



# Educational visits Policy

**Hyrstmount Junior School**

**Approved by:** Local Governing Board

**Ratified:** May 2025

**Last reviewed:** May 2025

**Next review due by:** May 2027

**Reviewed by:** Head Teacher



## HYRSTMOUNT JUNIOR SCHOOL

### EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

#### **1. Introduction**

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the school and for which the Governing Body and headteacher are responsible.

**Hyrstmount Junior School endorses the Kirklees policy document “Guidance for Outdoor Learning, Offsite Visits and Adventure Activities (2013)” as the basis for the school’s health and safety policy for the management of visits and off-site activities.**

**The school uses EVOLVE on-line system for the recording and processing of all visits/ visits in Categories A (low risk and one day duration) and B & C (residential and adventurous activities).**

#### **Inclusion**

Hyrstmount Junior School seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the Governing Body recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate school environment.

The Governing Body aims to enable this school to become an educational environment in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, gender orientation or individual need. We intend to apply this aim to the planning and management of all visits and off-site activities.

Visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas, encourage co-operation, team work and the application of problem-solving skills and develop independence and self-confidence.

Residential opportunities, physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people. Outdoor education helps young people to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, headteacher, the EVC, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy on visits and off-site activities therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.



**It is a priority of this school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well- managed and educationally beneficial.**

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

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Hyrstmount Junior School

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (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 execute visits in line with this school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## **2. Responsibilities of the Headteacher**

The headteacher will:

- ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- approve all visits and activities, based on compliance with the county and school health and safety policy, relevant Kirklees' guidance and recognised good practice;
- ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group;
- check that the staffing ratio is suitable for each visit;
- ensure party leaders have access to a planning checklist, based on the Kirklees policy (pp 10-12), and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the school;
- check that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety measures are in place.

## **3. Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator**

In order to carry out the above responsibilities effectively the headteacher may delegate specified tasks to a suitably experienced and competent Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). The EVC will be responsible for carrying out agreed tasks and attending relevant training provided by Kirklees. The EVC will be responsible



for ensuring the correct ratio of adults to pupils on any visit undertaken. The EVC will be responsible for checking that risk assessments are being followed and details from evolve are accurate. In order to do this, spot checks of 2 visits a year will be completed by the EVC. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE and uploads school documents on EVOLVE.

#### **4. Approval of off-site activities**

The headteacher will be responsible for approving all off-site activities and will forward those in Categories B & C to the LA Off-Site Visits Adviser (see below). This includes approving the party leader for each visit or off-site activity. This responsibility can be delegated to the EVC.

A summary of the programme for the following categories of programmes, together with a risk assessment, will be sent to the Education Visits Advisor, Kirklees for final approval via Evolve:

- Residential visits home and abroad (Category B activities);
- hazardous outdoor and adventurous (Category C activities)
- activities where there is significant concern about health, safety and welfare e.g. Proximity to natural water (Category C activities).

The Governing Body should be informed by the headteacher about plans which involve:

- a residential element;
- any residential visits and
- any visit where there is significant concern about health, safety and welfare.

#### **5. Responsibilities of the party leader**

The party leader will:

1. have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity;
2. obtain the headteacher's approval or designated EVC before any off-site visit or activity takes place;
3. follow policy and procedures of the Council and the school;
4. assess the risks involved, considering the benefits as well and amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk assessment;
5. inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate;
6. reassess risks while the visit or activity takes place;
7. ensure that all adults/volunteers on the trip have read and signed the relevant risk assessment(s) prior to the trip taking place. A copy of the risk assessment(s), including the signatures, should be kept electronically after the trip has taken place.



8. ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to weather etc.
9. appoint an assistant party leader. The assistant will join the party leader in the planning of a visit and take over running the visit in the event of the party leader's absence.
10. Once the trip is over, the party leader is to evaluate the visit on EVOLVE.

## **6. Responsibilities of additional members of staff taking part in visits and off- site activities**

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:

- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit;
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

## **7. Responsibilities of pupils**

Whilst taking part in off-site activities pupils also have responsibilities which they should be made aware of by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:

- Avoid unnecessary risks;
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff;
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct;
- Inform a member of staff of significant hazards.

## **8. Responsibilities of parents**

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child. Subject to their agreement to the activity parents should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct;
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit;
- provide an emergency contact number;
- sign the consent form.

## **9. The provision of training and information**

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures will be made available to all staff within the school who may be responsible for leading off-site visits and activities and to any parent requesting a copy.

Appropriate training will be made available to leaders and other adults taking part in off-site activities in order to reflect identified school health and safety priorities and educational priorities.



The headteacher will maintain a record of the qualifications held by staff and volunteers involved in outdoor activities including first aid, life-saving, mini-bus driving and specific hazardous activities.

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 consider 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.

## **10. Action in the case of emergency**

The headteacher or designated EVC will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, known to staff and in line with Kirklees policy (see appendix 1), to cover the range of activities undertaken from the school and the times at which they take place. This will include emergency contact numbers for designated senior members of staff or the governing body out of hours. First aid provision and training of staff will be in accordance with Kirklees expectations.

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.

## **11. Accidents and incidents**

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy. Kirklees will be informed of notifiable accidents and incidents. Accidents and incidents will subsequently be reviewed within the school to identify any learning points.

## **12. Monitoring and review policy and practice**

The Governors will review this policy:



- Every two years
- At such time as there are significant changes to guidance from Kirklees on the management of outdoor education, visits and off-site activities
- Should significant issues be brought to the attention of the Governors through the report of the headteacher.

## Appendix 1 – Emergency Procedure

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 either:
  - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
  - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (*Available via [www.oeap.info](http://www.oeap.info)*)
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from Visit Leaders.