Trips and Visits Policy

ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS TO TRIPS &VISITS POLICY

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Trips and Visits policy

1. Introduction

Monkston Primary School positively promotes the active involvement of all children in educational visits and journeys or 'learning outside the classroom' activities. Off-site activities have a great potential for enhancing the educational, personal and social development of children by enabling them to participate in experiences which are not available to them within the classroom.

The benefits of educational visits and journeys include the opportunity to:

- Enhance learning and raise achievement
- Develop independence
- Develop team work
- Extend, enrich and support the curriculum
- Develop resourcefulness
- Develop problem solving skills
- Face challenges
- Question values
- Raise confidence and self-esteem
- Develop social skills and environmental awareness
- Extend personal horizons

2. Legal framework

Kingsbridge Educational Trust as the employer has the legal responsibility for health and safety including off-site visits.

The Activity Centres (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995 and the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996 require certain providers of specified adventurous activities (see Appendix 1 for definition) to be licensed. Anyone who provides, in return for payment, these specified activities to young persons under 18, must have a licence and abide by its conditions.

Visit organisers, should therefore, as part of their assessment of an activity provider, confirm that the provider has satisfied the licensing criteria.

Under section 19 of the Transport Act 1985 organisations, who operate in Great Britain without a view to profit and under specified conditions can obtain a permit exempting them from the need to hold a PSV operator's licence when providing transport for a charge.

3. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all aspects of off-site visits and outside learning activities, whether they take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods. It includes all elements of those experiences including the journey and any residential element.

4. Inclusion

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of additional educational or medical needs, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children with additional needs, every reasonable effort will 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.

All reasonably practicable measures will be taken to include all children. The principles of inclusion will be promoted and addressed for all visits, thus ensuring an aspiration towards;

- An entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers

5. Approval of activities and visits

All visits will be approved and authorised in advance.

Level 1 Visits; these are visits that last up to one day and:

- Do not involve an overnight stay
- Do not involve adventurous activities (see Appendix 1)
- Are within the UK

These visits are approved by EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) and Headteacher.

Level 2 Visits; these are visits which include one or more of the following:

- An overnight residential experience
- A visit abroad (including day trips)

These visits are approved by EVC and Headteacher.

Level 3 Visits; these are visits which involve adventurous activities (see Appendix 1). These visits are approved by EVC and Headteacher.

Monkston Primary School uses an online system (EVOLVE) for notification of residential visits.

For most activities the competence required of a technical advisor is stipulated by the activity's National Governing Body. For further clarification regarding a technical adviser see 6h Adventure Activity Qualifications in National Guidance https://oeapng.info/downloads/frequently-asked-questions/

6. Effective supervision on visits

Employer guidance for off-site visits and outdoor learning provides clear advice regarding the assessment of leader competence. It is an expectation that all group leaders and their assistants have been formally assessed as competent to undertake such responsibilities as they have been assigned.

Staffing arrangements for off-site visits must be sufficient to facilitate safe and effective supervision of children. Effective supervision should be determined by risk assessment which includes careful consideration of:

- The age and gender (including the developmental age) of the children to be supervised
- The ability of the children, including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs
- The nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing environmental conditions)
- Staff competence

Whilst staffing ratios for visits will vary according to these aspects, this policy recommends the following supervisory ratios, in normal circumstances for Level 1 Activities:

- 1 adult for every 10 children in school years Foundation to 3
- 1 adult for every 10-15 children in school years 4 to 6, unless walking in the local area then 1adult for every 20 children in school years 5 to 6.

For Level 2 activities, i.e. visits abroad or residential visits, this policy recommends the following ratios:

- 1 teacher or worker for every 12 children
- At least one male and female teacher or worker for mixed groups where possible
- An appropriate number of group supervisors on night standby duty

In all cases there must be a minimum number of two accompanying adults, whatever the size of the group.

The actual ratios of adults to children will be determined through the risk assessment process and may need to be in excess of the above levels. The use of suitable parents or other adult helpers may be appropriate provided any necessary checks e.g. DBS are in place.

DBS checks are not required for volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays. However, where the Headteacher or managers assess that helpers are likely to have substantial access or unsupervised contact with children, a DBS check must be undertaken.

When authorising visits, the EVC and Headteacher will ensure that ratios are sufficient to enable effective supervision in accordance with this policy.

A visit must not go ahead where either the visit leader, EVC or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

7. Risk control

Effective risk management is a fundamental part of the planning and execution of all off-site visits and activities. Staff have a common law duty of care towards all children in their charge and the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children to undertake activities safely, and not to prevent activities taking place.

