

Gainford CE Primary School Educational Visits Policy

March 2016



Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes *Gainford CE Primary* a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning, making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants and not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie by encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, *Gainford CE Primary*:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Durham County Council Educational Visits, Off-Site Activities and On-Site Adventures Policy and Guidance**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
The learning area at Gainford CE is defined as:-

- Locations within walking distance of the school
- Teesdale Leisure Centre
- Schools in County Durham

At the start of the child's school careers parents sign an EV4 form which gives the child consent to attend any of the following activities without the need to seek further consent, although parents are always informed of the majority of such visits:

- All school organised off site activities before, during and after the school day (except for those that are adventurous or residential or take place in the school holidays or at the weekend).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC (who is also the headteacher) for checking.
 3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval. Note that there are a number of venues which have been given delegated approval so the Head can approve – see Evolve for the most up to date list.

Roles and Responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher / EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is *Mr. Howard Blindt or Mrs. Chris Riley if he is absent*, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC / Headteacher is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. There is no requirement for governors to approve visits but they will be informed at regular governor meetings what visits have taken place and what is planned. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency Procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts. If the visit is off site for only the duration of the school day the school telephone number is sufficient to give as an emergency contact. However, if the visit is of a residential nature **two** 24hr contact numbers will be identified (i.e. mobile and/or home phone number). The emergency contacts will have a copy of the Emergency Card (EV8) with the relevant emergency contact details on. They will also have access to all the relevant medical and next of kin information. The visit leader will have a completed Emergency Card (EV7) with them at all times (this will detail the contact details for the emergency contacts).

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

Educational Visits Checklist

Gainford CE Primary's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. *Gainford CE Primary's* Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. However, parents will always be informed of the detail when their child is undertaking an educational visit.

Written consent is only requested for activities which need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside of school hours. A 'one off' consent will be signed by parents when their child enrolls at school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school.

However, specific parental consent will be obtained for visits of a residential, overseas or adventurous nature. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

Gainford CE Primary will make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act 2010 does not require us to place employees or participants at risk of injury or ill health in order to make reasonable adjustments.

If appropriate, we may ask the parent/carer of a particular pupil to accompany them on the visit. If there are any concerns about whether school can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of others on a visit due to the specific needs of a pupil we will seek advice from the DCC Health & Safety Team.

Charging / funding for visits

Gainford CE Primary will arrange payment for visits on an individual visit basis, Visits such as residential trips, which will be more expensive, will have arrangements in place for payment to be made gradually over a period of time leading up to the visit.

Those pupils who receive specific benefits may be entitled to attend the visit with no charge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Transport

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – *Gainford CE Primary* follows the Local Authority advice.

Use of Parents and Volunteers Cars – *Gainford CE Primary* follows the guidance in the DCC Educational Visits Policy. The Parent and Volunteer Drivers Agreement form (EV5) will be completed and retained in school. This will be done on an annual basis. *Gainford CE Primary* will ensure supervision arrangements are considered and the relevant DBS checks are undertaken. We will also complete the Driving at Work Risk Assessment. (This will also be done where employees are using their own vehicle to transport pupils.)

Gainford CE Primary purchases insurance (RSA Insurance) that provides all staff and parents with business use insurance whilst transporting pupils for school events. The exception is any person who has 6 or more penalty points against their driving licence.

When transporting pupils in private vehicles *Gainford CE Primary* will ensure the relevant car seats are used as required by law and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

Insurance

Gainford CE Primary is covered by DCC Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance for activities when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the community within the UK. We are not covered for personal accident benefits or loss of personal property while on educational visits. If necessary we can arrange this insurance for individual visits. For overseas visits separate insurance will be taken out.

Other topics

Swimming Lessons

If it is at all possible, the school will take 2 members of staff to swimming sessions so that both male and female changing facilities can be supervised. In the event of only one adult being available to accompany children, that adult will request that a member of the staff from the Leisure centre supervises the other changing room.

There is a school risk assessment for travelling on public transport that is known to all adults taking child swimming and applies to swimming buses.

Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

- Parents must 'sign out' their children from any after school activity that is part of the Gainford Extra Time after school provision
- For any other after school activity, an adult must ensure that children are well supervised as they leave the school premises. Only children who are known to be permitted to walk or cycle home are permitted to leave the school without a parent or carer that is identified on the child's contact card.
- Should a child be uncollected after an activity, parents or carers are contacted and if necessary, the 'uncollected child' policy comes into operation.

Appendix 1 - School Learning Area

The learning area at Gainford CE is defined as:-

- Locations within walking distance of the school
- Teesdale Leisure Centre
- Schools in County Durham

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
- Educational visit near the river

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, or Deputy must give verbal approval before a group leaves. Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.

3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card (EV7).
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 2 – Whole Career Consent Form

PARENTAL CONSENT / MEDICAL FORM

EV4 (2014 - School)

School			
Name of Pupil / Young Person		Date of birth	

1. General consent

I agree to my son/daughter participating in educational visits and other off-site activities including –

- All school organised off-site activities before, during and after the school day where a higher level of risk management is required.
- All visits (including residential visits) which take place during the holidays or a weekend.
- Adventure activities at any time.
- Off-site sporting fixtures outside the school day.
- All off-site activities for nursery schools.

In exceptional circumstances a further consent may be requested but the school will send parents information about each trip or off-site activity before it takes place.

You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular visit or activity where parental consent is required.

Please note that parental consent is not required for low risk activities during the school day where the activity is a normal part of your child's education at the school.

This consent will apply for the duration of my son/daughters enrolment at the above school or until withdrawn in writing.

2. Medical information about your child

I agree to my son/daughter receiving medication as instructed and any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

I will inform the school/group leader of any changes in medication that is relevant to educational visits and off-site activities.

Please list any medical conditions or prescribed medication you want the school and group leader to be aware of. Include details of all medication your child will need to take on visits / off-site activities.

List all medical needs -

I hereby undertake to indemnify the school, Durham County Council and the staff accompanying the group against any costs and expenses reasonably incurred by them on behalf of my child during the visit (for example, the cost of replacement food or clothing not supplied for a trip/visit). This indemnity will not extend to any claims, damages, costs or expenses against the risk of which Durham County Council or member of staff are entitled to be indemnified under any policy of insurance.

3. Signature of parent / guardian. Please sign this form if you agree with all the above.			
Name (capitals)		Relationship to young person	
Signature		Date	
Emergency contact number –			

Appendix 3 - PARENTS' AND VOLUNTEER DRIVER'S AGREEMENT (EV5)

To the Head Teacher / Service Manager

I confirm that I am willing to use my own vehicle for transporting children and young people on educational and off site visits. I accept responsibility for maintaining appropriate insurance cover although the school insurance covers me for business use providing I have less than 6 penalty points. I have a current valid driving licence **with less than 6 penalty points** and will ensure that my vehicle is roadworthy in all respects. I am willing, to complete a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance form to ensure child safety.

Signed _____

Address: _____

Date _____

Appendix 4 - EMERGENCY CARD – GROUP LEADER EV7 (2014)

THIS CARD SHOULD BE HELD BY GROUP LEADER AND KEPT IN THEIR POSSESSION
THROUGHOUT THE VISIT.

IN THE EVENT OF A **SERIOUS ACCIDENT**, SUCH AS A FATALITY, MULTIPLE INJURY, MENINGITIS, ABDUCTION OR NATURAL/MAN-MADE DISASTER THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES MUST BE FOLLOWED:

1. Assess the situation and safeguard the uninjured members of the group.
2. Attend to any casualties.
3. Call the emergency services, if appropriate.
(999 in UK, 112 in Europe, 911 in North America)
4. Contact your **Emergency Contacts** at your School/Service.
5. **24hr Assistance** - If you are unable to get in touch with your emergency contacts or the incident is outside normal office hours, notify the **Civil Contingencies Unit (CCU)**.

