



**'Opening the Gate to Success'**

# **Educational Visits**

**2024 - 2026**

## Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every child 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 Parkgate Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of children taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change and novelty
- 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. Students 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 giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts.
- 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, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time or outside the normal school day, is covered by this policy.

Parkgate Primary School adopts Coventry City Council's **Policy for the Management of Visits, Trips and Learning Outside the Classroom** (currently dated October 2011 and available via the EVOLVE homepage. EVOLVE is the web based notification, approval, monitoring and communication system, used by Coventry City Council, to which all staff have access).

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with Coventry City Council's policy. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

The rest of this policy explains how visit approval and planning takes place at Parkgate Primary School.

## 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.

## 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 Head Teacher 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 Ben Henley, 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 Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head teacher** is Zoe Richards and she has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

**The Governors** at Parkgate Primary School are notified of past, and future, visits during Curriculum, Quality and Standards meetings on a Termly basis, as a minimum. The Chair of the Local Governing Body, Mrs Carol Blair, has read-only access to Evolve and is able to view visits that are submitted and approved. For any visits that are adventurous or are overseas, then the Local Governing Body are informed at the planning stage.

**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 realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe trip management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced trip leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to the role of visit leader

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the children, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

## Visit Planning and approval

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

1. Local area visits will follow the extending learning territory policy (appendix 1). Staff must complete the Signing out sheet for the office. (Appendix 3)
2. Visits within the UK excluding adventure activities – these are put on EVOLVE and approved internally by the Head Teacher. Visits should be submitted to the EVC via EVOLVE at least 14 days in advance.
3. Visits involving adventure activities must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least 30 days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval 28 days in advance. Visit leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence ([http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider\\_search.php](http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php)) or an LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>).

If they don't then they must complete a Provider Questionnaire (National Guidance document 8p)

The head teacher will liaise with the Chair of Governors to inform her of the proposed activities.

4. Visits abroad require detailed planning to commence well in advance and the head must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third party providers and permission from the head teacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge (see above) do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a Provider Questionnaire (National Guidance document 8p), which visit leaders should scrutinise. The head teacher will liaise with the Chair of Governors to inform her of the proposed activities.

The head will need to submit final plans to the Local Authority 28 days before the departure date.

## 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; 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. (see Appendix 3)

## The Visit Leaders job list

The visit leader will ensure all the following steps are completed for any type 2 or 3 visit:

- Gain outline approval from the head to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism / charging policy.
- Ensure the visit:
  - has clear learning outcomes
  - has activities appropriate to the group
  - is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks
  - is appropriately staffed
  - complies with the school's safeguarding policy
- Involve children in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure the LA procedures are followed and that the visit plan is recorded on EVOLVE.
- Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults and children are:
  - fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
  - know what to do in the event of an emergency
  - are given information they need about individual pupil needs.

Emergency procedures must include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the party leader.
- Ensure the base contact back at school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.



## Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent, for all local, non-residential visits, at the start of each year. 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. As above, parents have the option of consenting online via EVOLVE, or through a traditional paper consent form.

For residential visits, visits extending beyond the school day or visits out of the City specific consent should be requested using the school consent forms which will specifically detail the visit.

## Inclusion

Parkgate Primary School complies with the DDA regarding Inclusion.

The Equality Act 2010 states that the responsible body of a school must not discriminate harass or victimise a pupil (to whom one of the protected characteristics applies: Disability; Gender reassignment; Pregnancy and maternity; Race; Religion or belief; Sex and sexual orientation) in the way that it affords the pupil access to benefit, facility or service or by not affording the pupil access to a benefit, facility or service. There is a duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender, or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special need, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and actively involved.

Establishments should take all responsibility practicable measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and reflected in establishment policy, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- An entitlement to participate;
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- Integration through participation with peers.

In practise, this will mean either identifying a specific member of staff who will have one to one responsibility for a named child, or asking the child's parent/carer to accompany the visit (at no cost to them).

