



Educational Visits policy

Date approved: July 2022

Date for review: July 2025

Signature..... (Chair of Governors)

Print name.....Date:

Rigby Hall Special School EVC Policy

1. Introduction

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who help plan, organise and run school trips off site for their pupils.

An off-site visit is defined as each and every occasion that an individual pupil or groups of pupils leave the site of Rigby Hall School.

“Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn.”

Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto (LOtC)

All off-site visits should have clearly defined, stated and valuable purpose.

The staff at Rigby Hall School believe that Off-site visits benefit the pupil and bring learning to life. They also reflect our ethos of developing the whole child through:

- Providing a bridge to higher order learning.
- Developing skills and independence in a widening range of environments.
- Making learning more engaging and relevant to young people.
- Developing active citizens.
- Nurturing creativity.
- Providing opportunities for informal learning through play.
- Stimulating, inspiring and improving motivation.
- Developing the ability to deal with uncertainty.
- Providing challenge and the opportunity to take acceptable levels of risk.
- Improving young people’s attitudes to learning.
- Promoting a beneficial use of leisure time through an awareness of community opportunities locally and, possibly, further afield.
- Encouraging a respect for, and care of, the environment and the community.
- Increasing the pupils’ confidence, independence and sense of responsibility, particularly towards their own safety and the safety of others.
- Develop relationships between pupils and between the pupils and the staff.
- Developing the ability of the pupil to live and work with others.

2. Link Statement to Worcestershire County Council Guidance

Rigby Hall School Visit’s Policy follows the Employers Guidance supplied on the OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisers’ Panel Employer Guidance) Website which has been adopted by Worcestershire County Council as its employer guidance.

www.oeapng.info

With current restrictions due to Coronavirus all trip leaders should consider the most recent government guidance when planning and running an Educational Visit.

<https://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/4-4k-coronavirus/>

All visits will also be in line with other school policies such as Safeguarding including Child Protection, Inclusion Policy, WCC Charging and Remissions Policy, Health and Safety Policy and the Teaching and Learning Policy. These documents and other reference material can be found on the staff share drive.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

The employer is Worcestershire County Council

Role of the Governing Body:

The specific role of the Governing Body is laid out in the www.oeapng.info guidance.

The Governing Body should ensure that:

- It has a clear understanding of whether or not it is the employer of establishment staff and is fully aware of an employer's responsibilities under health and safety law.
- There is guidance in place - either its own or having formally adopted the Employer's guidance (e.g. that of a local authority)
- Robust systems support implementation of the guidance.
- They challenge in order to be clear about how outdoor learning and visits lead to a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness.
- There is an establishment visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures – including emergency procedures – and it supports the principles of inclusion.
 - The involvement of the Governing Body in the visit approval process is clear and approval and notification procedures operate effectively.
- There is a trained EVC who meets the employer's requirements, with a sufficient time allowance to fulfil the role and training to support the planning and delivery of visits and outdoor learning.
- There are monitoring procedures in place, activity is evaluated, good practice is shared and any issues are followed up to comply with statutory and employer's requirements.

Role of the Head Teacher:

The Head Teacher has nominated an EVC Mrs Samantha Hayward, there are also two Deputy EVC's, Shelley Hughes and Ben Homer.

Heads should:

- Have an establishment visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures that conform to and follow the requirements and recommendations of their employer's guidance.
- Be aware that the appointment of an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is critical to the implementation of this guidance. The EVC should be appropriately competent to their role and should be allowed sufficient time to fulfil the role, including attendance at OEAP-approved training. Heads may choose to designate themselves as EVC. Where the Head has not designated a named member of staff, then the functions of the EVC will automatically be attached to those of the Head

- Keep the Governing Body informed about the delivery of visits and outdoor learning and their contribution towards establishment effectiveness. This could be as a standing item in the Heads report to the Governing Body.
- Where needed, have access to expert advice such as from an accredited outdoor education adviser.

