



# ***Aston Clinton School***

## **Educational Visits Policy**

Date approved by Governing Board	Autumn 2023
Date to be reviewed	Autumn 2027
Committee responsible for review	Finance

## Context

We believe 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 Aston Clinton 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.
- 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.

## 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, *Aston Clinton School*:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Bucks Requirements and Guidance**' in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info), (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment)**  
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**

These are entered on EVOLVE by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) using the details in the Events Specific Plan from the Visit Leader. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.

- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**  
As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

## Roles and responsibilities

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for completing the Event Specific Plans. They should obtain outline permission for a new visit from the Head or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is Mrs Natasha Crace, who 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, and will enter the final visit plans from the Event Specific Plan on to EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head Teacher** has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. When there is a need to change a residential trip, the proposals are taken to governors for discussion and approval. They review not only the provision on offer, but the benefits to the children as well as the cost to parents. Governors receive an annual report on the trips undertaken in school so they can monitor the breadth of trips across the school and the support to the curriculum they offer. Dependent on availability, governors can go on trips with the children and staff. This enables a more detailed assessment of what the trips offer and their value to the children's learning and life experiences. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

**The Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

## 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 leaders 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.

In deciding whether a member of staff is ready to be a visit leader, the Head will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader'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.

## **Emergency procedures**

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 2 for a brief summary). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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

## **Parental Consent**

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for all activities and trips except residential trips e.g. after school fixtures, visits within the local area and further afield.

When a trip requires children to use transport to get there we seek consent to confirm that the parent is aware of the specific trip. Parents can give consent via the School Gateway or by completing a reply slip online.

Specific (i.e. one-off) parental consent must be obtained for residential visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. A parent meeting will take place to discuss the information. Parents complete paper consent forms so they can be taken on the trips with them.

## **Inclusion**

We believe all children should have the opportunity to participate in school trips and activities. We adapt activities to include all pupils or, when this is not possible, provide alternate activities or trips. We comply with the Equalities Act 2010.

## **Charging / funding for visits**

Some of our trips have a cost to them and we ask for voluntary contributions to cover these costs. Some trips are free or the school may cover some or all of the costs e.g. swimming lessons are paid for by the school; coach costs to Multi Skills festivals are covered by the Sports Premium. When a voluntary contribution is required the trip will only run if sufficient contributions have been received.

Requests for payments are made via the School Gateway and parents can choose to pay online or they can send cash / cheques in to the school office.

## **Transport**

We use coaches to transport children on our trips outside the village. The companies we use are from the Bucks CC preferred providers list. We have a risk assessment for the use of coaches. Children are required to wear seatbelts at all times. On a small number of occasions, parents take their children to an event e.g. sporting fixture.

## **Insurance**

We use the Bucks CC insurance for visits and renew it annually.

# Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

## General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent although we will inform parents by letter so they are aware when the event is taking place and we ask them to confirm they are aware electronically.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- are recorded on EVOLVE e.g. visit to the church

## Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: *e.g.*

- the Park
- the Pool and grounds at Green Park
- both Churches
- post office and post box
- Aston Clinton village
- War Memorial

## Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:**

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- A current list of staff approved to lead in this setting is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.

- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group. We do this on the side roads around the school in year 1
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles)
- Wherever possible, children will be taken on paths away from the main roads e.g. using the alleyway by the church to go to the park.

## Appendix 2 – 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 the senior management team, 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 leadership team 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 leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/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.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.