

Gorsewood Primary School

Learning Outside the Classroom Policy



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Off Site Educational Visits and LOtC Policy

1. Introduction

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of Gorsewood Primary School, which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that educational visits supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing the children with experiences and opportunities which would otherwise be inaccessible. All educational visits must serve an educational purpose to enhance and enrich our children's learning experiences and ensure they are taught a broad and balanced curriculum. This policy applies to the following activities:

Adventure Activities: Activities that take place in challenging environments that can present technical or environmental complexity in the organisation or delivery of the activity. Many adventure activities have well established National Governing bodies that train, assess and validate the competency of staff to lead in the activity.

Day Educational Visits: All visits with a group of young people that leave a school site to journey to another location either during the school day or for extended periods beyond the school day. This usually does not include work experience or activities in schools on split sites. This activity is planned and organised by the school.

Residential Visits: Visits with a group of pupils away from school for an overnight stay. This may be in the U.K. or abroad.

Off-site Activities: Activities that occur away from the base of regular work with children or young people, organised by staff who work within Children's Services.

On-site activities away from the classroom: These activities will include using our pond area, forest school activities and other lessons outside. These activities will be planned and led by School staff. Where an outside agency leads the activity, school staff must still be present and will maintain overall responsibility for pupils.

Experiences gained by pupils through off-site educational opportunities and LOtC activities should not be seen as isolated opportunities but as a vital part of the progression of a pupil's education. That they have a profound effect on pupils is an indication of their relevance within a broad and balanced curriculum. The experience provided can be determined within a number of specific categories:

- **Personal and Social Education.** These skills are developed through such activities as problem solving, decision-making and team work. Working and playing together particularly in a residential situation, affords plenty of opportunity for development in these particular areas.
- **Residential Experiences.** This situation provides an opportunity for development of social skills through living and working together.
- **Environmental Awareness.** The cross-curricular theme of environmental education is catered for specifically when pursuing off-site activities. A rich variety of environments, both natural and man-made can be experienced by pupils of all ages.

- **Aesthetic and Creative Development.** Project and topic work related to the vast range of activities available give rise to multiplicity of opportunities related to creative and aesthetic interpretation.

2.) Aims

The aims of our Educational Visits and LOTC policy are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our children;
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our children than could be provided on the school site alone;
- Promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

LOTC activities will begin as soon as pupils start school.

Off-site Educational visits begin with short excursions in and around school Early Years progressing to a wider field through to Year 6.

All pupils in Y2,3,4,5 and 6 are invited to attend and experience a residential experience in a number of different settings and locations. These include Delamere Forest, Kingswood Activity Centres and capital cities of the UK.

3) Curriculum Links

For each subject in the curriculum there is a variety of visits and activities, which take place throughout the year. Below are a few of the many visits that take place:

- English – theatre visits, library visits;
- Science – visits to botanical gardens, school pond, visits to museums;
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- Topic – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, museums, high school lessons;
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, adventurous activity centre visits, swimming lessons;
- Music - local schools' orchestra, concerts for parents to hear, singing concerts, performances in plays;
- RE – visits to local centres of worship;
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or an old people's residential home, safety visits, visits to Government buildings, UK cities.
- Local area – where possible we will use our local area to enhance our curriculum. It is important that children understand the history and geography of their locality. Local area visits include: Runcorn East train station, Norton Priory, Halton castle, Runcorn Hill, The Catalyst museum, Halton Lea library

Experiences gained by pupils through off-sites educational opportunities and LOtC activities should not be seen as isolated opportunities, but as a vital part of progression of a pupil.

4) The Legal Framework

Two major pieces of legislation bear on all activities taking place off the school site. The terms and conditions of employment of staff and health and safety at work requirements must be taken into consideration whenever an activity is being planned.

i) Terms and Conditions of Employment

Many activities will fall within the “normal” school day and will therefore be included in “directed” time. However, where an activity falls partly or solely outside the school day, there are implications for employment. Staff cannot be required to undertake activities out of their normal working time, nor might there be appropriate insurance cover for other activities. It is therefore crucial to ensure that staff have volunteered their services for out of school hours activities and that full indemnity is available for all those taking part in such activities.

ii) Under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974, employers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees. Employers are also under a duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of anyone else on the premises or anyone who may be affected by their activities. This duty of care extends to the pupils in school and includes participants in off-site visits.

iii) The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 requires the employer to assess the risks of activities, to introduce measures to control those risks and to tell employees about the measures taken. Responsibility also falls to the employee to take reasonable care of their own and others’ health and safety: to co-operate with their employer over safety matters; to carry out activities in accordance with the instructions and training they have received and to inform the employer of any serious risks they encounter.

5) Employer’s policies and OEAP National Guidance

Gorsewood Primary School is part of Halton Local Authority. Halton Borough Council has formally adopted “Learning Outside the Classroom Employer Guidance (LOtC EG)” as “Halton Employer Guidance”. This LOtC guidance can be found on the following web site: www.oeapng.info

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements of their employer’s guidance; therefore, Halton employees must follow the requirements of “LOtC Employer Guidance”, as well as the requirements of this policy.

