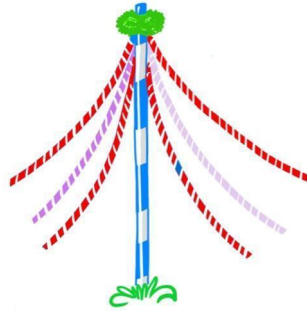


Maypole School



OFFSITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM POLICY

2026-2027

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1. INTRODUCTION

Maypole School is committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities for all our pupils. Educational visits and learning outside the classroom (Learning outside of the Classroom) are a key component of that provision, broadening experiences for our pupils and enabling a deeper understanding of learning to take place.

Learning outside the Classroom

Amongst other things, Educational Visits and Learning Outside of the Classroom comprise of:

- activities within the school's own buildings, grounds or immediate area;
- educational visits organised both within and outside of the hours of the school day, beyond the grounds of the provision and in the local and/or wider community;
- overnight stays on the school grounds;
- residential visits that take place during the school week, a weekend or holiday, away from school grounds;
- work placements with local organisations;
- involvement in clubs, musical groups, and sporting activities held during or after the end of the school day, either on or off-site;
- and participation in dramatic productions, concerts and other special events.

Learning outside of the Classroom is therefore distinct from Educational Visits, in that the former also includes learning within the school boundary that does not occur solely in the classroom.

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm our commitment, as an organisation, to delivering high quality Learning outside of the Classroom and on educational visits, and to delineate our procedures for planning, assessing and managing educational visits.

All learning outside the classroom is risk-assessed in accordance with the school's Risk Assessment Policy, and with reference to our Health & Safety and First Aid policies, which should be read in conjunction with this policy. This policy has been written with reference to 'Health and Safety on educational visits' (DfE, 2018).

2. AIMS AND RATIONALE

Maypole School has a firm commitment to Learning outside of the Classroom and during educational visits. It is acknowledged that organising and leading off site activities puts a great deal of responsibility on all involved.

However, the benefits are immense and make an invaluable contribution to the academic, personal, emotional and social development of young people.

Aims of Learning outside of the Classroom and Educational Visits

- To develop Learning outside of the Classroom as an entitlement for all young people by overcoming potential barriers such as complex needs and challenging behaviour.
- To ensure enriching, high quality curriculum provision through Learning outside of the Classroom experiences that facilitates pupils' holistic progress.
- To deliver a wide range of progressive and frequent Learning outside of the Classroom activities for all pupil groups.
- To provide young people with Learning outside of the Classroom experiences that promote personal development and wellbeing, by increasing engagement and maximising access.
- To design the curriculum so that it embeds progressive experiences for all young people.
- To improve the effectiveness of learning outside the classroom through better planning and evaluation of outcomes for young people.

Rationale

Educational visits and Learning outside of the Classroom can have valuable and discernible benefits for our children and young people, playing a crucial part in promoting their overall progress and achievement by, for example:

- Providing memorable, fun experiences that inspire, engage and motivate.
- Providing young people with divergent experiences that enable them to generalise their skills in contexts that they would not experience in school alone.
- Supporting the development of positive relationships through building trust.
- Developing greater independence and skills for daily living.
- Promoting social inclusion and engagement with the wider community, through the development of self and other awareness.
- Promoting confidence and self-esteem via engagement with challenging tasks and encouraging pupils to take more responsibility.
- Being responsive to the different learning styles possessed by the range of young people in school.
- Supporting better progress by upping the level of challenge, taking young people out of their comfort zone and working within a framework of managed risk.
- Revealing young peoples' 'hidden talents' that may not manifest within a classroom or standard setting.

3. PLANNING AND APPROVAL

Maypole School adheres to the DfE guidance on educational visits.

Lesson planning

Educational visits and Learning Outside the Classroom is embedded within the school curriculum and therefore should be treated as any other lesson with respect to planning. In order to plan an

off-site activity the Educational Visit Leader (the staff member planning and organising the visit) should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage.

Routine or local visits also need to be planned ahead. It may be possible to approve a series of events on a termly basis. No financial commitment should be agreed until all relevant approvals have been achieved.

Staff should be mindful of ongoing risk assessment. It is essential that there is sufficient lead-in time proportionate to the complexity of the visit and the level of approval required.

