# Educational Visits Policy

Swakeleys School for Girls

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# Contents

Contents ..... 3
1. Rationale ..... 4
2. Legislation and guidance ..... 5
3. Roles and responsibilities ..... 5
4. Planning and Preparation ..... 7
5. Inclusion ..... 8
6. Risk assessment ..... 8
7. Adult Volunteers ..... 11
8. Communication and consent ..... 11
9. Emergency procedures and incident reporting ..... 11
10. Charging and Insurance ..... 12
11. Residential visits ..... 13
12. Review ..... 14
13. Links with other policies ..... 14
Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Template ..... 15
Appendix 2: Volunteer Behaviour and Code of Conduct ..... 16

## 1. Rationale

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

The Board of Trustees recognises the importance of educational visits as a way to broaden the curriculum beyond the boundaries of the school in order to give all pupils the opportunity to experience cultural, religious, environmental, historical and sporting events locally, nationally and internationally. The Board of Trustees through this policy will encourage pupils to explore their own community and beyond and provide them with a spirit of wonder about the outside world. This forms an integral part of our approach to furthering our pupils' education and personal growth.

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

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

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

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training
- Working with the Board of Trustees to approve residential trips of more than 24 hours, overseas trips or higher risk activities.

### 3.2 The educational visits co-ordinator (EVC)

Fiona Johnson is the appointed EVC at our school. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit
- Ensure that the trip has the appropriate staff to pupil ratio
- Assess outside activity providers
- Advise the headteacher and board of trustees when they're approving trips
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Ensure adequate child protection procedures are in place
- Nominate a school contact (typically the EVC but maybe another member of the LG) and ensure that the trip leader has details and that this person has both contact and next of kin details of all adult supervisors
- Check that all elements of a trip have been thoroughly planned before giving approval (liaising with the headteacher as required)
- Evaluate all visits once complete, with the help of each trip lead, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

### 3.2 Trip lead

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

- Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers by undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment
- Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination (via EVOLVE),
- Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour
- Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others

### 3.3 Staff (including teaching and non-teaching staff)

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

- Deputise for the trip leader if and when required
- Be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities before the trip commences
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

**Staff accompanying a trip or visit should be employed by Swakeleys School for Girls. If a proposed accompanying adult is not employed by Swakeleys School for Girls then permission must be given by the EVC, Headteacher and/or the Board of Trustees.**

### 3.4 Parents and carers

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

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner

- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

### 3.5 Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips agree to:

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

### 3.6 Pupils

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

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

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

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may have their opportunity to go on a visit withdrawn. When this occurs, the curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways wherever possible.

## 4. Planning and Preparation

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

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

Initially all trips must be planned via EVOLVE. Full instructions on use of EVOLVE are available in the Trips Handbook.

To gain **outline approval** the information gathered will include:

- Purpose
- Location
- Date and time
- Participant details (year group(s) and number of pupils)
- Travel
- Cost outline
- Staffing outline

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

- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans (see below for more details)
- First aid provision
- Letter to parents/carers outlining the visit, including a section for parental consent

Further help and guidance on planning trips on EVOLVE can be found in the Trips handbook.docx

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the headteacher will seek approval of the board of trustees.

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the headteacher, and the trust board where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Each visit should be evaluated after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

## 5. Inclusion

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

If a pupil with a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

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

## 6. Risk assessment

The trip leader should carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template which can be found on our shared drive in the EVOLVE folder and in **appendix 1**, and will be approved by the EVC/headteacher. Existing risk assessments (examples available in EVOLVE folder) or those provided by the destination itself might also be used to support this process but each trip should have an individualised risk assessment so that every risk and associated support measure has been thought through thoroughly.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the EVC, headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

**A paper copy of the risk assessment should be taken on the trip by the trip leader.**

### 6.1 Staff ratios

There should be at least 1 adult for every 15 students, however individualised risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. Staffing ratios will vary depending on:

- Age of group
- Pupils with special education or medical needs
- Nature of the activities and who is responsible for pupil welfare during these activities
- Travel method

On all educational visits, we will also make sure:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed pupil groups)
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips

### 6.2 First Aid

- Appropriate first aid equipment and spare medication will be take on all trips. When outline approval is granted, welfare will be sent an automated message to make them aware that the trip is going out. It is the responsibility of the trip leader to collect and check all medications before departure.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip by the trip leader.
- Pupils are expected to carry their own medication (eg Epipen). Supervising adults hold the spare medication only. Failure to bring the correct medication may result in a pupil not going on the trip or result in the activities/freedom being limited.
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
-

### 6.3 Transport

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

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site. In the case that students travel independently or are met at an underground station in order to travel to the visit venue, consent must given by parents prior to the visit.

