



**Moulsham**

**Junior School**

# **Educational Visits Policy**

Ratified by governors: February 2017  
Next review: Spring 2021

## **Moulsham Junior School Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy**

At Moulsham Junior School we believe that children's education is enhanced by visits to places which are relevant to their studies. This policy outlines the school's approach to organising educational visits.

Each year the school arranges a number of activities that take place off the school site, usually within school hours but occasionally out of school hours. All activities support the aims of the school, enriching the curriculum and making learning meaningful and relevant to our pupils.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs such as music, art, ICT, gardening, sports
- School teams – such as Cross Country, Tag Rugby etc
- Regular nearby visits such as walking to Christ Church, Chelmsford Museum, Chelmsford Library, Tesco's etc
- Day visits for particular year groups to venues such as Kentwell Hall, Colchester Castle, Colchester Zoo etc.
- Residential visits which currently are to The Forest of Dean for Year 6 and to Mersea Outdoors for Year 4 respectively. Details of these trips are presented to the Governing Body who consider them before agreeing to the visit taking place.

Moulsham Junior School takes the health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff very seriously. We take reasonable steps as stated in the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974. This policy has been designed in line with the Department for Education (DfE) and Health & Safety Executive (HSE)'s guidance and details our responsibilities for pupils whilst out on school trips, visits and activities. It is essential that staff contemplating or organising any school trip or visit should before doing so read this policy in conjunction with the OEAP Nation Guidance – Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-Site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom

[www.oeapng.info/guidance-by-role](http://www.oeapng.info/guidance-by-role)

### **Authorisation – Legal Responsibilities**

All schools are required to appoint an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

Roles and responsibilities are identified as follows:

### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body will be kept informed of all visits and formally authorise residential visits or those involving outdoor and adventurous activities. Governors will ensure that visits are planned in accordance with the school's policy and that suitable and sufficient emergency procedures are in place. At Moulsham Junior School the Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of non-residential offsite visits to the Headteacher and EVC.

**Headteacher:**

The Headteacher will:

- Be assured that the EVC and all visit leaders, supporting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated.
- Designate a suitable member of staff as the EVC and ensure that the designated person meets employer requirements, including undertaking EVC Training.
- Ensure that suitable child protection procedures are in place, including the delegation of the vetting, at an appropriate level, of all voluntary helpers to the Finance and HR Officer.
- Assign sufficient time for staff to organise visits properly and provide opportunities for evaluating them with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any incident and to inform the operation of future visits.
- Ensure appropriate insurance arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that appropriate emergency procedures are in place in case of a major incident and details related to day visits (including personal details of both participants and staff) are accessible at all times to a designated emergency contact to ensure that parents can be informed in the event of a serious incident.
- Be aware of the need to obtain best value and ensure proper procedures are in place to account for the finances of all visits.
- Where charges are made to parents, ensure these are within legal limits.
- Oversee the work of the EVC in monitoring planning for visits and completion of risk assessments to the required standards.
- Ensure that serious incidents are reported to the LA as required by their guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

The headteacher has nominated Mrs Fran Humm as Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and the Governing Body has approved this appointment based on her experience, aptitude and training.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)**

The EVC will:

- Work with the Headteacher to approve plans and risk assessments for visits.
- Undertake regular update training as recommended by the OEAP and ensure that learning outside the classroom meets guidance requirements.
- Ensure all educational visits meet the employer's and school's requirements.
- Assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff.
- Ensure all risk assessments meet requirements.
- Organise training and induction.
- Ensure that parents are kept fully informed and give relevant consent.
- Organise emergency arrangements.
- Keep records of visits, accidents or incident reports.
- Review and monitor practice.
- Keep up-to-date with changes to national and local educational visits advice and review school policy and procedures in light of this.
- Have an understanding of how learning outside the classroom can support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people, and raise achievement.

- Ensure that preliminary visits have been made to new locations and, where the visit involves a third party provider, that appropriate assurances have been obtained.

### **The Visit Leader**

All Visit Leaders must have appropriate experience to lead a visit. The Visit Leader will:

- Liaise with the EVC when planning visits.
- Ensure that for residential visits an information meeting is arranged for parents at least 2 terms in advance of the planned visit.
- Complete a risk assessment using the Evolve website and submit to the EVC for approval at least 2 weeks prior to the visit date. For residential visits this risk assessment should be completed prior to the information meeting for parents.
- Ensure that parents are provided with all relevant information and an adequate period of notice for all visits. For all visits requiring parental consent and/or financial payment this shall mean a minimum of 6 weeks written notice.
- Ensure that a trips and visits checklist is completed and provided to the school office staff to ensure that the office staff are provided with all relevant information and adequate notice to allow appropriate notice and visit details to be communicated to parents and for all venue and transport bookings to be undertaken as required.
- Ensure that the office staff are provided with a copy of all risk assessments and a full list of names and contact details for all participants on the visit.
- Ensure that on the day of the visit a register is taken prior to departure and that a copy is left in the School Office.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision.
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed (e.g. good safeguarding practice is followed and adults are appropriately vetted and checked or closely supervised.)
- Provide relevant information to supporting staff, including about the nature and location of the visit and about the participants (including age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues).
- Identify a named First Aider for relevant visits.
- Ensure the activity/visit is effectively supervised, including arranging for an appropriate number of adults to attend the visit (depending on the nature of the activity and the needs of the pupils involved).
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses on their return to school.
- Constantly monitor activities and reassess risks during visits and consider stopping or changing them if they are being carried out in a way that causes concern.
- Ensure a named person has their mobile phone switched on during a visit.
- Carry the 'Critical Incident Action Plan' lanyard in the event of a serious incident.
- Ensure consent has been sought from parents for local visits on a pupil's admission to the school.
- Ensure that consent and full payment for all visits have been obtained from parents prior to the date of the visit or activity.

