

**West Row Academy**

**Educational Visits Policy**

**2023-24**

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| **Approved by: Date:** |
| **Last reviewed Autumn 2022** |
| **Next review due by Autumn** |

**Context**

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes West Row Academy 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.
* 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. ie. 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, West Row Academy:

1. Adopts the Unity Schools Partnership Trust 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 and Trust).
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 school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

**Types of visit**

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the ‘Extended learning locality’ (See Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visit that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

There is an addendum policy for Sports Fixtures.

**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 Principal 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 Laura Guggiari, who will support 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 Principal. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Principal** has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the Trust for approval, via EVOLVE.

**The Governing Body**’s role is that of a ‘critical friend’ and their roles and responsibilities are outlined in appendix 1. Individual governors may request ‘read-only’ access to EVOLVE.

**The Trust** 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:

* A system where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders/EVC 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 Principal will take into account 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.

**Approval**

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local visits follow the ‘Extending learning locality’ policy (Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 10 days in advance, and then forwarded to the Principal for approval.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see Trust guidance for definition of ‘adventurous’) are then submitted by the Principal to the Trust for approval.

**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 2). 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.

**Educational Visits Checklist**

West Row Academy’s Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is ‘YES’. West Row Academy’s Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

**Parental Consent**

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within the ‘Extended learning locality’ (see Appendix 1).

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a ‘fully informed’ basis.

**Transport**

All transport must be quality checked by the Health and Safety Officer for the academy, Shirley Rayner.

**Insurance**

Insurance is included and covered by the Trust; any other insurances are completed by Operations Officer, Shirley Rayner.

**Sports Fixtures**

Sports fixtures which take place at another school and are either in or out of school time follow the operating procedure outlined in Appendix 3.

**Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Locality**

**Boundaries**

The boundaries of the locality are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues: e.g.

* West Row Park
* West Row shops
* The Churches
* Memorial / Cenotaph

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the EVOLVE visit approval process, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure.

**Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality**

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:**

* 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 environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

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

* The Head or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
* Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
* The concept and Operating Procedure of the ‘Extended learning locality’ is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
* There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
* Staff are familiar with the area, including any ‘no go areas’, and have practiced appropriate 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.
* All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality 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 pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
* Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return. Consider adopting (or adapting) the ‘Signing-out sheet’ in EVOLVE Resources/Forms.
* A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
* Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

**Appendix 2 – 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 thatan 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 ‘extended learning locality’, the visit leader will carry either:
7. An Emergency ‘Card’ (see EVOLVE Resources), or
8. An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (Available via [www.oeap.info](http://www.oeap.info))
9. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.
10. For visits that take place outside the ‘extended learning locality’, the visit leader will carry an Emergency ‘Card’ (see EVOLVE Resources).

**Appendix 3 – Operating Procedure for Sports Fixtures.**

**General**

Sports fixtures which take place at another school and are either in or out of school time follow the Operating Procedure below

These fixtures

* Should be recorded on EVOLVE via the ‘Local Area Visit’ module
* Require informed parental consent
* Do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than those following this procedure) this will be agreed with the EVC in advance of the fixtures
* Are organised and run by a qualified teacher / competent employee.

**Locations**

Sports fixtures take place at schools and locations listed below. These include but are not limited to the following frequently visited venues.

* Worlington Cricket Club
* Mildehnall Hub
* Breckland school
* Newmarket Academy
* Great Heat Academy
* Glade Academy   
  Forest Academy

Mildenhall Academy.

This policy does not include sporting events which fall under our main Educational Visits policy such as Sports Tours if overnight or tournaments if overnight or adventurous.

All first aid and medical information for specific pupils must be listed and available to the visit leader.

Individual and specific risk assessments for pupils must be attached.

**Issues / Hazards**

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

* Road traffic.
* Other people
* social distancing
* members of the public
* animals
* etc.
* Losing a pupil.
* Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
* Weather conditions.
* Issues related to the actual sporting activities being practiced
* Travel by minibus
* Travel arranged by parents (which is managed in-line with school/employer policy)

**Managing issues / hazards**

These are managed by a combination of the following:

* The Head or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
* Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and admin team.
* The concept and operating procedure for ‘Sports Fixtures’ is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, consent is obtained and a synopsis is in the school prospectus.
* Parents transport their own children to and from the sports fixture.
* There will normally be a minimum of two adults (at least one employee).
* Staff are familiar with the locations and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
* Staff are fully aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an injury to a student, particularly if a hospital visit is necessary.
* Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
* 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.
* Staff leave a completed ‘Signing out’ sheet with the office which includes names of all attendees.
* A mobile phone is taken with each group and the school office / emergency contact has the number.
* Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, facemasks, bag for waste, tissues, etc.)
* If pupils will be travelling by car, National Guidance 4.5c Transport in private cars and school policy will be adhered to.
* If parent arranged transport is being used, responsibilities between school, parents and drivers in relation to how this is organised should be clear and transparent.
* School staff should know when, where, and who will be collecting pupils, especially where this is not a known parent/guardian.
* The school will ensure no lone working or 1:1 situations arise with dismissal unless by prior arrangement
* Staff have parents’ contact numbers available.