As an employer, Halton is required to ensure that its employees are provided with:

- Appropriate guidance relating to visits and LOtC activity;
- Employer-led training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood;
- Suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated;
- Access to advice, support and further training from appointed Advisers that have proven expertise and professional understanding of the guidance, the training and expectations set by current good practice.

LOtC OFFICE

Contact for Bethan Cooper, Jon Thorpe, Kate Lodge and Jane Pepper

Employer guidance must provide clarity on issues where responsibilities and functions are delegated. This is particularly critical in establishing requirements regarding formal notification and formal approval of activities.

Halton uses an online system for notification and approval called Evolve which can be found by following this link: www.haltonlotc.org.uk. A key feature of this system is that visits and LOtC activities requiring approval are automatically brought to the attention of the Local Authority. These are overseas, residential visits and adventurous activities delivered by an external provider or by staff within the establishment. Those visits and activities not requiring approval may be viewed, sampled or monitored using the database and diary facilities of the system.

It is a requirement that all Halton Children's Services establishments use the Evolve system for visits and activities that need LA approval. It is strongly recommended that establishments adopt this as their internal system to record all their LOtC visits. This will enable the LA to access relevant information from the system should a LOtC visit need support.

Gorsewood Primary School uses Evolve+ to record all off site visits. Evolve + is an enhanced system, which reduces paperwork and stores all trip information electronically including registers and pupil information. It is linked to SIMs, so we can always access the latest contact numbers and pupil information.

For further advice and help using the Evolve system, staff should contact the nominated officer for Halton.

The nominated officer for Halton is:

Jane Pepper

6) Roles and Responsibilities

It is vital to remember that on all Visits Teachers have a common law duty to act "in loco parentis" (as a reasonable parent), as indeed would any other employee involved in a LOtC activity on or off the school site. This includes during residential visits too, where staff must ensure there are always appropriate ratios available.

Safeguarding is always a priority during any activity. Any concerns should be recorded down and then reported to the visit leader. These should be raised with the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. All staff receive safeguarding training annually. Gorsewood Primary is committed to safeguarding all pupils and carries out the necessary checks on all adults working with pupils.

Where an adult hasn't had checks carried out (a parent volunteer), **under no circumstances** must they be left unsupervised with groups. If the parent/volunteer wants to help out on a regular basis, then DBS checks must be carried out before this can be done.

Designated Safeguarding Lead - Emma Jackson

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – Christine Westwood and Joann Neilson

Governing Bodies

Members of Gorsewood Primary School's Governing Body view their main role as being a "critical friend". 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.

Gorsewood Primary School's Head teacher 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.
- Keep the Governing Body informed about the delivery of visits/outdoor learning and their contribution towards establishment effectiveness. **This is a standing item in the Head's report to the Governing Body.**
- Where needed, have access to expert advice such as from an accredited LOtC education advisors.

Emma Jackson is the Head Teacher.

Gorsewood Primary School's Educational Visits Coordinators (EVCs) should:

- Ensure that all visits/outdoor learning meet the employer's and establishment's policies, procedures and requirements. This includes appropriate monitoring, evaluation and recording to ensure that the Head and Governing Body can access the data they require.
- Support staff members with planning and organising visits/outdoor learning
- Ensure staff are competent to lead visits/outdoor learning
- Provide training and induction to support new staff in leading visits/outdoor learning
- Keep own EVC training up to date and attend revaluation training every 3 years
- Track visit leader/outdoor learning training and provide refresher training when needed
- Keep up to date with changes, advice and policies.
- Ensure Educational visits/outdoor learning are discussed at staff meetings and updates or advice given as necessary
- Ensure EVC training is kept up to date. Revalidation in May 2025.

Sarah Jackson is the EVC.

Leaders should:

- Be knowledgeable about establishment and employer policies/procedures as they affect the responsibilities they have as leader.
- Hold overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit or activity. To ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion, a single Leader should be designated. If this role changes during a visit, a clear handover should be made.
- Follow the employer's guidance and Gorsewood Primary School policy and procedures. A Leader must ensure that the activity is properly planned including carrying out a pre-visit where needed and assessing the risks involved to ensure that there is wide understanding about what everyone needs to do.
- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) are properly defined and communicated, ensuring effective supervision.
- Plan visits/outdoor learning thoroughly following guidelines and advice in Visit Pack, always keeping the EVC updated. See further on for more detail.
- Upload the visit and all relevant documentation onto EVOLVE+, where it can be checked by the EVC and approval given the by Head.
- Be competent and confident to lead visits/outdoor learning. **New staff members and NQTs will not run visits without appropriate support, guidance and supervision.** There is always an experienced member of staff on visits with NQTs and new staff to provide support and model procedures. Experience must be gained by NQTs before being allowed to lead own off-site visits.
- Leaders must ensure they have their **Critical Incident Pack** with them and be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in an emergency situation.
- Complete a visit leaders CPD training

Assistant Leaders should:

- Be suitably knowledgeable about establishment and employer policies/procedures as they affect the responsibilities they have been assigned.
- Be competent and confident to carry out such tasks as they are assigned, and to take over if the Visit Leader is incapacitated.
- Be fully briefed to ensure that they understand the role and responsibilities expected of them on the visit and in the case of emergency.
- Complete a visit leaders' CPD training

The exact competence requirements should be guided by the assessment of the risks and what the Assistant Leader may be expected to do.