The EVC will:

- Have an understanding of the Manifesto for LOTC and the supporting rationale
- Have attended such EVC training as required by the employer - this is essential for the EVC to understand the links between good practice and the legal requirements of Health and Safety / Employment Law as set out in the employer's guidance.
- Ensure that visits meet WCC guidance requirements.
- Ensure that the head teacher, visit leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits, receive training at an appropriate level to ensure that WCC guidance and establishment procedures are properly understood.
- Make sure that this policy is kept up to date
- Support the head with approval and other decisions;
- Ensure that visits are led by competent and confident leaders. Refer to WCC definitions.
- Ensure that issues regarding succession planning are taken into account
- Ensure that assistant leaders are competent to carry tasks they are assigned
- Monitor visit leader planning and risk management, as well as sample monitoring of visits
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders including voluntary helpers;
- Ensure that DBS checks are in place as necessary.
- Ensure that visit leaders are kept updated regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Check that 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 emergency arrangements include access to all relevant paperwork including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party (including staff)
- Ensure that individual visits are reviewed and evaluated and that this process includes 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 updating, revalidation and other training events

4. Procedures for visit leaders:

All staff should refer to the Protocol for Educational Visits document to check the required procedures before planning and preparing an off-site visit. This guidance highlights the forms that need to be completed and submitted to the EVC to be signed. (Appendix 1)

A copy of the protocol and the paperwork required for planning an off-site visit can be found in the EVC Folder on Staff Share.

On return to school the visit leader should evaluate the visit and return a visit evaluation form to the EVC. Any changes to risk assessments should be made if an issue arises on a regular trip.

5. Risk management and assessment

The off-site visit will require a visits form to be completed which indicates the staff and pupils going on the trip. Consideration for transport, the kitchen, the minibus and any pupils not going must be indicated, alongside the objective of the trip and links to the curriculum.

These must be submitted to the EVC, alongside a generic and specific risk assessment for the trip and the pupils going, at least a week before the trip is due. Examples of risk assessments can be found on the Risk Resources CD section of the EVC folder on staff share.

A signed copy of the forms will be held in a folder by the EVC for reference but can also be stored electronically in the EVC file of staff share for reference.

The LA guidance (Through OEAP) sets clear expectations on its requirements regarding the management of risks in the context of visits and off-site activities. All off-site visits require a copy of the generic and specific risk assessment forms to be completed. The risk assessment and management process should be:

- Simple
- Proportional
- Suitable
- Sufficient
- Manageable

These principles should be refined and should concentrate on managing risk by:

- Being an integral part of the overall planning process for the visit
- Ensuring leaders have the experience and competence to manage the process positively and successfully
- Providing confidence in the process for those involved
- Focusing the users and recognising their competence
- Building upon current good practices within Rigby Hall School
- Enabling this process to be collaborative
- Ensuring all those that need to know, do know
- Concentrating on significant hazards in order to assess the risks
- Ensuring the control measures are suitable and sufficient for the leader and the individuals within the group, and responsibilities have been defined.

The process will be realistic and effective when it:

- Is flexible by not insisting on a rigid format
- Recognises the experience and professionalism of leaders in applying relevant policies and procedures
- Provides sufficient detail to give confidence in the event

- Provides evidence that the process has been followed
- Allows leaders, children and young adults with varied experience, motivation and training to be treated according to their needs.

The process is broken down in to three levels:

- **Generic** – general hazards and control measures associated with the activity.
- **Specific** – unique to each trip, takes in to account the venue / site, the individuals within the group and specific needs.
- **Dynamic** – professional judgement in response to changing circumstances. It is critical that control measures are monitored and confirmed or adapted as required. It is these on-going decisions that will determine the safety of the group.

Risk assessment terminology:

- **HAZARD** – Anything that can cause harm
- **RISK** – The possibility of someone being harmed by the Hazard

The level of risk needs to be low in order for the trip to go ahead.

F2 forms

To be completed and submitted to B and S Educational Systems and Training Ltd for the visits meeting any of the following criteria:

- Involves a journey more than 50 miles away from the school.
- Involves a residential or overnight stay.
- Involves a hazardous environment.
- Involves water.
- Involves an adventurous activity.
- F2 trips need to be submitted to the B and S at least 4 weeks before the event.

Regular visits.

Weekly or regular visits such as swimming do not require a new risk assessment every week but any change in staff needs to be recorded on the Visits form and they must sign to say they have read the risk assessment.

Parental Communication and Consent.

The school has a copy of the generic parental consent form for all off-site visits within a 20-mile radius of Rigby Hall School. These are renewed on a yearly basis.

It is good practice that communication of any off-site trips that are extraordinary and not routine (for example, theatre, farm, museum etc.) consent is expressly sought.

