

DARRICK WOOD SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Reviewed:	November 2023
Agreed:	November 2023
Next Review Due:	November 2025
Person Responsible:	Mr J Eynon

1. MISSION STATEMENT

Darrick Wood School recognises that the participation of children and young people in a wide range of visits, journeys and educational experiences is important in promoting learning and development. As part of their responsibilities, the Governors and Senior Leadership Teams will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of participants while travelling to, and engaged in, activities away from the School, whether provided by a contracted provider or the School itself.

The School's Educational Visits Policy is to ensure that the safety of students, employees and others is managed, to minimise risk as far as practicable and in developing its procedures, is guided by National Guidance issued by the DfE, local guidance from Bromley Borough Council and EVOLVE (evolve.edufocus.co.uk).

The School has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. We view school visits and journeys as a very important part of the rich provision of education both supplementing the academic programme and broadening the out of school activity provision. As far as possible the number of trips, both for students and staff, should be such that it affects their other work as little as possible, although trips and visits might be seen to enrich the curriculum such that it is sometimes (albeit rarely) justified.

Each year the School will arrange a number of activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours. These support the aims of the School to give opportunities to children to extend their learning beyond the classroom.

2. GOALS

Customer Goal: To be a school where participation in a wide range of visits, journeys and educational experiences is a part of promoting learning and development.

Curriculum Goal: To provide a curriculum that includes, and recognises, the invaluable contribution that visits, journeys and educational experiences outside the classroom can make to learning and development.

Community Goal: To encourage all students and staff to partake positively in educational visits, journeys and experiences, and understand that the community offers a wealth of learning experiences.

Quality Goal: To monitor all aspects of school life to ensure that educational visits, trips and journeys are used wherever suitable to enhance the learning experiences for all.

3. BACKGROUND

Educational visits at Darrick Wood School play a hugely significant role in the education and development of our students. They can contribute significantly to the development of cross curricular skills and to personal and social education through the use of problem-solving methods and approaches and through encouraging responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance. This policy is designed to help teachers, Governors and other interested parties to ensure that students stay safe and healthy whilst on school visits.

This guidance is specific to all situations where staff (or volunteers) acting in the course of their employment take responsibility for children and young people taking part in activities off School premises. This includes outdoor learning, off site visits, residential and overseas events.

Bromley Borough Council's Guidance and OEAP National Guidance is not pertinent to situations where the School arranges work experience placements or Physical Education events (excepting aspects of managing the journey either side of a sporting activity) where activity supervision should be that recommended by specialist PE Guidance such as that provided by the Association for Physical Education (AfPE).

4. APPROVAL PROCEDURE AND CONSENT

The Governing Body has approved the following types of activities:

- Out of hours clubs (both co-curricular and extra-curricular) and school sporting fixtures.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) has authority to approve the following:

- Regular nearby visits (village halls, libraries, shops, woodlands, places of worship, farms, schools, cinemas, theatres etc.) and day visits for particular year groups.

The EVC and Trips and Visits Governors Panel will approve the following activities prior to final sign-off by the Governing Body:

- Residential and overseas visits.

The Head Teacher has nominated a teacher as the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Head Teacher and the EVC. It has also nominated at least two Governors as signatories for overseas and residential trips, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body, although final approval for residential and overseas trips will always be by the Governing Body. Nominated Governors will undergo external EVC training by an accredited provider.

Before a day or an overnight visit is advertised to parents, the EVC must approve the initial plan. The EVC will also approve the completed plan and risk assessments for the visit at a later date.

For out-of-hours clubs, school teams and fixtures, parents will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their child enters the School. Parents will be given the timetable for the activities that students are involved in (as published on the school website) and will be informed if an activity has to be cancelled.

For all day trip visits, parents will be asked to complete and sign an approved trips and visits letter, alongside a behavioural agreement and medical consent form, which consents to their

child taking part in any School approved day trip during their time at the School. The School has model letters and forms, which can be used for this purpose.