- It is the visit leader's responsibility to ensure that all outstanding consent forms and payments are chased at least 2 weeks prior to the visit.
- Ensure that the correct medical equipment is taken on a visit for the children they are responsible for.
- Ensure hi-visibility jackets are worn by staff when out walking in the local area.
- Ensure there are contingency plans in place should a visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled (Plan B).

### **The Office staff**

The office staff will:

- Collect financial contributions or payments from parents for all visits.
- Be provided by the EVC or visit leader with copies of risk assessments and names/contact details of all participants on the visit.
- Book transport as requested by the visit leader and ensure it meets regulatory requirements.
- Liaise with and book visit venues as requested by the visit leader.
- Arrange all communications with parents regarding the visit, subject to receipt of all relevant information from the visit leader.
- Undertake all required checks, including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all voluntary helpers undertaking regulated activity or who volunteer on a regular basis.
- Support the visit leader, upon request and subject to workload and appropriate notice, with chasing outstanding consent and/or payment from parents.
- Follow the 'Critical Incident Action Plan' in the event of a serious incident.

### **Types of Visits**

Visits organised at Moulsham Junior School fall into two categories which are Locally Approved or Essex County Council authorised. The following arrangements apply to all trips.

- All visits to comply with this Educational Visits Policy
- All local and day visits to be approved by the EVC
- All residential trips, adventure activities and trips abroad require the authorisation of the Governing Body and the authorisation of the Local Authority by the Outdoor Education Advisory Panel. (OEAP).
- County approval is gained by using the on-line system.

### **Procedural Requirements**

- Risk assessments will be completed by the Visit Leader using the Evolve website. Copies will be given to all members of staff and volunteers on the visit as well as leaving a copy for the office staff in school.

- The competence of staff to undertake visits will be assessed by the EVC with support and advice provided from the Head of Year or a more experienced Visit Leader for new members of staff.
- The suitability of locations is assessed by staff making preliminary visits and using recognised organisations.
- As set out below parental consent for local visits is gained on entry to the school, while consent for all day or residential visits is gained via specific written permission in advance of the date of the trip. Verbal consent may be obtained in specific circumstances as set out below.
- An individual risk assessment for children with additional needs will be completed by the visit leader and their class teacher.
- In an emergency the Visit Leader will contact school and the LA as appropriate and will report the incident fully on returning to school.
- If a 'provider' is used, for example accommodation or adventurous activities, they will be contacted and their risk assessments obtained for these elements of our visit.
- A 'Multi-class Risk Assessment Cover Sheet' will be completed for visits where more than one class attend the same visit.

## **Parental Consent**

On admission to Moulsham Junior School parents are asked to complete a Local Visits Consent form. This asks parents to give permission for their children to take part in any local visits such as to Christchurch, Chelmsford Museum etc. Parents are always informed in writing of the dates and nature of any planned trips. If transport is required eg coach to Melbourne Sports Stadium then this is explained in the letter.

In addition, there may be occasions such as sporting fixtures when one parental consent form may cover a programme of similar activities over a maximum of one year.

Specific parental consent must be obtained for all day or non-local visits and also for all residential visits.

For all visits parents must be provided with full information regarding the visit. This will include:

- Dates and times of departure and return where visits exceed beyond the school day
- Transport arrangements
- The nature of activities planned.
- Kit list where applicable.
- Arrangements for supervision.
- Code of conduct or standard of behaviour expected during the visit
- Financial contribution expected from parents.

Parental consent must be obtained as outlined above before a child takes part in any trip. Ideally this is signed consent but there may be occasions when only verbal consent is given and this must be documented with the date time and identification of who has received this consent.

## **Training**

- The EVC undertakes training from the County Educational Visits team every three years or sooner if there are changes in legislation.
- Training for all other teaching staff is then undertaken by the EVC every three years and is covered in the induction procedures for teachers who join mid-term.
- New members of staff will receive support and advice from more experienced Visit Leaders before undertaking local visits and a more experienced Visit Leader will accompany them on day trips to locations further from school.
- Risk assessments, first aid records and records of incidents (when necessary) are kept for each visit.

