



Educational Visits Policy

Last revised: March 2021

Policy Owner: Deputy Head

Policy Statement

This is a whole school policy.

At Lyndhurst School we believe that all children should be afforded the opportunity to engage in educational visits as these pertain to the fulfilment of the Lyndhurst School ethos of rounded and balanced learning. We consider it to be of utmost importance that these visits take place under strict supervision and only after the necessary planning and preparation have been undertaken.

Associated Policies and Documents

- Lyndhurst School Behaviour and Sanctions Policy
- Lyndhurst School Curriculum Policy
- Lyndhurst School First Aid Policy
- Lyndhurst School Health and Safety Policy
- Lyndhurst School Risk Assessment Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Legal responsibilities

All the activities covered in this document take place within a legal framework. Adult supervisors in charge of young people during a visit have a duty of care to make sure they remain safe and healthy.

The duty of care

Adult supervisors in charge of young people during a visit are considered to be 'in loco parentis'. They have both a duty of care towards those young people and a common-law duty to act as a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would in similar circumstances. Adult supervisors should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation. In exercising the duty of care and interpreting the meaning of 'reasonable, prudent and careful', common sense should be applied.

Those involved should:

- Try to think as a parent might think in similar circumstances;
- Consider whether they would be able to justify what is proposed to professional colleagues whose judgement they respect and, ultimately, a court of law;
- If they are in doubt they should not go ahead until they have sufficient further information and advice to remove the doubt.



The Governing Body

The Governing Body retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare. The governing body should:

- be satisfied that the Headmaster is able to show how plans for visits comply with regulations and guidelines, including the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- be informed about new residential visits or visits abroad, well in advance.

The Headmaster

The Headmaster should:

- comply with the regulations and guidelines provided by the governing body and the school's own health and safety policy;
- ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor the risks involved in the visit;
- ensure that group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- be clear about their own role if taking part in a visit as a group member/supervisor. If they are attending in a visiting capacity only, they should follow the instructions of the group leader who will have sole charge of the visit;
- ensure that a school contact has been nominated (this may be the Head) and that the group leader has the details;
- ensure that emergency procedures have been agreed upon and the group leader, group supervisors and school contact have a copy;
- ensure that the leader, supervisors and contact have the names of all adults and children travelling in the group, the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin;
- ensure that there is a contingency plan for any delays, including a late return.
- ensure that all appropriate vetting checks have been completed e.g. DBS checks for volunteers on overnight stays.
- where a child has specific medical or educational needs, the school will ensure that suitably qualified and, where necessary, extra staff are available to accompany the child, and if appropriate, that the person will not be counted in the adult to child ratio.

The School Business Manager

The School Business Manager should:

- Ensure that insurance and European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), appropriate for the visit, is in place, including those outside of the United Kingdom.

The Group Leader

The group leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and should always pay attention to the health and safety of the group. The group leader should:

- follow school policies and procedures;



- clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned;
- be able to control and lead children of the relevant age range and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place;
- be aware of child protection issues;
- undertake the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of group members and parents;
- complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- ensure that teachers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- have enough information on the children proposed for the visit to assess their suitability, or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the children is unacceptable, and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- ensure that the ratio of supervisors to children is appropriate for the needs of the group
- ensure that all visit supervisors have the details of special educational or medical needs for the children, be they temporary or long term, which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact;
- ensure that group supervisors and the school have a copy of the emergency procedures;
- be aware of the conflict of interest that exists when parents act as supervisors;
- continuously be aware of general safety considerations (e.g. photographs taken of the children by members of the public, road safety, trip hazards etc);
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below.
- In association with the School Business Manager, plan appropriate transport for the visit and ensure that adequate insurance is in place.

Accompanying Teachers and Classroom Assistants

Teachers will accept responsibility in the following areas:

- act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline.
- act as deputy, should the group leader become incapacitated during the visit.
- follow the normal school codes of conduct whether the visit takes place within normal school hours or outside those hours;

Adult volunteers

Non-teacher adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Non-teacher adults acting as supervisors must:

- not be left in charge of a single child unless they have been cleared by the Disclosure and Baring Service or are the parent of the child;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisors and assist with control and discipline.



Children

The group leader should make it clear to children that they are expected to adhere to a clear code of conduct and outline the reasons for that expectation. This serves to involve children in the risk assessment process to an appropriate degree by allowing them to understand how rules for the visit have evolved. This includes:

- not taking unnecessary risks;
- following the instructions of the group leader;
- dressing and behaving responsibly;
- notifying an adult in the group of anything or anyone posing a possible threat to individual or collective safety or wellbeing;
- notifying an adult in the group of any accidents or incidents.

Any child whose behaviour may potentially compromise the safety of the group may be stopped, by the Headmaster, from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways, wherever possible.

Parents/Guardians

When parents sign the consent form they are doing so based upon the reasonable expectation that their child's safety has been a paramount consideration in the planning and preparation of the visit. Before taking their children on the visit the parents must have:

- signed the consent form.
- provided the group leader with emergency contact details (phone numbers, email addresses etc.).
- given the group leader relevant information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health (including current medication), which might have an impact on the visit.
- agreed permission for emergency medical treatment to be given if they cannot be contacted.

