dismissal of students after evening activities

At the end of the activities, students are collected by parents/carers from the school reception or previously advised place.

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 specific parental consent as parental consent is requested when a student starts Marshfields (if consent is not given the student will not join the visit/activity and alternative arrangements will be made within school)
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg 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:

- Sainsburys
- Asda
- Burghley House and grounds
- Millenium Park
- Olive Branch
- West Raven
- Frog Life
- All Stars Nursery
- Church visits
- Lovells Mechanics
- Nene Park Accademy
- Birch Tree Play Centre

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 when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The SLT must give verbal approval before a group leaves
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. Additional staff are provided when needed.
- The concept of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school in the 'Off Site Visits' letter, and can be found in the School Prospectus.

- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Students have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group
- Where appropriate, students are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- Students' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all students and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile phone is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

- There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
 - An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card
- This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 3 - Use of Staff Cars to Transport Students

- Wherever possible and practicable students will be transported in vehicles other than private vehicles with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as escort
- Adults may ensure that they are fit to drive when they take a vehicle. Drivers of school mini buses must obtain a mini bus driver permit. Every employee who drives for work must declare to Marshfields any medical condition which adversely affects their ability to drive safely
- On those occasions where it is necessary to use a private car. The vehicle must be roadworthy (MOT'd), taxed and correctly insured. This will be under arrangement with the driver's private insurer and is termed 'business class'. Some insurers provide this free of cost but all insurers must be notified that young people are transported as part of work

duties. Prior to any transportation, receipt of a valid certificate must be in the driver's possession. Wherever possible a driver and escort should be available

- There may be occasions where a child requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to provided transport may place the child at risk (e.g. medical reasons) and an escort is not available
- All journeys made with only one member of staff must **always** be brought to the attention of a senior member of staff **before** journey commencement
- **All** journeys made in private cars must be recorded. Transport must not be offered to students outside of normal working duties
- Parents will be requested on an annual basis whether they would agree to their child being carried in a private vehicle. However, school reserves the right under emergency situations to use private vehicles.