



# Offsite Visits Policy

**BEDWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Bedwell Crescent,  
Stevenage, Herts, SG1 1NJ**

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# Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Scope and remit	5
3.	Roles and responsibilities	6
	3.1 Headteacher	6
	3.2 Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC)	7
	3.3 Visit Leaders	8
	3.4 Governing Body	9
4.	Competence	10
5.	Planning	11
	5.1 Levels of Activity	11
	5.2 Risk assessment	13
	5.3 Use of generic risk assessments	13
	5.4 Plan B	13
	5.5 Seeking assurances from providers (form OV6)	14
	5.6 Preliminary visits	14
6.	Outcomes	15
7.	Staffing and supervision	16
8.	Emergency procedures	17
9.	First aid	18
10.	Insurance	19
11.	Inclusion	19
12.	Codes of conduct	20
13.	Transport	20
14.	Swimming	21
15.	Weather, clothing and survival	22
	Appendix A - Local Learning Area	23
	Appendix B - Local Sporting Area	25
	Appendix C - Trip Proposal form	27
	Appendix D - Trip Planning form	28
	Appendix E - Trip Evaluation form	29
	Appendix F - OV4 form	31
	Appendix G - OV5 form	34

# 1. Introduction

The Staff and Governors of Bedwell Primary School acknowledge the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people, and fully support and encourage those that are well planned and managed.

This document provides concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of off-site visits and related activities. It is available on the school website and on 'EVOLVE', along with a number of other supporting documents.

All visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities will be planned in such a way as to ensure that the benefits and intended learning outcomes are clearly identified and understood by the supervising adults beforehand and form the basis for objective evaluation afterwards.

This establishment uses Hertfordshire's online system, 'EVOLVE', to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own 'EVOLVE' account, which is set up by their Establishment's Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Arrangements and considerations for all visits and LOtC activities will be recorded, either on 'EVOLVE', by means of standard operating procedures using generic risk assessments, or in standard lesson plan format, as deemed most appropriate by the Headteacher in order to minimise the associated bureaucracy.

## 2. Scope and remit

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements their employer's guidance. This policy relates to Hertfordshire's "Guidance for the Management of LOtC and Offsite Visits" and it is the expectation that all staff will follow its requirements

This policy applies to all members of establishment staff, and other adults associated with Bedwell Primary School who take responsibility for children and young people participating in learning and recreational activities in environments that are different from where the young people are usually based. It therefore applies when organising and supervising children and young people taking part in off-site activities and visits, as well as when taking part in on-site activities outdoors.

This policy provides the key reference for sound planning for learning and recreational activities that involve taking groups of children and young people away from their usual operational base. It should be implemented when using places such as:

- the establishment's own grounds
- the local environment
- places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres and museums etc.
- residential venues
- learning ventures abroad

and involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC);
- facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base.

Staff must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), health and safety responsibilities lie with the employer. This might be a Local Authority (LA) or Governing Body or a Management Panel. An employer has the legal responsibility to carry out the duties imposed by the Act. However, employers can delegate the tasks necessary to discharge these duties, even though the overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the employer.

In Hertfordshire, the tasks of scrutinising and approving arrangements for Offsite Visits and LOTC activities are delegated to the Headteacher of the school. Further information on roles can be found on the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance website, [oeapng.info](http://oeapng.info), and specific documents within their Essential Guidance resources are referenced below.

### **3.1 Headteacher (see OEAP Essential Guidance docs 3.4g, 3.3b)**

The Head teacher (or their nominated delegate) will ensure that:

- All off-site visits and LOTC activities comply with employer guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required.
- All staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they may be allocated.
- There is a clearly designated person, either him/herself or another suitable member of staff, as the EVC and that the designated person meets employer requirements, including undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required by the employer.
- If taking part in the visit or activity as either an Assistant Leader or as a group member, s/he is clear about their role and that they should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader (who will have sole charge of the visit).
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. Where access to the young people is regular or significant, DBS checks must be in place as required.
- S/he is assured that the EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated.
- Sufficient time is assigned for staff to organise visits properly.
- A culture of apprenticeship /succession planning, to ensure sustainable visits and the development of competent visit leaders and EVCs, is supported within the establishment.
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing.
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visit information has been shared with parents and that consent has been sought where necessary.
- Arrangements are made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff.
- Inclusion issues are addressed.

- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements.
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate.
- Details related to the visit (including person details of both participants staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident.
- That there are contingency plans in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled (Plan B).
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as are required by the establishment visit policy.
- Staff are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships.
- Establishment visit policy should identify the types of visit that require a preliminary visit.
- Establishment visit policy should formally adopt a set format for recording written risk-benefit assessments. Such risk-benefit assessments should be proportional, suitable and sufficient and based on the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management'. The adoption of materials made available by employers to reduce bureaucracy is good practice.
- Where the activities or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been sought; national schemes e.g. LOTC Quality Badge, AALS licence, Adventuremark, or a clear management Statement of Competence, are recognised in keeping with Hertfordshire's recommendations and make further seeking of provider assurances unnecessary.
- All visits are evaluated with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any serious incident and to inform the operation of future visits.
- The establishment visit policy includes appropriate emergency procedures in case of a major incident.
- The establishment visit policy includes a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident.
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

### **3.2 Educational Visits Coordinator – EVC (see Essential Guidance docs 3.4j, 3.3a)**

To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, this establishment has a specifically designated EVC who supports the Headteacher. The EVC will:

- Be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment. Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the senior management of the establishment. Where the EVC role is attached to an administrative post, or where a post holder is not an experienced visit leader, s/he will receive structured support in the form of regular (twice termly) supervision meetings from a designated establishment colleague who has that practical experience
- Attend training, and update training, as required by the local authority (LA).
- Support the Headteacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions.

- Ensure that a policy is in place for offsite visits and LOtC activities, that it is updated as necessary, and is readily available to staff (via EVOLVE and the school website) and that procedures should aim to minimise bureaucracy, taking full advantage of any national schemes that provide assurances regarding safety and quality of provision (e.g. there should be no need to seek assurances from adventure activity providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge, or a current AALS Licence, or Adventuremark).
- Have an understanding of the Manifesto for LOtC and the supporting rationale
- Ensure Offsite and LOtC activities meet employer guidance requirements.
- Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that employers' guidance and establishment procedures are properly understood.
- Ensure Offsite activities must be led by competent leaders and that assistant supervisors are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders, including voluntary helpers.
- Support the Headteacher with approval and other decisions.
- Monitor visit planning and arrange for sample monitoring in the field as appropriate.
- Ensure DBS checks are in place where required.
- Provide sufficient guidance to Visit and Activity Leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include emergency contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated; this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

### **3.3 Visit Leaders (see Essential Guidance docs 3.4k, 3.3e)**

The Visit/Activity Leader will:

- Have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. S/he must be an employee and not a volunteer.
- Be competent to take on such responsibilities and tasks as may be allocated or required for the duration of the visit/activity and be formally approved to do so.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management. This establishment sees it as good practice to involve all participating staff in the planning and risk management process for any given offsite visit or LOtC activity to ensure wider understanding. It is also seen as good practice to involve young people in these processes wherever appropriate.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and appoint a deputy wherever possible.



- Ensure that where any accompanying staff includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management;
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed (e.g. DBS checks).
- Collate, make available and disseminate relevant information to supporting staff, parents and young people as appropriate.
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level.
- Arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate.
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event.
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
  1. the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities.
  2. the nature, location and duration of the activity.
- Ensure the visit is effectively supervised; the overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying establishment staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Have attended either HCC's 'Visit Leader Awareness' or the OEAP's 'Visit Leader' training.
- See also EG docs 3.4l, 3.4m, 3.4n, 3.3f, 4.4d

### **3.4 Governing Body (see Essential Guidance docs 3.4f, 3.3c)**

There will be a member of the School's Governing Body or Management Board who is designated as specifically responsible for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities. This is usually, but not exclusively, the Chair. This person's role is to "enable and ensure" by acting as a critical friend.

