



## Educational Visits Policy

Date Published	January 2021
Version	1
Approved Date	January 2024
Review Cycle	Biennial
Review Date	January 2026

An academy within:



“Learning together; to be the best we can be”



## 1. Statement

Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) and offsite visits are a valued and integral part of the curriculum offered at Hilltop School. These visits could include; major outings such as residential trips, trips to the seaside or to a farm; minor outings such as walks to the local shops, visits to the local swimming pool; and routine experiences built into lessons such as road safety practice, college links, transition links, visits to other schools; in addition, it also incorporates vocational links such as working shadowing or formal blocks of work experience.

## 2. Aims And Objectives Of LOtC:

- To develop LOtC as an entitlement for all children and young people.
- To offer first hand experiences and add relevancy to learning.
- To further develop and practice skills acquired within school.
- To develop communication and social skills.
- Raise achievement by boosting self-esteem, confidence and motivation.
- Promote health and fitness.
- Develop awareness of their local environment, its facilities and their location.
- Raising expectations in pupil behaviour.
- To give breadth, balance and enhancement to the curriculum through an enjoyable and memorable group experience.
- To encourage partnerships between our school and other schools, local providers and other organisations.

Staff wishing to plan LOtC should follow the guidelines below and the activity should be linked to planning and the curriculum. Different out of school experiences warrant different levels of planning; however, staff should ensure that there is sufficient time to plan the visit thoroughly and there should be at least 2 weeks notice given, with best practice being notification to families a half term prior to the visit.

## 3. Procedures

### 3.1 EVOLVE

Hilltop School commissions the Local Authority educational visits risk assessment and approval service via its web-based system EVOLVE.



EVOLVE is a web-based system that is used for the notification and approval of educational visits. The Local Authority is responsible for approving visits that fall into the following categories:

- Residential visits
- Adventure visits
- International visits

The Educational Visits Co-coordinator and/or Head teacher are responsible for approving all other 'local visits'.

EVOLVE is to be completed for any Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC) visit. All Teaching Staff and Higher Level Teaching Assistants have access to the EVOLVE system. EVOLVE informs the Educational Visits Co-ordinator who informs the Headteacher of the details of the visit which then requires the Headteacher to give approval, prior to the visit taking place.

Authorisation for this can be delegated to others from the Headteacher; and currently this is delegated to the Office Manager. EVOLVE forms should be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the visit. For re-occurring visits, one EVOLVE form can be submitted as multiple dates can be selected. For most of our visits in the local area we do not complete an EVOLVE form. The local area is described as; walk to the local shops, letter box drops, walk to the local park, walk to the post box or walk around the school grounds or surrounding area. Specific risk assessments should always be completed.

### 3.2 Educational Visits Planning

All LOtC visits should complement the school curriculum and lesson planning. Parent and carer consent needs to be sought for all visits. The way in which this is sought may differ according to the visit. Local Area visits, described above, is sought in annual permissions; Curriculum Links such as visits to college, routine PE offsite can be sought at the beginning of the school year or term, which is more applicable to the 14-19 curriculum; and finally, by each individual visit.

### 3.3 Charging for visits

The school does fund the majority of 'curriculum' visits, and no contributions from families are sought. However, some activity costs cannot always be met the school and contributions from families are needed. The HR and Finance Officer needs to be made aware of any visit costs and requested contributions. All contributions should be sent to the School Office and recorded. If venue or transport costs occur it is



necessary to liaise with the HR and Finance Officer so that correct financial procedures can be adhered to.

### 3.4 Transport Arrangements

The school does not have access to its own vehicles and either hires in vehicles to assist, uses public transport or uses staff cars to access LOtC.

Car seats and booster seats are available for use and should be used where appropriate. Some younger children require specific seating, and if children and young people are transported to school by Corporate Transport the seats that they use for this can be borrowed for LOtC visits, however, permission must be sought by the Corporate Transport Unit prior to the visit. It is important that vehicles used are suitable for the seats used. If any equipment is lost or broken then this is at the school's own cost.

Wheelchairs must be secured using a 4 point wheelchair restraint system. A separate passenger restraint (seatbelt) must be used for the wheelchair user. The suitability for the wheelchair restraint should be checked with the operator (hired vehicle). Not every wheelchair restraint is compatible with every wheelchair. This can be checked by the Contracts Monitoring Officer.

If staff wish to use their own vehicle for school use they must have business insurance. A copy of their motor insurance policy must be kept by school and their full drivers' licence should also be seen by the Office Manager.

### 3.5 Venue Considerations

When planning visits the venue needs to be appropriate to suit the aims of the visit and the needs of the children and young people. If a venue has not been used before, then where possible, it is good practice to inspect the venue prior to the visit to ensure it is suitable and to help inform risk assessments. All venues need to be risk assessed for the specific group that is visiting and for the activities that are taking place.

Accessibility needs to be checked to ensure that all children and young people can access the same activities and areas. It may be necessary to make some adaptations to some venues i.e. ramps. This needs to be considered as part of the risk assessment and advice sought around moving and handling if needed.

Children and young people's personal care needs should always be considered and risk assessed. Available for use is a portable hoist and changing bed. For further advice please seek advice round personal care and moving and handling.



### 3.6 Staffing

As with all LOtC visits, staff ratios and requirements must be visit-specific according to the number, composition, age range and medical needs of pupils as well as appropriate to the venue and the activities planned for the visit. Staffing ratios should form part of the visit risk assessment and as a general rule each visit must have at least two members of staff. There should be a nominated group leader. All staff involved should be informed of the visit logistics prior to the visit. They should know what their responsibilities on the visit are and any specific information. They should have the opportunity to read all risk assessments prior to the visit.