Equality and Inclusion

In relation to equality and inclusion, it is important to consider the points below to ensure that all our pupils have access and can participate in all offsite activities:

- Entitlement: the right to participate
- Accessibility: direct or by realistic adaption or modification
- Integration: participation with peers

The approval process

Maypole School leadership team will discuss all proposed educational visits to determine if they are appropriate. The leadership team will work together with the staff member proposing and organising the visit to ensure that the visits are planned, delivered and evaluated to the highest standard.

Categories of educational visits

Educational visits fall into one of four categories:

- Local (NB: this is not determined solely by geographic location – the nature of activities will also be a determining factor)
- Residential
- Adventurous
- Overseas

The leadership team review all proposals for educational visits, and may approve all those categorised as local (i.e. those which do not fall into any of the other three categories). Anything categorised as residential, adventurous or overseas will go to the ELT for approval.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT AND SAFEGUARDING

Risk assessments should identify suitable supervision ratios, and whether or not a qualified first aider or suitably trained staff member is required.

Children and young people should be involved in the process of risk assessment, along with families as necessary or relevant.

All adults attending /participating in a school visit will have undergone an enhanced DBS check.

The consumption of alcohol on educational visits is **always** prohibited, along with any misuse of substances – please refer to the Substance Misuse Policy for further guidance on this matter.

5. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency procedures

The risk assessment for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For visits extending beyond the school day this includes designating a home contact from the school who may be needed as a link between the party, parents/carers and the school in the event of an emergency.

In the event of a delay or injury

In the event of a delay (of more than one hour), or of an incident resulting in harm to any pupil, staff member or volunteer, the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the Principal or Executive Headteacher who will inform families/others as required.

In the event of a party being overdue and without contact by more than one hour, the school must investigate.

For visits that are longer than a day

For all visits longer than a day a comprehensive file, containing the itinerary, travel details, staff and pupil emergency contact details and any medical information, must be left with the school office, Principal/Executive Headteacher and emergency point of contact.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership Team responsibilities

The leadership team will:

- Monitor risk assessment and Learning outside of the Classroom/Educational Visits activity across the school as part of regular safeguarding/health and safety monitoring.
- Regularly review this policy and any attendant procedures to ensure that they are effective and compliant with all relevant requirements.
- Ensure that relevant training around Learning outside of the Classroom and Education Visits is provided for all staff and regularly refreshed as necessary.

- Produce and maintain a school-specific procedure for managing pupils before, during and after any educational visit, and ensure that all staff implement this procedure effectively during an Educational Visits activity.

Educational Visit Coordinators' responsibilities

Educational Visit Coordinators will:

- Seek approval for all educational visits categorised as 'local' as well as 'residential', 'adventurous' and 'overseas'.
- Ensure that all appropriate school procedures are in place and understood by staff, including child protection/safeguarding, health and safety and the school's own 'Before, During, After' procedures.
- Ensure that relevant consents have been sought and obtained for each visit (local visits will be consented for by parents/carers as part of the pupil admissions procedures).
- Evaluate all educational visits after they have taken place, including any incidents/accidents and lessons learned, and regularly report on these to the Principal/Executive Headteacher.

All staff responsibilities

All staff will:

- Ensure they are familiar with and adhere to all relevant risk assessment and educational visit policies and procedures.
- Report any incidents promptly via the correct channels.

7. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Positive Behaviour policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Substance Misuse Policy

8. FURTHER RESOURCES

- Health and safety in schools (DfE)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/health-and-safety-in-schools>
- Health and Safety of Learners Outside The Classroom (HASLOC) (Nov 2009) [Health and Safety of Learners Outside the Classroom \(HASLOC\) : revision of guidance - Digital Education Resource Archive \(DERA\)](#)
- Council for Learning Outside the Classroom: <http://www.Learning outside of the Classroom.org.uk/>

APPENDIX A: HEALTH AND SAFETY ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS (DFE, 2018)

1. The 2 main types of trips

1.1 Routine visits

These involve no more than an everyday level of risk, such as slips and trips and are covered by the school's current policies and procedures. They only need a little extra planning beyond the educational aspect of the trip. They can be considered as lessons in a different classroom.

