

Thorndown Pre-School

Educational Visits Policy

Our aspiration is that Thorndown Primary will be an outstanding school.

We value and respect everyone in our community and work as a team to:

- Provide learning experiences which support and inspire high achievement for all ;
- Ensure a caring, safe and welcoming environment;
- Promote co-operative and responsible attitudes to make a positive contribution;
- Actively encourage independence and confidence to thrive in a changing world.

Approved at Learning & Development committee meeting

1 Introduction

- 1.1** All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.
- 1.2** At Thorndown Primary School we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, the school provides a rich and varied programme of opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom (LOTIC), within the school, the local area and further afield. The programme of visits is structured and progressive to gradually develop young peoples' confidence, independence, responsibility and specific learning objectives.
- 1.3** Thorndown Primary School acknowledges the many benefits of learning outside the classroom and is committed to supporting educational visits and activities that enrich the learning opportunities of children and young people. This Policy aligns with Cambridgeshire County Council Policy for Educational Visits. None of the guidance material is reproduced here but can be accessed via the embedded web links.
- 1.4** All school staff will be made aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed.

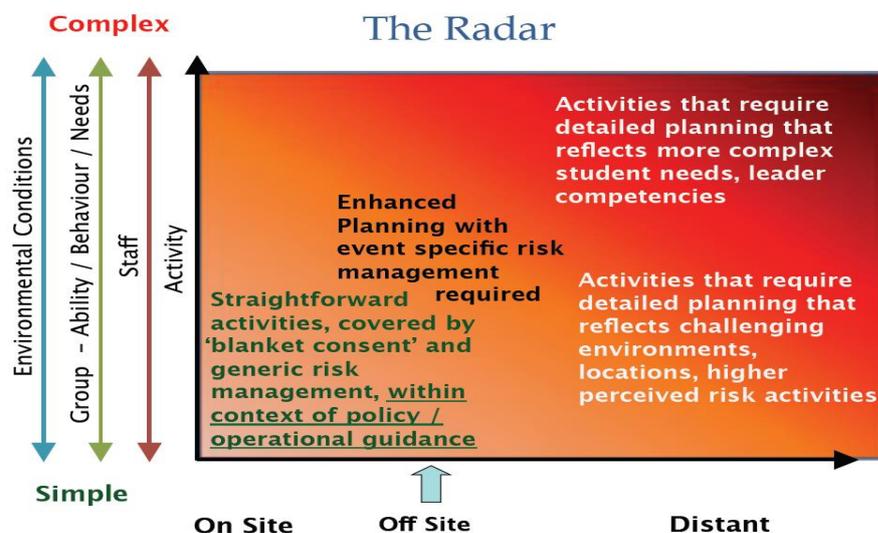
2 Organisation & Roles

- 2.1** [All roles](http://www.oeapng.info) are clearly defined on the National Guidance website, www.oeapng.info
Roles are defined as Visit Leader, Assistant Leaders, Volunteers, Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), Head Teacher, Governing Body and Employer. There is specific guidance and information for each above role and relevant documents.
Within the school, all roles are covered and managed by staff and the Governing Body.
- 2.2** The Educational Visit Coordinators are responsible for ensuring visits are approved as necessary. The EVCs have received relevant training in order to:
- grant verbal permission that a leader may plan a visit after deciding that the timetabling and ethos of the visit are acceptable;
 - check and approve that the planning and risk management for visits follows employer policy and guidance, and to liaise with the LA as required; and
 - ensure that there is sample monitoring of visits

- 2.3 The EVCs will ensure that Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained as required and specifically competent to carry out the responsibilities allocated to them for all visits. Visit Leaders will have over-all charge of the visits they lead, which will effectively be supervised with an appropriate level of staffing.
- 2.4 This school follows the advice on consent and does not require consent for visits that take place during the school day. Full information must be given to parents/ carers. Visits that last beyond the school day require specific consent; the level of detail of that consent will vary according to the visit.

