



Cledford Primary School

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Local Authority Code: 895

Establishment Number: 3821

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Federation Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

Reviewed: April 2023

Signed:

Mrs J Sercombe (Chair of Governing Board)

Mrs AJ Booth (Federation Headteacher)

Mrs J Nurse (School Principal GPNS)

Mr C Adlington (School Principal CPS)

Next Review Date: March 2025

Federation Learning Outside the Classroom Policy

(Incorporating Off-site Educational Visits)

1. Introduction

The staff and governors of the Federation acknowledge the immense value of learning that can take place outside the classroom. These can include both on-site and off-site visits with related activities which promote learning for all children. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of both schools by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching the learning experiences for all the children involved.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day, but on occasions, take place after school.

This policy applies to all pupils, staff, governors and volunteers.

2. Employer's policies and OEAP National Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with Cheshire East Council's LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom) policy and additional recommendations from OEAP's National guidance. All employees must follow this guidance and if there appears to be any conflict between them, then the Federation policy must be followed and clarification sought from the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) or a member of the SLT (Senior Leadership Team).

3. Clarification of roles

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), health and safety responsibilities lie with the local authority, which has the legal responsibility to carry out the duties imposed by the Act. The task of scrutinising and approving arrangements for offsite visits and LOtC activities are delegated to senior members of staff and the EVC with the school principal being ultimately responsible for approval.

Philosophy

Our philosophy across the Federation is that all children will have the opportunity to go on an outside educational visit each half term. This will total six educational visits per year group. Three educational visits will require payment by parents/carers, three educational visits will be of no charge to parents/carers.

At Gainsborough, children in lower Key Stage 2 and upper Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. At Cledford, children in Key Stage 1, lower Key Stage 2 and upper Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. The residential visits enable children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work, as well as having links with PSHE, science and geography. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the local authority. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

Curriculum links

- English – theatre visits, library visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to gardens and museums
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment
- History – castle visits, local museums
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork
- Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches
- Music – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local concerts for parents to hear, Young Voices
- Design and technology – visits to local factories or design centres
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc.
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers

Across the Federation we have thorough processes to ensure the safety and success of all visits. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined for every stage of the visit to minimise risk and to ensure the objectives of the visit/activity are achieved. The following boxes explain how each stage of a trip/visit is planned. Each box is followed by a checklist for each individual role.

3a) Visit Leader

Stage 1 - Visit Leader

- Liaise with EVC, school business manager and SLT to discuss viability of visit e.g. reason for visit, date, staffing, collect costing form.
- Complete costing form and hand to the school bursar to approve. Ensure visit has the principal's approval.
- Draft parent letter and email it to the office.
- Collect and follow procedures on the Educational Visits leaflet which includes carrying out a preliminary visit where possible, completing/obtaining risk assessments, completing Evolve, communicating all information to parents, seeking consent and evaluating the visit on return.

All Visit leaders will use the following checklist to ensure the safety of all pupils and adults:

- I have met all requirements of my employer's and my establishment's policies relevant to the visit.
- I am confident to lead the visit and have the specific competence to do so, and have been judged so by the principal in line with my employer's requirements.
- I have planned and prepared for the visit, involving staff and young people in the planning and risk management process to ensure wider understanding.
- I have kept my EVC informed at each stage of the planning process.
- I have undertaken a preliminary visit if appropriate or required by establishment policy.
- I have defined the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and have appointed a deputy.
- I have shared details of 24/7 emergency contacts and emergency arrangements with key staff.
- I have obtained parental consent forms (where required), medical details and contact details and these have been copied and shared with relevant staff and providers.
- I have checked whether insurance arrangements are adequate.
- If accompanying leaders take a family member on a visit, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
- Child protection issues are addressed, including DBS checks and processes where appropriate.

- I have disseminated relevant information to supporting staff.
- There is access to first aid at an appropriate level.

3b) Assistant Leaders

Stage 2 - Assistant Leader

- The leader will appoint an assistant leader who will be sufficiently involved in the planning and preparation for this activity/visit including risk assessment.
- Take over the running of the trip if required.

