



Charles Darwin School

School Trips Policy

Persons Responsible:

Governors: Full Governing Body

SLT: Mrs R Kearney

Written by: Mrs R Kearney

Formally approved on: 14 October 2022

1. 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 Charles Darwin 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.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- 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, ensuring that pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and that 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.

2. 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, Charles Darwin School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, and monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

3. Types of visit and 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.**
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. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but require additional checks prior to approval.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Rebecca Kearney 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 check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head, Aston Smith/Deputy Head, Mick Boyden. EVC in collaboration with administration support from Tina Franco sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head/Deputy Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to Governors for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governor approval is required for all adventurous, residential and overseas visits.

5. 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:

- CPD opportunities facilitated by the EVC for those who run and who want to run visits to explore both necessary documentation, including any key changes, and what if scenarios parallel to risk assessing.
- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Direct or remote supervision by senior staff if appropriate on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend additional training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the EVC and Head/Deputy Head Teacher 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.

6. Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). 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.

7. Educational Visits Checklist

Charles Darwin School's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

8. Booking an educational visit outside school

8.1. Before the Visit:

Fill in the school's preliminary VJ1 in advance of the trip and submit to the Deputy Head for approval. It is important that all costs and number of teaching hours that need to be covered are accurately entered on the form.

8.2. If the trip is approved-:

- Complete the Checklist Educational Visits Checklist.
- Book Visit, ensuring that if the activity/venue does not hold a lotc badge a provide form is completed.
- Book Transport.
- Send letter home
- Approve applications and request random selection if required.
- Notify those successful and place those remaining on a waiting list, informing parents.
- Complete the Evolve application and upload all relevant documents including: **correspondence with parents, Risk Assessment, Emergency Plan, Register and known Medical and SEND details with mitigation** (note that this may need updating and a copy will be needed to be given to Student Services for the register), **any event specific notes or forms for example, volunteer driver form, swimming form, behaviour contract** etc.

- Submit online Visits Form to EVC at least a week in advance, unless a longer time scale has been requested, and await final approval from Head Teacher.
- Attend Health & Safety Meeting with EVC if required. A meeting will be required for all residential/overseas trips and may be requested for others.

9. On the day of the visit (or as close to the day of departure if the trip is out of school hours)

9.1. Trip Leader should:

- Ensure that they have all emergency and contact numbers to hand.
- Collect first aid kit(s) from the School office.
- Collect any medication being held in the School office.
- Collect School mobile from the Finance Office and advise number being given out (provide this to parents beforehand if necessary).
- Register students and advise Student Services of those not attending the trip.

10. Parental Consent

10.1. Parental consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time

10.2. Parental consent is not required for activities within a maximum walking distance of 30 minutes from the school site. This might include locations such as:

- Downe Scout Camp
- Biggin Hill Memorial Museum
- Biggin Hill Airfield and Business complex
- Biggin Hill Memorial Library and Swimming Pool
- St Mark's Church
- Biggin Hill Waitrose
- Primary Schools; Biggin Hill, Oaklands, Cudham
- Cherry Lodge Golf Club
- The Old Jail (6th form leavers only)

10.3. The school obtains a blanket consent at the start of each year for activities held within the school area; local school trips and certain other routine activities, e.g, fixtures held offsite or after school, etc. Parents will be informed in advance of any such trip via phone call, text parent or email as a matter of courtesy but when an opportunity presents itself suddenly this may not always be possible.

10.4. Learning area visits do not always require the completion of an Evolve form by the Visit Leader but must be approved by the EVC/Deputy/Head prior to departure. The names of those students on the trip must always be provided to Student Services.

10.5. Sports fixtures remain the responsibility of the PE department using a generic risk assessment and emergency plan, dynamically assessed for the duration of the trip. If the fixture takes place off site during school hours, the names of those students not on site must be given to Student Services. If out of hours the names of those students involved must be held by the PE dept.

- 10.6. Parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks, eg weather conditions, risks associated with specific activities, remote supervision arrangements, catering etc, of the visit and how these will be managed, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis. Parents can provide consent through a traditional paper consent form or electronic consent system on ParentPay.