S/he will ensure that: -

- S/he has an understanding of how outdoor learning supports a wide range of learning outcomes.
- S/he has access to employer guidance as well as establishment policy, and a training package to support it.
- Establishment policy clarifies his/her involvement in the visit approval process.
- There is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements.
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements.
- The establishment visit policy supports the principles of inclusion.
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

## 4. Competence

Competence is a combination of experience, training/qualifications and common sense. The competence of the Visit Leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants.

Consideration will be given to the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits?
- b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- d) Is the leader an employee at the establishment?
- e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision making abilities?
- g) What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- i) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- j) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications, especially if leading adventurous activities?  
(See Appendix 1 of HCC Employer Guidance)
- k) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

This establishment operates a process of apprenticeship and succession for all staff likely to be involved in organising, leading or accompanying offsite visits and LOtC activities.

The establishment undertakes to ensure that all such staff, will undergo an induction process that typically entails Visit Leader Awareness training, either in-house or from the LA's Offsite Visits Adviser, access to (and training where required) the establishment's 'EVOLVE' site and practical experience of accompanying visits and LOtC activities *before* being tasked with leading a visit for themselves.

## 5. Planning and authorisation

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, based on STAGED: - **Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.**

### 5.1 Activity Levels

To support the planning, risk management and authorisation process for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities, we have grouped them into 4 levels. Trip Proposal and Planning forms (see Appendix C and D) are required for all trips apart from those covered by the Local Sporting Area. EVOLVE must be used for all activities at Level 2 and above.

Level	Type of activity	Authorisation	Further checks
1	Activities taking place within the Local Learning Area (see Appendix A) or Local Sporting Area (see Appendix B)	Local Learning Area - Trip Proposal and Plan completed and authorised by EVC.  Local Sporting Area - Trip Proposal and Plan not required.  Follow Operating Procedures (see Appendix A / B). If additional risks / hazards are identified, then a separate risk assessment must be completed  Annual parental consent	Operating Procedures to be reviewed annually by EVC and agreed by SLT.
2	Activities taking place beyond the Local Learning Area / Sporting Area or involving additional risks / hazards	Trip Proposal and Plan completed and authorised by EVC.  Specific risk assessment completed for each visit using EVOLVE. This must be submitted at least 2 weeks before the trip date.  Parental consent required for each visit.	Risk assessment to be reviewed by Visit Leader before, during and after the visit.  Post-visit Trip Evaluation to be completed by Visit Leader and EVC.

3	Residential trips	<p>Trip Proposal and Plan completed and authorised by EVC and Headteacher.</p> <p>Specific risk assessment completed for each visit using EVOLVE. This must be submitted at least 4 weeks before the trip date.</p> <p>Parental consent required for each visit - this should be made after a briefing meeting where parents are made fully aware of what the trip involves.</p> <p>Parents and children to also agree to Code of Conduct.</p>	<p>Risk assessment to be reviewed by Visit Leader before, during and after the visit.</p> <p>Post-visit Trip Evaluation to be completed by Visit Leader and EVC.</p>
4	High risk adventurous activities/overseas stays	<p>Trip Proposal and Plan completed and authorised by EVC and Headteacher.</p> <p>Specific risk assessment completed for each visit using EVOLVE. This must be submitted at least 4 weeks before the trip date.</p> <p>Parental consent required for each visit - this should be made after a briefing meeting where parents are made fully aware of what the trip involves.</p>	<p>Risk assessment to be reviewed by Visit Leader before, during and after the visit.</p> <p>Post-visit Trip Evaluation to be completed by Visit Leader and EVC.</p> <p>Use OV6 form if necessary to seek assurances / risk management statements from providers of adventurous activities</p>

There should be a clear, unambiguous audit trail for arrangements for all offsite visits and LOtC activities with clear evidence of approval. For Level 2 and above activities, this will be recorded on EVOLVE; for Level 1 activities a signed Trip Proposal form will suffice.

An offsite visit or LOtC activity should not proceed without clear evidence of approval. Where applicable, a visit may also need to be notified to the LA; this is done automatically by 'EVOLVE'.