Parental consent forms to be completed for Visits meeting any of the following criteria:

- Involves a journey more than 20 miles away from school.
- Involves adventurous activities that are extraordinary and not routine.

6. Monitoring

It is the role of the EVC to approve the trips, she may seek further approval from the Headteacher if required, i.e.: for trips over 50 miles, involving water or adventurous activities.

The EVC and the Headteacher will audit a trip at least once a term by visiting the venue and observing the visit. Any feedback will be given to staff and recorded on the evaluation form.

The Head Teacher will report to Governors about off-site visits, the numbers and types at the curriculum committee and through the Head Teacher's report.

The EVC attends several trips as a driver and moderates the staff and how they run the trips.

All staff attend church and are used to supporting one another with the smooth running of these activities.

Staff in Phases work collaboratively to plan visits off site. This ensures peer monitoring of the off-site visit, planning, implementation and evaluation.

7. External providers

A Provider means any third-party person or organisation contracted to organise and/or deliver all or part of a visit or activity, and may include support with supervision.

A Facility is a venue or resource, which will form part of a visit but where the Establishment Leadership Team will lead and deliver any activities. For example: visiting museums and galleries, theme parks, theatres when the venue does not provide teaching or instruction to the group.

When choosing a suitable provider, you should consider the following questions:

- Do the values and ethos of the provider match your expectations?
- Can the programme be tailored to fulfil the learning outcomes of your group?
- What provision will be made for any special needs?
- Is there a clear understanding about the responsibility for supervision at all times during the visit?
- What are the respective roles of provider staff and your staff?
- How flexible is the programme to meet changing circumstances?
- To what extent will you be able to involve the provider in the evaluation of the visit's objectives?

It is important to check whether the provider holds the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge (LOtC) as this is the easiest way to confirm that quality and safety has been externally accredited. To check a provider's accreditation status go to:

<http://lotcqualitybadge.org.uk>.

If a provider does not hold a suitable accreditation which covers all aspects of their provision, then you must use other means of gaining assurances about relevant aspects of their operation including:

- Insurance.

- Compliance with legal requirements.
- Health, safety and emergency policies and procedures.
- Use of vehicles.
- Staff competence.
- Safeguarding.
- Accommodation.
- Sub-contracting.

Where the visit involves certain adventure activities, within scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, then the provider is required by law to hold a licence from the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA).

For details and to check a provider's licence details go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala/>.

It is good practice to ask the provider for any information that would support your trip and your planning. This may include copies of risk assessments, photographs, maps, descriptions of the activities.

8. Induction, training, apprenticeship and succession planning.

It is the aim of Rigby Hall School to ensure that all staff are trained as an Educational Visits Leader, in order for them to be able to contribute to the visit to the best of their ability.

New staff, supply staff and volunteers will be inducted on off-site visits by the visit leader who will explain the risk assessment and their expectations for the trip. They will not be left alone with a group of pupils and will work alongside a trained Visits Leader.

Staff will attend Visit Leaders Training (VLT) provided by B and S Educational Systems Training whom the school has an SLA with. The EVC will book staff on to this course and monitor any revalidation requirements. This record is held both by the EVC and centrally on the training log. Revalidation is due every 4 years.

The training includes the laws behind running off-site visits, the benefits and the risks as well as training on writing risk assessments. The training materials for this course, including the booklet and a power point on risk assessments are held in the EVC file on staff share.

As all staff are trained, this ensures that there is succession planning for trips, however where there are new staff in school it is identified that they need training and this will be organised as soon as practicably possible.

9. Volunteers

- A 'regular' volunteer should have been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- A volunteer **should not** be appointed a Visits Leader.
- A volunteer should always be supervised by Rigby Hall school staff.
- A parent can be a volunteer on an individual basis and doesn't need a DBS. They will be supervised by Rigby Hall School staff at all times and will not be given a group to look after unsupervised.

- All volunteers should be made aware of their roles and responsibilities prior to the trip.

10. Emergency procedures and incident reporting.

Emergency contact training has been undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team, office staff and site manager. In the event of an emergency the following procedures take place.

