



# CASTLEFIELD SCHOOL

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

(including Local Area Visits)

Signed (HT):

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Date agreed: Term 3 2025

Signed (Chair of GB):

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Review date: Term 3 2028

## Context

We believe that experiences from educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum and as such, forms part of our Building Blocks (Experience and Enrichment). Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Castlefield School 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.
- 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 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. i.e. 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, Castlefield School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Bucks Requirements and Guidance**' in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://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 carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## 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 or 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 Miss Wilson, who will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC 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'. 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 ready to be a visit leader, the following factors will be considered:

- 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

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 1). 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.

## Parental Consent

"Schools, colleges and other establishments that a child attends as part of their day-to-day education or training do not need consent for the child to participate in off-site visits that take place during the establishment's normal hours, and which are a part of its secular curriculum (Education Act 2002 section 29). They do need consent for visits that take place outside normal hours.

However, nursery schools must obtain consent for a child to participate in all off-site visits.

While parents do not have the option to withdraw their child from the curriculum, except for religious or sex education, it is good practice to inform them that a visit or activity is to take place." [\*OEAP National Guidance document Parental Consent and Informing Parents\*](#)

Following this guidance, Castlefield School will always inform parents of planned visits and activities off-site through the use of email, website and newsletters. Online payment platforms will be used to collect parental contributions to cover the cost of visits and activities.

Online payment platforms will also be used to record consent when:

- the activity or visit is deemed to have a higher than usual risk;
- the activity or visit runs beyond the usual school day;
- the activity or visit is residential in nature;
- the activity or visit is invitational and not part of the planned curriculum.

## **Inclusion**

All trips are planned to ensure children gain the most from their experience and to ensure all children (inclusively) have their needs catered for (in compliance with the Equality Act 2010).

## **Charging/funding for visits**

The school will charge parents for the cost of the trip, to the point of breaking even. The school will never charge parents more than the cost of running a visit. Whilst this is a voluntary contribution, if the school does not receive enough to cover the cost of a trip, the trip/experience may be cancelled.

## **Local Learning Area**

### **General**

Visits/activities within the 'Local Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during normal school hours follow the Operating Procedure outlined below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent though notice of the activity will be shared in advance
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- Must be recorded on Evolve under Local Visit category

### **Boundaries**

The boundaries of the Local Learning Area are shown on the attached map (Appendix 2). This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- *The Avenue, Methodist Church, Rutland Avenue*
- *Parade of shops, Rutland Avenue*
- *Letterbox, Rutland Avenue*

### **Operating Procedure for Local Learning Area**

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

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

**These risks are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Head, Deputy or EVC must give approval before a group leaves the school site.
- Must be recorded on Evolve.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is on the school website.
- There will be an appropriate staff/pupil ratio for the cohort according to age, stage and need.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any "no go" areas, and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do in all foreseeable circumstances, including if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the Local 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 medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- The trip leader will leave a list of all pupils and staff/adults, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return in the office prior to leaving site.
- A designated Emergency Contact 'back at base', who is aware of the proposed visit/activities, will have been identified beforehand and ensure that s/he remains contactable until notified of the group's safe return.
- Mobile phones with charged batteries are taken and the office will have a note of the number(s).
- Personal medication (inhalers, epipens etc) is carried with the children at all times.
- Staff take a designated emergency bag with them containing first aid kit and contact details.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed ( e.g. gloves, goggles).

## Serious Incident Action Card for the Group Leader

This Action Card covers the following incident scenarios:

- 'Generic' emergency procedures (coach crash, fire, bomb threats, terrorism);
- Death or serious injury of a pupil / adult while on / at a school journey;
- Outbreak of an infectious disease which will curtail the school journey.
- Incident / emergency on a school trip including overseas;