Assistant leaders will use the following checklist to ensure the safety of all pupils and adults:

- Be sufficiently competent and confident to take over if the visit leader is incapacitated.
- Be specifically competent and knowledgeable about establishment and employer policies/procedures, in so far as they affect the responsibilities you have been assigned.
- Ensure that you have been sufficiently involved in the planning and preparation for the activity/visit, including contributing to the organisation of risk management.
- Ensure that you understand the role and responsibilities that you have been assigned and how these integrate with other staff and especially that of the activity/visit leader.
- Ensure that you are clear about any arrangements to hand-over and hand back responsibility for supervision between members of staff and to/from any third-party provider.
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
 1. The young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities.
 2. The nature and location of the activity.
- Contribute to the on-going monitoring of all aspects of the activity/visit, including the quality of any activities provided by a third-party provider.
- Contribute to the evaluation of the activity/visit after the event.

3c) Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Stage 3 - EVC role (1/2 day, full day, after school activities or events and residential)

- To check all trips submitted through Evolve using the checklist below.
- Assist with planning, carrying out preliminary visits & writing risk assessments if required.
- Liaise between school principal and visit leader.
- Ensure that activities are led by competent and confident visit leaders giving careful consideration to both newly qualified or newly appointed staff by attending the visit.
- To disseminate training and information to ensure leaders are up to date and accountable.
- Ensure that all plans for LOtC have included consideration for intended outcomes, best value, child protection and safeguarding, inclusion, risk-benefit analysis, medical needs, transport, insurance, contingency plans and emergency procedures.

All EVCs will use the following checklist to ensure the safety of all pupils and adults:

- I have attended EVC training as recommended/required by my employer's policy.
- My employer and my establishment have a policy for visits and learning outside the classroom.
- I have read and understood my employer's and my establishment's policy.

- Staff induction and training needs are identified and addressed.
- Where required by my employer's policy, visits are formally notified and approved.
- Staff that lead visits meet employer competence requirements.
- All adults including volunteers are vetted and those judged to be engaging in regulated activity are subject to enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks with barred list check.
- There is appropriate risk management for all visits.
- As EVC, I am kept informed of the planning of visits.
- Where appropriate, all staff and young people are involved in visit planning, including risk-benefit assessment.
- There is a 'Plan B' when necessary.
- Preliminary visits have taken place if required.
- Third party provider assurances have been obtained.
- The number and competence of leaders will ensure effective supervision.
- Medical, first aid and inclusion issues have been addressed.
- There is an establishment emergency response procedure, appropriate to the nature of visits undertaken, which is periodically tested.
- There is a designated 24/7 emergency contact, with access to all information and documentation relating to the visit.
- All staff and group members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Those in parental authority have been appropriately briefed regarding itinerary, accommodation, activities, transport and emergency telephone numbers.
- The visit leader has sufficient funds and an effective means of communication in case of an emergency.
- Visits are debriefed and reviewed.
- Visits are monitored in accordance with employer and establishment policy.
- Accidents and incidents are reported, learning is shared and RIDDOR requirements are met.

3d) School Principal

Stage 4 – School Principal

- Check competency of leader and staff
- Approve costings.
- Final check on letter for parents.
- Read and challenge risk assessments.
- Give final approval through Evolve.
- Be the 24/7 emergency contact.

Principal's Checklist

- I have read and understood my employer's policy and have undertaken any required training.
- I have a visit policy for my establishment.
- I have appointed an EVC.
- The visit policy identifies an induction process for all staff leading visits.
- Staff training needs are identified and addressed.
- Visits are formally notified and approved as required by my employer's policy.
- All visits are led by competent staff.
- All adults including volunteers are vetted and those judged to be engaging in regulated activity are subject to enhanced disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks with barred list check.
- There is appropriate risk management (including risk- benefit assessments) for all visits.
- The EVC is kept informed during the planning of visits.
- Where appropriate, staff and young people are involved in visit planning, including risk assessment.
- There is a 'Plan B' when necessary.
- Preliminary visits are undertaken where required.

- Third party provider assurances are obtained.
- Governors are informed as required by my establishment's policy.
- Sufficient competent leaders are deployed to ensure effective supervision.
- Medical, first aid and inclusion issues are addressed.
- There is an establishment emergency response procedure, appropriate to the nature of visits undertaken, which is periodically tested.
- There is always a 24/7 emergency contact, with access to all information and documentation relating to the visit.
- All staff and group members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Those in parental authority are appropriately briefed regarding itinerary, accommodation, activities, transport and emergency telephone numbers.
- Visit leaders have sufficient funds and effective means of communication in case of emergency.
- Visits are debriefed and reviewed.