## **5.2 Risk assessment**

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the 'EVOLVE' visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes or attachments.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question: *'What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?'* It should focus on those issues that are specific to the individual event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event. Significant issues must be recorded on 'EVOLVE', either notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is relevant to the needs of the group. It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions, and will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. As such, the provider's risk assessment is not the concern of the establishment leader, does not need to be requested from the provider, and does not need to be attached to 'EVOLVE'.

## **5.3 Use of generic risk assessments**

A selection of generic risk assessments is available in Word format from the Health & Safety pages on the Grid and for use on 'EVOLVE'. Whilst not exhaustive, the control measures contained within this selection are probably sufficient to cover most eventualities likely to be encountered in the course of most offsite visits and LOTC activities.

Staff are encouraged to compile their own "event-specific" risk assessments which can then be reviewed and re-used as required.

## **5.4 Plan B**

Alternative arrangements should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option. Where appropriate, all alternative activities should be fully considered and risk assessed beforehand.

## **5.5 Seeking Assurances from Provider (form OV6)**

Hertfordshire County Council provides the OV6 'Provider Assessment Form' to help provide an audit trail for arrangements and checks if required. Many providers have websites and offer information packs which contain the sorts of information asked for on the OV6, including a Safety Management statement, so it may not be necessary to use one.

The OV6 is a generic form, for use for all kinds of provider, so if one is sent to a provider, it should be specified that they only need to complete the parts applicable to them/their services. Once an OV6 has been received, signed and dated by a manager or person in authority, it is not always necessary to send a new one to the same provider each time you use them. It is sufficient to annotate the existing form already held by the establishment to show the school has checked back with the provider and that there have been no major or significant changes since the form was originally signed; this will not apply if the time interval is not more than 12 months or so.

To reduce bureaucracy for both Visit Leaders and Providers, leaders should take advantage of national schemes that have been established to eliminate the need for questionnaires and forms as advised in LA guidance e.g. LOTC Quality Badge, AALS Licence and 'Adventuremark'. Holding one of these is a credible assurance of Health and Safety, and Visit Leaders should seek no further verification. The LOTC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.

Visit Leaders should **not** ask for copies of risk assessment documentation but may seek assurance of a provider's competence to deliver their activities safely by means of a Safety Management statement if this is not already provided.

## **5.6 Preliminary Visits**

Wherever reasonably possible, it is good practice for the Visit Leader to make a preliminary visit to a venue or provider beforehand in order for them to familiarise themselves with the layout and surroundings, and any site-specific procedures or issues which may have an impact on the visit or members of the group.

Within the UK, highest priority for preliminary visits will be where no serving member of staff from the establishment has visited before, then when the Visit Leader has no experience of the venue/activity. For overseas visits, advantage should be taken of any offers by tour operators for "leaders' orientation"-type visits.

## 6. Outcomes

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. These are the starting point for Trip Proposals, and no proposal will be authorised without clearly defined learning outcomes. Up to four 'intended' outcomes may be recorded on 'EVOLVE' during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.

We recognise that learning that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means making learning 'sticky', embedding core skills and accelerating progress and attainment. As a result, our skills and knowledge progressions for each subject include a range of 'experiences every child should have', many of which involve Learning Outside the Classroom.

Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for developing our Learning Superpowers - for example:

- Curiosity - exploring the real world, investigating historical sites, being inspired to find out more about the history / engineering / geography behind a particular location
- Empathy - getting a 'real' understanding of what it was like to live in a particular place / time
- Independence - making beds, pitching tents or looking after themselves on residential trips, overcoming fears and setting personal challenges, making decisions about where to go / what to do next
- Perseverance - completing treks, fieldwork or challenging activities that may take longer periods of time
- Co-operation - working together to build rafts, shelters or sculptures, playing as a team during sporting activities or working as a group to investigate a site
- Reflectiveness - completing activities related to their learning on return to school.

Preparatory work should take place in advance of the visit where appropriate. This, in conjunction with activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow-up work.

## 7. Staffing and supervision

The LA requires establishments to ensure there is an appropriate level of supervision at all times for all visits and that such supervision is 'effective'. This must have been approved by the EVC and Headteacher and, where applicable, in accordance with Governing Body policy.

