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Educational Visits Policy

Reviewed on: 28th September 2026

Next Review due: Autumn 2027

Signed by: Chair of Governors

Signed by: Headteacher

Vision

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn. 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 Ranelagh Primary 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.
- Opportunities for 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 work 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 and the standard operating procedures, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Ranelagh Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'.
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication systems for adventurous/ residential activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document) and Standard operating procedures for Ranelagh, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of visits

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. Visits within the school learning area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the school day.
2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. E.g. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc
3. Visits that are overseas, residential or involve an adventurous activity, including trampoline parks. Please see Standard operating procedures for Ranelagh for trip leader responsibilities.

Roles and responsibilities
Please see Standard operating procedures for Ranelagh.

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.
- 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 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. Visitors coming into school.
Approval should be given by the head teacher and events placed in the diary. A note may be sent out to parents out of courtesy or a dojo message via class teachers (if appropriate).

2. Day visits within the UK that do <u>not</u> involve an adventurous activity/local visits.
Approval should be given by the EVC and events placed in the school calendar as soon as possible. The visit leader should complete a cost planning sheet which will be given to the office, as soon as possible. Letters to be given to parents. Visit leader to upload all relevant documents on Evolve at least 2 weeks ahead of time (unless agreed by the EVC) so the EVC can look this over. This will be then sent to the head for final approval.

3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous').
The above statements apply however EVOLVE must be done at least 4 weeks in advance.

Risk assessments

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from.

Insurance

- When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off school premises the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail.
- The visit leader must check the need for additional travel insurance depending on the nature of the activity to be undertaken (via Evolve).

Voluntary Contributions

- The basic principle underlying the charging provisions of the1988 Act (ERA 1988) is that education provided by any maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or partly during school hours.
- There is also a principle that an educational visit mainly outside of the school day should be free of charge if it contributes to the national curriculum.
- Charges may be made for residential accommodation.
- Visits that are non-educational should not take place during school time denying access to full programmes of study.
- All visits during the school day should be deemed to be educational
- Voluntary contributions can be requested for any educational visit that takes place during the school day, however a pupil cannot be prevented from taking part in the visit on the basis of a family not making any or sufficient contribution.
- Where the visit is non-educational the charge cannot exceed the actual costs to be incurred. Costs can be calculated against transport, board and lodging, admission costs, the cost of appropriate non-teaching staff, incidental costs of staff, materials and equipment and insurance costs.
- Accounts related to off-site activities should be kept by the visit leader and checked by the school finance secretary

Voluntary help

- The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Head Teacher or EVC. This permission will be based upon knowledge of volunteers and their previous experience and training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.
- All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

Transport

- Parents should always be informed of the type of transport to be used and risk assessments carried out.
- Hired transport – The school should ensure appropriate levels of supervisory staff are available to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils.
- Public transport – Close supervision should be ensured

- Use of private cars – Staff must ensure they have appropriate documentation for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties. This documentation should include insurance, driving license and MOT and needs to be given to the office before staff use private cars to transport pupils. Parents must always be informed if members of staff intend to use private transport.

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 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
The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within 'local visits'.
Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion
Ranelagh Primary School complies with the Equality Act 2010.
As a school we will provide the best provision we can to allow all children to be included in trips where possible.

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 contacts 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.