

Coulsdon C of E Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

The ethos of this school is to enable every child to learn and develop in a Christian environment. We ask all parents of whatever faith applying for a place here to recognise and support this ethos and its importance to the school.

Together, growing in mind, body and spirit

*Approved November 2025
Next Review November 2027
or sooner if required*

Couldson Church of England Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

Overview

Well planned, safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum, and provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. A variety of 'real-life' and first-hand opportunities enable our pupils to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience; they are an opportunity to extend pupils' learning and understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance or promote a lifetime interest in an area of learning.

This school recognises its duty of care and statutory responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, volunteers, providers and members of the public in connection with educational visits for which it is accountable.

This policy aims to:

- ensure that every pupil has an equal opportunity to benefit from educational visits
- ensure that all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of pupils taking part
- enable the school to identify appropriate responsibilities, training, support and monitoring for governors, staff, volunteer assistants, pupils and providers involved in educational visits
- ensure that whenever appropriate, further advice is sought from the LA and from other technically competent sources.

All visits will have clear educational objectives and will be planned sufficiently well in advance in accordance with good practice and effective planning procedures detailed in the DCC 'Policy of Safety and Guidance - Outdoor Education' 2005. We will follow the guidance set out in Health and safety on educational visits 2018.

The Governing Body

The governing body will include in its role the support of School policy and procedures for educational visits.

The Head Teacher

The Headteacher will be responsible for the approval of all visits.

The Group Leader

There will be a named and approved Group Leader, usually a teacher or known member of staff, on all educational visits. This group leader will be specifically competent for the role, with experience in organising, supervising and controlling the age group going on the visit.

Working with the Office Staff as necessary, the Group Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organisation of the visit. All plans must be agreed with the Headteacher.

The Group Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment and regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;

The Group Leader / Office Staff will ensure when purchasing goods and services that appropriate checks are made and that insurance and financial procedures have been followed.

Details of any residential visits at home or abroad or day visits involving activities of a hazardous nature will be submitted to the Governing Body for approval.

Other staff and adults involved in a visit

Staff on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Headteacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Other adults must be appropriate people to supervise children.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline.
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Parents and carers

Informed parental consent is required for all educational visits by pupils. A general consent form will be issued to parents at the beginning of the school year to be signed for local visits. These are visits in the immediate locality of the school and do not require the use of transport. If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible.

For other educational visits, parents will be required to sign a specific consent form, in letter or email form, before their child is permitted to participate. The school will provide parents and carers with information about the purpose and details of the visit, and procedures relating to safe management, enabling them to make informed decisions.

Whenever appropriate for high risk, residential and foreign visits a briefing meeting with parents/guardians will be arranged.

Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents/guardians. This information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.

Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Wherever possible, pupils should be involved with the planning, establishing codes of conduct, assessing and managing risk and evaluating their own learning, development, attitudes and behaviour.

Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- why safety precautions are in place;
- what standard of behaviour is expected;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group
- emergency procedures
- rendezvous procedures.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may not be permitted on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

During a visit, pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider, in liaison with the Head Teacher, whether a pupil's behaviour may require an early return.

Supervision

The staffing ratio will vary with each activity and the age and ability of the participants. The final ratio will be identified by the risk assessment and should be recorded. Although not statutory, a basic guide is:

- 1 adult to 6 participants for up to, and including, Year 3
- 1 adult to every 10 participants in Years 4 to 6

*These ratios do not include residential visits.

Very young children and those with special needs may need a higher staff ratio.

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special or medical needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times. For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one-to-one situation with a pupil. If the school is leading an adventure activity, the Head Teacher and Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before agreement is given that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Procedures for Planning off-site visits

Careful planning for educational visits is essential and a procedure must be followed.

Approval

Notice of an intended visit, with initial arrangements and costs, must be approved, other than exceptional circumstances, by the Head Teacher at least five weeks in advance.

Information and consent

Information letters and requests for contributions and consent must be sent to parents/carers in advance. Consent forms must be signed or approved via email, and communicated with the office before the visit.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be carried out before a visit and handed to the Head Teacher for checking prior to the visit. The venue may provide its own site risk assessment and the school's assessment will be written in conjunction with the site assessment.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- What are the risks?
- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level? Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided? What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit?
- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location;
- what modes of transport are to be used and what are the risks & safety measures associated with these, (obtaining a risk assessment from travel companies etc); the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the pupils' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

Safeguarding

The Group Leader/Office Staff should ensure that all adult supervisors are aware of Child Protection guidelines. There is a leaflet available to support this.

Exploratory visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group; ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a

party of pupils.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a risk assessment, as a minimum measure, should be obtained from the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. The group leader should also refer to the venue website to help with planning the visit.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad, where possible at least one trained first-aider will be included in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services. A suitably stocked first-aid box/bag will be available including any medicines specific to children on that visit. A person should be appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements. All staff should ensure they have a mobile phone with them at all times.

Residential visits

Consideration will be given to:

- appropriate room allocation for pupils and adults, with sufficient opportunity for supervision
- the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group;
- access by staff to student rooms must be available at all times;
- ensure the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routing, and key personnel are known by all in the party;
- appropriate security arrangements should be in place storage for of clothes, luggage, equipment etc
- provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special educational or medical needs;
- safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)
- recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.

Contact Details

On the day of the visit, relevant information must be lodged with the school office:

- relevant insurance cover
- contact details of the venue
- Names of all pupils on the visit
- Names of all adults and pupils in the travelling group, plus contact details of their next of kin.
- Notification to the school cook of arrangements for the class (this may be an early or late lunch).