LITTLE WALTHAM

*Aspiring to inspire others towards excellence, developing as individuals together in a distinctively Christian environment.*

1 Corinthians, 12:14 “For the body is not one member, but many”.

# EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Review Date: *Autumn 2026*

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Little Waltham C.E.V.A Primary believes that educational visits and off-site learning enrich the curriculum and support pupils' personal development. We will ensure all visits are planned and conducted safely, with the welfare and safeguarding of pupils as our highest priority.

This policy applies to all visits whether local, residential, overseas or curriculum-linked. Activities will be inclusive and accessible to all pupils where reasonably practicable.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a framework for planning and managing visits safely
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance ('Health and Safety on Educational Visits', DfE)
- Clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations for staff, pupils and parents
- Support effective communication with parents about visits

It applies to all staff and volunteers involved in planning, leading or supervising visits.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- DfE guidance on educational visits (including safety and consent guidance)
- HSE principles for school trips and health & safety management
- Safeguarding and child protection requirements as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education.*

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Governing Body

The Governors will:

- Approve the Educational Visits Policy and ensure regular review
- Monitor compliance and trends in trip safety and safeguarding
- Support risk management and emergency procedures

2. Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Ensure all visits are appropriately planned and risk-assessed
- Approve visits before submission to the Governing Body if required
- Ensure staff are trained and competent
- Ensure post-visit evaluation and record keeping

3. EVC

The EVC will:

- Support staff in planning and risk assessment
- Ensure staff have adequate training and guidance
- Coordinate transport and supervision requirements

4. Visit Leaders

Visit leaders will:

- Plan visits with clear objectives
- Complete and share risk assessments (at least 1 week before a visit)
- Brief staff, pupils and parents
- Maintain supervision and welfare throughout

All staff have a duty of care towards pupils on visits.

Planning & Approval Procedures

1. Types of Visits

Visits may include:

- Local visits
- Day trips
- Residential trips

Routine local visits that do not add risks beyond the classroom need proportionate planning; other visits require formal approval and risk assessments.

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2. Risk Assessment

- All visits must be supported by proportionate risk assessments. This is always completed and stored on EVOLVE.
- Generic, site-specific and dynamic risk assessments must be documented.
- Supervising staff must be familiar with risk assessments.

3. Parental Information & Consent

- Parents/Carers must be informed of all educational visits.
- Written consent is required for non-curriculum trips, residentials, and activities outside school hours.

4. Insurance & External Providers

- External providers must meet safety standards and have public liability insurance.
- Organisations with Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge are preferred.

5. Staff Briefing Before Departure

Prior to departure, all staff and volunteers involved in the visit must be briefed on supervision arrangements, timings, dismissal procedures, emergency protocols, and communication expectations.

<u>Supervision & Safeguarding</u>

- Pupils must be supervised at all times.
- Staff-to-pupil ratios must reflect risk, age, and needs of pupils. Ratios are determined by the make-up of each group, risk and in accordance with Essex Policy. At Little Waltham the minimum ratio of 1:8 for KS1 and 1:11 for KS2 with a minimum of three adults for any group that is going outside of the school environment.
- Pupils will remain on site until removed by an agreed adult or unless agreed otherwise in writing.
- Pupils permitted to walk home independently must have prior written parental permission, which applies to normal end-of-day arrangements only unless otherwise agreed in writing for a specific date or circumstance.

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Return from Visits and Procedures

When a return time from a visit has been communicated to parents, pupils must not be released from school care before this time unless parents have been directly informed and explicit consent has been received. Pupils will remain on site and fully supervised until formal dismissal. The Visit Leader, in consultation with the Headteacher or senior leader where appropriate, is responsible for confirming dismissal arrangements.

Communication with Parents

Effective communication is essential:

- Parents must be informed of itinerary, timings, contact details, and expectations.
- Where timings change (e.g. coach delays/early returns), parents must receive updates promptly.
- A follow-up message should be sent when pupils return to school safely.
- Staff must ensure accurate contact records remain accessible during the visit.
- A named Visit Leader will be responsible for ensuring that communication with parents is accurate and timely. The school office must be informed immediately of arrival or any change to timings so that messages can be issued consistently to parents and staff.

Emergencies & Incident Management

- The Visit Leader and EVC must have an emergency response plan.
- A communication plan must be established before departure.
- Staff must have contact details for school and emergency services.
- Significant incidents (near misses, injuries, safeguarding concerns) must be recorded and reported.
- All leaders must carry the critical incident action plan which includes emergency school and ECC telephone contacts. Group leaders should follow the set procedures and record any critical incidences.
  On all trips, the class teacher or designated adult will carry with them the phone numbers of all pupil parents.
- Near misses, as well as incidents, must be recorded and reviewed to inform future risk assessments and practice.

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Post-Visit Review

After every visit, a debrief should take place and include:

- What went well
- Any incidents or issues encountered
- Communication effectiveness
- Suggestions for future improvements

These reviews should inform future planning.