For longer visits, such as residential visits, the group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to briefing sessions

Planning the Visit

Risk assessment

The Group Leader should complete a Risk Assessment Control Sheet prior to any visit and should review the risk assessment after the visit. Where the location provides their own risk assessment this must be read by the Group Leader and included in the visit documentation.

The school's Risk Assessment Policy should be followed when completing the Risk Assessment.

Staff Ratios for educational visits

Staffing ratios for educational visits are difficult to prescribe, as the factors to be taken into consideration will vary depending on the activity, age, group, location, etc. Thus the



appropriate staff ratio will be informed by the risk assessment undertaken by the group leader.
As general guide:

- Kindergarten – 1 adult to every 2 children (with a minimum of 2 adults)
- Reception and Year 1 – 1 adult to every 6 children (with a minimum of 2 adults)
- Year 2 and 3 – 1 adult to every 8 children (with a minimum of 2 adults)
- Year 4 – 6 – 1 adult to every 12 children (with a minimum of 2 adults).
- Residential Trips (where activities are led by an outside agency) should have 1 adult to every 10 children with a minimum of 2 adults.
- Overseas residential trips should have 1 adult to every 7 children with a minimum of 2 adults.

Parents/Guardians/Volunteers

Where it is not feasible to only use school staff and therefore parent/guardian helpers or volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio.

- Helpers should be known to the school and, if possible, the pupil group;
- In assigning parent/guardian helpers to supervise groups, the group leader must address the conflict of interest that would arise in the event of an accident, and have a sufficient supervision ratio to absorb this;
- The teacher in charge must ensure that helpers are aware of children who require closer supervision, such as those who are overly energetic or have special needs.

Medical decisions

While the group leader and supervising teachers are in loco parentis, there may be circumstances where decisions cannot be made pertaining to consent on medical issues where that remains the sole responsibility of the child's parent or guardian. In such circumstances it is the responsibility of the group leader to contact the school office, who will contact the parent or guardian to obtain a decision during office hours. If the situation arises out of office hours the group leader will contact the parent or guardian to obtain a decision.

Residential Visits

The party leader should take overall responsibility for the group at all times during the visit or journey.

In addition the party leader should:

- Ensure that all adult supervisors understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It is good practice to hold a pre-visit meeting where roles can be discussed, agreed and put in writing.
- Ensure that all reasonable safety precautions are properly carried out. Additional particular arrangements may need to be made for any young person requiring extra supervision and care.
- Ensure that reconnaissance is undertaken immediately on arrival. Proposed arrangements for supervision must be reviewed in the light of prevailing conditions and allowances made for the possibility that conditions may change.



- If working on or near water, pay particular attention to levels of supervision and the availability of expertise in water safety and life-saving techniques. It is worth noting that many recent school visit tragedies have involved water.
- Be aware of any sites to be visited that may be in any way sensitive, including places of worship, environmentally sensitive areas, etc. The group should also be briefed appropriately.
- Remember that most accidents happen in normal or everyday situations such as in the kitchen, on stairs or on roads, and party leaders should brief their groups accordingly.
- On all visits the party leader's responsibility extends from the agreed start time to the time at which the party leader returns the young people to the parent/carer. On returning, the party leader should check that all young people are safely returned to a parent/carer or other known responsible adult.

Residential supervision

Residential Trips should have 1 adult to every 10 children (with a minimum of 2 adults) or 1 adult to every 7 children for overseas trips. The following applies to residential visits:

- An appropriate number of group supervisors must be on standby duty throughout the night.
- It is desirable that the party's immediate accommodation should be for the group's exclusive use.
- It is desirable to have a supervisor on any floor/area where young people are accommodated.
- In accommodation which is not for the group's exclusive use, it is essential that a supervisor sleeps on the same floor as the young people and in close proximity to them.
- In the absence of 24-hour staffing, external doors should be secured against intrusion and windows closed as necessary.
- Young people should not have to leave their immediate area to visit the toilet at night.
- When considering the advisability of young people locking themselves into their rooms at night, a judgement must be made balancing increased security against delays in evacuation in the event of an emergency. If young people are locked in, supervisors must have passkeys to hand.
- It is essential that young people can always contact their supervisors immediately.

Being 'on duty'

Whether it is day or night, those designated 'on duty' should either be directly supervising the party or be immediately available as required.

Planning time off for supervisors

Residential visits are extremely demanding of supervisors and young people alike and it is important that supervisors are given some time off when they are not on duty. Otherwise, supervisors may become overtired, reducing their ability to effectively supervise activities. Time off is likely to be in the evenings and should be organised through some form of rota system that ensures adequate supervision at all times.



Recreation time

Remote supervision may be appropriate for unstructured sessions, where young people may participate in informal games in a safe open area. This is valuable time for young people and is to be encouraged. Supervisors need not have direct input but the party leader should ensure that unstructured time is properly supervised.

It is good practice to:

- Ensure there is a named supervisor responsible for each recreation session;
- Consider making appropriate games equipment available (indoor and outdoor), to occupy young people. It must be stressed that 'free time' or 'unsupervised time' is unacceptable; there must always be a plan in place for the supervision of young people, although it may be remote or fairly informal.

