

**Catshill Middle School and
Catshill First School & Nursery**

**Educational Visits Policy &
Guidance**

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Review: September 2025

Signature Chair of Committee

Date

Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Policy for the Management of Visits and Learning outside the Classroom which is available in the EVC folder on Staff Share. Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

Catshill Middle School Educational Visits Co-ordinator: Mr D Hewitt
Catshill First School and Nursery Educational Visits Co-ordinator: Mrs G Plant
Educational Visits Governor: Mr Mike Hill, Premises, Staffing and Finance Committee

Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

Residential activities

During their time at Catshill Middle School / Catshill First School and Nursery pupils will have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. We do make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities.

The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities. We undertake this visit only once it has been recorded on Evolve, which is the LA website for educational visits. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

How visits may be authorised

The Executive Headteacher will appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

The school's educational visits coordinator (EVC) will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. Full reference by staff should be made to the EVC folder in staff share which is available on the school network.

The EVC will:

- ensure that risk benefit assessments are completed;

- support the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body in their decisions on approval;
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- organise related staff training;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;
- keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Executive Headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Executive Headteacher will seek the approval of the Governing Body and the Local Authority through Evolve before permitting all activities to take place.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Risk assessment (VAGRA)

A comprehensive risk benefit assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. This will include provision for vulnerable pupils. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Staff planning an off-site activity should endeavour to make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The LA will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the visit plan must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils – dependent upon location, age and activity.

The party leader will discuss the requirements of adult/pupil ratios with the Executive Headteacher.

Transport

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks.

The school makes a charge to parents if their children are transported by means of transport provided by the school. The charge covers the expenses of the journey only; we do not make any profit from this.

Communication with parents

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from a curriculum based activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Executive Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

Further health and safety considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a party leaves school the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times. For residential and day visits the school will endeavour to send one first aid trained member of staff.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the Executive Headteacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

Visit plan

The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk benefit assessment;
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for party leaders;
- guidance for the emergency contact and Executive Headteacher;
- medical questionnaire returns;
- first-aid boxes.

Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Body and will be reviewed every three years or earlier if deemed necessary.

School Trip Checklist

PLEASE DISCUSS ANY PROPOSAL WITH EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER BEFORE STARTING ANY OF THIS PROCESS

Trip:

Date:

*Curriculum/Enrichment Activity * please delete

Where are you going?	Do you need to visit beforehand?	
When are you going?	Check the diary/Head of School to ensure there are no other trips out or events.	
	Check the diary/Head of School to ensure no staff are out on courses.	
Which staff will be going?	Check with Head of School for available staff – 4 weeks before.	
	Inform Head of School of all staff going on trip and any lessons that require covering, any pupils who require free school meals and who will be the first aider	
How much will you charge?	Quote for hire of coach	
	Cost to visit venue	
	Any additional costs whilst at venue e.g. Food	
	10% contingency	
Essential Paperwork	Complete Risk Assessment	
	Complete Evolve form online. Trip details are entered onto Evolve to ensure authorisation from the Executive Headteacher is gained	
	See the finance department to ensure the trip is logged on the online payment site and to also check payment details (before trip letter goes out).	
	Compose draft letter and send to Wendy to ensure the layout is in line with all school letters. (Ensure wording for enrichment or curriculum visit is clear) – see next page	
	Send letter out	
Other things to consider	Phone the kitchen on 871755 to let them know the date of the trip and how many pupils will be out of school on that date.	
	Ensure a list of pupils going on the trip is put on the staff notice board and a copy is given to reception. – at least 1 week before so staff can plan accordingly.	
	Take pictures of the event so they can be used on the Website, Social Media, Newsletter and for displays (ensure you have checked the photo consent file beforehand).	

Enrichment Trip (Pupils have to pay to go on this trip)

The cost of this enrichment activity is £..... If you wish your child to join this visit please complete the slip below and return to school with full payment made using Payment4Schools, our online payment system or alternatively send payment in with the completed slip.

Pupils who do not join this visit will be expected to be in school as normal.

Curriculum Trip (We have to allow pupils to go on this trip even if they don't pay!)

We are asking for a voluntary contribution of £..... If you would like your child to participate in this visit please complete the slip below and return to school with payment made using Payment4Schools, our online payment system or alternatively send payment in with the completed slip. If we do not receive enough donations the trip may not be able to go ahead.

Behaviour Clause (All trip letters to include this clause)

Participation in this visit/event is dependent upon the pupil demonstrating acceptable behaviour in school leading up to the departure date. It is not the right of a pupil to attend and if necessary the Head of School will make a decision regarding participation related to behaviour.

Inclusion

The Catshill Federation of schools will endeavour to be as inclusive as possible. Account may need to be undertaken regarding accessibility, supervision or other related inclusion issues on a visit by visit basis and specifically related to individuals.

