



400 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Educational Visits Policy

Policy approval date	June 2026
Policy review date	June 2027
Policy Lead	Matt Botheras
Governor or SLT approval	SLT
Governor committee responsible for policy	Finance & Resources Committee

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1. Aims and scope

Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require students to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Educational visits are a valuable way to supplement and enhance the curriculum, expand education and provide enriching social and cultural experiences. They also teach life skills and promote independent learning and independence from home and form an integral part of our approach to furthering education and personal growth.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all students. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, students and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Having final authority for approving staff requests for educational visits and school trips
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training

1.2 The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC)

Matt Botheras is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit
- Assess outside activity providers
- Advise the Headteacher when they're approving trips
- Access any necessary training, advice and guidance

3.2 Trip lead

Every educational visit will have 1 member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- Seek and obtain initial approval for all visits from the Headteacher
- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to students, staff and volunteers
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, in agreement with the EVC as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, students and parents/carers, including roles, responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for students and others
- Evaluate the visit upon completion

3.3 Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all students and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all students' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage student behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

3.4 Parents and carers

By agreeing that students can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the student that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

3.5 Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent/carer volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for students
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure students under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

3.6 Students

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that students will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor
- Students are not permitted to take mobile phones on school trips.

Students will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

Please see the school's behaviour and mobile phone policies.

4. Planning and preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the EVC, and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school
- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-student ratio

- Itinerary
- Inclusion and accessibility

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks

See **appendix 1** for our trip information form for the planning and approval of a visit.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment. This does not include sports fixtures which are covered by general consent when the student starts at Richard Hale School.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

4.1. Inclusion

All students, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including educational visits.

Special educational needs (SEND)

The school will work with students and parents/carers to put reasonable adjustments in place and remove barriers to participation for students with disabilities or specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies).

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and students.

Challenging behaviour

In some cases, it may be reasonable and necessary to prevent a student with challenging behaviour from coming on a trip in order to protect their safety and the safety of the other students attending.

5. Risk assessment

Risk assessments are to be completed at least 4 weeks before all trips. They will be completed by the trip leader using the Hertfordshire County Council template (OV4). They will be checked by the EVC and submitted to the Headteacher at least 2 weeks before the visit for final approval. Additional risk assessments may be available from the provider.

Risk assessments should cover all elements of the visit including activities, travel, accommodation and general considerations.

Where practical, and by agreement with the EVC and/or Headteacher, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the Headteacher and, where appropriate, third-party providers.

Individual risk assessments will be completed for specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and students),

All paperwork must be uploaded to the Evolve system and approved by the Headteacher.

5.1 Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed student groups)
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all residential trips
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all residential trips and visits involving physical activities.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- Staff to student ratios will be agreed by the EVC and Headteacher
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with students at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or registers

5.2 Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our safety procedures. We will make sure students, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously communicated with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site. Examples of this may be where it is more economical for students to meet at an airport or more viable for students to meet at a local station.

5.3 Use of external organisations?

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

6. Volunteers

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities and expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Volunteers will be required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

7. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of students invited to take part in an educational visit at the earliest opportunity and least 1 month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via letter and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose and cost of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school
- Expected behaviour and consequences of students' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

In the case of overseas trips, they will be asked to provide passport and UK Global Health Insurance Card information.

8. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

A DSL will be named as the emergency contact for residential trips.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office or designated emergency contact for the trip. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

At least 1 member of staff will always accompany a student seeking medical treatment.

In the case of a student being unaccounted for, trip staff will search the area. In the unlikely event that a student cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the student when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the students.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded, from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

9. Charging and insurance

We will follow our school's Charging and Remissions Policy at all times.

Parents/carers won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place during school hours. They also won't be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place outside of school hours **if** it is part of the National Curriculum, a syllabus for a prescribed public examination, or religious education.

Where necessary, we may ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect students' ability to take part fully in the trip. However, the trip may be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the trip viable.

The School will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

10. Residential visits

Paperwork for all residential trips must be signed off by the Headteacher.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- Staff have received any necessary training

- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2 months before the first day of the visit. Where known, information shared with parents/carers will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school
- The full address and contact details of the destination
- Planned activities and options
- Meal provision
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which these must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what students must bring themselves
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations
- Accommodation options and arrangements
- The names of staff attending

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities holds the LOtC Quality Badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the [Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's overseas travel guidance](#) and the government's [foreign travel advice](#) when organising these visits.

11. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by Senior Leadership Team and the Risk & Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Charging and remissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Supporting students with medical conditions policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) policy

- Equality information and objectives
- Accessibility plan