3 Procedures

- 3.1 Staff wishing to plan and undertake a visit (prospective Visit Leaders) should first seek permission from an EVC to plan a visit. This should normally be within four months of the visit.
- 3.2 LOTC/ offsite visits fit into one of three Zones. The Radar Diagram below is used to define a range of activities that fall in Zone 1, 2 and 3. These define the level of planning and approval needed.
- 3.3 The School has defined the Zones for visits in consultation with the EVCs and staff, following appropriate training and advice from the Outdoor Education Adviser. If staff are unsure about a visit, whether because it is a visit that is new to the school, or the Visit Leader has not previously taken part in the visit, then the visit rises into the next Zone up for further guidance and planning.
- 3.4 All activities and visits will be carefully risk assessed, taking into account the distance from school, complexity and specific needs of the groups taking part. An EVC will be asked to declare that the Visit Leader and staff are competent to supervise the visit.



Zone 1: Local regular visits

These are visits which are regular, local and straightforward to organise. The school has prepared risk assessments for these regular visits, but it is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to ensure that these documents are amended, if required, because of changes in circumstances. These changes need to be recorded and approved by the EVC.

Activities which this school includes in Zone 1 are: outdoor education within the school grounds, regular local walks close to school, eg the post box, swimming visits, St Ivo, visits to religious buildings within St Ives, St Ives library and regular PE fixtures. If an activity is a one off, then this will be considered a Zone 2 activity. The needs of the children involved, eg younger children or those with SEN, may require such activities to be considered Zone 2. (The EVCs will advise.)

Zone 2: ‘Normal Visits’

These visits are the majority of this school’s visits. There will be aspects of complexity that require careful planning.

All visits in Zone 2 are required to be planned and logged on Evolve, and will be approved by the EVC (Deputy Head). Advice on these visits can be provided by the Outdoor Education Adviser. Approval for visits of greater complexity may require pre-approval before undertaking detailed planning and the EVCs should be consulted.

Visits that this school includes in Zone 2 are: visits to religious buildings within St Ives and further afield, St Ives Library, Norris Museum, Cambridge Art Trail, visit, Fitzwilliam Museum, Flag Fen, Duxford Air Museum and the Chess Championships

Zone 3: Adventure / Abroad and complex visits

These visits include residential trips and require specific approval at School level and the approval of the Outdoor Education Adviser. These must be entered into the Evolve system, and submitted to the Adviser at least 4 weeks before the departure date. The adviser approves visits on behalf of the employer.

Visits that this school includes in Zone 3 are: Grafham Water, Burwell House residential visit, Hilltop adventurous residential visit.

3.5 Further information about procedures can be found in Appendix 1.

4. Risk Assessment

4.1 The school follows the guidelines on Risk Management in the LA Guidance. The risk assessment should identify significant risks and take measures to control these, through proper planning by staff leading the visit.

4.2 A risk assessment must be undertaken prior to all educational visits and off-site activities. It is the responsibility of the Visit/ Activity Leader to complete the risk assessment, and this must be submitted to an EVC for approval at least two weeks in advance. The risk assessment must include the SEN/medical needs of the specific group of children participating.

4.3 The school has a standard format for risk assessment. Risk assessments should be completed and saved in the risk assessment folder on the school's network. These can then be amended when further visits are organised. All adults accompanying the visit should be given a copy of the risk assessment and made fully aware of their responsibilities.

4.4 The Visit Leader will ensure that they have read and understood the risk assessment of external providers, and these are shared with Assistant Leaders and volunteers.

5 Pre-visits

5.1 Staff will research the suitability of the venue and that the provision will meet the intended learning outcomes with groups' needs being met. The Visit Leader is required to undertake a pre-visit if visiting somewhere new.

6 Group Management & ratio of adults to pupils

6.1 With the exception of EYFS, there are no statutory adult to child ratios. School follows the OEAP National Guidance which states that: Staffing ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment. It is not possible to set down definitive staff/participant ratios for a particular age group or activity.

6.2 Decisions about the staffing and supervision will take into account:

- The nature and duration of the visit and the planned activities;
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place, including distance from school;
- The nature of the group, including the number of young people and their age, level of development and needs (behavioural, medical, emotional and educational);
- Staff competence and experience;
- The consequence of a member of staff being indisposed, particularly where they will be the sole leader with a group for any significant time.

