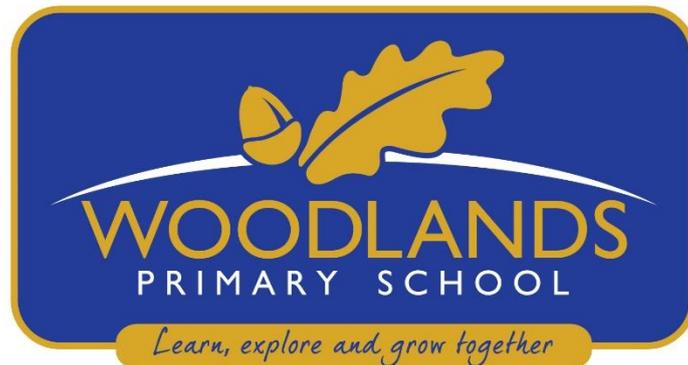


Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits Policy



Written by	Sue Buxton
Ratified by Governors	Spring 2021
Date for Review	Spring 2023
Signed – Chair of Governors	
Signed – Headteacher	
Is this an internal or external policy?	
Is this based on a model policy	Policy written by KCC outdoor learning team

This policy has been impact assessed by Sue Buxton in order to ensure that it does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality

Introduction:

At Woodlands Primary school, we recognise the value of outdoor learning and educational visits or trips. Visits are widely recognised as an important tool for supporting the education and development of children and young people, providing direct curriculum-linked activities to improve learning, skills, understanding and activity opportunities to enhance PE and extra-curricular activities. They also provide a wide range of personal development opportunities to support the development of real-life skills.

At Woodlands Primary school, we are committed to enriching the curriculum through outdoor learning and educational visits. We believe everyone should have the opportunity to access places and venues, which provide them with knowledge and understanding of our community and environment. Trips are planned annually in year groups and visits aim to include a wide range of establishments, venues and activities which broadly link to the children's learning. Woodlands Primary school ensures that these trips are inclusive to all children.

“Learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils’ personal, social and emotional development.”

Ofsted – ‘Learning Outside of the Classroom’ report

“It has long been acknowledged that pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their schools. In particular, they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom.

Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits – Department for Education and Skills, 1998

“Outdoor learning supports academic achievement, for example through fieldwork projects, as well as the development of ‘soft’ skills and social skills, particularly in hard to reach children. It can take place on school trips, on visits in the local community or in the school grounds.

House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee, February 2005

Aims and Objectives:

Woodlands Primary School has a clear and robust system, policy and procedures in place for the planning, safe management and monitoring of educational visits and activities. The Headteacher and Governors are committed to establishing and implementing arrangements that will ensure:

- Visits and activities are planned to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and volunteer helpers - with appropriate risk management and assessments that are specific to the needs of the group, individuals, the planned activity, the location and the environment. This includes any significant risk assessment information being shared with all adults and children on the visit as appropriate.
- Visits and activities are planned with clear educational aims and objectives, based on pupils’ needs and abilities, to support high quality learning outcomes. At Woodlands Primary School, these visits and activities link to the curriculum. They provide real life experiences, which enhance and enrich the children’s learning and provide opportunities to support the development of real-life skills.
- All trips are reviewed and evaluated on the EVOLVE system in relation to aims and future planning. For outdoor, residential and adventurous activities, this will take place in the form of a meeting following the trip.

Risk Management:

Visits are planned to ensure the safety of pupils and young people, including appropriate risk management and assessment that is specific to the needs of the pupils, the planned activity and the location and environment.

Risk assessments are undertaken for all off-site visits and outdoor activities. Forest school activities have individual risk assessment and are recorded in a specific folder. Children's initials are used on all risk assessments with behaviour / medical conditions which are only shared with school staff. We share the risks assessments with volunteers without identifying any specific children. Risk assessments are also undertaken for the transport of children from school to the venue and back.

Emergency and serious incident procedures are in place to manage accidents, incidents and safeguarding issues, and visit information can be easily accessed by all those who need it in an emergency situation (this may be overnight or during holiday periods). All Teachers have a school phone and numbers for emergencies. All staff and volunteers involved with visits receive appropriate training and briefings on dealing with emergencies. Qualified first aiders accompany each class and systems are in place for incidents and accident reporting. DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) are available by phone on all trips and overnight residential trips.