Other staff members/Helpers:

- Be suitably competent and confident to be able to carry out the duties they are assigned and understand how these integrate with other staff.
- Be used appropriately and not used to replace an Assistant Leader.
- Be able to contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit/outdoor learning.
- Be appropriately briefed on:

1. Relevant establishment and visit/outdoor learning procedures including expected conduct, mobile phone policy and use and risk management procedures.
2. Group characteristics, including age, health, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other relevant matters in the context of the visit/outdoor learning.
3. Nature, location, and aims and learning outcomes of the activity.
4. Sign Visit Form to confirm they have been fully briefed and are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Where the helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship with a young person taking part in the visit/outdoor learning) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise group management, particularly if there is a serious incident. There is a probability that the helper may be distracted by the needs of their own child, rather than looking to the needs of the whole group. This means that the Leader should directly address this issue as part of the assessment of risks.

Activity Leaders

On some visits or during some on-site activities, especially those involving adventurous activities, sessions may be led by a person not part of Gorsewood Primary School. This could be due to qualifications needed to teach some activities like climbing. **In such cases, the visit leader and other staff members, must remain with pupils and still have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct.**

Voluntary Help

The success of an educational visit often relies upon the good services and willingness of volunteers to accompany the trip. The role of volunteers must be carefully considered and their legal responsibilities clearly understood. To offer help voluntarily does not negate legal responsibilities.

Every volunteer accompanying the visit/outdoor learning should know precisely what their role is and understand that they have a responsibility to ensure they carry out that role. Where the school has been able to identify volunteers well in advance of a visit/outdoor learning, opportunities should be found for those volunteers to meet the pupils and get to know their names. Volunteers must understand that they have a responsibility to follow the instructions of the Leader.

Leaders must ensure volunteers have had all relevant safety checks carried out and that they have been fully briefed on their roles and responsibilities on the visit.

Approval of visits/outdoor learning

For all visits/outdoor learning, the school calendar must always be checked before anything is booked. All approved visits must be added to the calendar with visit name/location, year group, staff members attending.

Outdoor learning activities on site do not need specific approval, but the Head/EVC should be consulted about the activity and other members informed. At times the neighbouring school may need to be notified so communication is essential. Such activities should be added to the school calendar.

All off-site visits must be discussed with the Head teacher before any bookings are made.

Following Head teacher discussions, the agreed trip must be uploaded onto Evolve+. Once on Evolve+, visit details are checked by the EVC and approval then given by the Head. To enable this to be done efficiently the following times should be used:

Local walking visits at least 1 week in advance of visit

Coach visits at least 4 weeks in advance of visit

Residential visits are not only checked internally, but externally by the LA too. It is therefore essential to have these visits uploaded at least 6 weeks in advance. **There will be a fine issued to school for late submission of residential visits to the LA.**

At times there may be short notice of a visit opportunity. Whilst it is fine to allow pupils to take part in these visits, staff must still carry out the necessary planning and inform the Head/EVC of the late submission.

7) Risk Management and Visit Planning

Managing the risks with Visits/learning outside should always start with the benefits of the activities being identified followed by the risks to the health and safety of those involved. After this, steps should then be taken to reduce the risks to an acceptable or tolerable level.

At Gorsewood, we understand that all risk cannot be eliminated and nor should it be if pupils are to be able to develop their risk awareness and be prepared for working life.

At Gorsewood we strongly believe in the health and safety advice from The DfE Feb 2014:

School employers should take a commonsense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools risk assessments risk management are tools to enable children to undertake activities safely and not prevent activities from taking place. Sensible risk management cannot remove risk altogether but it should avoid needless or unhelpful paperwork .

Visits/outdoor learning will fall into one of two categories:

1. Routine visits/outdoor learning that involve no more than an everyday level of risk and are covered by school procedures and policy.
2. Visits/outdoor learning requiring additional planning and some level of specific risk assessment.

Leaders need to decide what type of risk management applies to the visit/outdoor learning they are leading:

1. Generic - already prepared risk assessments, policies and procedures. These documents should be read and amended so they are relevant for the visit/outdoor learning. For off-site visits these must be uploaded to Evolve+ and shared with visit staff. All risk assessments have a generic section to reduce workload. On the shared Google Drive Risk assessments folder, there is a wide range of risk assessments that staff can use. Generic risk assessments already created include: swimming, transport, staff cars, sports matches, museums, the pond activities and many more. These will need to be personalised for the group they are being used for.
2. Visit/outdoor learning specific - these are for any risks not covered in the generic risk management. Halton BC proformas are on the Shared Google Drive. Any off-site visit Risk Assessments must be recorded and uploaded to Evolve+.

When completing Risk Assessments staff should consider the following:

- identification of hazards;
 - who might be affected;
 - how can risks be reduced to an acceptable level;
 - can these measures be implemented;
 - what contingency plans can be put into place if all else fails
 - Are any individual risk assessments needed for specific pupils
3. Dynamic/ongoing - this won't be recorded as it will be happening continuously during the trip/outdoor learning to ensure the safety of the group and success of the trip/outdoor learning.

