Copnor Primary School

Educational Visits and Visitors Policy

Governing Body approval gained in March 2026 Next review March 2027
Policy proposed for adoption by Matt Johnson, Headteacher
Headteacher's signature: Chair of Commitee's signature:

Rationale

At Copnor Primary School, we believe we can enrich and develop children's learning beyond that possible in the classroom through educational and residential visits.

Aims

- Create more engagement, excitement and enjoyment through visiting a different and stimulating environment, or from a visitor sharing information.
- Place the learning that is taking place in the classroom within a real-life context
- Afford children the opportunity to work with real artefacts, carry out fieldwork and gain firsthand experiences
- Give opportunity to develop problem-solving, team challenges and group work
- Contribute to the personal, social and health education of the children
- Help the children become more aware at assessing risk and managing those risks

Implementation

The school has a designated Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who is responsible to the Headteacher for the safety of such visits. Members of staff wishing to carry out a residential or non-residential visit must liaise with the EVC to analyse its feasibility. Once the details have been initially investigated the group leader must seek the permission of the Headteacher. The EVC will then assist the group leader with the process of organising the visit, including risk assessment and risk management.

All visits and visitors must be risk assessed bearing in mind the guidance issued in "Keeping Children Safe in Education", and "The Prevent Strategy'. Furthermore, this policy follows Portsmouth City Council's (PCC) and Hampshire County Council's (HCC) guidance for all visits. Please note that PCC have signed up to following HCC's guidance and that HCC are responsible for ensuring that visits requiring authorisation are appropriately checked.

Continuing Professional Development

For some activities in-date Open Country training is required to lead the visit. A rolling programme of Open Country training is in place to ensure that staff become Open Country trained, enabling them to lead visits near water and to places where the children are in the countryside. There is also a rolling programme of first aid training, to ensure, wherever possible -but always where the children are classed to be in open country or are participating in a residential- that a trained first aider attends the visit.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Everyone concerned needs to ensure that every effort is made to include all. Activities may need to be adapted to ensure they are accessible in some form to all who wish to take part. This must be irrespective of their special educational needs, medical needs, emotional and behavioural needs, disability, ethnicity, gender or religion.

However, the health and safety of all is paramount. It should also be taken into consideration that in adapting some trips to meet the needs of all the original purpose of the trip could be compromised. There may be circumstances where these two factors override the inclusion of an individual, though this must always be a last resort.
It must be made clear, in letters to parent/carers/carers what type of trip it is. Any letter to parent/carers/carers must also include details about the itinerary for the visit. The activities to be undertaken and an approximate timetable need to be included as a part of the information provided. As an example, on a visit to HMS Victory, the body of the letter to parents/carers should include that they are visiting the ship itself, that they are having lunch and are then looking around the dockyard and viewing the outsides of the other ships in the dockyard.

Safeguarding (please also refer to the Overall Safeguarding Policy).

All adults involved in a visit have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Visits and activities have many benefits; however, there are also potential safeguarding risks which will be considered during the planning process. Visit leaders will ensure that they are informed of any children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable or have specific safeguarding needs, and ensure that other staff/adults are made aware as necessary.

When any concerns about a child are identified on a visit/residential, these will be raised with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). When visits occur out of hours, for example, during a residential, then DSL trained members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will be contactable and their contact numbers will be provided to all staff on the residential for this purpose. If a child is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, the person who has the concern needs to make a referral to children's social care via Portsmouth's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or the police immediately. Anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the DSL, the DSL must be told that a referral has been made as soon as possible.

For residential visits, additional planning and preparation will be required with regards to the overnight visit. The leader of the residential is required to liaise with the EVC (who is also DSL trained) in order to discuss the residential before it takes place and to complete the risk assessment process. Special consideration will need to be made to the sleeping arrangements, taking into consideration privacy and child protection. At night, if a child falls ill or is unable to sleep, two members of staff/adults on the residential will care for the child when/if the child leaves their room/tent. It will not be left to one member of staff/ one adult to do so. When staff are required to enter a child's room, they will do so in pairs if there is only one child in the room/tent.

