

# SCAWSBY SALTERSGATE INFANT SCHOOL



## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Each year many visits are made to a variety of places for wide range of educational reasons. These visits range from a walk from school into the locality, e.g. Cusworth Park, Stone Hill School, to full day trips further afield. The range of activities that children engage in is similarly wide. The purpose of this policy and accompanying information is to ensure that every trip made from this school combines the safest possible environment for our children and the greatest possible educational benefit, both in terms of the Foundation Stage/National Curriculum and in personal and social development

<b>Policy Approved by Governors</b>	<b>April 2024</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>April 2026</b>

## Context

Saltersgate Infant school believes 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 our school a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils 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. Pupils 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. I.e. encouraging pupils 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

As each child moves through school, visits will be arranged to complement the breadth of the curriculum and to emphasise aspects of the programmes of study, which lend themselves to such an approach. Within the constraints of the various codes of practice, children will be encouraged to be increasingly self-reliant e.g. when looking after their own personal belongings, managing their behaviour, keeping themselves safe and following rules.

## 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, Saltersgate Infant School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Educational Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities Guidance' with reference to OEAP National Guidance.
2. Uses 'Exeant', 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, DMBC policy and guidance, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits - Category A
2. Day visits within the UK (outside of London) that do not involve an adventurous activity - Category B
3. Visits to London, and/or that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity, and/or take place in a challenging environment - Category C

Most visits at Saltersgate Infant School are Category A and B visits, with Year 2 engaging in Category C once a year.

## Roles and Responsibilities

**Visit leads** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on 'Exeant' (where required). Using the 'Exeant' system, they are to obtain initial approval for a visit from the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Lead prior to formally planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leads have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** 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. Initial approval requests for visits will go through to the EVC via the 'Exeant' system. At the point of initial approval, the decision is made by the EVC as to whether the visit requires the approval of the Headteacher.

The EVC is the main point of contact between the LA and the establishment with specific reference to the 'Exeant' system and is responsible for the management of the 'Exeant' system with regards to granting access to the system for establishment staff.

The EVC lead: Headteacher

Deputy EVC lead: Joanne Farmer (Assistant Head teacher)

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. Risk Assessments will be regularly scrutinised. All Risk Assessments for new venues will be scrutinised prior to the visit taking place.

**The Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via 'Exeant') of all visits that are either overseas, residential, take place in a challenging environment (including London) and/or involve an adventurous activity for Local Authority maintained establishments. For establishments outside of Local Authority control, the LA acts in an advisory and consultative role providing guidance for such establishments.

### **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 leads 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
- EXEANT training delivered by LA or EVC when needed.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit lead, the Headteacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience
- Previous relevant training
- The prospective lead's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken

### **Approval**

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Category 'A' - Local visits which involve transport purely by foot within the locality. These trips require a more simplified amount of details onto Exeant alongside a 'walking to venue' risk assessment.
2. Category 'B' - Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity, are not within London and do not take place in a challenging environment. These are entered onto 'Exeant' for initial approval by the trip lead and must then be fully submitted to the EVC/Headteacher for checking at least 14 days in advance and then for final approval.
3. Category 'C' - Residential trips whereby an overnights stay is involved. These must be entered by the EVC lead and have Headteacher's approval. The LA will authorise these.

### **Parental Consent**

Parental approval/consent will be gained for ALL visits. Parents/carers will be fully informed of the arrangements and acknowledgement received from parent/carers that they have received the information regarding the visit. A medical information form will be completed for the academic year. Permission can be given via payment or by ticking the designated consent box on ParentPay. A slip receipt will be accepted for those parents not making a payment and in extreme circumstances, verbal confirmation can be accepted. Any verbal consent must be authorised by a member of SLT.

Detailed correspondence will always be sent to parents with regards to date, time, place and other relevant information e.g. contribution, clothing, lunch so that consent is always given on a fully informed basis.

### **Emergency Procedures**

**A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit lead.**

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix B). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention, assistance will be sought from the Local Authority.

### **Educational Visits Checklist**

The Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. 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'.

The checklist will be used as a tool or aide-memoire to assist the EVC/visit lead in the planning process.

### **Inclusion**

All trips will, wherever possible, be accessible to all children in the class, enabling them to gain confidence, acquire skills and take part in positive learning experiences beyond the classroom.