Where extra care should be taken

The following are times and places where potential danger points can occur:

- When leaving venues;
- When the supervisors do not know all the participants;
- Transport;
- Moving between activities;
- When on or near water;
- When there is any group reorganisation;
- During periods between activities.

Overseas Visits

In addition to the normal preparation for a residential visit, the following should be checked at the pre visit stage for overseas visits (e.g. visit to France):

- There will be a member of staff attending who is proficient in the language of the country being visited. This is essential in case of emergencies if a translator is not available through the venue.
- All children and accompanying staff have their own individual valid passport.
- Visas are acquired where necessary.
- All children and accompanying staff have a valid EHIC card.
- The school has insurance for foreign visits

Ferry crossings

The environment of a ferry is both potentially hazardous and an area of high risk.

Leaders must ensure that the level of supervision is appropriate to the age and nature of the group, to which end the following guidance is offered:

- Consideration must be given to the likely danger areas on board for the particular group. These areas may alter if weather conditions change. In particular, great care and diligent supervision must be exercised if the group is allowed on deck. Under no circumstance should young people be allowed on deck by themselves.



- A clear policy regarding sub-groups for supervision and the location of the party leader needs to be established.
- On no account should a group be left on its own for the duration of a crossing.
- Groups should not be allowed on deck during the hours of darkness or in poor weather.
- Group management will be eased if a firm base/meeting point for the group is identified.
- All in the group must have been briefed about:
 - a) What to do in the case of an emergency;
 - b) The location of 'muster stations';
 - c) Becoming disorientated on board;
 - d) Feeling unwell.
- Safety rules and socially acceptable standards of behaviour should be clearly agreed with all members of the group. This should include a policy for shops and restaurants.
- The structuring of the journey time with appropriate activities will enhance the educational value of the whole programme and help prevent boredom. This may be of particular benefit when there is a delay. The ferry company might be able to offer help and advice here.
- Group management on the dockside requires special consideration, taking into account immigration procedures, road and rail traffic, foreign signs, unexpected hold-ups and often-inadequate public facilities.

Activity Visits

Visits which contain potentially hazardous activities e.g. canoeing, rock climbing require special consideration. All instructors must be appropriately trained for the activity and the provider must have the appropriate licenses, safeguarding clearance and insurance which must be available for viewing.

Feedback and Evaluation

The group leader will communicate any relevant feedback about the visit to management and staff. By 'relevant feedback' refers to:

- Any aspects about the venue that require consideration when planning the next visit to the same venue;
- Information about any child or adult who requires special consideration when embarking on another visit;
- Any 'near misses' or hazardous situations that have presented themselves;
- Ideas or recommendations on how future visits may be planned in order to further reduce levels of risk.
- Actions or decisions taken that went well or were particularly successful

Emergency procedures

Immediate action following a serious accident or incident

A serious accident or incident is defined as:



- an accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury;
- circumstances in which a party member might be at serious risk or subject to serious illness;
- any situation in which the press or media might be involved.

If a child/children is missing:

- inform all adults accompanying the visit as soon as is practically possible
- conduct an immediate thorough search of the area, ensuring that all other children remain supervised throughout
- if appropriate, inform on-site security and a description of the child/children given
- in the event of a child not being found within **15 minutes**, treat it as a serious incident and follow the procedures below.

Guidance notes for party leaders

Remember that serious accidents and incidents are extremely rare, but if one occurs it certainly makes great physical and emotional demands upon you. These guidance notes are designed to help you deal with an emergency.

Be prepared

- Carry the emergency details at all times.
- Ensure that you are familiar with this policy.
- Brief your group on emergency procedures before they set off, including details of communications, so that they know how to deal with these should the party get split up.

Care of the group

- Ensure safety from further danger.
- Contact local emergency services immediately and follow their advice.
- Deploy other staff/adults as effectively as possible in continuing to ensure the welfare of your group.

Communication

1. Contact the Headmaster or, in his absence, another member of the Senior Management Team.
2. Give him details of the emergency, including your contact number.
3. He will begin the Emergency Action Plan and give you further advice.

Next steps and general advice

- Parents and relatives will naturally be anxious to establish what is happening, but try to prevent party members (staff or young people) from telephoning home until after you have made contact with the Headmaster and this has been agreed. (Given the



proliferation of mobile phones this will be difficult, but is important, as incorrect information and rumour will make the situation worse.)

- Do NOT speak to the press or media. Refer enquiries to the local emergency services handling the incident on the ground and promise that 'an official statement will be made as soon as possible'.
- Do NOT admit liability of any sort to anybody.
- Do NOT allow anyone, apart from medical services, to see any party member without an independent witness being present.
- Retain any equipment involved in an unaltered condition.
- Keep a written record of all that happens.
- Be as compassionate as possible, with anyone involved.
- Remember that no one, unless they are in a relevant official capacity, has the right to see anyone who does not wish to see them.
- If you change location, remember to let your Headmaster have the new telephone number at which you can be contacted.