

CHELLINGTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND FEDERATION



Happiness Through Wisdom

“Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel.”

Proverbs 20:15

**Christopher Reeves VA Primary School/
St. Lawrence VA Primary School**

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

January 2025

Review Date: January 2027

Introduction and aims

The Chellington Federation Church of England Federation is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its communities. We promote care and respect, and expect high standards in all aspects of Federation life.

As a Church of England Federation, the schools promote a friendly, caring, family ethos where everyone works as a team to support each other across all areas of school life thus encouraging Happiness through Wisdom - "There is gold and a multitude of rubies; but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel." Proverbs 20:15

In each school, we aim to build communities clearly based on Christian values. At Christopher Reeves, the whole community is encouraged to 'Live our Values' being strong and courageous to follow God's love and stand steadfast. "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord, your God, will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

At St Lawrence we encourage all children to 'Let Their Light Shine' through the core values of hope (Letting our light shine gives us hope for the future.), courage (We have courage to Let our Light Shine.) and perseverance (When we persevere our light can shine). "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5: 14-16

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles. With these values and principles in mind, all offsite visits and activities that are organised and undertaken by the school are regarded as "educational visits". Whenever pupils leave the school site under the supervision of school staff, they are undertaking an educational visit.

Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet DfES requirements and LEA guidelines.

Christopher Reeves current EVC is **Sarah Bush / Louisa Fairey**
St Lawrence current EVC is **Sarah Bush / Shelley Blackburn**

1 Rationale

The schools aim to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development. The schools' Executive Headteacher and governors recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities enables children to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience, and is an essential element of good primary educational practice.

Types of visits organised by the schools

The schools offer a wide range of educational visits, including:

- Local village walks
- Regular and occasional curriculum enhancement- e.g. swimming, locally arranged sports festivals, Sing On and other communal musical events
- Specialist topic related trips requiring transport, e.g. Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Castle Theatre, Kenilworth Castle, ThinkTank Birmingham
- Residential visits e.g. Yorkshire Dales, Frontier Centre

All educational visits have a defined purpose, with clearly stated, justifiable educational objectives.

Every effort is made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

2 Compliance

The Federation's Educational Visits policy complies with the Local Authority's Educational Visit Code of Practice and Safety Guidelines. This school policy should also be read in conjunction with the other relevant Federation and school policy documents, such as the Safeguarding Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

Access to Policies and Guidelines

Staff involved in the leadership and management of visits should be familiar with all relevant guidelines and policy documents, and should know how/where this information can be accessed.

The LA Educational Code of Practice and Visits Guidelines are accessible via the LA Educational Visits webpage

https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome_public.asp?domain=bedfordboroughvisits.org.uk

(Details of username and password and kept in the school offices together with hard copies of the LA guidelines)

3 Planning and approval procedures

Visits are recorded, checked, and approved in accordance with the following procedures:

3.1 Day Visits (Routine)

Visits that take place on a regular basis throughout the year, or over a specific period of time (such as local walks and Sports Festivals).

Visits are checked and approved internally - by the Executive Headteacher (with EVC support)

These do not require submission to the Evolve Online approval as long as the Executive Headteacher and EVC are satisfied with the Risk Assessments provided by the organising authority

3.2 Day Visits (Non Routine)

One-off or occasional visits must be submitted by the Group Leader for approval at least 4 weeks in advance, and by the EVC for external approval at least 2 weeks in advance of the visit

- Group Leader completes an Educational Visits Proposal Form
- Group Leader (with EVC support) completes a Risk Assessment
- Executive Headteacher (with EVC support) approves the visit by signing authorisation of the Proposal Form and the Risk Assessment
- EVC submits for external authorisation using the Evolve Online approval system
- Governing Body are informed of visits that will take/have taken place via the termly Executive Headteacher's report

NB Certain types of visit will require additional safety checks and should be given sufficient additional planning and approval times. These include:

- Adventurous Activity trips
- Water Margin trips

3.3 UK Residential Visits

Visits that involve one or more nights away from home in UK must be submitted by the Group Leader for approval at least 12 weeks in advance, and by the EVC for external approval at least 4 weeks in advance of the visit.