For all overnight and overseas visits, parents will be asked to complete and sign a behavioural agreement and medical consent form, which consents to their child taking part. This might be for each visit, termly or annually. The School has model letters and forms, which can be used for this purpose.

As part of the parents' consent, they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit.

It is good practice to invite parents of students going on a visit, accompanied by the students themselves where appropriate, to a briefing meeting at the School, in order for arrangements to be explained and questions answered. This applies to many longer visits and especially to residential and overseas visits.

For trips that do not offer a briefing meeting (which includes all Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) trips, where self-reliance is an important aspect of the training) a fully informative letter will be given out with a clear indication for parents who have queries to contact individual staff at School.

Together, information provided to parents in the initial letter and at the parents event will be comprehensive in informing the parents of any expected risks associated with the trip, including the level of parental checks made on homestay arrangements abroad. These arrangements have been agreed by the Bromley Council EVC. Initial letters and parents evening presentations will be held on Microsoft Teams if appropriate and required.

Parental consent

Parental consent must be sought for all off-site visits. If parents withhold consent absolutely the student should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the student in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent the Head Teacher and EVC will need to consider whether the student may be taken on the visit or not. The School will request blanket written permission from parents for their child to participate in all outings and workshops with visiting groups for the duration of their tenure at the School. Parents are referred to the terms of the DWS Admission Form, Privacy Notice for Parents and Privacy Notice for Pupils. All personal data of students and parents supplied for the purposes of educational visits will be processed fairly and held securely in accordance with GDPR principles and data protection legislation as amended from time to time.

5. CHARGES AND REMISSIONS

The School's policy for charging and remissions will apply to all educational visits.

For trips that are solely within the school day, we cannot legally impose the cost of the trip on parents. We will tell parents the cost, and ask them to pay it, stating that the trip can only go ahead if enough contributions are made. If parents genuinely cannot pay for the whole cost of the trip, they will be invited to write to the Head Teacher in confidence, and he will see what help the School may be able to offer.

For any further guidance on this issue the EVC should be consulted.

All money is banked with the School, and bills are paid by the Finance Office.

6. TOUR COMPANIES

It is recommended that staff use Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge providers, as they have been inspected for the standard of their provision (safety, equipment / infrastructure) and quality of delivery appropriate to the needs of the group. If they do not have this badge, they must complete our Provider Form. This fulfils our responsibility to have confirmed minimum standards and we keep the form as a record. Staff are made aware of the approved licensed providers on our trip planning system software "Evolve", which is used by over 100 other local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit, the contract will be made with the School on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made through the School's accounts. DWS might arrange special support agreements with partners such as World Challenge and, as a result, the contract is made with the parent. However, the School is ready to intervene on behalf of that parent if the School deems there is an issue that needs resolving.

7. INSURANCE

The School's insurance policy provides group cover for all members of parties involved in non-hazardous trips. Details can be obtained from the Finance Manager.

Hazardous activities require separate insurance and this must be discussed with the Finance Manager. If a licensed provider is being used details of their insurance arrangements must be obtained and a copy of the policy schedule given to parents.

8. STAFFING

The School recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a School visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing students' learning in a variety of environments through training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. The School will ensure that DBS screening is available, where required, for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits.

The School does not support people who are not members of the School or part of the agreed staff complement accompanying educational visits unless specific permission has been obtained from the Head Teacher. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Head Teacher is not satisfied that there is an educational or other benefit for the students.

The appointed Group Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

The School may vary the supervision ratios marginally depending on the nature of the trip, the experience of the staff and the age of the students involved. Recommended ratios for trips are clearly stated on the initial trip planning forms. The School undertakes to make trips as accessible as possible to SEND students and will, if possible, adjust staffing ratios as appropriate.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

A full Risk Assessment is required for all visits. All Risk Assessments must be visit-specific and must cover the full itinerary. They should also be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits / expeditions that occur regularly. The most up to date risk assessment template must be obtained from the EVC by the trip leader and completed, and approved on Evolve, before the visit takes place.