Halton BC proformas for risk management are to be used and can be found on the shared Google Drive.

Evolve+ can have specific risks added directly onto the form.

All staff are supported in completing Risk Assessments and part of Visit Leader training looks at how to carry them out. If staff feel they need further support in risk assessments, they should speak to the EVC.

For residential visits where pupils will be out and about, we have extra safety procedures including:

- Contact cards and wristbands (for pupils)
- Gorsewood caps
- Coloured T-shirts
- Coloured bags
- Regular head counts
- Sub-grouping with designated responsible adults to allow for quick and easy counting

Following a visit, there should be an evaluation completed on Evolve+ and any problems reviewed to inform future practice and visits.

Evaluations are not required after outdoor learning onsite, however, it is good practice to review activities and share successes and issues. This is done throughout the year during staff meetings.

Planning a visit/outdoor learning is an important part of Risk Management. When planning a visit/outdoor learning, staff should follow consider the following: (not all will be relevant for on-site learning)

1. Expected aims and benefits
2. Answer the Who, What, How, Where, When
3. Meet with EVC/head to discuss, check diary, seek advice, carry out any checks on centres or venues ie, Do they hold any Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge?
4. Carry out pre-visits.
5. Carry out risk assessments.

6. Visit variables and specifics (remember STAGED)

- Staffing: who is needed/available? Consider the need for first aiders. The plan must work within the limits of available numbers, abilities and experience. Meet with staff and ensure all are fully aware of roles and responsibilities
 - Timings:
 - Activities to be undertaken: what do you want the group to do and what is possible? Are you needing packed lunches?
 - Group characteristics: prior experience, abilities, behaviour and maturity, 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. Do children need special equipment ie waterproofs, sun cream etc.
 - Distance: how are you getting there, how long will it take, what about traffic?
7. Book activity and transport. Transport to be booked through the office.
 8. Communication - letter to parents and where necessary consent obtained
 9. EVOLVE+ to be completed
 10. Ensure contingency arrangements (Plan B) have been prepared, where needed.
 11. Ensure an effective emergency plan and designated non-trip emergency contact(s) are in place and will be available 24/7. Ensure all trip details are accessible to the emergency contact.
 12. Ensure all equipment is collected for the trip/out learning. This includes contact cards for pupils, wristbands with numbers, medication etc.
 13. Pupils should always be counted out of school and onto the transport being used. The Leader should sign pupils out in the signing out book and the group should leave by the main entrance. Staff must be signed out too. When returning to school, pupils should be counted in and signed back in. They should always come back in through the main entrance or through the hall door if at home time.
 14. Complete evaluation of visit.

Group leaders have a duty of care to ensure chosen providers meet acceptable standards.

Providers that hold the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge are the best providers to use and should be used whenever possible. Providers that do not hold these, will need to be carefully considered and additional forms completed for residential visits.

For on-site activities, staff, activities, group and environment (SAGE) should still be applied. There is no need to upload activities onto EVOLVE+, but risk assessments must still be completed if necessary.

Emergency Planning, Procedures and Critical Incidents

A critical incident or emergency is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an activity has:

- Either suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality
- Is at serious risk or
- Has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period

Gorsewood Primary School has clearly defined procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency or critical incident.

All staff have received training on this and it is included in visit/outdoor learning induction for new staff.

Staff have a Critical Incident pack which must be taken on all visits. The pack includes emergency contact numbers and procedures to follow.

The procedures follow the advice given by Halton Borough Council and have been developed following training attended by E Jackson on Managing Critical Incidents delivered by Mark Harnden.

There is a school mobile phone which should be taken on all visits. This should be used for any calls and to upload onto social media.

Staff carry personal mobile phones, **but these should be used in an emergency if there is a problem with the school phone.** All staff are expected to follow the Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones section in the E-Safety Policy when on visits/outdoor learning. Staff must not use their phones for photos of children under any circumstances. Staff all sign an Acceptable Use contract every year.

For all off-site visits there should be a nominated emergency back at school. This should be Member of the SLT. When contacting school in an emergency the number for the school office manager is: 01928712100 OPTION 2

For residential visits, the nominated emergency contact must be accessible and available if needed 24 hours a day for the visit duration.

8) Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it may be necessary to undertake a pre-visit. If a location has not been used before, then it would be essential to carry out a visit so staff can familiarise themselves with the location and carry out appropriate risk assessments.

Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time and reviews conducted.

When undertaking risk assessment, several variables need to be taken into account:

- the number of pupils involved;
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour;
- the previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits;
- the time of the day and the time of the year;

- the travel arrangements;
- the hazards of the environment being visits;
- the numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers;
- the nature of the activity.