The management of overall visit and activity planning, risk assessment and the visit approval process is carried out by a competent staff member with appropriate experience and training - the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). At Woodlands Primary School, this is **Sue Buxton (Assistant Headteacher)** and **Diane Dale (Administrative Assistant)**. Our EVCs have attended EVC training courses and will attend an EVC update every three years (January 2020). Residential trips are over seen by the Outdoor Educational Team through the EVOLVE system, Headteacher and Governors.

The governing body monitoring pair responsible for safeguarding review the policy, in line with the policy schedule, or before, if required.

Visits and activities are planned and led by year group leads who are competent members of the school community in conjunction with venue / establishment staff, who hold appropriate qualifications and experience as required by the activities.

All school staff are trained for their roles in leading and accompanying educational visits and activities.

Appropriate technical expertise is sought in relation to the planning and management of more hazardous or adventurous activities, including the verification of activity leader qualifications, safe activity management and ratios.

External providers used to provide services and support, are checked to ensure they are suitable for use on educational visits, meeting nationally accepted standards and legal adventurous activity requirements (e.g. Adventurous Activities Licence) where appropriate.

Activities such as swimming, crossing roads and curricular partnerships with other schools are examples of these site-specific risk assessments where the same venue is used each week and barring any changes to the nature of that venue, our prime concern on a weekly basis is the risk presented by the group of pupils undertaking the visit. For all 'one-off' trips, a specific risk assessment is required.

Written consent is obtained from parents / guardians / carers for all trips. Specific medical consent, informed activity and instructions are obtained from parents / guardians / carers as appropriate for

the type of visit or activity. All parents / guardians / carers are given enough information to be 'fully informed' about all educational visit activity plans.

Full medical information and details of other issues such as behaviour, special needs and dietary requirements are obtained from parents and are available to visit leaders and accompanying school or establishment staff. Specific risk assessments are undertaken where necessary for individual children in conjunction with parents / guardians / carers. The EVC will ensure the level of first aid provision needed for each trip. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidelines for first aid equipment are followed to ensure appropriate provision.

The trip leader should have a PLAN B in the event of the planned agenda needing to change. This is recorded on the risk assessment and all parties should be aware.

The Headteacher ensures that in the event of a major incident or accident, LA guidelines are adhered to in terms of informing parents, staff and the media to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near-accidents are investigated.

Staffing Ratios:

Accompanied visits must always be in the overall charge of a teacher known as a trip leader. All other staff and volunteers are required to follow the instructions that are given by the trip leader. Other people who the Headteacher considers responsible adults will provide additional help. These will usually be members of staff, other adults who have been disclosure and barring service (DBS) checked or parents who are well known to the school. The EVC must ensure that, as a minimum, there are never less than two responsible adults with any group, one of whom must be a member of staff / or other responsible and DBS checked adult designated by the EVC. In addition, it is desirable that an adult of each sex accompany mixed groups of pupils whenever possible. In considering the staffing needs for large groups of pupils, the following ratios are applied:

Year R	1:4
Years 1 – 3	1:6
Years 4 – 6	1:10

Where there is regard to high level of SEN or behaviour concerns, a ratio of 1:1 may be judged to be necessary by the Headteacher in consultation with the class teacher.

EVOLVE:

From 1 September 2017, all maintained schools and establishments were given the responsibility for approving their own educational visits and activities, including residential and adventurous activities. Kent County Council (KCC) provides all schools with a Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities to support and guide schools in the safe planning and management of outdoor learning activities and educational visits.

The EVOLVE system provides a powerful and easy to use tool for Headteachers and EVCs to use day-to-day to reduce the workload and administration of visit management. The system provides a comprehensive tool to evidence good planning and practice on educational visits and activities, covering all aspects of visit management from staffing to risk management in an online tool, as well as for reporting on and evaluation of visits.

KCC monitor compliance with the scheme of delegation and adherence to the Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities.

The school uses the KCC EVOLVE site to record all trips and off site visits. All information is held securely on this site in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) regulations.

Appropriate expertise through the EVOLVE team is sought in relation to the planning and management of more hazardous or adventurous activities, including the verification of activity leader qualifications, safe activity management, appropriate ratios etc. At Woodlands Primary School, the residential visits are planned by the school staff and advice / approval is sort from the EVOLVE team.

External providers on the EVOLVE system used to provide services and support, have been appropriately checked to ensure they are suitable for use on educational visits e.g. meeting nationally accepted standards and legal adventurous activity requirements (e.g. Adventurous Activities Licence), have appropriate financial protections in place (e.g. ATOL) as appropriate; and hold an appropriate level of Public Liability Insurance for the activities or services provided. At Woodlands Primary School, venues are checked and approved by the EVOLVE team and the school.