11. Inclusion

- 11.1. Equality legislation sets out a clear expectation that disabled children and young people should be given the same opportunities to participate as their peers. All children are equal. The school is responsible for providing a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum for all pupils.
- 11.2. Students with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) can benefit enormously from participating in day trips and residential trips alongside their peers. However, it is necessary to plan carefully before the visit to ensure that access is good for all pupils and the experience gives the student with SEND the greatest chance of success and equality. Under the Equality Act the school must make reasonable adjustments to ensure disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage to their peers.
- 11.3. The school will make arrangements for the inclusion of students with a medical condition with any adjustments as required, unless evidence from a clinician such as a GP states that this is not possible.
- 11.4. Risk Assessments must clearly identify those students who have SEND/known medical conditions and provide evidence of mitigation to ensure that any risks to the student, their peers, staff or others involved in the visit are limited. All reasonable adjustments must be made. Staff accept that dynamic risk assessment may be necessary.

12. Charging / funding for visits

- 12.1. No child will be excluded from an activity because parents are unwilling or unable to pay. However if insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.
- 12.2. Where possible and appropriate parents will be invited to pay in instalments, with clear dates of when instalments should be paid.
- 12.3. Payments should be made via ParentPay.

13. Allocating places on school trips

- 13.1. The school will outline criteria for acceptance onto a trip in any initial consultation with parents. This criteria may, for example, outline; attendance thresholds and/or effort banding. It may take into account behaviour points or academic success etc.
- 13.2. It is likely that many trips will be offered to specific groups of children. For example a Drama theatre visit may only be offered to Year 10 and 11 Drama students. Where skill acquisition is considered important a percentage of places may be offered to those students who have previously attended a similar trip in the past.

- 13.3. Parents must be aware that should a students' behaviour pose a risk to the success/safety of the trip they may be denied a place. For some residential and/or overseas or adventurous trips a behaviour agreement may need to be signed.
- 13.4. Parents should be aware that the school expects students to behave in a way which does not jeopardise the wellbeing of themselves, their peers, staff or the general public or, in any way, bring the reputation of the school into question. Where this is an issue during a visit parents will be contacted and may be asked to collect their child.
- 13.5. Once letters have been received, parents may then indicate a commitment via Parent Pay for their child to attend.
- 13.6. Where there is more commitment than places a random selector tool will be used by a member of the administration team to identify those students eligible for the trip, ensuring, where multiple year groups have the option to attend, that there is parity in opportunity.
- 13.7. Parents will then be invited to make a voluntary contribution for the visit on ParentPay. Those students unsuccessful in gaining a place will automatically, unless directed otherwise by parents, be allocated a place (in order of selection) on a waiting list and contacted accordingly should a place become available.
- 13.8. Children in care and care experienced are among the most vulnerable children in society. All Looked After Children will receive priority allocation of places on trips as appropriate.

14. Staffing Ratios

- 14.1. A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Head teacher and EVC as to the appropriate ratio for each visit. This will be determined by:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group (SEN)
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of the venue
- Weather conditions at the time of year
- Nature of transport involved.

However, when planning a trip, the following guideline may be useful to consider:

- Day trip – 1 adult to 15/20 students, 1 adult to 20/30 sixth form students
- Residential trip – 1 adult to 10 students
- Overseas trip – 1 adult to 10 students
- High risk trip – 1 adult to 8 students

- 14.2. National guidance does not have a 'set criteria' on staffing ratios. This is the responsibility of the school to set in place and the main priority is that the Trip Leader is competent to lead the trip.

15. Transport

- 15.1. All travel arrangements should be included in any correspondence with parents and on the risk assessment.
- 15.2. School minibuses may be used to transport students. In these cases a minibus risk assessment must always be completed in conjunction with the overall risk assessment.
- 15.3. All minibus drivers are tested by the LA and attend regular medical check-ups to ensure ability to drive. Minibus checks must be completed by the driver in advance of leaving the school/venue site.
- 15.4. Our minibus insurance is through Towergate with QBE insurance. All drivers even if using their own cars are insured.
- 15.5. Minibuses are leased from Marshalls with RAC breakdown cover and 17 week safety inspection of the buses.

16. Use of staff cars to transport pupils

- 16.1. Where it is necessary to use staff or volunteer drivers and cars to transport students, those driving must complete a volunteer driver form. Parents must be informed where this is the case and give written consent.