The Risk Assessment for the visit must record the arrangements that have been made.

## Charging / funding for trips

The visit leader is to ensure the financial viability of the visit at all times. In order to ensure that the costings are appropriate and that all costs have been taken into account the visit leader is to meet with the school finance manager.

## Transport

Parkgate Primary School follow the guidelines set out in the LA transport policy.

Drivers of the School Minibus must complete a Vehicle Check/Log Sheet before every journey. These can be found aboard the minibus. This is to allow careful monitoring of the minibus, its condition and its general use.

- The School Minibus should be collected from and returned to the school grounds and keys should be returned to the member of staff responsible (School Office) at the end of the journey, or as soon as is possible thereafter.
- Any defects noted should be reported to the member of staff responsible as soon as possible. More serious defects MUST be reported IMMEDIATELY. Minor defects can be reported after the journey has taken place. However, if the driver is in any doubt the vehicle MUST NOT be taken onto the road.

Any staff transporting children using the minibus must follow the National Guidance. In addition to this, the headteacher, EVC and staff members themselves must act professionally and make reasonable and sensible judgments based on each individual visit ensuring the safety of children is not compromised at any point. The drivers workload, expected driving time and distance are all factors that will need to be taken into consideration for any visit exceeding the local area.

**Use of staff cars to transport pupils** - Staff cars may only be used to transport pupils when the driver has business insurance and a clean driving licence (a record of both of these being checked will be kept by the SBM). Two members of staff must be present when transporting children in their own vehicles. Any use of private vehicles will be subject to a specific risk assessment.

## Insurance

Educational visits are insured under Marsh's Travel & Personal Accident for Schools Policy Schedule with The Futures Trust. Policy Number UKBCHC59970/67575. Underwritten by Chubb European Group Ltd (Chubb).

## Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Territory

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the territory are within 20 miles, from the school. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues, used by some staff:

- Coombe Abbey
- Ryton Pools
- City Centre
- Memorial Park
- Hereward College
- Herbert Art Gallery
- Transport Museum
- Allesley Park
- Brandon Marsh
- Local supermarkets
- Walks in the local area

We may use this area on a daily basis for a variety of learning activities and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the visit approval process so long as they follow the agreed standard operating procedure. The EVC and the office maintain a list of currently approved staff.

### Operating Procedure

The following are potentially significant hazards within our extended territory:

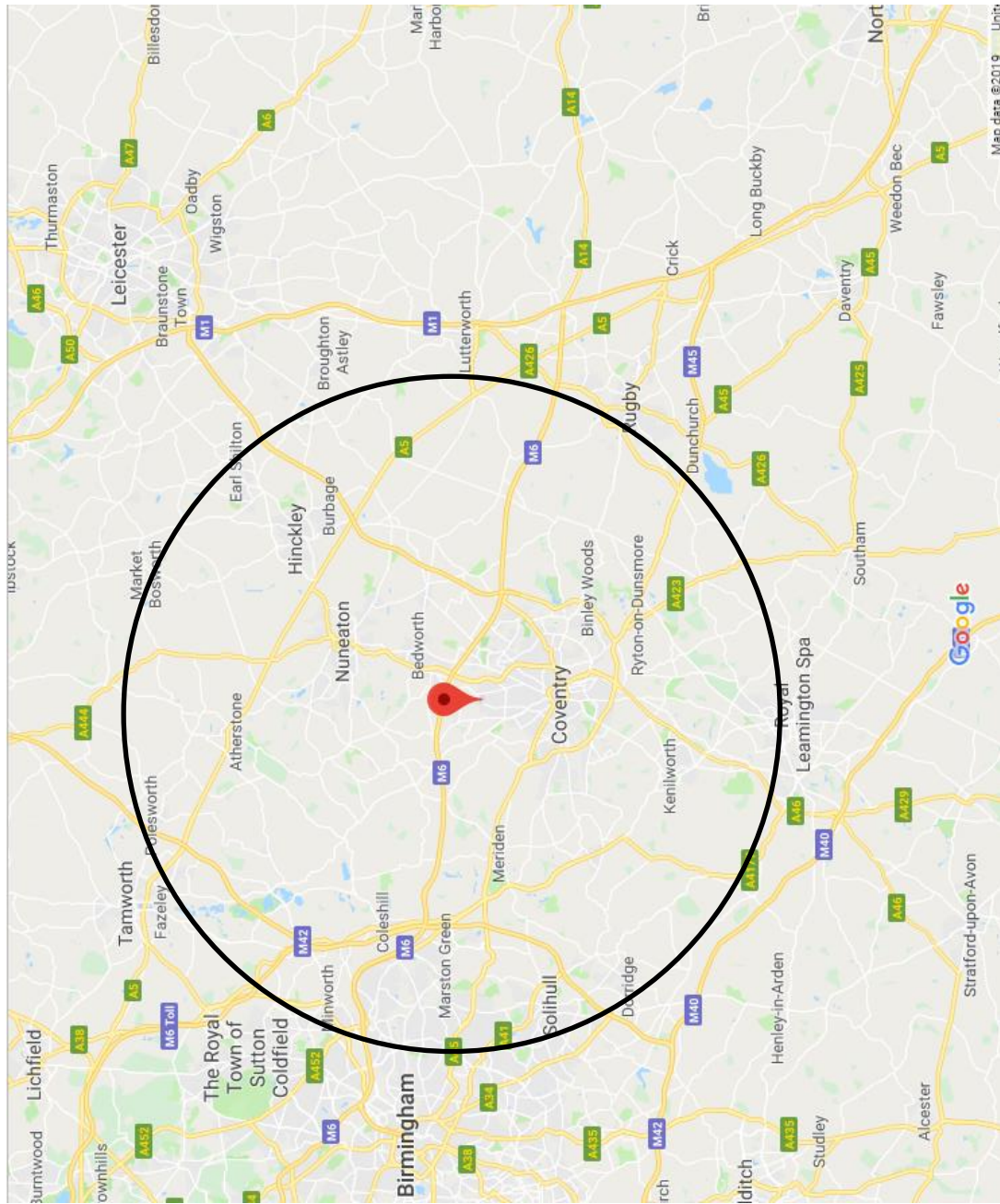
- Road traffic
- Other people / members of the public / animals
- Losing a pupil
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, falls
- Weather conditions
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles rubbish etc.)

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
- The concept and operating procedure of the extended learning terrain is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.

- There is always a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas' and have practiced appropriate management techniques.
- Children have been trained and practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Children are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended territory is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Children's clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness before leaving school and staff carry additional spare clothing, a survival blanket and a first aid kit
- Staff carry student medical information and emergency contact details (collect this from the office on the way out)
- Staff will deposit in the office the General Risk Assessment, a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route and an estimated time of return. 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 1 - Extended Learning Territory Map



## 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.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the trip participants (including staff).
4. Both the visit leader(s) and the base contact 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.
5. The National Guidance role specific emergency action cards are carried by:
  - a. The visit leader
  - b. The first point of contact (eg the office receptionist)
  - c. The designated base contact senior manager
6. This procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders

## Appendix 3 – Sign out sheet for visits in the Extended Learning Territory



**'Opening the Gate to Success'**

**Signing- out sheet for ad-hoc activities in the school locality, where the school policy addresses the generic risk management issues.**

**Leave this completed form in the office or other agreed place when you go out.**

Date	
Visit Leader	
Accompanying Staff	
Volunteers	
Group/Class/Form	
Activity	
Destination/Venue details	
First Aid kit / Emergency Card taken?	
Time out	
Time back	
Contact number	
Any other relevant details/issues (eg pupil medical/behavioural needs)	

Keep a record of this sheet.