PARK SCHOOL AND LITTLE CRICKETS

Educational Visits Policy

Applies to	Whole school, including EYFS and Little Crickets
Policy reference	Educational Visits Policy
Policy owners	Headteacher / Nursery Manager / Educational Visits Coordinator / DSL
Reviewed by	AWh / NW / EW / RM
Next review	Summer 2027

1. Purpose and framework

Educational visits, local walks, fieldwork, fixtures, residentials and other off-site activities enrich the curriculum and support pupils' knowledge, skills, wellbeing and personal development. This policy applies to Park School and Little Crickets, including EYFS, and must be followed alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Missing Child Policy, First Aid and Medical policies, and current DfE guidance on health and safety on educational visits.

All visits must be planned, authorised and conducted so that risks are identified and managed, inclusion is considered and staff can respond effectively to emergencies. Age, development, SEND, medical needs, the environment, transport, activity and experience of supervisors must inform the arrangements.

2. Roles and responsibilities

School Board

The School Board retains overall responsibility for health and safety and provides oversight of the arrangements implemented by the Headteacher and staff.

Headteacher and Nursery Manager

- ensure a suitable system of planning, authorisation and monitoring
- support and challenge the Educational Visits Coordinator and Visit Leader
- approve visits, costs and higher-risk arrangements as required
- ensure lessons from incidents and evaluations inform practice

Educational Visits Coordinator

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) supports the Headteacher and Nursery Manager and should be involved from an early stage. The EVC checks that proposed visits meet School and Nursery requirements, reviews planning and risk management, monitors practice and may require further evidence. In conjunction with the Headteacher or Nursery Manager, the EVC may stop a visit where arrangements are not satisfactory. The current named EVC is recorded internally and communicated to staff rather than fixed permanently in this policy.

Visit Leader

Every visit has a designated Visit Leader, also referred to operationally as the Party Leader or Educational Visit Leader. The Visit Leader is responsible for planning, risk assessment, briefing, supervision, communication, registers, emergency arrangements and evaluation. Responsibility for pupils remains with school or nursery staff at all times.

Accompanying adults

Staff, provider staff and approved volunteers follow the Visit Leader's instructions and agreed safeguarding arrangements. Parent helpers remain under staff direction and are not given sole responsibility for a group. Adults should avoid being alone with a pupil wherever reasonably practicable.

3. Planning and authorisation

Visits are recorded and authorised through the School's current Educational Visits planning system and shared records. The Visit Leader must involve the EVC early, complete the required authorisation and obtain approval before commitments are made or information is issued to families.

- educational purpose, destination, itinerary, departure and return times
- names and roles of adults, pupil numbers and age range
- individual SEND, disability, medical, allergy, behavioural and pastoral needs
- transport, provider, venue, accommodation and financial arrangements
- staffing and supervision, including transitions, toilets and unstructured times
- equipment, clothing, food, hydration and environmental conditions
- first aid, medication, communication and emergency procedures
- insurance and provider assurances for specialist or hazardous activities

A preliminary visit should be completed where reasonably practicable and where it materially supports safe planning. If this is not practicable, the Visit Leader must obtain sufficient reliable information by other means. Water-margin and farm visits require the relevant additional guidance and controls. Outdoor centres and specialist providers must supply satisfactory evidence of competence, qualifications, risk management and any required licence.

4. Risk assessment and dynamic risk management

Every visit requires a suitable and sufficient risk assessment prepared or reviewed by the Visit Leader and checked through the School's approval process. A repeated assessment may be reused only after review for the current group, staffing, date, environment and activity. The assessment must include the emergency plan, missing-child procedure and medical arrangements and be shared with relevant accompanying adults.

Staff continue to assess changing conditions during the visit. Extreme heat, severe weather, air quality, travel disruption or other emerging hazards may require the activity to be modified, relocated, delayed or cancelled.

5. Consent and information for families

General consent may be obtained on admission or annually for routine local visits that take place as part of the normal curriculum. Specific informed consent is required for overnight or overseas visits, visits involving higher risks than normal daily life, visits carrying an additional charge and all visits involving Nursery or Reception children where the arrangements are not already covered by valid written consent.

Parents or carers receive proportionate information about the date, timings, purpose, destination, travel, activities, costs, equipment and significant arrangements. A parent meeting may be appropriate for residential or complex visits. All permissions are checked before departure.

6. Supervision and staffing

Final staffing is determined by the Visit Leader and EVC through risk assessment. Decisions consider the educational objectives, age and development of pupils, environment, activity, travel, group behaviour, staff competence and individual medical or SEND needs. Ratios are not used as a substitute for professional judgement.

For EYFS visits, staffing must meet the applicable statutory minimum ratios and will normally be enhanced where needed to assure safety. As a planning baseline the setting uses 1:2 for children under two, 1:3 for children aged two to three and 1:8 for children aged four and over, subject to the statutory framework, staff qualifications and the visit risk assessment.

