

# **Educational Visits Policy**

**Date:** February 2026

**Review Date:** February 2028



**Larkspur**  
**Community Primary School**

## Context

At Larkspur Community Primary School, we believe that educational visits are a vital component of our children's learning journey. These experiences enrich our curriculum by making learning tangible and relevant, supporting our core driver of providing real-life learning opportunities.

Educational visits offer numerous benefits to pupils, including but not limited to:

- **Enhanced adaptability:** Pupils develop a greater ability to cope with change and new environments.
- **Critical curiosity and resilience:** Visits stimulate inquisitiveness and perseverance in learning.
- **Meaningful learning experiences:** Opportunities to foster creativity, build learning relationships, and develop strategic awareness.
- **Trust development:** Pupils explore and deepen their understanding of trust—trust in adults, peers, and themselves.
- **Improved academic outcomes:** Active participation in varied learning styles supports achievement across a broad curriculum.
- **Contextual learning:** Pupils engage in 'real world' learning that promotes social and emotional intelligence.
- **Risk management skills:** Pupils learn to assess and manage risks practically, encouraging them to become risk-aware rather than risk-averse.
- **Personal responsibility:** Visits nurture a stronger sense of accountability and independence.
- **Teamwork and communication:** Pupils develop genuine collaborative skills and effective communication.
- **Environmental awareness:** Pupils gain knowledge and appreciation of diverse environments.
- **Sustainability understanding:** Visits enhance awareness of sustainable practises and their importance.
- **Physical development:** Opportunities to acquire physical skills and promote a healthy, active lifestyle.

Through these experiences, our pupils become confident, well-rounded learners prepared to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

## Application of the Educational Visits Policy

At Larkspur Primary School, any visit leaving the school grounds is governed by this policy, whether it is part of the curriculum, during school hours, or outside the normal school day.

To ensure the highest standards of safety and educational value, the school:

1. **Adopts the Local Authority's Guidance:** We follow the Local Authority's document, *Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE*. All staff have access to this via the EVOLVE system.
2. **Follows National Guidance:** We adhere to the *Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel National Guidance* ([www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info)), as recommended by the Local Authority.
3. **Utilises EVOLVE:** This web-based system supports planning, notification, approval, monitoring, and communication for all off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and conduct visits in strict accordance with this policy, Local Authority directives, and national guidelines. Staff must be familiar with their roles and responsibilities as outlined in these frameworks to ensure safe, effective, and enriching educational visits.

## Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the 'Extended learning locality' (See Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visit that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Visit Leaders**

- Are responsible for the comprehensive planning and organisation of their educational visits.
- Must obtain outline permission from the Head Teacher or Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) before commencing detailed planning or making any commitments.
- Ensure that all visits comply with relevant school policies, Local Authority guidance, and national standards.
- Are responsible for entering visit details accurately onto the EVOLVE system.

### **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – Miss Chloe Conway**

- Provides support and challenge to staff regarding educational visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities.
- Acts as the primary point of contact for advice on all visit-related matters.
- Reviews and approves final visit plans on EVOLVE before submission to the Head Teacher.
- Manages staff accounts on EVOLVE and maintains generic school documentation related to visits.

### **Head Teacher**

- Holds overall responsibility for authorising all educational visits.
- Submits applications for overseas, residential, or adventurous activity visits to the Local Authority via EVOLVE for final approval.

### **Governing Body**

- Serves as a 'critical friend' to the school, providing strategic oversight and challenge regarding educational visits.
- Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to the EVOLVE system to monitor visit planning and compliance.

### **Local Authority**

- Has the final approval authority for all overseas, residential, and adventurous activity visits through the EVOLVE system.
- Provides guidance and oversight to ensure visits meet safety and educational standards.

### **Staff Competence**

At Larkspur Community Primary School, we recognise that the competence of staff is the most critical factor in ensuring the safe and effective management of educational visits. To support and develop staff competence, we implement the following strategies:

- **Apprenticeship System:** Staff new to leading visits work alongside experienced visit leaders, gaining practical experience and confidence before assuming full leadership responsibilities.

- **Senior Staff Supervision:** On certain visits, senior staff provide oversight and support to less experienced colleagues, ensuring best practice and safety standards are maintained.
- **Training Opportunities:** We encourage and facilitate staff attendance at relevant training courses tailored to their roles in educational visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC).

When determining whether a member of staff is competent to lead a visit, the Head Teacher considers:

- The staff member's relevant experience in leading visits and managing groups.
- Previous training related to educational visits, risk management, and emergency procedures.
- The individual's ability to make dynamic risk management decisions and respond effectively in emergencies.
- Familiarity with the pupils involved, the visit venue, and the planned activities.

This thorough approach ensures that all visit leaders are well-prepared, confident, and capable of providing safe, enriching experiences for our pupils.

## Approval Process for Educational Visits

Larkspur Community Primary School follows a clear, tiered approval process for all educational visits, ensuring thorough risk assessment and compliance with Local Authority and national guidance.

### 1. Local Visits and Walks

- These are risk-assessed with the same rigour as day trips.
- Staff complete an *Educational Site Risk Assessment (ESRA)* form and attach it to the EVOLVE risk assessment.
- The completed documentation is submitted to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) for review and approval.