The Executive Headteacher will ultimately determine if a pupil cannot attend/participate in a visit if he deems there to be risk factors that may contravene the safety of a pupil or a member of staff. All effort in planning will be made to regate such a decision however the Executive Headteacher retains the right to make such a decision.

Residential Visits Checklist

	Does your visit have clear aims and objectives?	
2.	Has the visit been approved by the Executive Headteacher and Governors?	
3.	Has the visit been booked and written confirmation received?	
4.	Has a preliminary visit been made?	
5.	Has the transport been arranged and written confirmation received where appropriate?	
6.	Has suitable insurance been arranged? School insurance is provided, but additional insurance might be arranged and/or offered to parents.	
7.	Has the visit been costed? e.g. travel, entrance fees, accommodation charges, equipment hire, excursions, refreshments.	
	<p>Have the parents been sent a letter giving all necessary information about the visit? e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of visit • Dates, places and times of departure and return • Transport arrangements • Name, address and telephone number of place to be visited • Details of accommodation provided • Pocket money (suggested amounts and arrangements for care) • Insurance arrangements • Proposed programme and itinerary (including activities to be undertaken, places to be visited and bad weather alternatives) • List of recommended clothing and equipment including any special requirements (with a request that all items should be named) Details of clothing, equipment or other items not allowed (e.g. mobile phones, iPods, jewellery) • Details of recommended type and size of luggage and labelling required • Information on makeup of group (numbers of pupils and staff and staff experience and qualifications) and group leader • Supervision during visit and at other times. Ratio of pupils to staff should also be given • Parents should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected of their children and the possible sanctions that might be applied (e.g. in extreme cases, parents could be sent for to collect their children.) The joint signing of a code of conduct by parents and pupils should be considered • Name and telephone number of a member of staff who can be contacted in school in the case of an emergency <p>After receiving the above information – parents must complete and sign LA parent consent form</p>	
9.	Arrange an evening meeting with parents to discuss arrangements and details of activity/off site visit	
10.	<p>Has all the necessary information been received from parents prior to visit? Parents to complete LA form (OS3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed consent for visit • Signed consent for medical or dental or surgical treatment • Dietary information 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical problems, including travel sickness and medication requirements • Name, address and telephone number of doctor • Home, work and mobile telephone numbers • Children's swimming ability • Any other problems such as bedwetting or homesickness • Parent and child approval of agreed sanctions for inappropriate behaviour (which should be clearly stated) – Code of Conduct 	
11.	Do staff have the mobile telephone numbers of colleagues involved in the visit?	
12.	<p>All information to be kept by organiser, along with parental consent forms. Copies should also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistant leaders • School contact (Executive Headteacher or Head of School) • Outside organisers i.e. PGL etc. <p>At the end of the trip it is the responsibility of the trip leader to ensure all information is handed back in and given to a member of the admin team for shredding</p>	
13.	<p>Is the pupil/adult ratio adequate for the visit being undertaken? Taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of year • Type of activity • Requirements of the group 	
14.	Have all assistant leaders, helpers etc. been police checked?	
15.	Have all minibus drivers passed the County Council minibus assessment test?	
16.	Does your party include a first aider and or a second minibus driver?	
17.	<p>Has a risk assessment been completed? The risk assessment should include all aspects of the visit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to and from the centre • Activities organised by the centre/outside group • Activities not part of the organised itinerary • Contingency plans drawn up in case of illness, injury or emergency <p>A copy of the risk assessment to be given to educational visits co-ordinator</p>	
18.	<p>Have you notified the LA of your visit? This should be done for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential or overnight visit • A journey of more than 50 miles • Activities in a hazardous environment • Adventurous activities <p>Educational Visits Co-ordinator to enter visit on Evolve</p>	

Checklist when using minibus for sports fixtures/activities

1.	Have parents been informed of the sports fixtures/activities and/or given their written permission?	
2.	Has notification of the sports fixture/activity been passed on to staff? (daily sheet)	
3.	Has a list of pupils participating in the sports fixture/activity been left in school? (Head of School, Deputy or reception)	
4.	Do you have a list of parents' emergency telephone numbers for each pupil participating in the sports fixture/activity?	
5.	Do staff have the mobile telephone numbers of colleagues involved in the sports fixture/activity?	
6.	Do you have access to a telephone in the case of an emergency? (mobile phone)	
7.	Has the minibus driver passed the County Council minibus assessment test?	
8.	Does the group include a first aider and/or second minibus driver?	
9.	Is there a first aid kit in the minibus?	
10	Does the minibus driver know the location of the emergency breakdown telephone number?	
11.	Have you made a minibus check? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel • Tyre pressure • Water and oil levels • Brakes 	
12.	Are the pupils wearing seat belts?	