Ratios for Early Years are specified and must be adhered to; see [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

For all other visits the visit leader, EVC and Headteacher will make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;
- the contingency or 'Plan B' options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

A useful 'starting point for consideration' is 1 adult :10 young people. Where departure from this starting point results in fewer staff, the justification should be recorded as a note on 'EVOLVE'. Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

The use of parents and other adults with a clear association with the establishment, as helpers or supervisors on offsite visits or LOtC activities, is seen as a valuable means of encouraging or maintaining closer links with the local community and accessing a wider set of skills and experience than may exist amongst the establishment's staff. Such volunteers will need to understand and consent to the fact that they will be answerable to the Visit Leader.

Clear DBS checks must have been returned before a volunteer adult helper may participate in a visit or activity.



## 8. Emergency procedures

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of, and adhere to, the School's agreed emergency procedures.

It is each Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure that they have a (charged) mobile phone with them at all times during offsite visits, along with access to relevant contact details.

Beware of over-reliance on mobile phones - in event of an emergency a land-line should be used wherever possible.

For all "out of hours" and residential visits there will be a nominated person(s) that can provide 24/7 cover as an Emergency Contact and that the person(s) so nominated will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit. This will include medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff as well as young people.

Consideration will be given to the following:

- Criteria for identifying the nominated Emergency Contact(s)
- Is more than one Emergency Contacts required?
- Procedure for lodging visit plans to enable them to be accessed in the event of an emergency?
- Have procedures been tested?
- Is it possible to demonstrate a proactive response, to any pattern that can be recognised within incidents?

Visit Leaders should also complete and carry an Emergency Contacts sheet (OV9). Where appropriate the Visit Leader should have an "Emergency Events" card, as issued by HCC.

## 9. First aid

It is not always necessary that a qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit or LOfC activity. First aid issues for any LOfC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is "appropriate" will be determined by:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity to:

- Know how to access qualified first aid support.
- Have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation that requires those leading such activities to hold a current first aid "qualification". To be a "qualification", the first aid course must include a formalised assessment process; otherwise any certification will have the status of a certificate of attendance. In practical terms, the course will be a minimum of 16 hours.

It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

## 10. Insurance

Advice regarding insurance may be sought from the Local Authority's Insurance Department. Contact details are given on the 'Contact' page and from the 'Insurance' section when completing a visit entry on 'EVOLVE'.

In addition to the standard public liability cover which all establishments will have in place Hertfordshire County Council has taken out 'blanket' personal accident cover / travel insurance for all trips/visits at home or abroad. This cover only applies to establishments which buy into the Council's Annual travel Insurance Scheme. Details are available from the County's insurance department on 01992 555480 or by email at [insurance@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

For those establishments who make their own insurance arrangements, personal accident / travel insurance must be taken out for all visits abroad. For all other visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Body, Headteacher, and EVC to determine whether additional insurance should be taken out. The establishment should particularly consider the need for additional insurance for residential activities, or those involving adventurous activities or hazardous environments.

## 11. Inclusion

This establishment policy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. Visit Leaders are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage - where necessary, form OV5 can be used for Individual Risk Assessments (see Appendix G).

However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity. Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and normal work practices.

## 12. Codes of Conduct

This establishment encourages the use of codes of behavioural conduct as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young persons' behaviour. Such codes need to be explained to both the young people and those in a position of parental support before the visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where the code is breached.

As part of encouraging social responsibility, young people should be encouraged to sign up to a "behavioural contract" for all residential visits/ As part of the request for consent, parents should sign and accept responsibility for removing young people in prescribed circumstances. Further examples can be found under 'resources' on 'EVOLVE'.

## 13. Transport

### Private Cars (see EG 4.5c)

Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Headteacher, and an [OV7D](#) Form must be completed on an annual basis.

### Coaches

The LA does not 'approve' coach companies. Whilst UK legislation ensures that coach companies are fit for public use, the facilities available on coaches may vary. Liaising with other establishments within the LA that have used a particular company (via a search on 'EVOLVE') will help to determine the level of service that may be provided.

### Minibuses (see EG doc 4.5b)

The school leases a 9 seater (8 passenger) vehicle to support the provision of Offsite Visits and LOTC. Legally, this is a car, but it is often referred to as a minibus - see the School's Minibus Policy for more information.