Call **0345 6060 365** (Police 24hr Switchboard) and request to speak to the North Durham Communications Duty Supervisor. Then ask for the CCU Duty Officer to be paged. (Call 00 44 345 6060 365 from abroad)

6. Inform DCC Health & Safety on **03000 265 781**. (8.30am to 4.30pm Mon - Fri)
7. Stay in contact with your own establishments Emergency Contacts until the accident/incident is fully under control.
8. **DO NOT** contact individual parents or adults associated with the visit, this will be done by the Emergency Contacts/ CCU / DCC Health & Safety Team.
9. **DO NOT** speak to the press or media, refer them to the Corporate News Team **03000 268 070** or **03000 268 064**.
10. Keep a written account of all events/times/contacts/decisions as they happen. This will help you recall events afterwards.
11. Keep all receipts for any expenses. Insurers will ask for these after the event should you wish to claim them back.
12. If abroad, ring the British Consulate or Embassy.

My emergency contacts are –	
1. Name -	2. Name -
Tel Number –	Tel Number -

Appendix 5 - Visit Planning Checklist

This checklist is a planning guide and consideration should be given to completing this checklist for some educational visits that require significant planning such as overseas visits or those with higher risk. For low risk visits it may be more appropriate to use this form as a guide rather than completing the form. In the case of low risk visits the completion of an EVOLVE record may be all the evidence of planning that would be required.

			Yes / No
1.	Purpose	Is there a clear educational purpose of the visit matched to the age and ability of the group?	
2.	Group Leader	Is the group leader sufficiently experienced and competent to manage the proposed visit?	
3.	Supervising adults	Are all supervising adults DBS checked and competent to supervise children and young people on the visit?	
		Have all supervising adults been briefed on the details of the visit, the risk assessment and the specific needs of individual children or young people on the visit?	
		Is the level of supervision suitable for the location, activities and needs of the group?	
		Have staff leading adventurous activities been approved by CAS H&S Team (via online Activity Leader Form)	
	Approval	Will the visit be approved by the Head Teacher / Line Manager / EVC / Governors before it takes place?	
4.		For residential, overseas and adventurous activities, will approval be obtained from the CAS Health & Safety Team at least 3 weeks before the visit takes place?	
5.	Risk Assessment	Are all the significant risks identified in the risk assessment (EV2 or standard school risk assessment), along with suitable measures to control this risk to adults and young people?	
6.	Location	Is the location suitable for the activities planned and the ability of the group?	
		Has a pre-visit been undertaken (recommended practice). If not has sufficient information been obtained about the location or venue?	
6.	External Providers	Have external providers of staffing, guiding or instruction completed an External Provider Form or do they hold an LOtC Quality Badge?	
7.	Transport	Are transport arrangements suitable and satisfactory?	
8.	Finance	Has finance been agreed to cover the cost of the visit and arrangements made to collect parental contributions?	
9.	Insurance	Has insurance been arranged that is sufficient for the activities planned?	
10.	First aid	Is the level of first aid appropriate to the activities planned?	
11.	Medical	If participants have medical needs, have these been	

		addressed and staff suitably informed/trained?	
12.	Parents	Has fully informed parental consent been obtained if required? (could be whole school career consent)	
		For residential/overseas visits, have parents been offered a parents meeting to detail the visit arrangements?	
13.	Briefing participants	Have the participants been fully briefed including – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of visit • Clothing, footwear and equipment • Jewellery / mobile phones / personal electronic equipment • Travel arrangements • Groupings for study and activities • Behaviour and code of conduct Safe practice and results of risk assessment.	
14.	Emergency Procedures	Have the emergency procedures been shared with all the adults involved and the emergency contacts?	
15.	Plan B	Has an alternative programme been considered should the activities be affected by poor weather or adverse circumstances?	
		Are there arrangements in place to inform parents in case of a delay in the return time?	
16.	End of visit	Are there arrangements for evaluation of the visit and learning lessons for future visits of this type?	
17.	Overall	Does the visit comply with the CAS Health & Safety policy for Educational Visits.	

Completed by

Date/...../.....