1.2 Trips that need a risk assessment and extra planning

These are trips not covered by current policies. This could be due to things like:

- the distance from school
- the type of activity
- the location
- needing staff with specialist skills

Sometimes a school may just need to review its current plans or arrangements that were successful on previous trips. However, some trips will need risk assessments, detailed planning and informed approval of leadership team or the governing body. The person given the job of managing this should:

- have the skills, status and competence needed for the job
- understand the risks involved
- be familiar with the activity

Plans should be proportionate and sensible, focusing on how to manage genuine risks.

2. When to get consent from parents

For children over nursery age, written consent for most local trips is obtained as part of the admissions process, and are part of the curriculum. It's good practice, however, to tell parents about them each week to remind them their child will be going out.

Additional written consent is needed for trips that:

- need a higher level of risk assessment
- are outside normal school hours

We ask parents to sign a copy of our consent form when their child enrolls. This will cover them for their whole time at the school.

Schools should still tell parents about these trips and give them the opportunity to withdraw their child.

3. Using outside organisations

Schools using an outside organisation to provide an activity must check they have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

The Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (Learning outside of the Classroom) awards the [Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge](#) to organisations who meet nationally recognised standards.

Schools can check if an organisation holds the Learning outside of the Classroom Quality Badge. If an organisation does not hold the badge, the school must check that they're an appropriate organisation to use. This could include checking:

- their insurance
- that they meet legal requirements
- their health and safety and emergency policies
- their risk assessments
- control measures
- their use of vehicles
- staff competence
- safeguarding
- accommodation
- any sub-contracting arrangements they have
- that they have a licence where needed

The school should have an agreement with them that makes it clear what everyone is responsible for. This is especially important if they'll be taking over supervision of the children.

4. Adventure activities: caving, climbing, trekking, and watersports etc

These kind of activities should be identified and risk assessed as part of the visit beforehand. Staff managing or leading visits must not decide to add such activities during the trip without prior consent from the leadership team.

Always consider the abilities of the children when assessing risk.

Organisations need a licence to provide some adventure activities. Organisations who hold the Learning outside of the Classroom Quality Badge should hold a licence for the activity they provide.

[Find out more about licensing](#) on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website.

Watersports

When planning watersports, consider the need for:

- instructors
- lifeguards

Schools should take particular care when using hotel swimming pools and other water leisure activities which may not have a trained lifeguard. Although there are no swimming pool specific health and safety laws, the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) provides advice when undertaking adventure specialist activities, including swimming.

5. Trips abroad

Trips abroad can have extra risks and need a higher level of risk assessment.

Schools should make sure any organisation that is providing activities holds the Learning outside of the Classroom Quality badge or similar local accreditation.

The HSE does not cover incidents overseas. However, it can investigate work done in Britain to support the trip, like risk assessments. School staff could also be liable under civil law for any injuries to the children due to negligence.

If the trip includes significant risks, such as challenging terrain, going to remote places or extreme climates, follow the guide to the [British Standard for adventurous activities outside the United Kingdom](#) as the basis for the planning and risk assessment. Organisations employed by the school should follow this too. If they have Learning outside of the Classroom Quality Badge then they follow this standard.

Schools should consider the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's detailed guidance on [safer adventure travel and volunteering overseas](#) when organising adventure visits abroad. A [teachers' pack](#) is also available.

6. Knowing what to do in an emergency

Schools should have an emergency response plan that covers what to do if there is an incident away from school. Schools should also have a communications plan that covers how routine communications should be handled, including regular check-ins and calls to reassure people. Trip leaders should be familiar with these plans.

Schools can get advice on these plans from their outdoor activity adviser or the [OEAP website](#).

7. Evaluating trips

Set up a clear process for evaluating all visits once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. Schools should keep a record of any incidents, accidents and near misses. This will help the school:

- evaluate whether its planning has worked
- learn from any incidents which took place

8. Educational visits coordinators

Schools should appoint an educational visits coordinator and make sure they have the training they need. The Principal or Executive Headteacher has this duty if there is no coordinator.

The coordinator works with the leadership team and Health & Safety coordinator to assess and manage risks.

The coordinator should:

- be an experienced visits leader
- have the status to be able to guide the working practices of other staff
- be confident in assessing the ability of other staff to lead visits
- be confident in assessing outside activity providers
- be able to advise headteachers and governors when they're approving trips
- have access to training, advice and guidance

Coordinators can also get guidance on the [OEAP website](#).