3e) Governors

Various Stages – Governors

- Attend visits to monitor procedures and report back to school principal.
- Support visits through funding.
- Be involved in dealing with complaints.
- Know that they will be required to assist with emergencies if their names and numbers are on the critical Incident plan.

Governor's Check List:

- We are aware of our responsibilities as explained in the OEAP guidance and our establishment's policy.
- If we are the legal employers, we are fully aware of all the responsibilities this entails
- We have had access to training to ensure that we understand the guidance provided.
- Visits are included on our meeting agendas.
- All visits are planned in accordance with our employer's and establishment's policies.
- Suitable and sufficient emergency procedures are in place.
- We have made arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions.
- We are aware that we may be involved in adjudicating parental complaints or dealing with an emergency.

4. Procedures for organising a visit or LOtC activity

All staff seeking to organise an activity or visit will follow set procedures (see above boxes for the different stages) using the following documents for guidance:

The educational visits leaflet is to be used for any visit or activity that takes place outside of the school grounds e.g. whole class visits to the theatre, year group trips to museums, small groups taken to local high schools, sporting activities etc. These visits will need to be processed through Evolve. Every member of staff has access to this service with their own login and password. Please see the EVC if you do not have one of these. The educational visits leaflet guides you through all the stages of planning a successful trip with timescales and checklists to ensure that nothing is missed.

5. Monitoring

The governors should monitor at least one trip per year – this could be through Evolve or by actually attending a LOtC visit.

When a new member of staff or a newly qualified teacher is appointed, an induction session will take place where this policy will be shared by the EVC Co-ordinator or another experienced member of staff. Such members of staff

will be asked to be an assistant leader on a trip in order to experience the policy in action. They will not be allowed to be a leader until this process has taken place and monitoring by a senior member of staff proves them to be competent.

The school principal will keep copies of any monitoring that takes place and suitability of staff for different types of trip.

Visit evaluations should be completed after the visit has taken place. These can be uploaded onto Evolve taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or school principal regarding the outcome of the visit.

All paperwork from any trips should be kept including Evolve forms, permission slips, correspondence with parents and risk assessments. These will be kept by the office. Children can claim against negligence until they are 23 years old.

6. Risk management and risk-benefit assessment

All visits will require a risk assessment. These should be succinct with the important points made clear. The EVC and school principal will read every risk assessment.

Traditional risk assessment is about identifying risks before the visit takes place so that you can implement suitable controls. Risk assessments should be adhered to. However, it is important to remember that 'dynamic' risk assessments are essential – this means that the trip leader continually assesses risk throughout the visit and manages risks as they arise.

The notification and approval system of EVOLVE requires the preparation of a risk - benefit analysis. A risk-benefit analysis approach considers the targeted benefits and learning outcomes against any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) to provide an acceptable level of risk.

The risk-benefit analysis should be shared with accompanying staff and trip members. It is important that young people are involved in the risk – benefit assessment and exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

Sufficient control measures should be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual, or harm several people. The content of the risk - benefit assessment process should include consideration of the degree of complexity of a particular activity and should reflect several variables that can impact on any given activity:

- Staffing requirements (qualifications/experience/competency/ratios)
- Activity characteristics (specialist/ licensable/adventurous/insurance issues)
- Group characteristics (experience/ability/behaviour/special and medical needs)
- Environmental conditions (familiarity/impact of weather/water levels)
- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base (transport/ residential/local/remote)

This is known as the "SAGED" model. The law expects effective supervision.

7. Assessing venues and providers

It is good practice for visit leaders to take full advantage of any nationally accredited provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Examples of such schemes include:

- The LOtC Quality Badge

- Adventure mark

Where a provider holds such one of the above accreditations, there should be no need to seek further assurances. If they are not appropriately accredited, visit leaders have the responsibility of conducting a thorough assessment of the service offered by the external provider, including ensuring that activities will be delivered safely (adhering to National Governing Body guidelines as appropriate), that safety and fire procedures are in place and that external provider staff are DBS checked.

8. Volunteers

If a volunteer is required to attend a visit the visit leader should ensure that:

- The volunteer understands their role, responsibilities and limitations with regards to the activity they are supporting.
- The volunteer has been fully briefed about the activity and group members.

Where a volunteer is a parent (or otherwise a close relation to a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the visit leader's plans for group management. The visit leader should directly address this issue as part of the risk-benefit assessment and avoid using this volunteer where possible.