### 3.7 Preparing pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils should be informed of what standard of behaviour is expected of them and what to do about any potential dangers, for example, stranger danger, risks from activities or travelling.

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy and have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would.

## 5. Emergency Procedures

5.1 Staff should not hesitate to act in an emergency, and if an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- assess the situation;
- safeguard the uninjured members of the group;
- attend to the casualty;
- inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.



5.2 On all LOtC visits, pupils Medical Information Forms and where appropriate Health Care Plans should be taken. The Medical Information Forms should be used in an emergency and should always be given to emergency services.

## 6. First Aid

At least one member of staff on the LOtC visit should have the minimum of Emergency First Aid training and this person should administer basic first aid when appropriate, though this person must be careful to avoid administering medical treatment beyond their training, skill and knowledge. Information on staff first aid training can be sought from the Office Manager. A first aid kit should also be carried whilst on LOtC visits and the contents of this kit may differ depending on what activities are planned. It is also good practice to be aware of first aid facilities and procedures at the venue of the visit.

## 7. Medical Needs

Hilltop School will not exclude pupils with medical needs from LOtC visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Pupils with medical needs should have a Health Care Plan and this should be followed whilst out of school. If medication is to be administered whilst out school, again the Health Care Plan should be followed. Medications should be logged as out of school appropriately. All medications should be stored securely whilst out of school and should not be left unattended. A record of administered medication should be kept; this should be written on a pupils' individual log sheet and always witnessed by another member of staff. Please see the Medications in School Policy for more information.

## 8. Insurance

'School journey's insurance' is organised by the Risk Pooling Arrangement (RPA) through the DfE and is available to provide comprehensive cover to pupils and accompanying adults for any school journey approved by the Headteacher. The main exclusions are activities which involve racing of any kind (other than on foot) or air travel (other than as a passenger). The cover provided includes compensation for personal accident, loss of baggage and personal effects. Insurance is organised via



the EVOLVE system. For journey's abroad insurance should be organised through the tour operator. LOtC visits are logged each term by the Office Team; this information is sought from Out of School Forms.

## 9. Risk Assessments

9.1 As with any other aspect of school activity, schools must give careful consideration to the hazards involved in the LOtC visit and ensure that risks are managed at acceptable levels. Risk assessments are a legal requirement and must be "suitable and sufficient", they need not be complex but should be comprehensive.

9.2 In practice this means that:

- the level of detail should be proportionate to the risk. Insignificant risks can be ignored, but this will depend upon the context and staff will be well aware of the need to be vigilant at all times;
- all reasonable steps are taken to identify risks;
- the assessment should be appropriate to the nature of the activity and take account of changing circumstances.

9.3 The person conducting the risk assessment needs to be competent to do so. This means that they should have sufficient experience or knowledge appropriate to the hazards and risks encountered. All activities involve a level of risk. Risk assessment includes the assessment of significant hazards and their management so as to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

9.4 Visit risk assessments should include:

- how are you going to get to the venue;
- the venue and the activities taking place;
- specific pupil medical needs;
- specific pupil behavioural needs/issues and
- a group risk assessment detailing information such as staffing ratios and first aid.

9.5 All visit risk assessments are stored electronically on the school's curriculum network. This allows access to everyone and the opportunity to customise their assessments for their own particular visit. There are also a range of examples and proformas to use and adapt for the needs of your group and activity.



9.6 If a provider is being used for a visit and are responsible for activities then their risk assessments should be followed at all times and it is advisable to ask for a copy of them so that they can be shared with staff, read and understood.

9.7 All risk assessments are read and approved by the Office Manager on behalf of the Headteacher as per the EVOLVE system. Insufficient risk assessments will result in the visit not taking place. All risk assessments need to be signed by SLT before going out.

## 10. Incident and Accident Reporting

It is a requirement that any accident, incident or 'near miss' on a visit should be reported immediately. If the LOtC visit is taking place at a specific venue then that venue should provide means to report any accidents or incidents that have happened as they have a duty of care for the school as 'users'. School paperwork should be completed for any accident, incident or near miss. Behavioural incidents and use of reasonable force needs to also need to be logged.

## 11. Accompanying Parents, Carers And Volunteers

11.1 Parents, carers or volunteers can be invited on a LOtC visit where appropriate and staff organising a visit should have a discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If a parent, carer or volunteer accompanies a visit on a one-off occasion then they do not need a DBS check. A DBS check is applicable if the parent or carer is in school for 3 or more occurrences in a 30 day period.

11.2 Parents, carers or volunteers that accompany a visit should:

- not be included in the staff to pupil ratios,
- never be allocated sole responsibility for an individual pupil or group of children,
- always work under the direct supervision and guidance of a member of school staff,
- be given appropriate information about children and young people such as risk assessments, medical information etc.





11.3 Further information about accompanying parents, carers or volunteers can be sought from the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 12. Residentials

Hilltop School encourages residential visits for all of its children and young people. Any staff wishing to organise a residential is welcome to discuss it with the Office Manager, SLT or any member of staff that has organised them previously.

## 13. Work Experience

Off site work experience placements will be aligned to person centred planning. The form this takes will be personalised and individualised. All placements will be organised using the agreed Off Site Placement Procedure, please see the Off Site Work Placements Policy for further information.