**6.4 Use of external organisations**

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

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

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity. It is vital the trip leader is fully informed of who has responsibility for the pupils and when.

**6.5 Trip Mobile Phone**

The trip leader must take a trip mobile phone on any trip of visit that leaves the school site.
The number should be shared with the pupils prior to the trip/visit leaving.

**6.6 Remote Supervision ("free time")**

In order to encourage independence, there may be times on a visit when pupils are supervised remotely.
The time and location of this must form part of the planning stage of the visit. Pupils should remain in groups of at least three and the visit leader should check that all pupils have the trip mobile number. The visit leader remains responsible for pupils even when not in direct contact with them.

Parents should be told, before the visit, whether any form of remote supervision will take place.

**6.7 Safety in and around water**

**The DFE strongly advises that swimming and paddling or otherwise entering the water in the sea or rivers or lakes should never be allowed as an impromptu activity.**

Any planned activity in and on water must be classified as an adventurous activity at the planning stage on EVOLVE. This will ensure that extra health and safety checks are in place.

Consideration should also be taken in the risk assessment when an activity occurs close to water.

## 7. Adult Volunteers

In exceptional circumstances, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips.

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed at least 2 weeks ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance in writing. They will also be asked to confirm they agree with the expected behaviour. See **appendix 2** for our volunteer code of conduct for educational visits.

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

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (i.e. when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

## 8. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit. Communication will be via letter and information provided will include the date, travel method and times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will communicate:

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

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

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

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

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

## 9. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury

- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

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

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

1 member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

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

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

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

All visits and trips should be evaluated using EVOLVE once they have been concluded. This evaluation should take into account from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

## 10. Charging and Insurance

We will follow our school's charging and remissions policy at all times.

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

Where necessary, we ask for a voluntary contribution to the costs of educational visits, but this will be entirely optional (except for residential visits) and will not affect pupils' ability to take part fully in the trip. All transactions must be made through ParentPay.

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

The cover provided for educational visits is by the school's insurers, the RPA(Risk Protection Arrangement). Further details can be obtained from the Finance Office.

## 11. Residential visits

The headteacher, together with Board of Trustees, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

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

- Staff have received any necessary training
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip

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

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

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the visit leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, should consider whether such pupils should be sent home early. Parents and pupils should be told in advance of the visit about the procedures for dealing with misbehaviour and how a pupil will be returned home and who will meet the cost.

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

## 12. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the EVC. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full Board of Trustees.

## 13. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Charging policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions and medication in school policy
- SEND policy
- Equality policy
- Accessibility Plan

**Please note: Guidance for planning and running trips use of EVOLVE and suggestions of contributions to costs can be found in the Trips handbook.docx**

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Template**

**SWAKELEYS SCHOOL RISK ASSESSMENT**

**Date of assessment:**
**Date(s) of trip:**
**Trip leader:**
**Trip destination(s):**

| HAZARD | RISK | WHO IS AT RISK | CONTROL MEASURES | ACTION WHO: | ACTION WHEN: | TICK IF ALL IN PLACE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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Once this has been completed it should be uploaded to your trip form on EVOLVE.

## Appendix 2: Volunteer Behaviour and Code of Conduct

This code of conduct sets out the expected behaviour for volunteers attending school trips. Volunteers should read and sign this form, showing that they understand and agree to follow this code while acting on behalf of the school. If you feel you cannot agree with this code, please speak to the EVC at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from the trip.

Volunteers agree to:

- Remain professional and respectful with staff and pupils at all times
- Listen to and act on instructions from staff
- Dress appropriately for the trip
- Arrive at the agreed time and remain until the trip is concluded and they are told they may leave by staff
- Act responsibly and demonstrate good behaviour to pupils
- Report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a pupil to staff as soon as possible

Volunteers agree **not** to:

- Exchange contact details with pupils unless told to by a member of staff
- Engage in physical contact with pupils unless appropriate or required
- Share inappropriate personal information (i.e. personal beliefs, religious views, relationship status)
- Use demeaning, offensive, abusive or insensitive language
- Smoke, drink alcohol, or use drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) for the duration of the visit
- Allow themselves to be left alone with a pupil unless previously agreed with staff
- Take photographs or record pupils

As a volunteer, I have read and agree to this code of conduct, and will follow the rules set out above.

**Signed:**

**Date:**