17. Supervision

- 17.1. Students must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision).
- 17.2. The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:
 - Prior experience of students.
 - Age of students.
 - Responsibility of students.
 - Competence/experience of staff.
 - Environment/venue

18. First Aid

- 18.1. For all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment (e.g. urban, remote, water etc). For all visits, via the process of the Evolve system based on the nature of the particular visit, including location, activities and participants, there will be a professional judgement made by the EVC (or visit leader) as to the level of first aid skill required by accompanying staff.
- 18.2. Based on the nature of the particular visit, the EVC (or visit leader) should make a professional judgement regarding the level of first aid required.
- 18.3. All students with known medical conditions will be noted on the visit risk assessment.
- 18.4. First Aid packs including additional inhalers and epipens must be collected from Susan Booth (Lead First Aider) prior to the trip.

- 18.5. All consent forms remind parents of the requirement to note any medical conditions and to ensure that any necessary medication is with the student on the day of the trip as appropriate.
- 18.6. Where medication is needed to be administered on residential trips written details of requirements must be with staff alongside medication prior to departure. In some cases this may require additional conversation.
- 18.7. Where medication is needed to be administered on residential trips written details of requirements must be with staff alongside medication prior to departure. In some cases this may require additional conversation.
- 18.8. Where first aid has been administered parents must be notified by the visit leader at the time/on return from the visit.
- 18.9. In the case of any accidents or injuries, once first aid has been administered, the visit leader must notify parents and the EVC, completing an accident form as appropriate.

19. Terror Threat

- 19.1. Where visits involve London, other large or Capital cities or overseas trips, students must be advised of the Run, Hide Tell guidance. Student mobile phone numbers will be noted down for the duration of the visit by trip leaders and students will also have access to a range of emergency school phone numbers including that of a school mobile held for the duration of the trip by the visit leader.

20. Covid -19

- 20.1. Government and international guidance will be adhered to. This is a changing landscape and the school will keep abreast of developments.
- 20.2. At the time of writing, particularly where visits are residential, students and staff may be advised to take an lfd test prior to departure as a precaution in order to keep the group as safe as possible.
- 20.3. Where proof of vaccination/additional Covid -19 testing is necessary parents will be advised and it is parental responsibility to ensure that all documentation meets requirements, is up-to-date and with staff as advised.
- 20.4. In the case of a student becoming unwell with Covid-19 symptoms on a residential trip, local advice will be followed and it is possible that parents will need to make arrangements to collect their child from the location.

21. Adventurous Activities

- 21.1. There are many types of adventurous activity including but not exclusively the two below:
 - **Swimming and Safety at Water Margins**
All visit leaders taking a trip involving swimming or proximity to water should be familiar with the following documents, ensuring that their risk assessment is accountable:

OEAP National Guidance:
- Natural Water Bathing

- Swimming Pools
- Group Safety at Water Margins

For any activities involving swimming, parents must complete a separate swimming assessment and consent form.

- **Trampolining**

Visit leaders should be familiar with the following document and ensure that a qualified member of teaching staff present:

OEAP National Guidance, 7d Trampoline Parks

22. Insurance

- 22.1. Charles Darwin School pays into the Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), an alternative to commercial insurance for academy trusts.
- 22.2. Under RPA, the UK government covers the losses instead of commercial insurance.
- 22.3. In some instances such as the annual ski trip for example, additional insurance is part of the contract with the specific educational visit company.

1. 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 parents should be made aware of the activity in advance
 - do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below)
 - should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular
 - do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

2. Boundaries

- Charles Darwin School Learning Area:

A maximum walking distance of 30 minutes from the school site. This might include locations such as:

- Downe Scout Camp
- Biggin Hill Memorial Museum
- Biggin Hill Airfield and Business complex
- Biggin Hill Memorial Library and Swimming Pool
- St Mark's Church
- Biggin Hill Waitrose
- Primary Schools; Biggin Hill, Oaklands, Cudham
- Cherry Lodge Golf Club
- The Old Jail (6th form leavers only)

3. 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:
 - The Head, Deputy or EVC must give verbal 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 '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 will be guided across roads by staff as 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 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.
- A first aid kit including inhalers/epipens as appropriate to the group will be taken by the Visit Leader
- Staff will deposit in Student Services a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school/personal mobile is taken with each group and Student Services will have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

1. Emergency Procedure

- The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:
 - There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
 - An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (*available via www.oeap.info*)
 - This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.