### Public Transport

For public transport within the Greater London area contact 'Transport for London', who offer special arrangements for establishment parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. See [Transport for London](#) Tel. 020 7918 3954.

## 14. Swimming

This establishment acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken. All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

### Swimming pools (life-guarded)

LA notification is not required

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly life-guarded pools abroad, the establishment's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.
- Unless suitably qualified, the establishment's staff should not have responsibility for life-guarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.
- For swimming lessons, the LA establishment should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

### Open water swimming

LA notification is required via EVOLVE. The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.

## 15. Weather, clothing and survival

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements
- Likely changes in weather
- The experience and strength of the party
- The nature of the visit and environment

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group
- Provision of emergency food and drink
- Torch
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas)

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

# Appendix A : Local Learning Area

## General

Visits/activities within the 'Local Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during normal school hours follow the Operating Procedure outlined below.

These visits/activities:

- Do not require parental consent - *parents will be informed of the trip (via Gateway / email / text / letters) so that they can ensure children have correct clothing, but this will be for information only.*
- Do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- Do not involve motorised transport.

## Boundaries

Our Local Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used areas:

- The Bedwell area (including Bedwell shops), as bounded by Six Hills Way, Fairlands Way, the Town Centre and Fairlands Park
- Fairlands Park
- Town Centre (including Stevenage Library, the Gordon Craig Theatre and the Leisure Centre)
- Stevenage Leisure Park (including Cineworld)
- Local schools which can be reached on foot (eg. Marriotts and Nobel secondary schools).
- Stevenage Swimming Pool

## Operating Procedure for the Local Learning Area

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

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

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- A Trip Proposal and Trip Planning Form must be completed and approved by the Headteacher or EVC before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. The visit / activity must be led by a member of Bedwell staff holding Qualified Teacher Status.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis on the School website.

- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any "no go" areas, and have practised 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.
- All remotely supervised work in the Local Learning Area (eg. orienteering around the Park) 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 medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff/adults, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A designated Emergency Contact 'back at base', who is aware of the proposed visit/activities, will have been identified beforehand and ensure that s/he remains contactable until notified of the group's safe return.
- The Visit / Activity Leader has a (charged) mobile phone, and their number is known to the School Office / Emergency Contact.
- Cycle paths and underpasses will be used wherever possible. When walking to the Town Centre, groups will use the underpass adjacent to Stevenage Museum.



## Appendix B : Local Sporting Area

### General

Matches and tournaments within the 'Local Sporting Area' which are part of the sporting life of the school follow the Operating Procedure outlined below.

These visits/activities:

- Involve tournaments, matches and other sporting events organised by Stevenage Sporting Futures, Rising Stars, Stevenage & District Primary Schools FA or Stevenage Primary Netball
- Are primarily team events, and involve a maximum of 20 children [*whole-class or whole-year-group events are therefore not covered here, though these may be included in the Local Learning Area if they do not require motorised transport*].
- Do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- Do not include adventurous activities (eg. climbing, watersports).

### Boundaries

Our Local Sporting Area includes:

- Facilities at Stevenage Schools (both primary and secondary)
- Facilities at other local schools that play in Stevenage leagues (eg. Codicote and Knebworth)
- Other sporting facilities within Stevenage (eg. Stevenage Cricket Club, Rugby Club etc.)

Sporting events that take place further afield (eg. County Finals events) will need to be risk assessed separately, as we deem these to be Level 2 activities.

### Operating Procedure for the Local Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our Local Sporting Area:

- Transport
- Activity-specific issues (sports injuries, collisions, exhaustion)
- Weather conditions
- Other people / members of the public
- Losing a pupil
- Uneven surfaces (slips, trips and falls)

**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- Parental consent must be received for children to take part in all events covered by this Appendix.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups at offsite sporting events will be approved to attend and lead events.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.