- Pre-Visit and planning meeting with the residential venue is essential
- Group Leader completes an Educational Visits Proposal Form
- Group Leader (with EVC support) completes a Risk Assessment
- Head Teacher (with EVC support) approves the visit by signing authorisation of the proposal Form and the Risk Assessment
- EVC submits for external authorisation using the Evolve Online approval system
- Governing Body are informed of visits that will take/have taken place via the termly Executive Headteacher's report

3.4 Staffing selection and supervision ratios

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of the children on educational visits. The LA Educational Visits Guidelines provide recommended minimum staffing ratios, but the choice of staff and the decision regarding ratios is still a matter of judgement for the Executive Headteacher, after consultation with the EVC and Group Leader as part of the risk assessment and management process.

Recommended ratios

The Group Leader will retain overall supervision of the class/group for the duration of the visit. Other than on Routine Day Visits, the ratios should therefore exclude the Group Leader as a supervising adult.

Foundation Stage: One to Three

Years 1 to 3: One to six/eight

Years 4 to 6: One to ten

3.5 Risk assessments and management

The schools have a legal duty of care for its young people, and must therefore give careful consideration to the hazards involved during an educational visit, and ensure that risks are managed at reasonable and acceptable levels.

The Group Leader will undertake appropriate risk assessments for each visit, supported by the EVC and these will be shared/discussed/agreed by all visit leaders before the visit takes place.

A set of written generic risk assessments and a blank specific visit form is available on the Bedford Borough Educational Visits website:

https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco6/evchome_public.asp?domain=bedfordboroughvisits.org.uk

Teachers also have copies of the school's generic risk assessments accessible on a shared drive.

3.6 Insurance and Finance arrangements (including charging arrangements)

The Executive Headteacher and EVC must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place for all educational visits.

The Group Leader and EVC should ensure that:

- each visit is accurately costed

- adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances
- the costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents), including how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute
- Charging arrangements (for more details see school charging policy)

3.7 Transport

As part of the overall risk assessment process, the EVC must take reasonable steps to check that any transport used during the visit is suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe, and that any specific Local Authority or legal requirements are met.

Leaders should refer to the Schools' generic risk assessment for transport which includes emergency arrangements, supervision, use of seat belts and pick up/drop off arrangements. The school hires coaches/buses from companies that can provide evidence of their Child Protection measures, and in the absence of an approved Local Authority list, come with a recommendation by other schools.

For visits that require the use of staff cars, drivers must have a valid insurance policy covering the driver and the vehicle for the intended use. This may require that the driver has 'business use' cover. The staff member will have been assessed as competent and suitable by the Executive Headteacher.

Establishments that organise transport in private cars have a legal duty of care, and may be liable in the event of a claim following an incident. They should ensure that:

- The driver properly understands their duty of care and any agreed responsibilities for supervision.
- Parents are informed about the transport arrangements.
- Evidence is obtained that:
 - The vehicle is safe. This means that it holds a valid MOT certificate, where relevant, that the driver certifies it has been serviced in line with the manufacturer's schedule, and that the driver carries out any pre-use checks specified by the manufacturer.
 - The driver is suitable. This means that they hold a valid licence for the type of vehicle and meet any employer requirements.
 - There is a valid insurance policy covering the driver and the vehicle for the intended use. This may require that the driver has 'business use' cover.

Tax and MOT status can be checked at www.vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk. Driver licence details can be checked at www.gov.uk/check-driving-information if the driver provides a check code (from www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence). It is advisable for establishments to keep evidence of these checks having been carried out.

3.8 Parent information and consent

At the start of each academic year, the Schools seek or confirm permission from parents / carers for consent to local walks and routine day visits. Thereafter, specific consent is sought for each Educational Trip in the one-off or residential categories.

The Group Leader and EVC ensure that parents/carers are provided with appropriate and sufficient information about all visits. The amount of information and method of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned and the assessed level of risk involved.