9) Ratios of Adults to Pupils/Supervision

There are no legally enforceable ratios of pupils to adults accompanying a visit/outdoor learning. However, the factors that should be considered when deciding on appropriate levels of supervision are:

- Type, time and duration of activity
- Location and environment the activity is taking place
- Nature of the group including number of pupils, ages, abilities and needs
- Staff competence
- Consequence of a member of staff being indisposed.
- First aid cover

On all visits/learning outside Gorsewood Primary School ensures that the number of staff enables pupils to be supervised effectively. Staff use the ratios below as a starting point for all off-site visits:

- Reception 1:4
- Years 1 - 3, 1:6/8 (depending on trip and group)
- Years 4 - 6, 1:10/15 (depending on trip and group)

We always aim for residential visits have a higher ratio than the starting points above. For residential visits to cities, we would have a ratio of 1:8 for pupils in Y5 and Y6.

All off-site Visits should have a minimum of staff 2 staff members regardless of how many pupils are on the visit. One of these should be a first aider. Where there is a local visit to a school and transport is used, one staff member will be allowed to go if the group is below 8.

10) Records

Staff should ensure they carry out and upload the following documents onto EVOLVE+ for off-site visits:

Before visit:

- Booking information
- Transport confirmation
- Visit letter to parents (containing all relevant information)
- Visit permission – online permission sought (Unless detailed medical form is required)
- Risk assessments
- Pupil register created on EVOVE+
- Staff next of kin details
- Grouping information for the visit

- Itinerary and timings
- Plan B
- Checklist completed

During the Visit

- Logs of any incidents/first aid
- Medication administering

After the visit

- Evaluation - this is online on Evolve+
- Any incident/accident forms

11) Communications

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. In certain circumstances, parents may wish to exercise their right to refuse to allow their child to take part in a visit. Under such circumstances, the school must make alternative arrangements to ensure that the National Curriculum work that was being developed during the visit is made available in another form to the pupil in school. The refusal of the parent to allow the child to take part does not offer the opportunity for a day off!

When informing parents of a visit, a letter should always be used and include the following:

- **Date and timings of trip**
- **Purpose**
- **Location**
- **Supervision arrangements eg group size, will group be together or split up?**
- **Mode of transport to be used**
- **Lunch arrangements**
- **Voluntary contributions**
- **Spending money (if allowed/needed)**
- **Equipment needed (including: sun-cream, hats, gloves, coats etc)**

For visits in the local area where we will be walking in school time, the letter will serve as notification and the annual consent for visits will be used.

Parents may need notification of on-site learning outside so they can ensure children have the correct equipment and clothing with them.

For visits using any type of transport (other than walking), out of school hours or any instructed activities (ie swimming), a letter must be sent and consent must be sought. Consent is online.

12. Types of trips/visits

i. Residential Visits

For all residential visits, a detailed medical and emergency contact form must be completed as well as a Medication Form if needed. These forms must be taken on the visit and the information on them used to inform any risk assessments or planning.

A parent meeting must be held for all residential visits, where visit packs with equipment lists, itinerary, location details, contact numbers etc are given out.

Leaders must also have meetings with staff prior to visits/learning outside, where any information can be shared and roles and responsibilities clearly defined.

During Visits/learning outside information will also be shared through:

- Marvellous Me
- Twitter (**avoid using videos**)
- School website

Parents are kept informed of Visit/learning outside through social media photographs and updates. Staff must ensure all children have relevant consents before sharing any photographs on social media.

Staff should use school I-pads or the school phone to collect images and keep Twitter and the website updated.

Staff personal mobile phones/device MUST NOT BE USED FOR PHOTOGRAPHS OR USED WHILE PUPILS ARE BEING SUPERVISED.

ii. Swimming lessons

- Swimming lessons should be led by qualified swimming teachers
- Risk assessments completed and ratios followed
- Effective communication with swimming centres and teachers
- For any other swimming activities approval from Evolve is required

iii. Walking in the countryside

- Risk assessments completed
- Relevant Visit Leader training course completed by visit leader

iv. Farm visits

- Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions.
- Refer to EVOLVE National Library: [‘Preventing or controlling ill health from animal contact at visitor attractions - Advice to Teachers’](#) and associated documents.
- Refer to Farming & Countryside Education: www.face-online.org.uk
- Refer to relevant section/s of [National Guidance](#) by using the search facility.

v. Adventurous activities

The following activities are regarded as ‘adventurous’ and require Edsential and LA approval:

- All activities in ‘open’ (see below).
- Swimming (all forms, except as part of the Edsential Primary & Secondary School Swimming Programme).
- Water margin activities [Group Safety at Water Margins](#)
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Sailing / Windsurfing / Kite Surfing
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- Use of powered safety / rescue craft
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Water skiing

- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Rock climbing (including climbing walls), Abseiling
- Mountain Biking
- Coastering / coastal scrambling / sea level traversing
- Snowsports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including dry slope
- River / gorge walking or scrambling
- Camping
- Underground Exploration
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights).
- Horse riding.
- Motor sports- all forms
- Shooting and archery
- Theme Parks- where there is a range of water rides
- Off road cycling
- High level ropes courses AND Zip wires
- Trampolining and Trampoline Parks
- Other activities (e.g initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above.
- External advisers must lead the sessions.
- Providers must hold an LOTC Quality badge and AALs licence.
- Provider forms completed for any providers without LOTC badge
- School staff must provide supervision and pastoral care
- Approval from Evolve required
- **Any activity where the provider has to sign a waiver form must not go ahead**

vi. Overseas visits

For all visits it is essential that consideration is given to the following:

- a) Culture: food and drink, local customs, religion, expected behaviour/dress, gender issues, sanitary arrangements, corruption, political stability, local financial information, alcohol & drugs.
- b) Accommodation: checked for suitability, security, safety precautions and emergency evacuation.
- c) Transport systems have been assessed as safe for use.