Risk assessments do not need to be complex but should address any significant risks. However, the Headteacher or manager will ensure that the person assessing the risks is competent to do so.

Risk assessments will 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?

The risk assessments will take into account:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is undertaken
- The age, competence, fitness and the temperament of the group members
- Any additional educational or medical needs of individuals within the group
- Supervision ratios
- The competence, experience and qualifications of the supervisory team
- The location, routes and modes of transport to it
- Security for residential or overnight stays

There are three levels of risk assessment that will be undertaken:

Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever or whenever it takes place. They are useful to cover activities which are likely to be repeated and that do not need doing again unless the activity, the environment and/or the nature of the children change significantly.

Visit or site-specific risk assessments, are to be completed by the group leader and are unique to each occasion. They should take into account the site, learners' needs and activity specific needs (environment, accommodation, leaders, transport etc.). Site specific risk assessments available from activity providers will support this aspect.

Ongoing risk assessments, involve professional judgements during an activity in response to changing situations e.g. weather conditions or ill health of participants. This applies to all categories and is critical to the success and safety of any activity.

Planning visits

Planning should reflect the consideration of legal and good practice requirements, ensuring that:

- There is a clear purpose for the trip
- Benefits and learning outcomes that the trip might achieve have been clearly identified and recorded to enable evaluation
- There is a suitably competent and experienced person designated as Group Leader who understands the role's requirements
- All staff, including adult volunteer helpers and the children involved have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- There is an appropriate risk management plan and all participants are aware of the detail where it impacts on them
- Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed about the nature of the trip, particularly any risk entailed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained
- Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers
- For residential visits there are emergency contingencies, alternative options in place and designated home contacts have been identified and briefed
- All details of the activity provision are available to the emergency contact throughout the period of the activity

The degree of complexity of a particular plan will reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity as follows:

- Staffing requirements – training, experience, competency and ratios
- Activity characteristics – specialist, licensable, any insurance issues
- Group characteristics – prior experience, ability, behaviour, special and medical needs
- Environmental conditions –impact of weather, water levels
- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport, residential

8. Preliminary Visits

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet our expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of children. This is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. A 'virtual tour', where available, using the internet could support this. It is also useful to learn from other establishments' experience of using particular providers.

Where a provider holds accreditation through one of the national provider assurance schemes, there should be no need to seek further safety reassurances. Examples of such schemes include:

- The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge
- AALS licensing
- Adventuremark
- NGB centre approval schemes (applicable where the provision is a single, specialist activity).

Group leaders should be aware that the AALS license is an assurance of safety. It does not accredit educational or activity quality.

Home contact, emergency planning and critical incident support

A home contact must be established as part of the planning of any journey involving an overnight stay and is recommended for all off-site visits.

The home contact will need to be conversant with and act in accordance with Monkston Primary School's critical incident procedure.

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has either:

- Suffered a life-threatening injury
- Suffered a fatality
- Is at serious risk

OR

- Has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period of time

9. Insurance cover

Organisers must ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place for any off-site visit, including for transport arrangements. Visit organisers should clarify what cover already exists, to identify whether additional cover needs to be obtained.

10. Provision of transport

Organisers must ensure that all travel arrangements, including the hire of private coaches or buses, are suitable for the nature of the visit. Where driving is carried out by members of staff, all relevant licences including Passenger Service Vehicle (PSV) or Section 19 permits (within UK) must be held, in accordance with the Transport Act 1985 and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency guidance.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey, giving proper consideration to the issues of driver distraction when considering what supervision is required for the specific group of passengers being transported in a minibus.

All transport arrangements must comply with UK and/or EU rules is respect of drivers' hours and breaks, and use of tachographs as appropriate to the journey being undertaken.

All staff and others, who drive participants in their own car must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and that they have proper insurance e.g. for business use, that covers carrying participants. The driver is responsible for making sure that children and young people have a seat belt and use it at all times.

11. First Aid

For all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment (e.g. urban, remote, water etc.)

General 'life experience', or a 3 hours non-assessed 'basic skills' course is suitable for routine urban visits. However, the nature of the visit may indicate that a higher-level qualification is appropriate, especially in circumstances where it is likely that access by emergency services may be delayed.

Based on the nature of the particular visit, the EVC (or visit leader) should make a professional judgment regarding the level of first aid required.

A first aid kit appropriate to the visit should be carried.

For EYFS outings, there must always be at least one member of staff present who holds a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate.

12. Parent/Carer Consent

Written consent from parents is not required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by a school (with the exception of nursery age children (as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, it is good practice to inform parents of where their child will be at all times and of any extra safety measures required.