Training & Record-Keeping

- Staff involved in visits must receive training on risk assessment, supervision, first aid, communication and emergency procedures.
- Records of planning, approvals, risk assessments, communications, incidents and evaluations must be retained centrally.

Monitoring & Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner in response to:

- Changes in guidance
- Incidents on visits
- Feedback from staff or parents
- Where a safeguarding or supervision concern arises during a visit, actions taken and learning points will be shared with the safeguarding governor as part of monitoring arrangements.

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Appendix 1: **Educational Visit Checklist for Trip Leaders**

**BEFORE THE TRIP**

Planning & Organisation

☐ Visit approved by Headteacher / EVC
☐ Risk assessment completed and uploaded to EVOLVE (at least 1 week before)
☐ Staffing ratios confirmed and appropriate for age, needs and risk
☐ Roles allocated (Trip Leader, group leaders, first aider)
☐ Emergency contacts and pupil and medical information printed and accessible
☐ Mobile phone charged and school contact number saved
☐ Medical bag and first aid bag organised for trip

Briefing Staff & Volunteers

☐ All adults briefed on:

- Supervision expectations
- Pupil groupings and headcounts
- Behaviour expectations
- Emergency procedures
- Communication responsibilities
- End-of-day arrangements

☐ Adults aware of:

- Pupils with SEND, medical needs or specific risks
- Any pupils with walking-home permissions and how these apply

Preparing Pupils

☐ Pupils briefed on:

- Behaviour expectations

- Staying with their group
- Listening to adults at all times
- What to do if they feel unwell, worried or separated
- Travel safety (e.g. seatbelts, walking near roads)

Communication with Parents

☐ Parents informed of:

- Itinerary and timings
- Transport arrangements
- Collection arrangements
- Emergency contact procedures

☐ School office informed of:

- Trip details
- Expected return time
- Named Trip Leader contact

**DURING THE TRIP**

Travel & Transitions

☐ Register taken before departure
☐ Pupils seated appropriately on transport
☐ Seatbelts checked and worn on the coach
☐ Headcount taken before and after:

- Boarding transport
- Leaving transport
- Entering/leaving venues

Supervision & Safeguarding

☐ Pupils supervised at all times
☐ Regular headcounts carried out

☐ Group leaders remain with allocated pupils
☐ Dynamic risk assessment reviewed if circumstances change

Communication

☐ Any delays or changes to timings shared immediately with:

- School office
- All adults on the trip
- Parents (contact office to text out to parents)

☐ Any incidents or near misses recorded

**END OF TRIP / RETURN TO SCHOOL**

Arrival Back at School

☐ Register taken on coach before return journey.
☐ Pupils remain on site and supervised until formally dismissed
☐ Pupils not released earlier than the communicated collection time unless: Parents have been directly informed and explicit permission has been confirmed

☐ Walking-home pupils released only in line with agreed arrangements

Communication with Parents

☐ Parents contacted with estimated time of arrival as soon as on coach. Trip leader to contact office to send text out.
☐ Follow-up message sent confirming pupils have returned safely

**AFTER THE TRIP**

☐ Any incidents or safeguarding concerns reported to Headteacher / DSL
☐ Post-visit review completed:

- What went well
- Any issues

- Communication effectiveness
- Actions for future visits

☐ Documentation stored centrally (EVOLVE)

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**Parent Communication Plan for School Trips**

School visits are an important and exciting part of school life. We know that, as parents and carers, you want to feel confident that your child is safe and well cared for at all times. This leaflet explains how we communicate with parents before, during and after school trips.

What parents will receive:

Trip letter with:

- Purpose of the visit
- Date and approximate timings
- Transport arrangements
- Collection arrangements
- What children need to bring
- Contact arrangements in an emergency

We will contact parents if there are any significant changes to timings. We will also send a message once the coach departs and has arrived back at school safely.

How We Will Keep You Updated

We aim to keep communication clear and purposeful**.**

You can expect:

- Email as the main form of communication
- Text messages used for updates (for example, delays or significant changes)

To reduce worry, we will:

- Contact parents if there is a significant change to timings
- Send a message when the coach has departed and arrived back at school safely

If you have not heard from us, this means the visit is running as planned.

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Occasionally, circumstances such as traffic or transport issues mean plans need to change.

If this happens:

- Parents will be informed as soon as possible
- Updated timings will be shared clearly
- Staff supervising pupils will be fully aware of the information sent to parents

End of the Trip and Collection

When a return time has been communicated to parents:

- Pupils will remain on site and supervised until that time
- Some older pupils have permission to walk home independently. This applies to normal end-of-day arrangements only

Our Commitment to Safeguarding

Your child's safety is always our highest priority.

- Pupils are supervised at all times
- Staff follow clear procedures for supervision, communication and dismissal
- Any concerns or incidents are reviewed carefully to improve future practice