The visit leader should consider the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk ('Home' page, 'Travel & Living Abroad', 'Travel Information by Country'). All relevant FCO information should be circulated amongst the staff team.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card). See www.dh.gov.uk

- Approval from Evolve required

13) First Aid

All staff are emergency first aid trained and many staff are fully qualified first aiders. We strive to have a fully qualified first aider on all visits/outdoor learning. If visits include whole classes, residential visits and pupils with medical needs then a fully qualified first aider must go on the visit.

A first aid kit must be taken on all visits/outdoor learning. It is the responsibility of the group leader to ensure this kit is well-stocked. He/she may delegate the job to a first aider if they are on the visit. If groups are splitting up on visits more than one first aid kit will be needed.

For activities within the school grounds and at the pond, a first aid kit should be carried by one staff member for minor cuts and grazes.

For children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), there is a statutory requirement that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate must accompany children on outings.

When off site, staff should determine first aid facilities at the venue they are visiting and ambulance/vehicle access should also be identified if in areas where access could be difficult.

On residential visits, the group leader must find the contact details of the nearest doctor and hospital to the accommodation. Where possible a staff car should be available.

Staff should also be prepared for travel sickness on coach journeys; 'vom bags', wet wipes, tissues, plastic gloves and plastic bags should be taken.

Staff should also carry **hand sanitizer** to be used to ensure good hand hygiene.

14) Medication

All pupils with medication must have this taken on visits/outdoor learning if it will be or might be needed. Emergency kits (epi-pens etc.) must be carried by the first aider and the child must remain in close proximity to them (not be split up). These kits should contain care plans and all staff should know who has the kit.

Pupils with asthma must always have inhalers whenever they are off-site. For younger pupils, the leader will need to nominate an adult(s), who is responsible for carrying the inhalers. Older pupils should be encouraged to be responsible for their own inhaler, but this should be monitored.

During learning outside on-site, asthma inhalers should be taken outside. They should be placed in an area where they are easily accessible by pupils and staff.

On all off-site visits an emergency inhaler should be taken. Parental consent for usage of this is obtained annually by parents of children on the asthma register.

A trained member of staff should be named as the person responsible for administering and storing medication on visits.

Any medication taken on a trip will be in a sealed bag with a medication form inside it. Itineraries should take into account times medications need to be administered.

On all visits the school medication policies should be followed and that includes storing medication securely and administering it with a witness.

Following a visit, medication should be handed back to parents by the member of staff responsible for it. This should be recorded on the medication form.

15) Insurance

When a trip is undertaken as a part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off the school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail. However, if a school visit includes time out of normal school hours, there is a requirement for additional school cover. You

should ensure that appropriate insurance cover is provided before a trip is undertaken. There are many types of insurance that it might be necessary to acquire depending on the type of activity to be undertaken:

- Public liability;
- Employers liability;
- Personal accident cover for all adults including teachers;
- Medical treatment costs;
- Specialised activity risks;
- Evacuation for medical reasons when abroad;
- Loss or damage of hired equipment;
- Emergency costs including accommodation and transport;
- Compensation against cancellation or delay, loss of personal possessions, baggage and money;
- Legal assistance in the recovery of claims;
- Failure or bankruptcy of an agent or travel company;
- Travel abroad.

Where a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance provided must be ascertained. Parents must be notified of the insurance cover.

Halton Borough Council provides a Trips Insurance Policy through RPA. Any pre-existing conditions must be disclosed. The Office Manager will support staff with insurance notification.

16) Pupils with SEND

Gorsewood Primary School is a fully inclusive school and our ultimate priority is to always make every effort for all pupils to participate and be included in visits/outdoor learning.

When a pupil with specific needs takes part in an LOfC activity, school will engage in conversation with the pupil, parents, staff and other agencies (health workers etc) to ensure the needs of the child are fully met. For example, it may not always be possible for a child to participate in all activities, so alternatives (when possible) should be planned for the child, so they do not miss out.

When the school is undertaking a residential visit, parents should be asked to give their authorisation to the leader of the party to act for their child should the need arise for emergency medical treatment during the course of the visit. If parents are unable to give this authorisation, head teachers may decide that the resultant risk to that child precludes them from taking part. If a pupil is included in the party where parents have not given authorisation, a clear unequivocal protocol should be supplied by the parent including appropriate enforceable notification to any medical practitioner that may find themselves looking after the pupil's medical or surgical needs.

16. a) Behaviour needs

Where it is considered inappropriate to include a particular pupil because there is serious doubt about their ability to behave and their safety and the safety of the group could be at risk, it is appropriate to find a suitable alternative occupation for that pupil on the occasion of the visit. For such pupils, an individual risk assessment must be carried out and the outcome shared with parents and the pupil.

