

Educational Visits Policy



Moreland Primary School and Children's Centre

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Moreland Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.
- Opportunities to build cultural capital and extend children's knowledge of a range of subjects.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Moreland Primary School:

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

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

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a process not a document. Risk assessment reduces the risks involved in any visit to an acceptable level. Risk assessments should be shared with all staff, pupils and parents/volunteers involved with the trip. There are 3 levels of risk assessment:

1 - Generic - Guidance that stays the same whatever the visit. This is covered by the Educational Visits Checklist. Moreland Primary School's Educational Visits Checklist (see Appendix 4) forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

2 - Event Specific Notes - This is for anything about the visit that is not covered by the Education Visits Checklist. Details should be recorded on the Event Specific Notes attachment which forms part of the planning process.

On EVOLVE, as well as entering the names of pupils, staff and other adults and the location/activity and transport details etc, you should also record that you have considered the following:

- Is a strategy required to manage individual pupils' needs of behaviour?
- Are there children with medical plans?
- If your first choice transport arrangements are not possible (eg tube line suspended), what would your alternative route be?
- Have you read the venue's safety/evacuation procedure (upload it if possible)?

Appendix 5 'Event Specific Notes' can be used to help you consider any other important things to do to keep children and staff safe.

3 - Ongoing - Ongoing risk assessment deals with the 'there and then'. Although pre-visits are not an absolute requirement, they are good practice but are not always possible. Even when a pre-visit has been made, the unexpected can still happen. Staff must be competent in identifying risks as they go.

Wherever, possible Evolve risk assessments must be submitted at least 2 weeks before an intended activity. Those submitted outside of this time- frame will be refused unless there are exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Head of School.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC/Head of School for checking.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but the Head of School then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

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

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is the Deputy Headteacher Sophie Eleftheriou (or Headteacher Catherine Lawrence in her absence), who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Headteacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governors are provided with information on trips and visits at the CCPS committee meetings. Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Before the Visit

- The visit leader should ensure that the pre visit checklist has been completed.
- All risk assessments and trip permissions should be completed 2 weeks in advance of the trip wherever possible.
- The visit leader should provide parents/ carers with relevant information for the trip at least 1 week in advance.

- The office should be informed 2 weeks in advance if children will be absent for the lunch period. This enables them to order packed lunches for FSM children in good time.
- Travel arrangements should be arranged and checked at least two weeks prior to the trip. It is the visit leader's responsibility to book travel tickets through the TFL website.
- It is the visit leader's responsibility to ensure that there are the appropriate number of parent/carer volunteers to safely manage the trip. It is also their responsibility to remind volunteers of the arrangements for the trip and arrange any replacement volunteers needed.
- All volunteers must be given a copy of the trip guidance in Appendix 3 before the trip and provided with a trip itinerary and contact details in case the group becomes separated.
- An up to date list of children and staff including contact numbers must be left with the school office prior to leaving on the trip.

Emergency procedures

If a child or children become separated from the group the visit leader should follow these steps:

- If the child/ children are with a volunteer then the visit leader will attempt to contact them by phone to locate them.
- A staff member will be sent to look for the child/ children (even if they are with a parent volunteer) whilst the visit leader remains with the group.
- If the child/ children have not been located within 5 minutes this will be reported to a member of the school senior leadership team and to the venue security.
- The visit leader will follow instructions from the venue security and the school senior leadership team.

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

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

Educational Visits Checklist

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

Parental Consent

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

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for planned trips and certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, local field work etc. Parents have the option of consenting online via Parent mail, or through a traditional paper consent form. Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via Parent Mail, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting via Parent Mail or through a traditional paper consent form.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play an important role in supporting staff during many educational visits. Some visits are specifically organised so that parents and their child can share the learning experience together. This is particularly the case, but not exclusively so, for some Foundation Stage and Key Stage One visits. However, for the majority of visits, parents and carers are invited to support staff in ensuring the visit runs smoothly and meets the objectives set out for the visit. See Appendix 3 for guidance for parents and carers who are supporting an educational visit. (Additional guidance may be issued for specific trips.)

Consideration is given to the appropriate number who can participate on the visit. A list of named parents who will be taking part in the visit must be compiled in advance.

Inclusion

Moreland Primary School complies with the Equality Act of 2010 in ensuring all children have access to off-site trips and visits wherever possible. We believe all children have the right to experience the benefits offered by Learning Outside the Classroom and when selecting venues and activities make every effort to ensure children can access them regardless of any SEN or disability. We will liaise with external providers where necessary to support access to venues and activities. Where a child's additional needs or behaviour places that child or others at risk the school will assess as part of the risk assessment process whether that child can attend an off-site visit. We will make every effort to make reasonable adjustments to include the child e.g. providing additional staffing, inviting the child's parent/carer to accompany them; but may make the decision that the risk outweighs the benefit of the child participating in the activity. The child's parents and carers will be made aware of this decision and the reasons behind it.