Volunteers are appropriately selected, checked and briefed. The School maintains arrangements for DBS-checked helpers. Volunteers receive clear guidance on safeguarding, confidentiality, conduct, mobile phones, photographs, emergencies and their responsibilities.

7. Inclusion, SEND, disability and medical needs

Reasonable adjustments will be made so pupils with SEND, disabilities or medical needs can participate fully and safely wherever possible. Planning must include individual support, accessibility, transport, staffing, communication, intimate care, medication and emergency arrangements. Relevant Individual Healthcare Plans and risk assessments must be followed.

8. First aid and medication

All visits must have suitable first-aid provision and an identified qualified first aider. Where Nursery or Reception children attend, at least one accompanying member of staff must hold an appropriate paediatric first-aid certificate. The Visit Leader takes suitable first-aid equipment, pupil medical information and all required medication, including inhalers, adrenaline auto-injectors and seizure medication. Medication is accessible and administered according to the child's Individual Healthcare Plan and the Administration of Medicines Policy.

9. Transport

Families are informed when children will be transported off site. Transport is planned using approved providers or maintained, insured school or nursery vehicles. Seat belts must be fitted and worn; suitable child car seats or booster seats are used where required. Only authorised drivers may drive school minibuses.

Children must be supervised by an adult other than the driver. For a school minibus carrying up to 16 pupils, the established arrangement is two staff members, subject to the risk assessment and passenger needs. Driver competence, vehicle checks, breakdown arrangements and emergency contacts must be confirmed.

10. Before departure and conduct during the visit

- check consent, registers, group lists, contacts, medical information and equipment
- brief pupils about the purpose, behaviour, boundaries and key safety information
- brief adults and providers about roles, groups, safeguarding and emergencies
- leave visit details and the Visit Leader's contact number with the School Contact
- nominate an Out-of-Hours Contact for any period beyond the normal school day
- carry a working means of communication and keep school or nursery contacts accessible
- conduct headcounts at planned transition points and whenever circumstances require
- use high-visibility clothing or other identification where identified by the risk assessment
- follow safeguarding, mobile-device, photography and staff conduct requirements

11. Emergencies, accidents and missing children

The Visit Leader must remain contactable and implement the visit emergency plan. During the school day, a nominated School Contact remains available. For activity outside the normal day, an Out-of-Hours Contact receives full visit and contact details.

In an accident or medical emergency, staff make the area safe, provide first aid, contact emergency services where required, inform the School or Nursery and notify parents or carers through the agreed process. A staff member accompanies a child to hospital if needed while suitable supervision is maintained for the remaining group. The incident is recorded and reported under School procedures.

If a child becomes separated from the group, the Visit Leader is informed immediately, the group is secured and supervised, and a rapid search of the immediate area begins. Venue staff and police are contacted if the child is not located immediately. The Headteacher or Nursery Manager is informed without delay, parents or carers are contacted in accordance with the Missing Child Policy, and a full written record is completed.

12. Residential and higher-risk visits

Residential visits require specific consent, detailed information for families, medical forms, emergency and out-of-hours arrangements, appropriate sleeping and safeguarding arrangements, insurance confirmation and approval of costs. Pupils not attending will receive suitable alternative provision. Specialist and adventurous activities are led only by appropriately competent and qualified staff or providers and require enhanced risk management.

13. Insurance and finance

The Visit Leader must confirm with the Bursar or appropriate manager that the visit, activity, provider, transport and any specialist element are covered by the School's insurance. All charges, deposits, staff overtime and financial commitments require approval through the established process.

14. Evaluation, incidents and records

Following each visit, the Visit Leader evaluates educational outcomes, safeguarding, supervision, risk controls, provider performance and operational arrangements. Accidents, incidents, near misses and safeguarding concerns are reported and reviewed. Lessons learned are shared with the EVC, Headteacher or Nursery Manager and used to improve future visits. Records are retained securely in accordance with School procedures.

Appendix 1: Visit planning checklist

- Approval and educational purpose confirmed
- Visit Leader, EVC and contacts identified
- Risk assessment and emergency plan approved
- Consent and family information completed
- Registers, groups and supervision arrangements confirmed
- SEND, medical, allergy, intimate-care and accessibility needs addressed
- First aider, first-aid kit and medication confirmed
- Transport, drivers, seat belts, insurance and provider checks completed
- Pupil and adult briefings completed
- Headcount points and missing-child response agreed
- Evaluation and incident reporting arrangements understood

Appendix 2: Parent and volunteer helper briefing

- Remain with the allocated group and follow the Visit Leader's instructions.
- Refer emergencies, concerns and changes directly to staff.
- Do not use personal phones or cameras except where specifically authorised.
- Do not buy or give pupils food, sweets, gifts or treats.
- Follow allergy, safeguarding, confidentiality and behaviour arrangements.
- Parent helpers may assist with intimate care only for their own child and only under the agreed arrangements; staff support other pupils.
- Ultimate responsibility for all pupils remains with Park School or Little Crickets staff.