17) Voluntary Contributions

Many visits are entirely funded by School. Others are subsidised by School to reduce the voluntary contributions needed. It should be noted that without voluntary contributions many visits would not be able to take place. When a visit takes place during school hours, no child should be excluded from taking part if they have not made a voluntary contribution. Costs can be calculated against:

- Transport;
- Board and lodging;
- Admission costs;
- Costs of appropriate non-teaching staff;
- Incidental costs of staff;
- Materials and equipment required for the visit;
- Insurance costs for the visit.

Monies are always asked to be made to the office through the School Gateway.

18) Transport

Hired transport

Only reputable companies should be used. Seat belts should be provided on all seats. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the conduct and behaviour of the pupils on the transport. The school must provide sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the pupils required under the school's duty of care.

When booking coaches, mini-buses and taxis, we use companies recommended by the Halton Transport Co-ordination Team.

The Office Manager books transport.

As good practice staff abide by the following rules on coaches:

- Pupils counted on and off vehicles
- Adults next to emergency exits
- No pupils on centre back seat (always an adult if needed)
- Pupils to remain seated for journey
- One adult to check coach once all pupils have disembarked
- Emergency inhaler on coach as well as any medications which may be needed.
- Sensible locations for collections and drop-offs arranged.

Public transport

When public transport is to be used, close supervision of the pupils must be ensured. Pupils should be prepared in advance concerning expectations of their behaviour.

- Pupils must be counted on and off.

- Pupils must remain seated.
- Staff must fully supervise pupils.
- The Leader must be aware of the need to split the group if using public transport. There should be a plan in place for this before the visit. Parents should be informed groups may travel separately on the letter. Bus companies should be informed where possible.

Private transport

Where possible, staff cars will not be used for the transportation of pupils. If staff cars need to be used, only staff cars with relevant insurance can be used to transport pupils. Staff are asked to hand in MOT certificates, insurance documentation and driving licenses annually. Copies of these are retained by the office.

Booster seats are available in school and these must be used for children under 135cm tall. No booster seats should be used in the front seat of a car. The front seat should not be used for children.

There should always be 2 members of staff in the car when transporting children.

Parents must always be informed that it is intended to use private transport to convey their children. If an objection is raised, suitable alternative transport should be provided where it is reasonably practicable to do so. In extreme cases, a pupil may have to be found a suitable alternative activity in school if a parent does not wish their child to be conveyed in a private vehicle.

Walking

Walking to visits is common practice. Staff should consider the following:

- Plan route in advance.
- Check route for hazards - parked cars, bushes, slippery surfaces etc
- All KS1 and lower KS2 group members to wear Hi-visibility waistcoats.
- Upper KS2 do not need to wear hi-visibility waistcoats all of the time, but staff should assess weather conditions, light availability, activities, location and if they are needed then wear them. If a group needs to cross lots of roads, then hi-visibility jackets should be worn. Wearing of these is also group dependent.
- Pupils to always walk in pairs in an orderly line with adults at the front, rear and middle.
- Remind pupils about behaviour expectations.
- Do not allow pupils to touch dogs. Stop group to let dogs pass if on a narrow pavement.
- Leader should inform group and other adults of any hazards along the way ie dog excrement, uneven paths, prickly bushes.

Crossing roads:

- Choose a safe place to cross. Ideally use pelican or other crossings.
- KS1 – two adults to stand in clear road while children cross. One adult leads the group across.
- KS2 – one adult to stand in clear road and give pupils a location to walk to. Some roads may not need an adult in the middle for Upper KS2. Teachers to assess this depending on group and location. Older must pupils must be taught about the importance of checking and not just rely on staff.

School staff do not have the authority to stop cars.

Road safety should be discussed with classes if crossing roads.

Driving Mini-Buses

Occasionally, the local high school use their mini-bus to transport our pupils to lessons at the high school. At such times, Gorsewood school staff need to ask for any documentation linked to the mini-bus and keep a copy of it. Gorsewood staff must accompany pupils on the mini-bus.

The following documentation should be requested:

- Driver information
- Vehicle checks
- Insurance

19) Code of Conduct – Pupils

Out of school activities undertaken during school time, or largely during school time, will always be conducted according to the school's disciplinary policy. The need to ensure appropriate behaviour during an activity will be assisted by thorough preparation of the pupils, staff and volunteer adults taking part in the visit. Clear standards should be identified and adhered to.

The legal responsibility of teachers towards the pupils (duty of care) is in no way diminished because the activity is taking place off the school premises. Because of the increased risks likely to be encountered in a different environment, the opportunity for inappropriate behaviour may be increased.

For the visit to be both beneficial and enjoyable the following will be shared with pupils where necessary:

On all visits you are expected to follow our usual school rules:

**Be Your Best Self
Be Respectful
Be Ready
Be Safe**

The following expectations will also be shared:

- Behave responsibly and show consideration for others, including fellow pupils, staff and members of the public.
- Comply with instructions.
- Look after your own possessions and anything you borrow.
- Keep all facilities clean, tidy and undamaged.
- Abide by any rules and regulations of the places we visit.
- In the event of an emergency, follow emergency procedure instructions.
- Inform staff if you have any medical conditions or injuries.
- Inform a member of staff if you have any concerns about safety or security.