Ratios

Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council have agreed a set of minimum ratios of adults to children. These ratios take into account the age of the children and the type of activity being undertaken. A visit will not be undertaken if the ratio of children to adults exceeds these agreed ratios. Wherever possible, the school will aim to have better ratios of children to staff than the minimum required.

Day Visits and Funding

Day visits will be one of two types. These visits might be:

1. A “Core Curriculum Visit”
2. An “Enhanced Curriculum Visit”

1.“**Core Curriculum Visits**” are visits that will prove essential to all children to help them gain a better understanding about a subject. We really would be unable to provide this understanding in our school setting. These visits, including any transport**, would be funded by the school**. This will be made clear in the letter, with the following wording: *“As this visit is deemed to be essential to the curriculum, the costs associated with the visit have been met by the school. Were your child not to attend, then their normal curriculum will not be provided in school.”*

2.“**Enrichment activities**” are visits which are in addition to the curriculum. Should **parent/carers/carers** wish their child to take part in these enrichment outings, the **full cost** of the visit **must** be **paid**. For those children not taking part, the full curriculum will continue at school.
All letters about charged for “enrichment activities” should include the phrase: *“An Enhanced Curriculum Visit is one that enhances the child’s experiences but is not essential. The child’s normal curriculum will still be provided back at school. As this is an enrichment activity, full payment is needed to attend.”* A visit to a hockey tournament is an example of an enrichment activity (and one which would not be charged for).

The difference between the Core Curriculum Visits and the Enhanced Curriculum Visits depends upon how the learning from the visit is being used. As an example, a visit to the Mary Rose could be considered to be either essential or supporting. For the essential, the children would be expected to write about the touch, feel and smell of the whole experience at the Mary Rose and how the exhibits enhance the visitor’s experience. Clearly, they would be unable to do this via videos and photographs of the museum. However, if the work being completed was about why the Mary Rose sank, this could be achieved at school or at The Mary Rose itself. Experiencing the museum first hand would not be essential.

Medical Forms for Day Visits

If a day visit is one or more of these: more than an hour’s travel away, is in London or is more than 60 miles away, then a medical form will need to be completed by a parent/carer/carer of each child attending. This form will be taken on the visit. This medical form will be the same as the one used for residential visits and is the one approved by Hampshire County Council.

Residential Visits

A residential visit is an Enhanced Curriculum Visit. For residential visits, payment must be made; however, the option to make payment over the months leading up to a residential must be provided. With this in mind, parent/carers/carers must be informed well in advance of a residential trip in order for them to meet the costs. Once parent/carers/carers have been informed of the dates of residential trips, those who are interested will be asked to provide a deposit to secure a place. If a trip is over-subscribed, decisions about which children will attend will be made by drawing names out of a hat. Those children not successful will have their deposits refunded. At this point, those who are successful will be given to the online payment register for the visit at which point their deposit becomes non-refundable.

Registers are created prior to visits which list names; parent/carer contact numbers and dietary and medical needs. This is sent to the residential centre, to staff attending the residential and senior staff back at school. All staff must ensure these registers are returned to the main office for shredding on return.
For a residential visit, the residential centre are responsible for the health and safety of the children and adults who are completing the activities. These will be risk assessed by the centre and the centre's policies and procedures will have been agreed with Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council. In the letter sent to the parent/carers about the activities to be undertaken, it will be made clear that the itinerary may change. This could be down to weather, a lack of qualified instructors or other unforeseen circumstances. Where an alternative activity is undertaken, it would be impractical to contact every parent/carer at short notice, in order to seek permission. Instead, therefore, parent/carers will be made aware of the fact that alternatives might be made, with permission sought for their child to undertake both the timetabled activities as well as alternatives.

Payment for a Residential Visit
In line with the school's Charging and Remissions Policy, the school will charge for residential visits. These visits are deemed to have taken part during the school hours even where there are activities taken place in the evening but are enrichment activities, with the curriculum available at school for those who do not attend. Where a child is entitled to free school meals, the school will contribute to part of the cost of the residential via its contingency funds, upon request. This is to pay for the board and lodgings of the residential.