- Staff are familiar with the sport / event in question, so that they can ensure that all matches / fixtures / events are played in the correct spirit. Adults need to have a good understanding of the game and its rules so that they can quickly recognise if play is becoming unduly aggressive or argumentative.
- Children have an appropriate understanding of the game; for competitive football, netball, hockey, rugby etc they need to have practiced and played as a team before; for 'introductory' events (particularly those organised by Rising Stars), they only need a basic understanding of the game, as these are played in a more friendly, developmental spirit.
- Children are aware of the School's expectations for behaviour, and understand that they will be expected to act as representatives of the school at all times.
- When attending longer tournaments or events, all staff and children present will agree a 'base' area to leave bags etc, where the group should reassemble between games or if anyone gets lost.
- Children's clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Water bottles will be taken to events (and lunch / snacks for events lasting longer than an hour).
- Staff are aware of any relevant medical information and ensure that any required medication is available (particularly asthma inhalers).
- A first aid kit will be taken to all events.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff/adults and an estimated time of return.
- A designated Emergency Contact 'back at base', who is aware of the proposed visit/activities, will have been identified beforehand and ensure that s/he remains contactable until notified of the group's safe return.
- The Visit / Activity Leader has a (charged) mobile phone, and their number is known to the School Office / Emergency Contact.
- Transport will be provided in line with Section 13 of this policy, using the School 'minibus' where possible.
- The Visit / Activity Leader will assess weather conditions before leaving site, and will liaise with the event organiser / host school if there are any concerns over outdoor venues (eg. waterlogged football pitches).

## Appendix C : Trip Proposal Form

Desired learning objectives / outcomes:

- 

Proposed location & date:

- 

Visit Leader:

- 

Why have you chosen this trip / activity? Why is it the best way to achieve the desired outcomes?

- 

Approximate cost of trip:

- 

Number of children involved:

- 

Evaluation criteria - how will you judge whether the trip has been successful? How will it feed into further learning?

- 

To be completed by EVC / Headteacher:

Approved

Not approved

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Things to think about:

## Appendix D : Trip Planning form

<u>Learning objectives / outcomes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>																					
<u>Visit location and address:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<u>Visit Leader:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>																				
<u>Visit details:</u> Date:  Time of departure: Time of return:	<u>Adults on visit:</u> Agreed number needed:  Names of adults on trip:																				
<u>Number of children on visit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>																					
<u>What will the trip involve - activities / workshops etc.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>																					
<u>Planning checklist:</u> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 30px; border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Venue / tickets / workshops booked</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Coach booked - name of company: .....</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Risk assessment completed on EVOLVE</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Visit approved on EVOLVE</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Consent letters sent to parents / carers</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Consent received for every child</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Lunches ordered (if necessary)</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Pre-visit briefing completed for all adults on trip</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Pre-visit briefing completed for children</td></tr> <tr><td style="border: 1px solid black;"><input type="checkbox"/></td><td>Briefing completed for parents (for Level 3/4 trips)</td></tr> </table>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Venue / tickets / workshops booked	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coach booked - name of company: .....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk assessment completed on EVOLVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit approved on EVOLVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent letters sent to parents / carers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent received for every child	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lunches ordered (if necessary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-visit briefing completed for all adults on trip	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-visit briefing completed for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing completed for parents (for Level 3/4 trips)
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk assessment completed on EVOLVE																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Visit approved on EVOLVE																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent letters sent to parents / carers																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consent received for every child																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lunches ordered (if necessary)																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-visit briefing completed for all adults on trip																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-visit briefing completed for children																				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing completed for parents (for Level 3/4 trips)																				
<u>To be completed by EVC / Headteacher before departure:</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not approved Signature: ..... Date: .....																					

## Appendix E : Trip Evaluation form

<u>Learning objectives / outcomes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<u>Visit location and date:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<u>Visit Leader:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
<u>Number of children on visit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	<u>Number of adults on visit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

The Visit Leader should evaluate all trips post-visit. This will often best be done as a group activity with other adults involved in the visit, and should take into account feedback received from children. For Level 3 and 4 activities, an evaluation discussion should also take place with the EVC to inform future provision.