## **Risk Management and Risk-Benefit Assessment**

- Moulsham Junior School understands that risk management does not strive to eliminate risk altogether but to reduce it to an acceptable level by balancing it against the benefits of the visit.
- Risks involved in travelling to and from the location (either by walking or by coach) are included in the risk assessment and detail procedures for crossing roads and coach breakdowns.
- Only coach companies whose coaches have individual seat belts are hired. All children travelling by coach wear a seat belt.
- Moulsham Junior School does not follow set guidelines for staff ratios on visits but ensures that pupils are supervised in accordance with the principles of 'Effective Supervision' as set out by the OEAP. When considering staff ratios Visit Leaders must take into account:
  - The planned learning outcomes or benefits of the activity/ visit
  - The nature of the activity (including its duration).
  - The location and environment in which the activity is to take place.
  - The age and gender (including developmental age) of the young people to be supervised.
  - The ability of the young people (including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs).
  - Staff competence and experience.
- As a minimum requirement for a visit, Visit Leaders must ensure there is one adult for every ten pupils.
- On a visit where door-to-door transport is provided by coach, each party of young people shall be accompanied by a minimum of two adults
- Staff may include teachers, teaching assistants, or other members of the school support staff. The visit leader ensures that all staff understand their responsibilities, and are competent to assume these

## Assessing Venues and Providers

- The EVC will ensure that a preliminary visit has been made to all new proposed venues for day visits.
- The Headteacher and/or visit leader will ensure that a preliminary visit has been made to all new venues for residential visits.
- The EVC will ensure that providers have been asked for information they publish aimed at school visits and this will be used to inform planning and risk assessments.

## Supervision

Supervision of pupils is taken seriously and is outlined below. It is unlikely considering the age of the children that 'remote access' is appropriate except for on residential visits on the accommodation site.

- Responsibility for pupils extends for the full duration of the visit, including any period of 'down time' when pupils are not engaged in structured activity.
- The visit leader determines when supervision must be 'direct' and when it may be 'remote':
- 'Direct supervision' – pupils remain within sight and hearing of the member of staff in charge of their group. Group leaders will be told which pupils they are responsible for and are issued with a list. In addition pupils will know who is in charge of their group
- 'Remote supervision' - pupils are allowed to operate unaccompanied in small groups. A decision to permit remote supervision must be made on a careful assessment of the environment, the activity, the age and maturity of the pupils and any training they have received. They must be given clear instruction as to where they may go, what they may do, and when they must return, and must have a means of making contact in case of an emergency.

## Volunteers

- Regular volunteers, or any volunteers undertaking regulated activity, will require an enhanced DBS check.
- A parent or adult volunteering for one trip may not require an enhanced DBS check but will not be left unsupervised with children.
- Members of staff will supervise all toilet trips.
- Volunteers will receive copies of the risk assessment and will be briefed about the plan for the visit, their role and responsibilities, including any pupils they are supervising.
- Volunteers will be monitored throughout the trip by the Visit Leader to ensure that the safety, enjoyment and behaviour standards expected by the school are being maintained. The Visit Leader may change the role or responsibilities of the volunteer during the visit if concerns arise.

## Behaviour

- All staff and pupils at Moulsham Junior School follow the school's behaviour policy whilst on school trips to reinforce behavioural expectations.

- Members of staff will monitor the behaviour of pupils during the visit and will remove pupils from their peers and closely supervise them if there is a concern for their safety or that of others.

### **Inclusion**

- Moulsham Junior School is an inclusive school and will make reasonable adjustments to the organisation of the visit or the activities and resources to ensure the participation of all children. This will be balanced carefully so that it does not compromise the health and safety needs of all of the children. Where there is cause for concern about the behaviour of children, parents will be invited into school to discuss the matter.

### **Insurance**

Moulsham Junior School is insured through the EFA RPA Scheme which includes cover for all pupils on Education and Off-site visits.

### **Emergency Planning**

The following procedures are considered at the planning stage and in addition contingency plans are included as part of the risk assessment:

- Group leaders have a means of making emergency contact with the Visit Leader at all times.
- Group leaders have a means of making contact with the emergency services if required, plus access to first aid equipment and a nominated person with first aid knowledge as appropriate.
- If the visit extends beyond school opening hours, two emergency home contacts are identified; these are normally members of the school's leadership team. The emergency home contacts are provided with details of how to contact the Council officers in the event of a serious incident that requires additional support.
- A list of pupils with parental contact and medical information, are held by the visit leader. A copy is also left at school. Outside school opening hours, the emergency home contacts also have access to this list.

In the event of an incident then the school's emergency plan will come into operation. Copies of this are held in the school office and at home by the Headteacher and any other identified emergency contact.

### **All Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers are responsible for following this policy and acting in the best interests of the pupils at all times under the instruction of the visit leader.

### **Review and Monitoring of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a four yearly cycle or sooner if necessary. Its effectiveness will be monitored in the individual reviewing of trips undertaken.