Risk Assessment
Serious accidents and incidents during educational visits and adventurous pursuits are rare but they do happen. At Copnor Primary School, the health and safety of all is paramount and as such thorough risk assessments are carried out for any off-site activity. A risk assessment must be carried out for each visit – residential or non-residential, with the EVOLVE website used alongside this risk assessment. EVOLVE is Hampshire County Council's approval website for visits and allows visits to be agreed by the EVC/Headteacher with support from the County Council. Hampshire County Council review the forms (on behalf of Portsmouth City Council for Portsmouth schools) and provide permission for residential visits, sleepovers and open country activities etc. to take place.

For sporting tournaments and events, held at leisure centres and other similar facilities, the risk assessment completed by the organisers will be consulted and followed by the leaders and other staff attending the event. These are NOT instead of the risk assessment completed by the school but instead should support the school's assessment.

Which version of EVOLVE will be used?
There are two versions of EVOLVE: the main EVOLVE and the Local Visits EVOLVE.

If it is an **adventurous activity, a residential** (including the Year 3 Sleepover) **or open country**, then the visit will need authorisation from the Local Authority in order to proceed (HCC). They need a 4-week notice period in order to authorise the visit/activity. Apart from the sleepover, there will need to be up-to-date medical information/consent via the medical and consent form.

If the event is on foot and does not involve transport, then it is a local visit as per the definition of the
EVOLVE website. A reduced EVOLVE form is used (The Local Visits EVOLVE). Therefore, to use
the Local Visit EVOLVE form, the visit cannot:

- be in or near water e.g. beach/river study;
- include any adventurous activities including bushcraft/forest school;
- require transport of any kind (with the exception of sports fixtures);
- take place outside of the school day (with the exception of sports fixtures)
- be led by anyone who does not work at the school/establishment.

For sports fixtures, where the visit is to an event on Portsea Island, then it is classed as a Local Area Visit
for the purpose of the EVOLVE form. Minibuses, coaches and taxis can be used.

Pre-Visit

Where possible, visits require a pre-visit by the teaching staff who will be leading the visit. If a pre-visit is not possible or practical e.g. for a visit to London, then the person who will lead the visit needs to ensure that they have investigated the visit as fully as possible. They need to contact the venue to discuss their risk assessments; use Google Maps to view the location; and refer to EVOLVE (Hampshire County Council's visits' website) for visits from other schools to the same site. They should also refer to other members of staff who have visited the location. Sports fixtures do not require a pre-visit.

Where possible all members of staff should attend a pre-visit. This is when the risk assessment is carried out. Risk assessments are carried out in accordance with Hampshire County Council guidance. They must be approved by the EVC who may assume responsibility for the Headteacher in this role. Copies of these must be given to the EVC and all adults on the trip.

Group names and contact numbers must be left with the admin staff on the day of the trip with absences noted. All medical information needs to be documented (either on a medical form, or on a permission form, dependent upon the type of visit) beforehand and taken on the trip, along with any medicines. This medical information needs to be readily accessible in case of emergency. However, to comply with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), this information should not be left unattended. A copy should be left with the school: for day visits, the medical information available in the school's records will suffice. For residentials and visits that are not local, a copy of the medical forms will be kept in the office for the duration of the visit. At the end of the visit, any medical forms/permission slips will be disposed of in line with GDPR regulations.

Where possible photographs of a site should be taken/provided and shown to the children prior to the visit. Children should be thoroughly briefed about any hazards and involved in risk assessment at their level.

Coach/ Minibus List

Where coaches or minibuses are being used, there will be a list of who is on which vehicle – which must also be left at school for the admin staff.

Minibus Travel

If the visit is by minibus, two adults must accompany the children in each minibus. The driver must be a MIDAS trained driver. (MIDAS is the nationally recognised standard for

the assessment and training of minibus drivers.) The adult passenger is required to sit at the rear of the minibus, next to the rear exit. Furthermore, this adult passenger will answer the children's questions to enable the driver to concentrate on driving. The minibus driver will aim to park the minibus as close to the sporting event/school as possible.

Where the minibus is used for the walking bus, the passenger will sit next to the sliding door. This is because it is impractical for them to move from the rear of the bus each time they need to let a passenger onto the bus.