Information and documents relating to educational visits are appropriately stored and retained, in line with GDPR and document retention requirements, to support incident management and potential investigations / court proceedings after serious incidents and accidents. Information and documents are held on the EVOLVE system and in secure folders in school. Individual class teachers carry an offsite folder with children's trip data sheets, medical information for adults in a sealed envelope, blank medical forms, venue information (booking details), risk assessments and green safeguarding forms which remain with the class teacher at all times.

The EVC (Sue Buxton or Diane Dale) formally approves all visits and activities. The school uses the EVOLVE system to record all trips. Residential trips are approved by the EVOLVE team, Headteacher and school governors.

Appropriate monitoring and evaluation of visits and activities takes place, to ensure quality and safety, visit aims and to aid future planning. The EVC is informed of any specific issues affecting future visits, venues and transport of the group.

Full training is given on the use of the EVOLVE service and visit management. The Headteacher or Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) formally approves all visits and activities. The KCC outdoor education team and the headteacher approve residential trips. KCC retains its legal health and safety responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act as the ultimate employer of staff.

Voluntary Contributions:

The basic principle underlying the charging provisions of the 1988 Act (ERA 1988) is that education provided by any maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours.

There is also the principle that an educational visit mainly outside the school day should be free of charge if it contributes to the delivery of the National Curriculum.

Charges may be made for residential accommodation.

Visits that are non-educational should not take place during school time, denying access to full programmes of study.

All visits during the school day should therefore be deemed educational.

Voluntary contributions can be requested for any educational visit that takes place during the school day; however, a pupil cannot be prevented from taking part in the visit based on a family not making any or sufficient contribution.

Where the visit is non-educational, the charge cannot exceed the actual costs to be incurred. Costs can be calculated against transport, board and lodging, admission costs, costs of appropriate non-teaching staff, incidental costs of staff, materials and equipment and insurance costs.

Accounts related to off-site activities are kept on the EVOLVE system and checked by the school finance secretary.

Voluntary Help:

The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Headteacher or EVC. This permission will be based upon knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience and training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.

It is the aim of the Governing Body that DBS checks are carried out by the office on all volunteer helpers – hence much advance notice is needed and those intending to use voluntary help should liaise with the EVC as early as possible in the planning phase. Where insufficient numbers of volunteers have been DBS-checked, the trip leader will be made aware of the individuals that are not checked and ensure that they are paired with checked individuals.

All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the trip leader.

Transport:

Hired transport – The school should ensure appropriate levels of supervisory staff are available to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils.

Public transport – Close supervision should be ensured.

Use of private cars – Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties. Parents must be informed if private transport is used. Parents volunteering to provide transport in their cars will be asked to certify (a) that they have fully comprehensive insurance (b) that their vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and (c) that they have a valid driving licence. The school will not reimburse parents/staff for the use of their cars. Unless agreed otherwise with the EVC, there should always be two adults in each vehicle.

On occasions when more than one coach is used to transport a class of children, the trip leader will travel on one coach and will delegate overall responsibility for the children on the other coach to another employee of the school, until at the destination. Consideration should also be given to the personality, behaviour and SEN of the children involved.

When travelling by coach or minibus, adults should space themselves evenly throughout the vehicle to ensure adequate supervision at all times.

Children should not travel in the front seat of vehicles, and a check should be made beforehand whether 'booster seats' are needed. There are school booster seats available.

Emergency Procedure:

1. In an emergency, the emergency services should be contacted if needed.
2. The children should be evacuated to a safe area.
3. The trip leader should ensure that all members of the party, adults and children are accounted for.
4. The trip leader should telephone the school's designated person, usually the Headteacher, and arrange to keep them regularly informed.
5. The designated person will inform KCC and the Chair of Governors.
6. The designated person will contact parents and other named persons as appropriate. Adult helpers should be told not to make contact by mobile phone to avoid misinformation and rumour.

Documents:

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/health-and-safety-guidance/health-and-safety-policies>

https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/27918/DfEE-First-aid-guidance-for-schools.pdf

<https://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/outdoor-learning>

Document History	
Date	Summary of changes
Autumn 2018	Document created
Spring 2021	Updated with an amalgamation of the latest KCC model policy and more detail added. Change in S Buxton's job status and adding Diane Dale as EVC.