Educational Visits Policy

THIS POLICY SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE London Borough of Redbridge Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with EVOLVE 2026

Signed: _____

Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee

Date: _____

Reviewed: October 2026

Context

At Wells Primary School 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 Wells 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 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, Wells 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
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.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the local area are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
   These follow the 'Local Trips' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**

These are entered on EVOLVE by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) once checked by the EVC. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.

3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and the EVC is responsible for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). Visit Leaders should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning using the Proposed Educational visit form, 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.

The Visit Leader must carry out a risk assessment covering all aspects of the proposed trip which must be approved by the EVC. A risk assessment pre-visit must be attended by teaching staff accompanying the trip. Ongoing 'dynamic' risk assessments will be continued by the visit leader throughout the trip to ensure that hazards are monitored and appropriate safety measures are put in place. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that all accompanying staff are familiarised with the risk assessment and to continue to brief staff throughout the trip. The visit leader will keep a list of all children (and contact numbers for parents, when necessary) on the trip with them at all times and will ensure that a copy is left at the main office.

The EVC is the Deputy Headteacher, 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 before submitting them to the Head and entering them onto EVOLVE.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. *(see National Guidance www.oeapng.info for additional information).*

The Local Authority 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:

- 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.

When 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.

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

Wells Primary School Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be found in the Risk Assessment folder on Google drive. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

Parental Consent

Consent is collected annually from parents / carers (or when pupils start Wells Primary mid-year) for activities within the local area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

This includes routine activities such as local visits, after school fixtures, etc. Parents consent through a traditional paper consent form and is included in the school's admission pack.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting through a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

For all visits, the pupils should be adequately briefed about the aims, expectations and codes of conduct for the visit. Pupils should be engaged in evaluating the risks of the tasks they are about to undertake.

In all cases parents and pupils should be made aware of the standards of behaviour expected and the sanctions which may be used in cases where the standards are breached. For residential visits it may be appropriate that parents and pupils sign a Code of Conduct Agreement relating to the standards of behaviour expected from the pupils and informing the parents that they are agreeing to the School reserving the right to send their child home at the parents' expense if they jeopardise their safety, the safety of others or the good name of the School.

Charging / funding for visits

Please see charging policy

Transport

Wells Primary School does not have self-drive transport.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – *Refer to the LA's guidance document and*
London Borough of Redbridge Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with EVOLVE 2025

Insurance

Wells Primary School uses the LA's insurance scheme for visits.

Other Topics

Dismissal of pupils from trips that finish after the end of the school day/out of school time:

Children will usually be brought back to school and taken to their classroom where a register will be taken. No child will be allowed to leave the group on the way into school.

Residential trips: A register will be taken as the children are collected from the coach by parent/carer.

Appendix 1 – Local trips

General

Visits/activities within the local area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg swimming lessons
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities unless of an adventurous nature.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the local trips are in easy walking distance of the school. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used places: e.g.

- Bancroft's School
- Woodford Wells Club
- Knighton Woods
- Woodford Green
- Woodford County High School
- Woodbridge High School

Operating Procedure for Local Trips

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

- 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:

- All Local trips are to be agreed with the Headteacher or the Deputy Headteacher before the trip is planned.
- Trip to be risk assessed.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of for Local Trips 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 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.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area 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.
- A mobile phone is taken with each group and the office have a record 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 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
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.