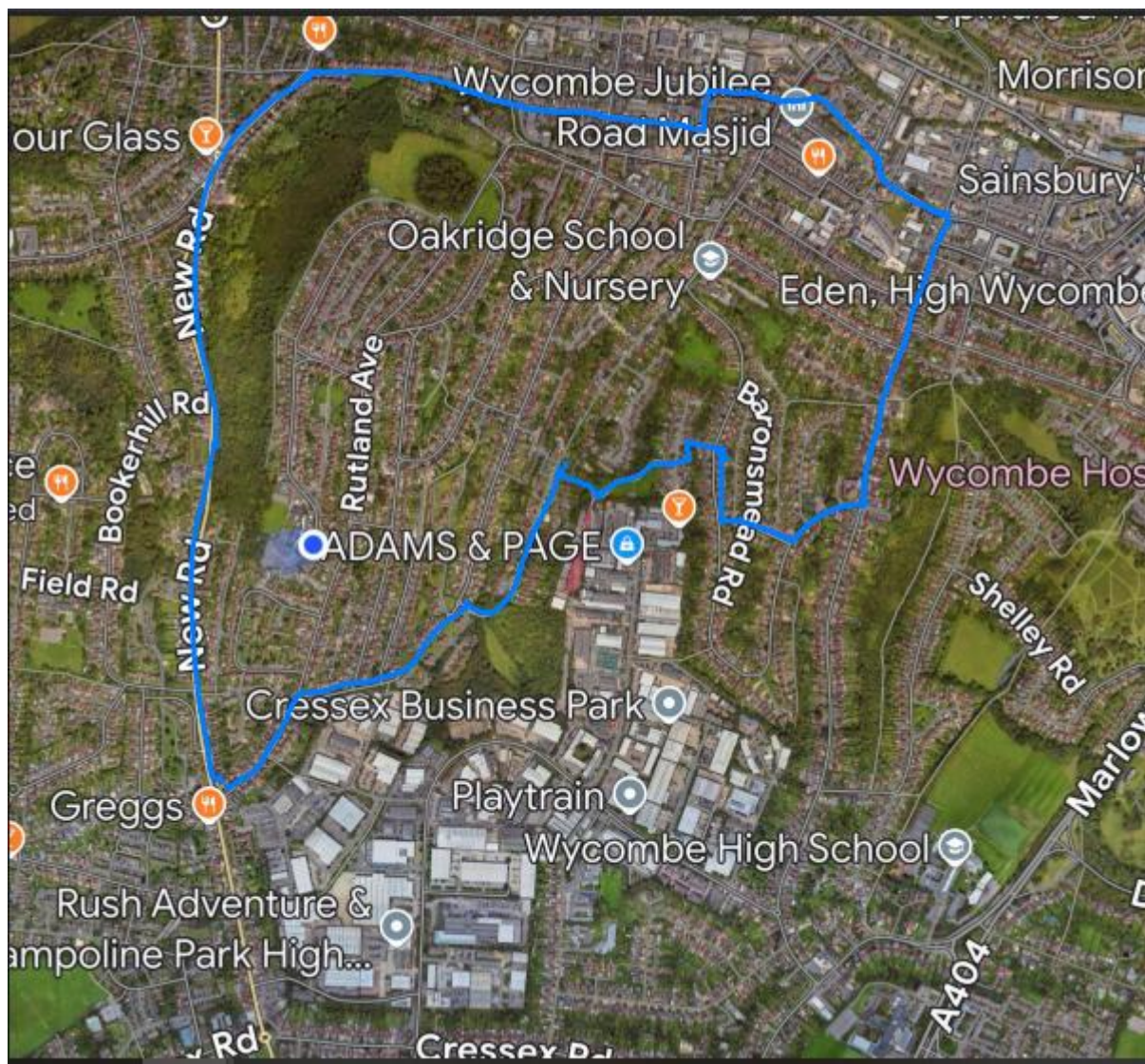
### **INITIAL ACTIONS**

- Summon emergency services if appropriate;
- Provide first aid / prevent further injury;
- Account for all party members including staff;
- Delegate a responsible adult to take care of uninjured members of the party;
- Instruct no-one to talk to media and secure inappropriate use of mobile phones, email and social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter etc);
- In order that you can be contactable at all times and to enable you to lead and coordinate all necessary actions you should delegate party leadership to the Deputy Leader;
- Keep a log using the Incident Record Sheet to note down:
  - Full and further details of the incident such as what has happened, the exact location of the emergency, and any casualties;
  - all action taken and conversations held;
  - any decisions that have been made;
- Contact the Buckinghamshire Council Duty Resilience Officer on **07738 501318 or +447738 501318 if abroad**, and provide the following information:
  - your name;
  - the name of your school /party;
  - the nature of the emergency;
  - the complete telephone number which we can call you on (including national /area codes etc) any other contact numbers that can be used.

### **SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS**

- You should not make any public statements about the incident without prior agreement of the School and the Council.
- Depending on the circumstances some or all of the following actions may be required:
  - Retain all equipment involved in an accident or incident in an unaltered condition - unless it is required by the police;
  - Begin to make appropriate arrangements for those not injured to return home immediately;
  - Arrange any support for the staff and injured in hospital;
  - Obtain necessary documentation from the medical authorities e.g. death certificates, medical certificates indicating how injured may travel home, and case histories including x-rays;
  - Retain receipts for all expenditure connected with the incident.

## Local Learning Area



Blue - Local Learning Area