There must be on-going risk assessment by group leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require. On expeditions and visits involving any hazardous activity, Group Leaders and staff should always be prepared to make a dynamic risk assessment on site. Students must not be made to undertake or to continue with an activity if they are expressing serious concerns about their health, well-being and overall safety.

Any student who is deemed to be a risk to the safety of other students should not be allowed on a visit. Generic risk assessments are available from the EVC and on the School IT systems and may be helpful (though they must be adapted to the specific visit).

It is important that students going on a visit are properly briefed before departure and given clear instructions as the visit progresses.

10. THE EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The School has a clear code of conduct for School visits based on the School's Behaviour Policy. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and include the potential of withdrawal of a student prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term suspension from School. The School should state by covering letter the implication for parents (associated costs, collection of a child or children) as part of the signed agreement from parents.

11. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The School will appoint two members of the Senior Team as the emergency contacts for each overnight and out-of-hours visit. If the visit is in school hours, then the School Office should be contacted. All major incidents should immediately be related to the above, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Group Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contacts, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Group Leader will take a copy of the School's Serious Incident Action Card with them. All Senior Team contact numbers are listed on this form.

The School will have emergency funding available to support the Group Leader in an emergency.

12. INCIDENT REPORTING

All incidents and accidents including "near misses" occurring on a visit will be reported, post management of issue, on the Medical Incident Form. It is a requirement that any accident or "near miss" on a visit should be reported immediately on return to the EVC, when the medical incident form is also handed over to the EVC. Incidents involving particular children will be stored on our IT information systems until they reach 25 years of age (as per GDPR).

More serious incidents will, on judgement of the EVC, be passed to the Head Teacher and Governing Body.

Any area of Health and Safety concern must be reported to the EVC immediately on return.

13. EVALUATION

All visits will be evaluated by the Group Leader on Evolve. The exception will be local visits where the evaluation may be written or verbal to the EVC.

The Group Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the School's procedures.

14. EXTENDED LEARNING AREA DEFINITION

Visits/activities within the 'Extended 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:

- must be recorded on EVOLVE via the 'Local Visit' module
- do not require parental consent (except in agreed situations with the EVC where we would like parents to be informed in advance, via a returned permission slip sent home)
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).

Boundaries

The boundaries of the Extended Learning Area are shown on the attached map, below. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- Darrick Wood Swimming Pool
- Darrick Woods
- Tugmutton Common

Specific 'no-go' areas within the Boundaries e.g.

- Darrick Wood Swimming Pool when used by members of the public
- The public conveniences in Tugmutton Common
- The roads surrounding Tugmutton Common, with the exception of crossing Lovibonds Avenue to access Tugmutton Common when traffic levels are low (generally, although not always, between 9.15am and 14:30pm)

Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Area

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

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

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, Deputy or EVC must give written (email or letter) approval before a group leaves

- 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 Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the Educational Visits Policy
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults, unless numbers are suitably low. Decisions will be based on the area and the age / maturity of the pupils
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no-go' areas, and have practiced appropriate group management techniques
- Pupils have been trained and have practised 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. In most circumstances, the student is required to return to the Main Reception at Darrick Wood School immediately
- 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 either record the activity on EVOLVE (Extended Learning Area module)
- A mobile phone 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).

IMPORTANT

- When crossing Lovibonds Avenue, only crossing directly opposite the entrance to Tugmutton Common is permitted
- Where indirect supervision takes place at any location specified on the map, the meeting point will be specified for each trip or visit. There must always be a member of staff there.
- Students must not visit the local shops or enter any other properties, other than the Darrick Wood Swimming Pool and Darrick Wood School site.

Map of the Darrick Wood School Extended Learning Area



15. RELATED POLICIES

Admissions Policy
Behaviour Policy
Curriculum Policy
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Prevention of Bullying Policy
Staff Discipline Procedure
Staff Grievance Procedure
Special Educational Needs Policy