Aspect	Comments
The way the visit was organised	
Travel & transport	
Suitability of environment	
Instruction / interactions with adults	
Equipment / resources provided	

Aspect	Comments
Food and accommodation (if provided)	
How well the trip matched expectations	
Behaviour of children	
Risk management - had all hazards been identified?	
Equipment / resources provided	
Things it would be good to know next time	
How will you follow-up on this trip in class?	

**Overall, how well did the trip meet the desired learning objectives / outcomes?**

Visit Leader's name: .....  
Signed: ..... Date: .....

The trip evaluation should also be completed / attached in EVOLVE

## Appendix F : OV4 form



**FORM OV 4 (CSF4255)**

**RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

(Focus on the things over which you have control)

**Establishment:**

<b>ACTIVITY:</b>		<b>Group Leader:</b>		
<b>Visit Details:</b>		<b>Date of Visit:</b>		
<b>Assessment by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	<b>Target Date for review:</b>	
<b>Approved by:</b>		<b>Position:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Significant Hazards and Associated Risks</b> <i>Those hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people</i>	<b>Those who might be harmed</b> <i>Persons at risk from hazards identified</i>	<b>Control Measures(CM's):</b> <i>Controls, including relevant sources of guidance (e.g. Guidance from Provider, etc.). Specific CM's not included in the generic RA</i>	<b>Additional CM's required?</b> <i>If existing CM's cannot be met or circumstances have changed</i>	<b>Residual Risk Rating (H / M / L)</b>


<b>REVIEWS:</b>		
<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>COMMENTS:</b>
<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>COMMENTS:</b>
<b>DATE OF REVIEW:</b>	<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>COMMENTS:</b>



### Notes for guidance:

- Focus on *significant* hazards and associated risks over which Group Leaders / Group Members have control
- Control Measures should be simple and easy to understand
- Include reference to external guidance from providers / LA as part of Control Measures (CM's), where relevant. Also, CM's not included in the Generic Risk Assessment, briefings, actions by leaders and participants, qualifications / experience of supervisors
- Consider the key variables: **S**taffing; **T**iming; **A**ctivity; **G**roup; **E**nvironment; **D**istance from support (STAGED)
- Compile Risk Assessments with contributions from as many people concerned as practicable, including participants
- Ideally, each Risk Assessment should be no longer than one side of A4
- Ensure, as far as is appropriate, that understanding of the Risk Assessments is shared across all members of the group
- Include Additional CM's if generic CM's are insufficient, existing CM's cannot be met or circumstances change
- Review the Risk Assessments after any incident and as a matter of routine on an annual basis

### Definitions:

- **Hazard** Anything with the potential to cause harm
- **Risk** The likelihood that someone may be harmed by the hazard
- **Significant** A hazard is significant when either it may cause *serious* harm to an individual or it may harm *several* people
- **Control** Arrangements in place to reduce / manage the risk
- **Measures**

### Reducing the Risks:

- ✓ Experienced and competent leaders
- ✓ Improve briefings
- ✓ Apply stricter supervision ratios
- ✓ Separate people from the risk
- ✓ Reduce the period of exposure to the risk
- ✓ Provide PPE
- ✓ Use alternative method
- ✓ Increase training and qualification of leaders
- ✓ Specify higher competence level of participants
- ✓ Discontinue the activity

*Use your Risk Assessment process to inform your planning*

*"Clearer objectives lead to safer activities"*

## Appendix G : OV5 form



**FORM OV 5 (CSF4256)**

**INDIVIDUAL RISK ASSESSMENT & ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**

(Please attach any additional supporting information as appropriate.)

**Establishment:**

**Visit:**

<b>Name of Individual:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	

**1. Risk to self**

Please describe additional needs which need to be accommodated due to this individual taking part in the activity / project / visit. This should include potential risky behaviours, vulnerabilities, medical needs, physical limitations and other characteristics as specifically as possible.

--

**2. Circumstances, situations or times at which there is an increased risk or need for additional support. (This should also include any likely triggers)**

--

3. **Support plan and strategies for minimising risks identified above:**  
(If necessary this should include who will be responsible for providing support)

4. **Where applicable, brief details of conversations with parents / guardians and individual to support the above plan.**  
(In the event of young person taking medication, there needs to be clarity as to whether medication is to be self-administered and responsibility for its storage.)

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....