- 6.3** The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing. The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be higher than the legal minimum (for children aged three and over in early years settings either 1:8 or 1:13 and 1:30 in Reception).
- 6.4** When making decisions about group management and ratios, a useful framework for assessing requirements for ratios and effective supervision is **SAGE**:
- **Staffing:** who is needed/available? The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience.
 - **Activities to be undertaken:** what do you want the group to do and what is possible?
 - **Group characteristics:** prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, gender, any specific or medical/dietary needs.
 - **Environment:** indoors or out; a public space or restricted access; urban, rural or remote; quiet or crowded; within the establishment grounds, close to the establishment or at a distance; and the ease of communications between the group and base. Do not overlook environments to be passed through between venues. For residential visits consider the accommodation and surrounding area. For outdoor environments, consider remoteness, the impact of weather, water levels and ground conditions. Consider the implications of current guidance about avoiding infection during an epidemic.
- 6.5** The School's inclusion policy and behavior standards will be applied to all visits.
- 6.6** Further information about group management can be found in Appendix 1.

7. Voluntary Help

- 7.1** At Thorndown Primary School, we are aware that many educational visits could not take place without the goodwill of volunteer helpers. Volunteers will normally be people well-known to the school as either parents or governors.
- 7.2** Volunteers will be told that they have the responsibility to follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and that the Visit Leader retains overall responsibility.
- 7.3** The school will appoint volunteer helpers as far in advance of the visit as and at least two weeks prior to the visit. This will be organised by the Visit Leader or an EVC, which will be agreed at the initial planning meeting.
- 7.4** The school retains the right to make the final decision as to which volunteers accompany a visit as not all volunteers may be suitable or competent.

- 7.5** If a leader is the parent of a young person taking part in a visit, there is the potential for them to be distracted by the needs of their own child, rather than looking to the needs of the whole group. This could compromise group management, particularly if there is a serious incident. The potential to be distracted can be avoided if a parent is not allocated a leadership role with direct responsibility for their own child. Sometimes this may not be possible (e.g. when a class teacher has their own child in their class). In this case consideration should be given to other ways to manage the risk, for example by ensuring that other leaders are available.
- 7.6** The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring that each volunteer has the information they need, knows precisely what their role is and understands that they have a responsibility to carry out that role.
- 7.7** All volunteers accompanying a residential visit will obtain a DBS check via the school. On all visits, only those volunteers who have received a DBS check will be allowed to spend any time on their own with a group of children. Volunteers without an enhanced DBS check must, when with children, remain in the company of another adult who does have one.

8. Transport

- 8.1** Travel does not have to be merely a means to an end; it can make a major contribution to a visit's learning opportunities. In deciding where to go and how travel, staff will consider factors such as cost, convenience and safety, and factors around health benefits and environmental impact of travel.
- 8.2** Travel time shall be taken into consideration by the Visit Leader when visits are planned. We will generally aim to plan visits with a maximum journey time of approx. 1 hour (less for younger children). However, on occasion, staff may feel that the educational value of a more distant location makes a longer journey worthwhile.
- 8.4** If coaches are used, the EVCs will ensure that the company is reputable and meets required standards. Seat belts must be provided on all seats and each child will wear a seat belt whilst travelling. The Visit Leader is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of the children whilst they are travelling. The school must ensure that there are sufficient supervisory staff, and that they are positioned through the coach to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children whilst travelling.
- 8.5** Public transport can also be used, including buses for local journeys, either as private hire or public use. An increased adult/pupil ratio must be considered and close supervision of the children must be ensured.
- 8.6** Staff will not be allowed to use their private cars to transport children, unless they are accompanied by another approved adult. They must ensure that their care is safe (holds a valid MOT certificate) and that they hold appropriate insurance.

- 8.7** There are occasions when parents provide transport to or from a venue, for example, for sporting events. Parents must provide copies of their driving licence, insurance and MOT certificate.
- 8.8** General transport OEAP guidance can be found [here](#).
- 8.9** OEAP National Guidance regarding the use of private cars can be **found** [here](#).

.9. Emergency Procedures

- 9.1** This policy integrates into the School's Critical Incident Plan which addresses all critical incidents.
- 9.2** Visit Leaders must carry a school phone.
- 9.3** All staff on a visit will carry a copy of the emergency contact card (from CCC). In the event of an emergency during an offsite visit, the Visit Leader, or other member of school staff will phone the school office or member of SLT.
- 9.4** The EVCs and SLT will have access to the Critical Incident Plan.

10. Evaluation

- 10.1** Following the return of a visit which has been logged on Evolve, staff should complete an evaluation on Evolve to aid future plans.

11. Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The governing body does this by:

- taking into serious consideration any complaints regarding educational visits from parents, staff or pupils; and
- reviewing this policy every two years.