Parents/carers of each pupil on a visit are asked to complete and sign a written consent form.

Any special/medical needs of pupils are collated by supervising staff. Medical information and consent forms can be obtained from the Lead First Aider or the School Office.

The Group Leader must also ensure that the school holds up to date emergency parent contact details for all pupils on the visit.

3.9 Staff briefing and emergency procedures

All staff (including volunteers) involved in the leadership of a visit must be briefed fully about each visit. In addition to the specific arrangements for the venue and activities, the following must be covered:

- Each adult is aware of their expected roles and responsibilities before, during and after a visit
- Group Leaders are made aware of emergency procedures and how to obtain outside assistance or contact the emergency services if required
- A properly equipped first aid kit has been checked and is available to staff during school visits

3.10 Briefing and preparation of young people

Providing relevant information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for all school visits. Pupils are briefed about safety arrangements and what clothing/equipment should be brought. Leaders ensure that pupils clearly understand what will be considered unacceptable behaviour or conduction, and the consequences of non-compliance.

3.11 Field File

Group Leaders are required to compile a 'Field File' which they will take with them on the visit. A copy remains with the school contact back at school, and will be taken home by the school contact in the case of overnight residential visits. These will be centrally stored on return in the Executive Headteacher's Office . The Field File should contain:

- pre-visit documentation, confirmations and booking details
- risk assessments
- lists and groupings of adults and pupils
- emergency contact details
- any other documentation associated with the visit

Where appropriate, the records for the visit will also be held centrally on Evolve.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Executive Headteacher has overall responsibility for all the school's education visits:

- Ensure the EVC is competent to oversee the co-ordination of off-site education
- Visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LA, school governors and the school's own Health & Safety Policy
- The group leader is competent to monitor risks and supervise the group throughout the visit
- Adequate child protection procedures are in place
- All necessary action have been completed before the visit takes place
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- The LA or Governing Board has approved the visit if necessary

4.2 The Schools' Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

The EVC oversees the planning and organisation of the school's visits, and provides advice and guidance to staff and Executive Headteacher, including recommendations regarding the approval of visits. Specifically the EVC must ensure:

- Group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- Ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- Parents have signed consent forms
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- Adequate first aid provision will be in place
- The mode of transport is appropriate
- Travel times out and back are known in school
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- They have a contact name, the address and phone number of the visits venue
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- The group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed risk assessment and emergency procedures
- The group leader, helpers and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers and other helpers next of kin.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

4.3 The Group Leader who must be a member of the teaching staff, but not an NQT, has a common law duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. They must:

- Obtain the EVC's prior agreement before any off-site visit Follow LEA and governing body guidelines
- Appoint a deputy (preferably another teacher, but certainly another member of school staff)
- Have ownership of the risk assessments
- Pre-visit the site if possible
- Evaluate the trip after the event and forward all paperwork to the EVC to be kept on file.
- Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an emergency

4.4 Adult Volunteers – Additional adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. They must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment Follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with the control and discipline
- Speak to the Group Leader or Teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

4.5 Pupils

The group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell their supervising adult about it

5 Post visit review and evaluation

It is good practice for Group Leaders, on return from a visit, to review the visit with the EVC and/or Executive Headteacher, and to record any examples of good practice and lessons learned that might assist with the planning and leadership of future visits. In particular, it is important to record and review any accidents, incidents, or near-misses (i.e. dangerous incidents that nearly happened, but fortunately didn't). It is important that details are recorded as soon as possible after an incident whilst they are still fresh in the memory, preferably with signed witness accounts.

Serious incidents must be notified to RIDDOR (HSE's "Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995), and to the Local Authority using the procedures and standard forms (available in the office)

After any major accident, the school will undertake a review of the incident and their emergency procedures, and will share the findings with the Local Authority for the benefit of other schools.

Should a serious incident occur, all documentation from the visit and details of the pupil/s involved must be stored by the school until the pupil/s reach the age of 21.

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

Confirmation:

This policy has been reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on 15th January 2025 and will be renewed in January 2027.

If you require a hard copy of this policy, please contact the school office.