Written consent is usually only requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside schools hours. Parents must be informed of these activities in advance and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity covered by the form.
E consent, via services such as the Arbor app etc. is an acceptable alternative to paper-based consent forms.

13. Charging for visits

In all cases group organisers must ensure that there is a clear financial audit trail for all income and expenditure in respect of off-site visits.

Monkston Primary School may charge or request voluntary contributions for educational visits and journeys in accordance with our Charging and Remissions Policy.

If charges are raised for trips involving transport, this affects the legal position as outlined in the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency guidance.

14. Farm Visits

Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are reasonably balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.

Refer to National Guidance document 7g Farm Visits:
https://oeapng.info/downloads/specialist-activities-and-visits/

15. Water Margin Activities

Activities that take place near or in water – such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water*. It does not apply to swimming and other activities that require water safety or rescue qualifications and equipment, or water going craft.
*'gentle' means hardly moving at all
'Shallow' typically means up to the knees of the participants

Staff involved in water-margin activities should be conversant with and adhere to, the guidance contained within the National Guidance document 7i Group Safety at Water Margins:
https://oeapng.info/downloads/specialist-activities-and-visits/

16. Residential Visits

The school fully supports and encourages residential visits that are correctly planned, managed and conducted.

Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
A Guide to High Quality Outdoor Learning and Residential Experiences:
https://oeapng.info/downloads/policies-planning-and-evaluation/

Can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place. It can also help the leader in providing clarity to a provider when designing a programme.

Refer to National Guidance document 4.2b Residential Visits
https://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/

Weather, Clothing & Survival
Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;

- The nature of the visit and environment

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group'
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signaling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB mobile phones may not work in remote areas)

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances – for example: over busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels etc.

17. Swimming

The school fully support and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed and conducted.

Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with reasonable practicable safety precautions.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and lifeguarding arrangements checked in advance.

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities. The following criteria apply:

Swimming pools (lifeguarded)
LA approval is not required

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely
- Unless suitably qualified, school staff should not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote supervision
- For swimming lessons, the LA establishments should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

Refer to National Guidance document 7.x Swimming pools
https://oeapng.info/downloads/specialist-activities-and-visits/

18. Definition of an 'adventurous activity'

The following activities are typically regarded as 'adventurous':

- All activities in 'open country' (see below)
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Abseiling
- All forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Camping
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- 'Extreme' sports
- High level ropes courses
- Hill walking and mountaineering
- Horse riding
- Motor sports – all forms
- Off road cycling
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Sailing/windsurfing/kite surfing
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools
- Shooting/archery/paintballing
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Snow sports (skiing, snowboarding and related activities), including dry lope
- Trampoline Parks
- Underground exploration
- Use of powered safety/rescue craft
- Water skiing
- Other activities (e.g. initiative exercise) involving skills inherent in any of the above

'Open country' is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access.

The Following activities are not regarded as adventurous; however, these activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the EVC and Head of Establishment is competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or on remote country paths
- Field studies – unless in environments stated in 'open country'
- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go karts
- Ice skating (rink)
- Farm visits
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library etc.
- Physical education and ports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water margin activities

19. Adventurous Activities

The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) An external provider
   The provider must hold a LOtC Quality Badge
   Whilst the responsibility for the safety of the participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care

Or

b) A member of school staff
   This person must be specifically approved by the headteacher to lead the activity via EVOLVE

20. Water-Based Activities

The following are not regarded as adventurous activities:

swimming publicly lifeguarded pools, water margin activities and commercial craft, tourist boat trips and similar activates for which young people would normally not wear personal buoyancy

With the exception of the above, all other forms of water-based activities are regarded as adventurous activities.

The responsibility and safety of the participants in an adventurous activity will rest with either:

a) An external provider
   The provider must hold a LOtC Quality Badge
   Whilst the responsibility for the safety of the participants rests with the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care
b) A member of school staff
   This person must be specifically approved by the headteacher to lead the activity via EVOLVE

In order to participate in water-based activities, participants should normally be water confident. Participants who lack water confidence may still be able to take part subject to consideration of all factors, including the activity itself and supervision arrangements. The level of water confidence of all participants must be known by the activity leader prior to the commencement of water-based activities.

Leaders should have knowledge of the water conditions, hazards (and potential changes) that might be encountered and prepare accordingly. Local advice must be sought where appropriate, e.g. coastguard, harbour master, other site users etc.

Personal buoyancy conforming to the appropriate National Governing Body must be worn at all times by all participants in water-based activities, except, at the discretion of the activity leader, where the activity:

a) takes place in a swimming pool; or
b) is 'swimming; or
c) is an activity for which personal buoyancy would not normally be worn by young people.