Charging / funding for visits

All trips and visits should be approved by the Head of School, who will consult with the School Business Manager around any financial costs.

We ask that parents and carers make a voluntary contribution to trips and visits wherever possible. If the school does not receive adequate voluntary contributions a trip may have to be cancelled. We aim to keep these contributions low and subsidise all trips and visits to ensure equality of access for all children.

Transport

Whatever the forms of transport used on a visit, both adults and children must be made aware of the expectations of behaviour and how this relates to safety issues. **TfL free school travel** must be booked at least 14 days in advance using the school's login details.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Staff may only use their own car if they have the consent of the Headteacher, the parents/carers of the children and have the appropriate insurance. See LA guidance for further information.

Insurance

Moreland Primary School has appropriate insurance cover through the LA for visits and additional insurance is only mandatory for overseas visits. See LA guidance for further information.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

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

These visits/activities:

- do not require explicit parental consent. Parents will be informed by text in advance.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, e.g. swimming lessons, football matches
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- Kings Square Park
- St John's Street Library
- Iron Monger Row Swimming Baths
- The Angel Shopping Area e.g. Vue Cinema
- Graham Street Park and the Canal Basin
- The Museum of London and the Barbican
- Finsbury Leisure Centre and football pitches

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

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

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

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head of School must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced 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.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.

- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A mobile phone is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry either:
 - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 3

Guidance for Parents and Carers

- Please inform the Visit Leader as early as possible of your intention to support on the visit. Do not make a commitment you are not able to keep. This may jeopardise the visit.
- When we are on a visit, we are still 'at school'. As such, the Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the children. The Visit Leader decides on matters such as route, choice of transport, lunchtimes, etc. We expect children and parents to respect the decisions and requests of the leader in charge of the visit. Please see the Visit Leader if you have any questions or issues regarding the outing.
- Be prepared. Buy all you need for the outing prior to the trip – please do not expect to be able to pop to the shops to buy a drink or to top up your Oyster Card, for example, while we are en-route to our destination.
- The Visit Leader should brief you on risk assessments, the objectives of the visit and your role in supporting these.
- Please ensure, if appropriate, you swap contact details with the visit leader.
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or unplanned stops are not allowed.
- You will not necessarily be supporting your own child or a group containing your child.
- Please stick to the agenda of the visit.
- If you do not feel comfortable with the situation you have been placed in, please speak to the Visit Leader at the first available opportunity.

We would like to thank you in advance for your support in ensuring the smooth running and the successful meeting of the intended outcomes of the visit. We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum and the overall success of these visits is often dependent on the support of parents and carers.

Thank you.

Appendix 4

Moreland Primary School Educational Visits Checklist

The questions below form part of the risk management process for educational visits. Any visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. This checklist can be used as a tool or aide-memoire to assist the EVC/visit leader in the planning process, although alternative approaches to considering the relevant issues are equally as valid.

In advance of the visit:

1. Have the intended outcomes of the visit been clearly identified? (see Section 4) yes
2. Is the visit appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the group? yes
3. Has there been suitable progression/preparation for participants prior to the visit? yes
4. Does the visit comply with any guidelines specific to your Establishment? yes
5. Does the visit comply with any specific LA guidelines? (see relevant sections) yes
6. If a member of staff is going to lead an adventurous activity, have they been 'approved' by the LA? (see Section 28) yes n/a
7. If using an external provider or tour operator, does the provider hold an LOtC Quality Badge (see www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk) or have they satisfactorily completed and returned a 'Provider Form'? (see Section 29) yes n/a
8. Are transport arrangements suitable and satisfactory? (see Section 14) yes n/a
9. If residential, have appropriate measure been taken to ensure the suitability of accommodation? (see Section 17) yes n/a
10. If the visit is overseas, have appropriate additional measures been taken to ensure the suitability of activity and safety of participants? (see Section 18) yes n/a
11. Has a pre-visit taken place? (normal procedure for most visits within the UK).
If not, have appropriate additional checks been made? yes
12. Do the adults in the party have the appropriate skills for the visit? (Check this carefully and arrange suitable training and/or briefing to clarify your expectations). yes
13. Have any adult helpers (non LA employees) been approved by the Head of Establishment as to their suitability? yes n/a
14. Is the level of staffing sufficient for there to be an appropriate level of supervision at all times? yes
15. Does the Visit Leader possess the necessary competence to lead the visit, and is he/she comfortable with their role? yes
16. Are all support staff aware of and comfortable with their roles? yes
17. Are all helpers aware of and comfortable with their roles? yes
18. If appropriate, have Event Specific Notes (ESN) been made and will these be shared with all relevant parties? (see Section 7 and ESN Form) yes