Educational visits should fulfil the needs of all children. Children with Support Plans and EHCPs may need additional supervision or support whilst on a school trip. This will be provided.

Saltergate Infant School is committed to increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum, including the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services, particularly in respect to Educational Visits.

### **Charging/funding for visits**

Some visits may be part or wholly funded by the school where specific funding is available to do so.

For most visits, the school will request a voluntary contribution and the trip will not go ahead if contributions are not sufficient to cover a large percentage of the cost.

All staff need to make parents/carers aware of the cost of the trips for the academic year in good time to ensure parents can budget for the costs. As a guideline, where possible, we endeavour to keep costs below £15 per child per trip. Each year group aims to go on 3-4 trips per academic year.

### **Transport**

Transport is arranged through reputable and recommended (LA) providers.

If mini buses are hired, these will be hired through the Local Authority.

**Use of staff cars to transport pupils** – LA's guidance on this can be viewed in the document below;

<https://buy.doncaster.gov.uk/Page/31160>

### **Insurance**

The school takes out the Local Authority Insurance for all visits.

## Guidelines for planning visits

1. Identify the educational aims and objectives of the visit at an early stage. When travelling to a distant location, the question should always be asked, whether the same objective might be achieved more simply and cheaply closer to home. Time spent travelling should not exceed the time spent at the location.
2. Due regard must be paid to the experience of staff, the nature of the visit and the age and needs of the children. Staffing levels stipulated are minimum levels and where possible, we aim to exceed these:
  - **Nursery** - minimum 1:2, ideally 1:1
  - **Reception** - minimum 1:5, ideally 1:4
  - **Key Stage One** - minimum 2:12, 1:8 thereafter, ideally 1:6 - two adults must be DMBC staff, at least one of whom must be a qualified teacher.

Whenever possible, we avoid the lead teacher being responsible for a group.

**Please note:** There may be trips which require more adult support if an activity taking place involves a risk element. In this instance, discussions should be had with your line manager and ratios could alter significantly.

3. Visit the venue. This is an essential requirement where the venue has not been used before and you are unfamiliar with the location. Any teacher leading their class on a school visit **must** visit the venue prior to taking any children.
4. Check that the proposed dates do not clash with other school events and enter into the school calendar **as soon as possible**.
5. Inform the office staff of the details in order that they can obtain costs for transport, arrange transport and work out final costs for the trip.
6. The office staff will send out a letter to inform parents of visit details, request contributions and to request parental consent. Parental consent should always be given either in writing or via electronic consent. In exceptional circumstances, verbal consent may be given and authorised by a member of SLT.
7. The Headteacher must approve all letters prior to them being sent out.
8. Parents must be informed about appropriate clothing and footwear and arrangements for lunch.
9. The appropriate Risk Assessment should be completed by the trip lead, and uploaded to EXEANT as soon as possible.

10. All adults accompanying the party, whether school staff, parents or other adults must be made fully aware of the purpose and itinerary of the trip and of their own area of responsibility.
11. All helpers should be fully briefed prior to the trip, about their role and responsibility and about expectations in terms of the children's learning and behaviour. Each helper should have a list of the names of the children in their group.
12. On the day of the trip, if travelling by coach, the teacher should ensure that wherever possible, access to the coach should be directly from the pavement.
13. On the coach, the children should behave in a sensible and controlled manner. Adults should be interspersed around the coach.
14. Children must wear seatbelts until staff instruct them to remove them.
15. The children should behave, at all times, in line with the usual expectations of the school's behaviour policy and follow the Golden Rules consistently.
16. Children are never allowed to go to the toilet unaccompanied. One adult should be inside the toilets and one outside. Volunteers must not take children to the toilet.
17. Children must walk along pavements with adults on the outside, keeping the children away from the traffic.
18. All members of staff must read and take account of the Risk Assessment for the trip. This includes any Risk Assessments and Health and Safety information provided by the venue.
19. All volunteers must receive information regarding their role and give their next of kin details to the trip lead in case of emergency.

ALL trips are to be entered onto EXEANT **two weeks** prior to going on this trip if this is a familiar trip.

If a new trip is taking place, the details are required to be entered onto EXEANT a **month** in advance.

## Appendix A – Emergency Procedure

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

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of SLT, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit lead will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit lead and the emergency contact/s will be aware of and have any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit lead/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.
  - The visit lead will carry a 'Visit Lead Emergency Action Plan - VLEAP' and 'Phone Crib Card'.