- Report any damaged or unsafe equipment.
- Remain in your designated group and know which member of staff is your nominated leader.
- Always carry your emergency contact card and wear your band.
- Follow the rules regarding electronic equipment. This includes not taking mobile phones on any visits.

On a coach or minibus:

- Remain in your seat, unless given permission to do otherwise.
- Wear your seat belt.
- Stow luggage on the luggage rack or under the seat. Luggage should not block the aisle.
- Put litter in the bags/bins provided.
- Do not distract the driver – no shouting out, no flash photography etc.
- If you begin to feel travel sick, inform a member of staff.
- When disembarking, be aware of traffic movement and direction and always follow the instructions of staff

Motorway service stations etc.:

- Follow instructions from staff about where you are allowed go
- Remain in seated area with staff
- Go to the toilet in a group.
- Never go anywhere alone

Staying in a hotel/accommodation:

- Listen to and understand all instructions about fire and safety procedures.
- Know the location of school staff.
- Comply with instructions about access to other people's bedrooms.
- Be ready for given times
- Behave in a sensible and safe way when in rooms
- Respect other people's privacy and belongings

Electronic Equipment

Pupils are not allowed to take any electronic equipment on school trips including cameras and mobile phones.

20) Code of Conduct - Staff

Staff should ensure that their behaviour remains professional on visits/outdoor learning at all times. This includes:

- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people, and avoid situations where they and an individual child or young person are completely unobserved
- When physical touching is required (e.g. when coaching an activity or fitting a climbing harness), seek permission and do it openly – ideally with other staff present
- Comfort or reassure a distressed child or young person in an age-appropriate way, whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries
- Follow their employer's reporting procedures if a child or young person makes a disclosure of abuse
- Wear appropriate clothing
- Be vigilant and report any concerns to the Leader
- Continually dynamic risk assessment the situation and inform Leader of any concerns
- Carry out roles and responsibilities given by the Leader including regular headcounts of the group
- Follow the school Code of Conduct Policy including use of mobile phones

Staff are entitled to breaks during residential visits. The group leader must ensure ratios of pupils and staff are always maintained when staff are given breaks. Staff should still be contactable when on a break.

Staff must never:

- Drink alcohol at any time on a school visit
- **Display photographs of children or staff on personal social media websites from the visit/outdoor learning**

21) Threat of Terrorism

The current global situation means that the possibility of being close to, or caught up in, a terrorist attack is a risk faced by us all. Like all risks this needs to be kept in perspective and managed in a thoughtful and proportionate way. At Gorsewood Primary School, staff must consider the likelihood of the destination, venue or transport hubs being at risk of a terrorist attack.

For all off-site visits, we follow OEAP advice and guidelines:

- Be aware of the latest news relating to your destination
- In the UK know the current threat level (available at:<https://www.mi5.gov.uk/threat-levels>.)
- When travelling abroad check the FCO website www.fco.gov.uk in the early stages of visit planning, at regular intervals and immediately prior to leaving.
- Consider the threat of terrorism as part of visit risk management and include it within visit emergency plans.
- When visiting crowded places such as a major city, venue or event, where the risk of attack may be greater, consider within your planning:
- Possible safe areas or venues, near where you intend to be, that you could use as an emergency shelter.
- How to minimise waiting time at busy venues. Where to wait and gather for head counts.

- How to minimise queuing times (such as not carrying unnecessary items) to speed up search and entry.
- Are staff phones charged and numbers shared?
- Do all leaders have all group information? Will they be spaced apart?
- A contact card for all participants giving a number to call if separated from the group, and the name and telephone number of the establishment
- How you would get away in an emergency, bearing in mind that the direct route and planned transport might no longer be an option. Are you aware of alternatives and can you access emergency funds to pay for them?
- Do you need to leave the site immediately with the crowd at the end of the visit event?
- The possibility of an enforced overnight stay and what this might entail – for example do you need a reserve of any critical medication?
- How the leadership team might manage an enforced group split.

During the visit:

- Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings – know where the exits are and where you would run to.
- Be aware of the possibility of suspicious items.
- When staying at any place for more than 30 minutes, identify emergency meeting points in case the group is forced to move and becomes split.
- Avoid congregating too long around entrances to major public sites.
- At ports and airports don't linger unnecessarily on the public side of security screening.
- Be aware of the 'Stay Safe' principles: 'Run, Hide, Tell' and know what to expect if you encounter armed response officers.

22. Other documentation and policies to be used in conjunction with this policy

The following policies/documents should also be referred to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings 2020 (addendum)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- Online Safety Policy
- School Asthma Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Professional Relations Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Sun Safe Policy
- Intimate Care Policy

- SEND Policy

Included in this policy are the following documents:

- Critical Incident Procedure
- Lost child Procedures
- Trip Incident Log
- Staff next of kin
- Visit/Outdoor Learning Risk assessment
- Terrorism Risk assessment
- Transport Risk assessments including: coach, public transport, staff cars

Last Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2025

Policy to be reviewed earlier when there is a change in HBC Policy or a change in legislation.