



WILLOW  
BROOK  
PRIMARY

## Educational Visits Policy

Date: September 2024  
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Reviewed Annually

## Overview

At Willow Brook Primary School, as part of the Griffin Schools Trust (GST), we are dedicated to providing an education rooted in our three pillars: wide horizons, proud traditions, and high achievement. In particular, we emphasise the importance of wide horizons in expanding the cultural capital of our pupils, recognising that a rich variety of experiences is essential for their personal and academic development.

We acknowledge the great value of educational visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experiences of our pupils. Such visits are an integral part of every child's entitlement to a balanced and well-rounded curriculum, and we are committed to ensuring that no pupil is excluded from these opportunities. Educational visits allow pupils to explore new environments, encounter different perspectives, and engage with the wider world—vital for nurturing cultural awareness and building the skills needed to succeed in a diverse society.

Carefully planned visits not only enrich learning but also raise attainment, forming a key element of what makes Willow Brook Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. By providing our pupils with these opportunities, we ensure they develop a broader understanding of the world, fostering curiosity and a lifelong love of learning, all of which contribute to their success in school and beyond.

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 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.

Under guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfE Requirements and LA guidelines.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

At Willow Brook, the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Jenny Kelly, School Operations Manager. She is responsible for ensuring that any visits are planned following relevant procedures and that the associated risk assessments are completed in a timely fashion.

The Head, Lucie Dawn, has responsibility for authorising all visits including extended learning activities offsite and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body is made aware of all visits.

If the external provider or tour operator being used does not hold an LOfC Quality Badge, they must complete the detailed Provider Form at the time of the provisional booking. The procedures to be followed in this case are outlined in Section 31 of the booklet.

## Competence to Lead

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. This will be assessed by the school, considering experience, ability to take charge in the event of an emergency and knowledge of pupils, venue and activities to be undertaken for the visits.

## Assessment of Risk

All Activity Leaders are required to carry out a Risk Assessment of the activity and submit this to the EVC for approval.

All risk assessments must be completed at least a week before the date of the trip. They must then be saved on the shared drive in the relevant folder, as well as being shared with Jenny Kelly and SLT via email.

A 'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (ie below)

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks, attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

## Plan B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality.

## Emergency Procedures

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 1). All staff on visits are familiar with the emergency procedures.

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 Griffin Schools Trust.

## Staffing Ratios

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Head or a member of SLT as to the appropriate ratio for each visit –

This will be determined by:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Age of children
- Needs of individuals within the group (SEN – behaviour, dyspraxia, visual impairment etc.)
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of the venue
- Weather conditions at the time of year
- Nature of transport involved.

## Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits and including staff monitoring the changing facilities at sports centers and swimming pools.

## Role of Supervising Parents/Volunteers

Supervising parents/volunteers must be DBS vetted, fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed risk assessment.

## First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has an appointed First Aid Certificate, which is the minimum requirement for residential visits, but we will endeavour to include first aiders who are trained to a higher level of competence.

First aid kits and appropriate personal protective equipment are available at the front office prior to the trip; if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

Pupils participating in educational excursions who have specific medical conditions must have their needs catered for. Checks should be made prior to the activity taking place to ensure their needs catered for and ensure medication is included in a 'Day Pack' or 'Residential Pack' clearly named. Medication should be administered in the same way as it would be if the child was at school – dosage and frequency etc.

## Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule; pupils may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour. Any journey over 60 minutes will necessitate the coach or minibus to have on board toilet facilities, if taking younger children.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete a 'Use of a private car to transport your people form'. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

## Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfE 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. Protocols must be discussed with all supervising adults including parents prior to the visit. A copy of this guidance is available at school.

## Education Visits Checklist

The EVC will ensure the checklist as part of the risk management process is completed for all visits.

## Seeking Parental Consent

Parental consent is obtained via a dedicated letter outlining the details and purpose of the trip. This letter will contain a space where families can give permission for their child to attend the visit.

All trip letters must be sent no later than two weeks before the trip. All trips will then be added to the school calendar, something that is then shared every week via the weekly update to parents.

## Arranging the Visit following Approval

- Book venue/activity
- Book transport
- Send letter
- complete risk assessments
- Complete education visit checklist
- Order lunches if requested (10 days before)

## On the Day of the Visit

- Collect first aid kit(s), PPE and any 'Day Packs' required
- Collect bucket if appropriate (travel sickness)
- Ensure asthma inhalers, medication, Epi-Pens are collected and clearly labelled
- Brief supervising parents
- Give supervising parents and staff their lists of pupils
- Ensure that a minimum of one mobile phone is working, and that the office has the number(s)
- Count pupils
- Sign group out on Inventory
- Trip leader to complete trip evaluation form

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Supervising adults should always 'double count' participants.

## Local Learning Area

The Local Learning Area includes venues such as those listed below

- Any Facility within Waltham Forest

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

- Completed risk assessment through the EVC considering
- 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 fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
- Have parental consent given at the start of the academic year
- Must be signed out on Inventory

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head or member of SLT must give verbal approval before a group leaves. (Not strictly necessary if you have clearly identified competent staff, and are confident in your operating procedure, and the fact that staff will follow it.)
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- 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. Hi-Viz jackets are available to support staff identifying children.
- 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.
- A mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves,)

## 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 leadership 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 Griffin Schools Trust 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 Contact Card