DBS checks will take place on any volunteer who works frequently or intensively with, or has regular access to young people or vulnerable adults.

- frequently is defined as "once a week or more"
- intensively is defined as 4 days or more in a month or overnight

9. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

The Employer's Role

Many incidents and emergencies that happen on off-site visits will be dealt with by the visit leader, in collaboration with the SLT at school. However, some of these will become critical incidents and require further support from Cheshire East where any member of the group involved may:

- suffer a life-threatening injury or fatality;
- be at serious risk;
- go missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

Definitions of a Critical Incident:

- 1) An incident which meets any criteria laid down by the Employer's Critical Incident Plan, or
- 2) An incident which goes beyond the coping mechanisms of the visit leader and the SLT at school.

Principles and Priorities

- To meet the needs of the group in crisis.
- To meet and support the needs of the school, its community, parents, relatives and friends.
- To respond to the needs of other agencies.
- To respond to media demands.

Overview

The critical incident plan includes a flow chart that can be adapted to deal with any given critical incident. The procedures within the action plan should be pre-planned, fully documented and supported by an appropriate training regime, specifically designed to ensure that it is understood by the key decision makers.

10. Supervision Ratios

Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/student ratios for a particular age group or activity.

Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may only be appropriate where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements. For example, the DfES publication HASPEV (1998) suggested the following “starting points”:

- School years 1 - 2, 1:6
- School years 3 - 6, 1:10

The early years foundation stage (EYFS) does not set out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing. The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be lower than the legal minimum that applies.

11. First Aid

A qualified first aider should be available on all visits. The provision of first aid during off-site visits and activities should be considered as part of the risk-benefit assessment and planning process. Leaders will take into consideration:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the group will be isolated from the support of the emergency services (both in terms of distance and response time).

12. Voluntary Contributions

It is important to provide written information to parents. This should explain the nature of the proposed activity or visit, the likely value in educational terms and the financial contribution per student which would be required if the activity were to take place. The information should emphasise that no student will be excluded because parents are unable to contribute. However, it must be made equally clear whether the activity or visit is likely to be cancelled if there are insufficient contributions. Students must not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents/carers have not made a financial contribution.

13. Behaviour

The Federation aims to include all pupils in all visits. They will provide additional support for children with physical, learning or behavioural needs. However, if a child’s behaviour in school indicates a significant risk to the safety of themselves or the people (adults and children) with them, or the reputation of the school, they may not be allowed to participate and will remain in school. Parents will be consulted at an early stage if there are concerns.

Poor behaviour outside of school is taken very seriously and will not be tolerated. The school reserves the right to refuse to take children on a trip if their behaviour has been poor during previous visits, or if their behaviour in school is poor and poses a significant risk to the health and safety of themselves or others.

14. Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that LOtC activities are available and accessible to all, irrespective of any ‘protected characteristic’ as defined in The Equality Act 2010, i.e. disability, race, religion or belief, age, socio-economic disadvantage, special educational needs, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender re-assignment. If a visit needs to

cater for people with protected characteristics, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Equality should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or reasonable adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

15. Insurance

Insurance is taken out yearly. The company name and insurance number can be obtained from the school principal, EVC or Jackie Irlam.

16. Travel

Cars

Members of staff occasionally transport children in their own cars. In order to do this, they must satisfy the following requirements:

- Fully comprehensive insurance including business use identified on the policy.
- Car seats must be used for all children below 1.35m.
- Must not travel with only one child in the car.

Coaches

The office will book coaches through local reputable companies. Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

17. Consent Forms

In the interests of good relations between The Federation and home, it is good practice to ensure that those in a position of parental responsibility are fully informed of where their child will be at all times and of any extra measures required. Written consent is therefore required for all activities/visits that take place within school hours, residential and extra-curricular activities outside school hours. Staff should always presume that written consent is needed unless otherwise informed by the school principal.

18. Contact details and useful addresses

Strategic Lead for Learning Outside the Classroom and Educational Visits

Bethan Cooper LOtC Specialist

Tel: 0151 541 2170

Email: bethan.cooper@edsential.co.uk

Critical Incidence Telephone numbers

Please refer to the school critical incident policy

Websites:

- National Guidelines: www.oeapng.info
- Outdoor Education Advisors Panel: www.oeap.info
- Learning Outside the Classroom: www.lotc.org.uk