21. Open Country Activities

'Open Country' is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access.

The responsibility for the safety of participants rests with either:

a) the provider, the accompanying staff continue to retain a 'pastoral' duty of care or
b) A member of school staff
   This person must be specifically approved by the Headteacher to lead the activity via EVOLVE

The following minimum levels of technical competence apply where a member of school staff intends to lead an open-country activity:

a) For leaders of walking groups outside the UK or Ireland
   - International Mountain Leader Award (IML) or
   - a written statement of competence by an appropriate technical advisor
b) For leaders of walking groups in mountainous terrain within the UK and Ireland
   - Mountain Leader Award (ML) Summer or Winter as appropriate or
   - A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical advisor
c) For leaders of walking groups in summer conditions or non-mountainous hilly terrain (known variously as upland, moor, bog, hill, fell or down), with well-defined obvious boundaries, such as roads and coastlines, and where any hazards within it are identifiable and avoidable, and where wild camping or movement on steep ground is not involved
   - Hill & Moorland Leader Award (HMLA) or
   - A written statement of competence by an appropriate technical advisor
d) For leaders or walking groups in terrain 'easier' than that defined in c) the leader must demonstrate an appropriate level of competence. This may include one or more of the following:
   - Countryside Leader Award (CLA)
   - Lowland Leader Award (LLA)
   - Sports Leaders UK Level 3 Award in Basic Expedition Leadership (BEL)
   - a written statement of competence by an appropriate technical advisor
   - Evidence of recent, relevant experience, appropriately corroborated
   - an assessment of competence (written or implied) by the Headteacher.

22. Emergency Procedures

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to their establishment's policy on emergency procedures.

For visits that take place outside normal establishment hours:

- A completed 'Emergency Card – Visit Leader' must be with the visit leader at all times and
- A completed 'Emergency Card – Home Contacts (or equivalent) must be with the emergency home contact(s) at all times where access to electronic storage is not possible.

Refer to National Guidance documents:
4.1i Emergencies and critical incidents
4.1b Emergencies – the establishment's role
4.1c Emergencies – Guidance for Leaders
https://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/

Milton Keynes Council Emergency Contact (24 hour) – 01908 311773

23. Using an External Provider

An 'External Provider' is defined as where there is an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding, for example:

- Activity Centre
- Ski Company
- Educational Tour Operator
- Overseas Expedition Provider
- Climbing Wall where instruction is provided by climbing wall staff
- Freelance instructor of adventurous activities
- Youth Hostel (where instruction is provided)
- Voluntary Organisation (e.g. Scout Association), where instruction is provided

An External Provider is NOT:

- Youth Hostel (where accommodation only is used)
- Hotel, B&B etc.
- Campsite
- Museum, gallery etc.
- Tourist Attraction
- Theme Park
- Farm
- Coach, Train or Airline Company
- Swimming Pool

The decision about the use of an eternal provider is the responsibility of the visit leader, EVC and Headteacher.

To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, school must ensure that either:

a) The provider holds an LOtC Quality Badge www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk or

b) A 'Provider form' has been satisfactorily completed by the provider

Note: If a provider holds an AALA licence (and/or any other accreditation) but not a LOtC Quality Badge, then a provider form is still required

Procedure for Providers that hold a LOtC Quality Badge

No further action is necessary, other than to check the suitability of the provider/venue in relation to the intended aims for the particular group.

Procedure for Providers that DO NOT hold a LOtC Quality Badge

- Download a 'Provider form' from EVOLVE
- Complete the top section
- Send provider form to the provider
- On its return check that it has been satisfactorily completed
- Upload the completed provider form to EVOLVE or keep on file

If the Provider has made any alterations to the wording of the provider form or is unable to comply, then you must discuss this with the provider, and if necessary seek advice before making a commitment with the provider.

The Provider form should be sent to the provider at the time of making a provisional booking and no deposits should be committed prior to its satisfactory completion and return.

The satisfactory completion of a Provider Form does not necessarily signify that the service on offer will be appropriate. A pre-visit and recommendation from previous users will help you decide on its suitability.

See National Guidance documents:
4.4h Using external providers and facilities https://oeapng.info/downloads/good-practice/
6a Asking for a provider's risk assessments https://oeapng.info/downloads/frequently-asked-questions/

24. Useful information:

Outdoor Education Advisor – Mark Falkingham via EVOLVE Messenger or Notes

MK Council Emergency Contact (24 hour) – 01908 311773

National Guidance www.oeapng.info

LOtC www.lotc.org.uk