- There should be a 24/7 emergency contact for all visits.
- There are three emergency contact numbers for each visit. Tracey Smith, Samantha Hayward and Shelley Hughes.
- In the event of an emergency during the school day the Visit Leader should contact the school and speak to the Head Teacher or in their absence the Deputy.
- In the event of an emergency during after school activities or a residential the Visit Leader should contact the nominated emergency contact number. This will be Tracey Smith, Samantha Hayward and Shelley Hughes mobile numbers.
- For all after school and residential visits, the visits leader should leave a copy of the relevant emergency contact details with the office and the emergency contact. These should include medical and next of kin information regarding staff as well as pupils.
- In the case of a critical incident the EVC and Head Teacher will contact the following numbers.
- **B and S Appointed Adviser (see B&S Emergency Contact document) Bill Taylor tel: 01239 654571, 07890 316228, 01239 654102. Stewart Puttick tel: 01608 730557, 07812 905419**

Any incidents that occur would be recorded on the evaluation sheet and on Scholarpack if it is a behaviour incident, Cority if an accident, injury or near miss and My Concern if a safeguarding incident.

11. Codes of Behavioural Conduct.

All pupils need to know the Codes of Behavioural Conduct before participating in an off-site visit. Expectations of the pupil's behaviour should be clearly explained to both the pupil and their parents so that there is a clear understanding of the expectations and any sanctions that may occur if the code is breached.

Behaviour plans will be taken on the visit and any reward charts or behaviour supports will be available for the child. It will be planned in the risk assessment if there may need to be a pupils collected from a trip.

Mobile phones will not be allowed on residential trips as these can pose a safeguarding risk. Young Adults in Post 16 will be allowed mobile phones on their trips to aid independence work.

12. Inclusion

The LA guidance promotes the Principles of Inclusion as an issue to be addressed for all visits. These should ensure:

- An entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification.

It is unlawful to:

- Treat a disabled child or young person less favourably
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at substantial disadvantage without justification.

13. Insurance

Rigby Hall School's insurance is organised by Worcestershire County Council. Any trips that would need additional insurance would be sourced as part of the trip. i.e.: a sports tour abroad.

14. Finance

Rigby Hall School will ask for a voluntary contribution towards trips that cover the costs. If a pupil is unable to afford the trip, the trip will go ahead if the school can subsidise the trip from curriculum budgets or through the pupil premium as appropriate. Subject leaders have been asked to plan for trips for their curriculum and budget for them to go ahead.

Payments can be made through ParentPay where they will be monitored by the finance team and through the School Business Manager.

Appendix 1.

Protocol for Educational Visits.

1: Investigate the trip and how it links to the pupils' learning. Identify costs, distance, needs for staffing etc.

2: Speak to Phase Leader about logistics i.e.: staffing, timings, impact on the rest of the Phase. Assistant head for Phase to sign front cover with staffing changes and impact on feeds for tube fed pupils.

E mail Sam Hayward and Tracey Smith with the prospective trip and the date. Book the minibus.

3: Complete forms, including the staffing.

SAGED Planner, EVC form, Generic Risk Assessment, Specific Risk Assessment.

EVC form – states all checks have been made including staffing, naming pupils, date(s), time(s), whether lunches are required and ordered, minibus ordered.

Generic risk assessment is the basic one that covers transport to and from to the venue, emergency procedures etc., weather.

Specific risk assessment covers specific children and their needs **AND** specific issues related to the venue i.e.: standing up on a ride at Alton Towers, going near the fire at the blacksmith at the Black Country Museum or going near water at a local park.

4: Submit the forms to Sam Hayward in paper copy, not stapled together, at least one week before the trip in order to be processed. Send letter to Tracey Smith to be checked, then to the office to be sent out to parents.

5: Once the form is processed it will be returned to you with Sam Haywards signatures on, this must be photocopied for the pack for **ALL** members of staff on the trip. They must have all read and signed the risk assessments before going on the trip.

6: Order staff details and pack from the office. Show them the approved EVC form Signed by Sam Hayward to prove that the trip has been authorised.

7: On the day: Collect the packs from the office. These packs **MUST** be signed out by the visit lead, with the number of packs taken.

8: On return: Visit lead **MUST** sign the packs back in to the office.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to GDPR all data taken off site must be signed in and out by the Visits leader as per the Data Protection policy. Failure to adhere to policy may result in management guidance, restriction of offsite visits and ultimately disciplinary procedures. Please see the Data Protection Policy on the school website for further details.