

Holmesdale Community Infant School and Nursery



Educational visits Policy

Approved by:	Governors	Date: March 2026
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Next review:	March 2028
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1. Aims and scope

We believe that children benefit academically, personally, and socially when they take part in educational visits, and we offer our children opportunities for learning off site. We recognise there is a level of risk involved and this policy is designed to help and support all those involved in the approval, organisation, planning and leading of educational visits so that children may benefit from well-organised, successful, safe, and enjoyable activities.

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Educational visits are a valuable way to supplement and enhance the curriculum, expand pupils' education and provide enriching social and cultural experiences, teach life skills and promote independence, provide a foundation for lifelong learning, and form an integral part of our approach to furthering our pupils' education and personal growth.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

Sections of this policy are also based on the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training

3.2 The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC)

The Headteacher is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip leader for each visit
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance

- › Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

3.2 Trip leader

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip leader. The trip leader will:

- › Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers
- › Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- › Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- › Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- › Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits
- › To ensure key details are communicated about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- › Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others

3.3 Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- › Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher
- › Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- › Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- › Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- › Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- › Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

3.4 Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- › Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- › Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- › Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

3.5 Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- › Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- › Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- › Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- › Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible
- ›

3.6 Pupils

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- › Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- › Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- › Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times. They will understand the expectation that they are 'safe, respectful and ready', inside, and outside of school.

4. Planning and preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Headteacher, and based on factors including:

- › Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- › Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- › Educational purpose and value
- › Disruption to the normal running of the school
- › Health and safety considerations
- › Staff-to-pupil ratio
- › Any other factors deemed appropriate and relevant

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- › Location and approximate travel distance
- › Travel plans or options
- › Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- › Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- › Accommodation options, where needed
- › Insurance detailed, where needed
- › Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- › What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks

The trip details will be entered on to EVOLVE, for headteacher approval. EVOLVE Visits is an online tool for the planning, approval and management of educational visits, sports fixtures, and outdoor educational activities.

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, the headteacher will seek approval of the school committee.

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the headteacher, and the school committee where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher level of risk assessment, such as a trip involving coach travel.

4.1. Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

5. Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template, and approved by the headteacher. Existing risk assessments provided by the destination itself might also be used to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the headteacher, and a copy taken on the visit and another copy left with the school's operations manager.

5.1 Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- › At least 1 supervising adult first aider is present on all trips
- › For EYFS at least 1 qualified paediatric first aider is present on all trips
- › Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips
- › All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- › Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- › The trip leader will take regular headcounts and/or registers

5.2 Transport

We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

5.3 Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate liability insurance.

6. Volunteers

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

- › The needs of the pupils going on the trip
- › The setting and circumstances of the trip
- › Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance to the class teacher or school office.

Volunteers will receive an induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers are required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

Where DBS checks have not been completed or undertaken, those volunteers will be identified on the risk assessment and will not be left alone with children or given sole responsibility for any child at any time.

7. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 1 month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via email correspondence, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination and purpose of the visit.

We will also communicate:

- › Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- › Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school. Children will not take part if consent is not given. Provision will be made for them to remain at school.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will inform parents/carers as above about any class or year group off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements.

8. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- › Serious and unexpected risk
- › Serious and life-threatening injury
- › Individuals going missing

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office.

The school duty officer will contact our Surrey County Council, Area Schools Officer. The ASO will support the duty officer in acting and managing communications.

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) where necessary.

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report to the headteacher, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be an evaluation of the trip from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full school committee.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Charging and remissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) policy
- Equality Policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Accessibility plan