### 2. Day Visits within the UK (Non-Adventurous Activities)

- All such visits must be entered on the EVOLVE system.
- Visit plans and risk assessments should be submitted to the EVC for checking at least **two weeks** prior to the visit date.
- Following EVC approval, the visit is forwarded to the Head Teacher for final authorisation.

### 3. Overseas, Residential, and/or Adventurous Activity Visits

- Definitions of 'adventurous activities' follow Local Authority guidance.
- These visits require submission by the Head Teacher to the Local Authority via EVOLVE for formal approval.
- No commitments or bookings should be made until full Local Authority approval is granted.

This structured approval framework ensures that all visits are planned with safety, educational value, and compliance at the forefront.

## Emergency Procedures

At Larkspur Community Primary School, we recognise that a critical incident during an educational visit is any event that exceeds the normal coping capacity and experience of the visit leadership team. To ensure effective management of such incidents, the school has established the following protocols:

- **Emergency Plan:**
  - A comprehensive emergency plan is in place specifically for educational visits (see Appendix 2 for full details).
  - All staff involved in visits are familiar with this plan and understand their roles and responsibilities in an emergency.
- **Regular Testing and Updates:**
  - The emergency plan is tested annually to ensure readiness.
  - It is also reviewed and updated following any major staffing changes to maintain effectiveness.
- **Escalation and External Support:**
  - In the event that an incident overwhelms the school's emergency response capacity, involves serious injury or fatality, or is likely to attract media attention, the school will immediately seek assistance from the Local Authority.
  - This ensures that expert support and resources are mobilised promptly to manage the situation effectively and safeguard pupils and staff.

Through these procedures, Larkspur Primary ensures a swift, coordinated, and professional response to emergencies during educational visits, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all participants.

## Educational Visits Checklist

- Larkspur Primary School uses an Educational Visits Checklist as part of its risk management process.
- This checklist is adapted from the Local Authority's generic checklist.
- A visit should only proceed if all relevant checklist questions are answered 'YES'.
- The checklist is available for download from EVOLVE Resources.

## Parental Consent for Educational Visits

- The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities within the 'Extended Learning Locality' (see Appendix 1).
- Parents provide annual paper consent allowing children to participate in local walks and use public transport.
- For all other visits (e.g., day trips beyond the locality, residential visits), specific, one-off parental consent must be obtained.
- Parents must receive sufficient information (via Arbor, letters, meetings, etc.) to give fully informed consent.
- Specific consent is collected via signed paper forms.

## Inclusion in Educational Visits

At Larkspur Community Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils can participate safely and meaningfully in educational visits. Our inclusion approach includes:

- **Risk Assessment and Adult Ratios:**  
Each visit is individually risk-assessed, considering adult-to-pupil ratios and any additional support needs.

- **Reasonable Adjustments:**  
We make every reasonable effort to include all pupils, adapting activities as necessary to ensure safety and accessibility.
- **Parental Involvement:**  
For pupils with a documented history of disruptive behaviour, we may request that a parent or carer accompanies the visit to support safety for all.
- **Exclusion in Exceptional Circumstances:**  
In rare cases, where there is substantial evidence of persistent disobedience that poses a risk to others, a pupil may be excluded from a visit for safety reasons.
- **Accessibility:**  
For pupils with mobility difficulties or wheelchair users, alternative activities will be planned to ensure inclusion. These adaptations will be personalised for the pupil without altering the experience for the whole class.

## **Charging / funding for visits**

Parents and carers will be asked for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of a coach, venue or other costs of any educational visit.

## **Transport**

Day trips from school will utilise either public transport or coaches. Coaches will always be hired from companies with whom we have prior positive experience and confidence in their service and provision. Occasionally, parents may be asked to transport their own children, for example, when small groups attend sports venues. In such cases, the school will be informed in advance of any car-sharing arrangements made by parents. If mini cabs are used at any time, we aim to have two members of staff present, and parental permission will be sought prior to the visit.

When using public transport, staff will endeavour to keep all children together, preferably on the lower deck of a bus or within the same train carriage. The trip leader is responsible for ensuring that all children are accounted for before the transport departs and again before it continues its journey.

When staff use their own cars to transport pupils, the school strictly follows Local Authority guidelines governing the use of staff cars for pupil transport.

## **Insurance**

At Larkspur we are covered by the local authority blanket insurance for visits and trips.

## **Swimming Lessons**

Two members of staff accompany the class going swimming. The children are transported by coach and changing rooms are supervised by the two staff. The leisure Centre has group changing rooms for boys and girls.

## **Dismissal of pupils after evening activities**

The trip leader will stay with pupils until all children are collected by parents/ carers, unless written permission is given by the parent for the child to walk home on their own (Y5 and Y6 only). A senior member of staff will also be present to support the trip leader. If visits are returning later than expected the school office will contact families via text to keep them informed of the situation.

## **Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Locality**

### **Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality**

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

- 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).
- Use of the nature park

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves site. Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Extended learning locality' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults. There are no legal ratio requirements but we follow Gateshead Authority's guidelines of that EYFS should be 1:4 or 1:3, Y1-Y3 1:6 and Y4-Y6 1:10-15. The risk assessment process enables the staff member completing it to assess the needs of the individual class or group and allocate adults accordingly.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and know appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils know standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality 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 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)

## **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 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry either:
  - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
  - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders