

## Educational Visits Policy

**This policy is applicable to:** South Hunsley School and South Hunsley Sixth Form College

**Intended audience:** Parents, Students, Staff

<p><b>Important:</b> This document can only be considered valid when viewed on the school website. If this document has been printed or saved to another location, you must check that the version number on your copy matches that of the document online.</p> <p><b>Name and Title of Author:</b></p>	<p>Luke Duerden Assistant Headteacher</p>
<p><b>Name of Responsible Committee/Individual:</b></p>	<p>South Hunsley School and Sixth Form Local Governing Body</p>
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# Educational Visits Policy

## Contents

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Aims	3
2. Introduction	3
3. Rationale	4
4. Organisation (incorporating roles and responsibilities)	4
5. Charging for School Activities	5
6. Residential Visits	5
7. Risk Assessments	5
8. Emergency Procedures	6
9. Approval and Planning	6
10. Documentation	7
11. Monitoring and Review	7

## 1. Aims

South Hunsley School's Educational Visits Policy sets out the school's formal commitment to providing a robust framework for approving, planning, assessing and supervising all educational visits in a safe and responsible manner. All approved educational visits must be managed in such a way as to ensure that students are able to reap the benefits in the safest practicable circumstances and environment.

All educational visits will be organised so that visit leaders, support staff, and all others involved in the planning and conducting of visits do so within a structure which clearly defines their roles and responsibilities, to effectively ensure the safety of all participants.

South Hunsley School aims to offer young people an inspiring curriculum that is broad and balanced, and prepares them for adult life. The school believes that educational visits provide invaluable teaching and learning opportunities that supplement this curriculum, and that such visits allow students to see the relevance of classroom and other school-based experiences within the context of society and our wider environment. Well planned educational visits develop the wider personal development of pupils. Educational visits provide a range of opportunities and experiences which cater for the needs and interests of all pupils and encourage positive physical, emotional, spiritual, mental and social development.

South Hunsley is committed to:

- Clearly defining roles and responsibilities for those activities necessary for the planning, approval and execution of an educational visit
- Adhering to 'best practice' standards
- Ensuring all educational visits are consistently and thoroughly documented, before, during and after the dates of the visits
- Ensuring all educational visits are approved by senior members of the school leadership team before students are allowed to leave school premises

## 2. Introduction

This document should be read alongside guidance from the DfE and the ERYC Educational Visit Policy document, and in conjunction with the any other relevant policies or documents, including the Safeguarding Policies, Pastoral Policies including Behaviour Policy, Charging Policy, and Staff Expectations and Code of Conduct. All policies can be accessed via the VLE, school website, or from the Human Resources team. Additionally, all staff planning and leading or accompanying an educational visit must be familiar with, and adhere to all relevant guidance on the Educational Visits section of the VLE/ Staff handbook. This section is updated annually by the EVC.

Educational Visits in the context of this policy refer to any departure from the school site by any student (Years 7 – 13) as part of a supervised visit accompanied by school staff, or any departure from the school site by any student that takes place with the knowledge and approval of a member of school staff during school hours as part of a designated curriculum activity.

Regular, local sports fixtures are approved and managed by the PE department. These fixtures are governed by the same rules, regulations and guidelines as all other educational visits. However, some of the procedural elements of approval and planning for these fixtures are carried out on approved templates at the start of each academic year, so that one set of planning and risk assessments can cover multiple fixtures. This planning is conducted by the Subject Leader(s) for PE and is approved by the EVC or Head of School each September.

### 3. Rationale

We aim to offer pupils a broad and balanced curriculum in line with our core school values of learning, potential and community. We recognise the importance of our school curriculum in preparing pupils for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

We ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all students, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to access the full extent of our curriculum, including knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. To enhance and enrich the curriculum, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that complement what they learn in school. As far as possible, pupil access to educational visits is universal, with fair selection procedures for any experience where demand exceeds available spaces.

Very occasionally, the specific needs or behaviours of a student may mean their ability to participate safely or effectively in an educational visit may be open to question. In such circumstances the EVC, SENCO, ERYC advisor or other relevant external agency, as well as the Head of School may meet with all relevant parties to look to find a mutually agreeable resolution. Where this is not possible, the final decision on the participation of any student in an educational visit is at the discretion of the Head of School. Should approval be given for a student to participate in an educational visit in such circumstances, a specific risk assessment with agreed contingencies should be completed by the visit leader prior to departure.

### 4. Organisation

The school curriculum across all year groups is determined by the school leadership team working alongside the local governing body. The curriculum itself is the basis for each subject area's programme of learning for each school year. To support this curriculum we plan for a corresponding programme of visits and activities each year. These are further supplemented by a number of other opportunities, including sports activities such as skiing or adventure and team building experiences.

Within each subject area's programme of learning, teachers may plan educational visits and activities that support student learning and development. Details of these visits and activities are always shared with parents and carers through newsletters, official school letters, via the school website or through the Head of School bulletin. None of the educational visits offered by South Hunsley School form an essential or obligatory part of the school curriculum. Where an element of the school curriculum is expected to be delivered or supplemented by an educational visit, most commonly in Drama, Geography or Biology, consideration will always be given to alternative methods of curriculum delivery, and provision will always be made to ensure no student is disadvantaged through failing to participate in an educational visit.

Educational visits may take place both within and outside of school hours, and may take place outside of term time. The Head of School approves all educational visits in advance, with advice and support from the school's Educational Visits Coordinator, and with input from the extended leadership team. All DfE and ERYC guidelines relating to health and safety must be followed, and we ask parents to give written permission or electronic permission for their child to take part in any activity that takes students off the school site. If we do not receive this written or electronic permission, it is unlikely that the child will be able to participate in any visit. The only exception to this is where parents give direct verbal consent for their child to participate in an educational visit directly to the Head of School or the EVC.

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of all students and staff on educational visits. The ratio of students to adults is dependent on age and type of visit and followed in accordance with the ERYC Policy document. Volunteers are carefully assessed and permitted to accompany visits only if deemed suitable.

## **Roles and Responsibilities – General**

Staff organising visits (Visit Leaders) must familiarise themselves with, and comply at all times with all guidance relating to the planning and running of educational visits that is published on the Educational Visits section of the Staff handbook. The planning and running of an educational visit is comprised of four clear elements and staff must follow published guidance for each of these:

- Outline approval – this must be sought and confirmed before any further planning takes place. In particular, no financial commitments or promotion of any visits should occur before outline approval has been received.
- Pre-visit planning and risk assessment – all visit leaders must use their own EVOLVE identity to complete the process using the EVOLVE planning tool, and in conjunction with the school EVC administrative support officer.
- The visit itself – from the point where students leave the school site until they are returned, either to the school site, or directly to their parents or carers.
- Visit evaluation – completion of the medical and injuries declaration available from the Staff handbook, as well as the accident and near-miss log if appropriate.

The designated visit leader retains responsibility for all elements of an educational visit at all times, including ensuring appropriate first aid provision on the visit itself. Where the visit leader is rendered incapable of effectively discharging this responsibility for any reason, the responsibility passes to the deputy visit leader. To this end the visit leader and deputy have joint responsibility for ensuring they are familiar with all relevant planning and procedures for the visit prior to departure.

## **5. Charging for School Activities**

There are circumstances where the school can make a charge for certain activities. These are documented in the South Hunsley School Charging Policy, including the full range of activities where a charge can be made. The group leader of each visit should ensure that a visit is carefully costed and budgeted for and that all relevant charging guidance is adhered to. Documentation to support the financial planning of educational visits can be found on the Staff handbook, and may be requested by the EVC alongside the outline approval request. The costs of any visit should be clear to all concerned, stating how much parents/carers are being asked to contribute. There is no compulsory financial contribution element to any South Hunsley School visit that is deemed to take place during 'school hours', although the school may request voluntary contributions towards the costs of these visits.

## **6. Residential Visits**

Staff must be aware when they are in residential accommodation that they must rigorously check for any possible hazards/risks/defects. Additional risk assessments must be completed for such visits as part of the EVOLVE process. These visits are also subject to an additional element of pre-visit approval from the local authority advisor and from the local governing body before they are permitted to depart the school site.

## **7. Risk Assessments**

Risk Assessments are required for all educational visits. A set of generic risk assessments that cover all possible visits are available from the ERYC Visits and Visits website. Relevant generic risk assessment forms are reviewed, amended and agreed at the start of each academic year by all appropriate staff.

Staff must ensure that they are familiar with these generic risk assessments so they are aware of agreed practice before undertaking visits. In addition, specific risk assessments must be completed by the visit leaders for each visit to record and share information about potential hazards and precautions that may be relevant for any specific group or individual, doing particular activities, at specific sites on that day. Completed assessments should be signed by all staff accompanying visits, and checked/approved by the Educational Visits Coordinator.

## **8. Emergency Procedures**

All visit leaders must carry copies of the Educational Visits Emergency plans and procedures, and follow these in the case of an emergency. All visit leaders must ensure they collect a guidance card regarding what to do in the event of an emergency, and have access to all parent contact details prior to departure. All guidance cards and emergency plans have emergency contact numbers that can be used by staff on school visits, should any unforeseen problems arise. For educational visits that could occur out of school hours (whether planned or because they are running late) or not on a school day (weekends, non-term time) staff can ring EVC (contact details will be shared in advance), or other designated SLT team member. Additionally, there is a 24 hour emergency contact number for the local authority support team.

## **9. Approval and Planning**

### **Special/Medical Needs**

Any special/medical needs of students are collated by the visit leader, and supervising staff are briefed and trained accordingly. Parents are asked to give written consent to the administration of plasters and off-the-shelf first aid/medication, if deemed necessary. Documentation about special and/or medical needs must be taken on the visit and the leader and relevant assistants must be aware of the needs and the documentation. This documentation is collected separately for every educational visit to ensure visit leaders always have the most up to date information for students on their visit. Where students have a specific medical need, a specific risk assessment must be conducted prior to departure.

### **Transport**

The school has a list of approved transport providers, all of whom are approved by the ERYC Transport Services team, who may be contracted to provide transport for educational visits. Vehicles from these providers all have individual seat belts, with the exception of standard service school buses. There are occasions (usually for local visits) when a school service bus might be used to transport students. These buses do not have seatbelts but are approved for student transport. In all other circumstances, the visit leader will ensure all students are wearing a seat belt.

### **Training**

The School's Educational Visits Coordinator will attend externally provided educational visits training at least once every three years. All staff undertaking the role of Visit Leader will also undertake externally provided training to reflect their enhanced responsibilities at least once every three years. Updates, advice and training for all staff involved in visits are provided by the Educational Visits Coordinator or Head of School during regular staff meetings when appropriate. In addition, ECTs at the school are given introductory training on educational visits as part of their induction training programme.

### **First Aid**

At least one member of staff with appropriate first aid training is expected to accompany all visits. The only exception to this is where the visit is to a venue within 5 miles, and where there is a confirmed first aider at the venue. Even in these circumstances, the school will endeavour to ensure a trained first aider accompanies the visit.

All accidents and near misses on visits must be recorded by the visit leader on their return to school, in line with standard accident reporting procedures. All incidents where a student has been injured, or suffered a medical issue on a visit must also be recorded. These documents are stored by the school for a period of not less than 15 years.

Any such incidents are reviewed subsequently by the EVC and Health and Safety manager. Any lessons learned are will be shared with all relevant staff, and any necessary changes to procedures made.

## Insurance

The school has its own insurance policy that covers all visits that are undertaken, and is deemed sufficient. However, additional insurance may be required by the school, or recommended to parents in certain circumstances, and this must be checked and verified by the visit leader.

## Conduct/behaviour

Staff on visits are required to remind students that there should be no smoking and no alcohol or drugs consumed on any visit whatsoever. South Hunsley School has an Alcohol and Drug Misuse Policy which applies to all Educational Visits. Normal school rules regarding student conduct and behaviour apply to all school visits. Staff will follow normal school disciplinary procedures where these rules are not adhered to.

## Communication

Visit leaders should collect a school mobile phone from the IT team prior to departure. This must be booked at least 3 days in advance of the visit departure date. In the event of an emergency during a visit, contact details are held in the documentation pack for the particular visit. A copy of this documentation must be carried by, or accessible to the visit leader at all times, whilst a second copy is held by the EVC or designated deputy.

## EVOLVE system

The EVOLVE system is the online educational visits system provided by the ERYC which is used as a logging and a planning tool for all educational visits. The web address for EVOLVE can be obtained from the VLE/ Staff handbook.

## Planning and Approval

All educational visits must be initially approved using the electronic request template available through the VLE/ Staff handbook. Once approved, all visits must be logged on the EVOLVE system by the proposed visit leader, who must have their own EVOLVE username and password. All necessary and relevant documentation must either be attached or referred to specifically on the EVOLVE visit entry, and be available for inspection. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator is required to review the EVOLVE entry prior to final approval being recommended for the visit. The EVOLVE form will be subject to rigorous checking before any approval is given by the Head, EVC and/or Governor. The Local Authority Educational Visits Consultant will check category 4 and category A visit forms and will provide recommendations to the Headteacher, EVC and Visit Leader. The Headteacher will give final approval of all visits. No visit should leave school without this final approval.

## Types of visit and planning/approval procedures:

	Description	Submit before visit:	Checked/Approved by:	Final Authorisation by:
Cat 1	Day visits (Frequently repeated/recurring)	2 weeks	Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)	Headteacher
Cat 2	Day visits (one off/occasional)	2 weeks	Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)	Headteacher
Cat 3	UK residential	6 weeks	EVC, LA and Headteacher	Headteacher
Cat 4	Overseas	6 weeks	EVC, LA, Link Governor and Headteacher	Headteacher
Sub Cat "A"	High risk activities and environments	6 weeks	EVC, LA, Link Governor and Headteacher	Headteacher

To supplement the online EVOLVE documentation each educational visit must follow the guidance on the Educational Visits section of the VLE/ Staff handbook and on Evolve.

## **10. Documentation**

Three copies of any Educational Visit documentation should be created. One copy is held by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, one by the School (stored at the school main office should the visit occur out of school term time, or by a member of the senior leadership team other than the EVC), and one copy taken on the visit.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

South Hunsley School is aware of the need to review the policy regularly to take account of new rules, procedures and guidance relating to Educational Visits. This policy will be reviewed every three years.

To assure quality of standards, the Head of School and/or the EVC will accompany at least one visit per year to monitor real practice, and to assist with the review of policies and procedures.

Staff are encouraged to express any concerns regarding the organisation and management of visits in writing to the Head of School, and these will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence. If necessary issues will be considered by the Governing Body.

**Clare Johnson (LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant at ERYC)** or one of her team may turn up during any school visit and observe proceedings. They may also check paperwork to check for compliance with school and local authority policies.

### **Records of visits**

Records of visits are kept by the school for a minimum of 15 years.

The School's Educational Visits Coordinator is currently Luke Duerden

The EVC has administrative support provided by Jayne Kirk

The Educational Visits Link Governor is Jenny Gibson

The LA Educational Visits Consultant is Clare Johnson.