19. Is insurance cover adequate? (see Section 13) yes
20. Does at least one member of staff know the participants that are being taken away, including any behavioural traits? yes

21. Have participants been advised in advance about expectations for their behaviour?
If appropriate, are participants aware of any 'rules', and have sanctions to curb unacceptable behaviour been identified and agreed with participants and staff? yes
22. Are participants aware of the nature and purpose of the visit? yes
23. Are parents fully aware of the nature (including contingency plans), and purpose of the visit, and has consent been obtained? (see Section 9) yes
24. Have all relevant details been issued? (e.g. itinerary, kit lists, etc.?) yes n/a
25. Are staff aware of any medical needs and/or other relevant details of participants? yes
26. Has parental consent been gained for staff to administer specific drugs/injections, and if necessary have named staff received appropriate training? yes n/a
27. Are staff aware of any relevant medical conditions of other staff/helpers within the group? yes n/a
28. Does at least one responsible adult have a 'good working knowledge' of First Aid appropriate to the environment? (see Section 12) yes
29. Is a first aid kit (appropriate to the visit) available? (see Section 12) yes
30. Is there flexibility within the programme? Are there contingency plans that would be suitable in the event of changed or changing conditions, staff illness, etc. eg. 'Plan B', and have these plans been risk assessed and parental consent been obtained? yes
31. For journeys taking place outside the establishment's 'normal' hours, will an Emergency Card (Visit Leader) be with the leader, and an Emergency Card (Home Contacts) be with the designated home contacts? yes n/a
32. Are full details of the visit at the LA establishment, or recorded on EVOLVE, and if appropriate with the establishment's Emergency Contact(s)? yes
33. Are staff aware of the appropriate action to be taken in the event of accident, incident or emergency? (see Section 27) yes
34. Is a weather forecast and/or other local information necessary, and are staff able to access this information and act upon it appropriately if necessary? (see Section 19) yes n/a
35. If undertaking water-margin activities, has a copy of 'Group Safety at Water-Margins' been made available to all supervising staff in advance of the visit? (see Section 16) yes n/a
36. A mobile phone is recommended for all visits. Are you aware of the reception in the area you are visiting? yes n/a
37. Will the group need waterproof clothing, boots or other equipment? If so, are procedures in place for checking the suitability of equipment? yes n/a
38. Does any specialist equipment conform to the standards recommended by responsible agencies? yes n/a
39. Have all financial matters been dealt with appropriately? yes
40. Has the visit been approved by the Head of Establishment and EVC, and in line with Governing Body policy (where appropriate)? (see Section 3) yes
41. If residential, overseas or involving adventurous activities, has the visit been approved by the LA ? (see Section 3) yes n/a

During the visit

42. Do all staff have a list of participants/groups? + emergency contact details and an Emergency Card (Visit Leader) if out of the establishment's normal hours? yes
43. Does the establishment office have a list of the names of all participants, including adults? and if out of hours, does the home contact have these details and an Emergency Card (Home Contact)? yes
44. Do staff have sufficient funds to allow for any contingencies? yes n/a
45. Do staff have any relevant literature, work sheets, clipboards, etc.? yes n/a
46. Do staff have other items, e.g. first aid kit, + sick bags, litter sack, etc., if needed? yes
47. Are participant numbers being checked at appropriate times? yes
48. Has the group been warned of potential hazards in advance? If necessary, have specific arrangements been made to supervise these areas particularly carefully? yes n/a
49. Are participants aware of the procedure in areas where there is traffic? (e.g. if walking, is it pairs, crocodile, groups? - may participants run? - are participants aware of the procedure at road crossings? etc.) yes n/a
50. Has a clear recall system been arranged if the group is working away from you? Do participants understand this and will they be able to respond effectively? yes n/a
51. If a rendezvous for the group has been arranged after a period of time, does each participant and member of staff know exactly where and when to meet? yes n/a
52. Do participants know what action they should take if they become separated from the group? yes
53. Is on-going risk assessment being conducted, and if necessary the programme adapted to suit changed or changing circumstances (Plan B)? yes

At the end of the visit

54. Are appropriate arrangements in force for the dismissal of participants? yes
55. Has the Visit Leader reported back to the Educational Visits Coordinator? yes n/a
56. Has the group been debriefed and any relevant follow-up work completed? yes n/a
57. Have all loose ends been tied up, e.g. paperwork, finance, thank you letters, etc.? yes
58. Has the visit been evaluated, and if appropriate have notes been made of points to be considered for future visits? yes
59. Have all staff and helpers involved in the visit been thanked for their input? yes