Taxi

Any visit by taxi is permitted, provided that the taxi company is on the list of recognised providers (as deemed appropriate by PCC). A minimum of one member of the school staff must travel in each taxi. Each child must sit in the rear of the taxi and must wear a seatbelt. The taxi driver will, wherever possible, ensure that the collection and drop off place is as close to the entrance of the location as possible.

Walking

For events at local schools/ sporting areas, for example at ALNS or ROKO, it may be appropriate for the children to walk to the event. There are also occasions where the local environment is used and walking is an appropriate form of travel. In such a situation, a minimum of two adults must walk with the children. The ratio for these walks must not exceed the ratios stipulated by Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council.

When crossing a road, adults are aware that they are legally not allowed to stop traffic. Wherever possible, they will use designated crossings, such as pelican or zebra crossings. Where this is not possible, they will cross where they can clearly see traffic approaching from both sides. The children will cross the road in waves, the number of children in each wave appropriate to the amount of space available for the children to line up on the pavement. They will cross between two adults, who will have checked that it is safe to cross before the children enter the road.

Unfortunately, in Portsmouth, there will be occasions where, due to the number of parked cars, it is not possible to cross in large waves. In such cases, the children crossing in pairs may be more appropriate, although larger waves should be considered if applicable.

Behaviour

The sanctions/rewards provided to the children will mirror the practices in place at school. Poor behaviour will be dealt with in the same way as it would be in school. In the very unlikely event that poor behaviour warrants the removal of the child from the event, then support will be sought from school, with additional adults sent to the event in order to facilitate the return of the child or their parent/carers/carers/carers will be contacted and asked to collect their child from the venue.

Children with an individual behaviour plan (IBP) are able to attend a visit to a local school or sporting event, provided it has been deemed appropriate and safe for them to do so. Under these circumstances, the IBP will be followed in the same way that it would be followed when the child is at Copnor Primary School or adapted for the circumstances, in consolation with the SENDCo.

Inappropriate behaviour on an off-site activity of any sort is a hazard. As such, preventative measures to minimise the risk should be taken. During risk assessment with the children, appropriate behaviour must be discussed. The school behaviour policy must

be adapted to meet the needs of each individual trip, but should be followed as closely as possible. For positive rewards, stickers can be used instead of names on the board and/or house points awarded on return to school. For correcting poor behaviour, the teacher should keep a record of names on a clipboard or similar and remove a child from a group in accordance with school policy where possible, again in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Where possible, the group leader should not have a group of their own to work with. This enables them to move quickly, react rapidly to situations and also remove a child from another group where necessary. If this is not possible the group leader / teacher should give themselves a group of children that are responsible and well behaved so that any addition to the group in terms of inappropriately behaved children can be accommodated with ease.

Those children who have one-to-one support in class for behaviour should also have one-to-one support on visits and this adult must not be counted as one of the group adults in terms of adult – child ratio.

If a teacher has any concerns about the behaviour of a child prior to a visit taking place these must be discussed with the EVC and / or Headteacher. Whilst we will always try to be inclusive, safety must always be of paramount concern, and if we cannot minimise risks to a satisfactory level then we may in exceptional circumstances be unable to take a child. Any decisions about excluding a child from an educational visit can only be taken by the Headteacher (Deputy Headteacher when Headteacher is absent). As part of the decision process, it will be the responsibility of the visit leader (with support from the EVC) to complete the Challenging Behaviour Risk Assessment to assess the risk as part of the decision process (available on EVOLVE). This form should also be completed where a child with significant needs with regards to their behaviour is attending a residential.

Downtime

For the vast majority of the visits to other school/sporting activities, there will be no downtime. However, if there is, provided that the activities completed within downtime are similar to those the children would participate in normally (such as warmups for a match or playtime) no additional risk assessment will need to take place. The staff attending the visit will ensure that the children are adequately supervised during downtime.

For longer visits, including residentials, downtime will be limited wherever possible. Where it is a part of the day/days, the staff will ensure that the children completing downtime are adequately supervised. Areas of supervision should be assigned to each adult so that they are able to observe the areas of the site where the children are.

Sun cream

The risk of burning due to over-exposure to the sun is a regular risk, particularly in the warmer months of the year. Whilst a teacher or other member of staff will not rub in sun cream, they can, if required, spray sun cream onto a child and then ensure that they have applied it appropriately. Should a child not have sun cream and the risk of burning is high, then the child will be required to apply the school's sun cream. A reminder will be sent out, at least annually, stating that this is the school's policy and reminding parent/carers/carers/carers that it is their responsibility to inform the school of any changes to medical conditions, including allergies to any ingredients within sun cream.

Ticks

Ticks are a threat to the long-term health of children as they can carry Limes disease. Appropriate footwear and clothing will be referred to as part of the letter provided to the parents/carers about a visit. However, where children are on open country activities, a tick may latch itself to the child. It is imperative that the tick is removed as quickly as possible. For this reason, if the activity is in open country, a tick remover will be available in the first aid kit. The first aider will then use this to remove the tick. The parent/carer/carer will be informed, and they will be encouraged to seek medical advice about any further action required. Ticks will not be removed without the tick removing tool.

Staff conduct

All staff taking children on residential and non-residential trips must adhere to the same expectations of their conduct as exist in school. All trips must have a group leader who is ultimately responsible for changes to itinerary and any decisions that need to be made in the case of an emergency.

Care must be taken in terms of supervision, particularly when swimming / residential visits. If administering first aid, it is sensible to have another adult present (particularly if the removal of a child's clothes are necessary). Where possible there should be adult supervision of both genders. When carrying out night-time supervision on residential trips, two members of staff should be on duty together.

On residential trips, there must be two members of staff on duty each night in case of emergency. These members of staff need to be fully alert and able to drive should the need arise.

Adults are only permitted to be alone with children in a group or individual situation if they have been DBS cleared by the school. A DBS check from another organisation is not sufficient.

Visitors

Before arranging for a visitor, the Headteacher's permission needs to be sought. We will undertake a Google search of any visitor that is unknown to us to ensure there are no radicalisation concerns or safeguarding issues. Were any concerns raised whatsoever, the visit/visitor would not go ahead and we would seek advice from Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as to whether we should also directly report this to the police.

Visitors and Funding

A visitor attending will be one of three types. These visitors might be:

1. An "essential curriculum visitor"
2. A "supporting the curriculum visitor"
3. An "enrichment visitor."

1."An essential curriculum visitor" is a visitor who will prove essential to all children to help them gain a better understanding about a subject. We really would be unable to provide this understanding in our school setting without this visitor. These visitors would, where a cost is payable, be funded by the school. This will be made clear in the letter, with the following wording: *"As this visitor is deemed to be essential to the curriculum, the costs associated with the visitor have been met by the school. Were your child not to attend the session with the visitor, then their normal curriculum will not be provided in school."*

2. A “supporting curriculum visitor” are curriculum visitors that would require a voluntary contribution, where there is a contribution required. These are visitors where the school would be able to provide an understanding of the topic in the school setting without this visitor. For these visitors, it will be made clear in the letter that should the amount contributed fall far short of the cost of the visitor, then the visitor’s visit to the school may have to be cancelled. All letters about “supporting curriculum visitors” should, therefore, include the phrase: *‘In order to meet the costs of this curriculum visitor we ask for voluntary payments of £x. Should there be a shortfall between contributions received and costs incurred, we may have to cancel the visitor. At this point, those that have made a contribution will be refunded. We thank you for your support in this regard and hope that you are able to support the school with this voluntary contribution.’*

2. “Enrichment visitors” are visitors who are in addition to the curriculum. Should parent/carers wish their child to take part in an enrichment visitor’s visit, the full cost of the visit must be paid. For those children not taking part, the full curriculum will continue in school.
All letters about “enrichment visitors” should include the phrase: *“An enrichment activity is one that enhances the child’s experiences but is not essential. The child’s normal curriculum will still be provided in school. As this is an enrichment visit, full payment is needed to attend.”* An example of an enriched visit is Rocksteady.

Children attending a different visit to their class
In a few cases, we will consider moving a child to an alternative visit on the request of the parent/carer. For example, where leave has been authorised for that child (in exceptional circumstances) and it clashes with the visit, we may be able to accommodate the child attending another visit. However, this will depend upon staffing and transport and we cannot guarantee that the child is able to attend the visit.