

# Gossops Green Primary School



## Visits Policy

*(Learning Outside the Classroom – LOtC)*

Approved by: LGB
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Next review due by: March 2025
Staff Member Responsible: Deputy Principal

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## 1. Introduction

**1.1 Gossops Green Primary** provides many opportunities for its pupils to learn and develop through **Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)** activities and visits and recognises the key role they play in the development of an active curriculum. This encompasses both on-site and off-site learning, residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities, business visits, and adventurous activities. Our aim is to ensure every member of our school community accesses LOtC activities throughout their curriculum and that LOtC is considered as an educational entitlement.

**1.2** The value of LOtC activities and visits are well recognised by the Local Governing Body and fully supported throughout the school by all staff. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. The safety culture is such that children and young people are *encouraged and supported to recognise hazards and manage risk in a way that supports their learning and development*. Learning Outside the Classroom must be well managed with information communicated and responsibilities recognised as with any other learning that takes place within the school.

**1.3** This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for **Gossops Green Primary School**. It supplements and follows the advice and guidance contained within the following significant publications:

- WSCC’s Regulations and Notes of Guidance for Learning Outside the Classroom Activities and Visits.
- WSCC’s Adventurous Activities Reference Document.
- The Department for Education (DfE) published guidance Health and Safety on Educational Visits: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits)
- OEAP National Guidance: [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info).
- DfE advice on health & safety: responsibilities and duties for schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>
- The Health and Safety Executive statement: “School Trips and Outdoor Learning Activities – Tackling the Health & Safety myths. available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

**2.1 Local Governing Body:** satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk management processes and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All residential experiences need to be approved by the Local Governing Body. Such approval must be recorded in the minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting.

**2.2 Deputy Principal:** is delegated by the Local Governing Body to approve all LOTC activities and off-site educational visits of a low risk, local, daily or regular nature that have been agreed by the EVC.

**2.3 Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)** ensures that all LOTC activities and visits follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the Visit Leadership Team for every visit and monitor the risk management processes to ensure good practice. In addition, the following responsibilities and duties are undertaken:

- Support the Visit Leader in identifying the purpose and outcomes for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers. It is important to consider the continuing professional development needs of staff engaged in these activities.
- Ensure that Disclosure and Barring Scheme disclosures are in place, where necessary.
- Arrange for an Emergency Contact Duty Officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event (this Emergency Contact is named on the Evolve forms and the process is referred to in the School's Emergency Plan).
- Keep records and make reports of incidents, accidents and 'near misses'.
- Review and regularly monitor policies and procedures.
- Liaise with the Outdoor Education Adviser where necessary to ensure the proposed visit complies with the WSCC policies for Learning Outside the Classroom.

**2.4 Visits Leader:** is responsible for identifying the purpose and outcomes for the visit. Significant hazards and their control measures will need to be recorded on the school Risk Assessment (*Appendix D*) and attached to the EVOLVE visit form (available at <http://www.westsussexvisits.org>).

This will take account of:

- Generic hazards – such as; slips, trips, falls/lost child/use of the toilets etc.
- Event specific hazards as identified from a pre-visit or through knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the competence of the staff team, the group and other factors such as transport
- On-going hazards identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose, outcomes and the risk management process
- All policies that exist within the school that must be applied when working off-site, for example safeguarding, behaviour policy, managing medicines etc.

**2.5 Participants (other staff and older pupils)** are encouraged to consider hazards involved in LOtC activities and off-site educational visits and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning. They will be fully aware of the purpose and outcomes of the visit and understand expectations of behaviour. They will be able to evaluate the experience and the impact it has had on their learning.

### **3. Guidance Notes for LOtC Activities and Off-Site Educational Visits**

To ensure good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that the following will take place.

#### **3.1 Published Guidance and Training**

- The school EVC will complete EVC training every three years
- All Visit Leaders will familiarise themselves with the published advice and guidance.
- Further information, available from the EVOLVE website ([www.westsussexvisits.org](http://www.westsussexvisits.org)), will be referred to as appropriate.
- Training for staff will be arranged by the school to include all aspects of supervision, on-going risk management (including being prepared to stop an activity that has become too hazardous) and how to deal with an emergency. Access to such training is also available through the Outdoor Education Adviser.

#### **3.2 Proposal Form**

In order to plan LOtC activities and visits, the **EVC or Principal** should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage – this is managed via staff submitting a ‘Visit Proposal Form’ (*Appendix C*) to the EVC or Principal for approval prior to a booking being made. Routine or local visits such as sports fixtures also need to be planned. 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.

#### **3.3 Contact Details**

Parental Consent and contact details must be available for the Emergency Contact and the Visit Leader to take on the visit. This can include digital copies and can be obtained via Arbor.

#### **3.4 LOtC Risk Assessments**

The Visit Leader will complete a school *Risk Assessment and Key Information* (*Appendix D*) which contains all the relevant information. This will be shared with the EVC and uploaded to Evolve under the ‘*Visit Form*’ tab.

#### **3.5 Local Area Visit/Sports Trips**

The school will use the *Local Area Visit Form* available on EVOLVE to approve regular, low risk or routine visits including sports fixtures and local study walks (such as to the woods or to complete a traffic survey). A brief risk assessment will also be completed (*Appendices G and H*). Permission for local study trips is given by parents when a child starts school.

#### **3.6 Evolve Visit Form**

An EVOLVE Visit form must be completed and submitted online for all class visits, year group visits, residential visits, visits abroad, visits out of county and for all adventurous activities whether on-site or off-site. The form will need to be submitted online (to the Local Authority) four weeks in advance of the activity or visit date and before the school becomes financially committed. Residential visits need the Governing Body’s approval (see

section 2.1) and will be sought by the EVC. School Journey Insurance is provided by Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) for schools and is organised by The Collegiate Trust – evidence should be attached to the EVOLVE form. Visit Leaders should avoid duplicate of cover being provided by a tour operator, or external provider.

### **3.7 Provider Standards**

The OE2 form (*Appendix K*) provides information on what WSCC expects an external provider to provide and deliver. It should be sent to any provider being considered for the first time and attached to the EVOLVE form as evidence of the planning process. Please note that WSCC ‘check’ a number of providers who are regularly used by WSCC establishments; these providers are listed on EVOLVE as ‘checked.’ In addition, providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge are considered as suitable to offer activities and have achieved a nationally recognised accreditation.

### **3.8 Evaluation Form**

On return, the Visit Leader must report to the EVC and, where necessary, an evaluation report (*Appendix J*) should be completed to support any learning about a ‘near miss’ or where an incident took place. If such a form was completed at the venue, there is a need to place such an occurrence on the record at the ‘home’ establishment.

In addition, it is highly recommended that an evaluation of the visit’s purpose and outcomes is carried out to review the learning achieved and educational value. It is possible, within 28 days, to record this through the EVOLVE visit form.

### **3.9 Provider Risk Assessments**

Risk management forms should be completed and attached to the EVOLVE form when risks are perceived as significant. External providers will have their own risk management documents that can be used to help in this process. For certain activities, an Adventurous Activity Licence is legally required (see [www.hse.gov.uk/aala](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala)). If this is the case, the provider’s licence number should be quoted instead of copies of their risk assessment documentation.

### **3.10 ‘Checked’ Providers**

Providers that hold a Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC) Quality Badge have been externally assessed and are acceptable as a ‘checked’ provider on the EVOLVE site.

## **4 Contributions**

### **4.1. Charging**

In general, no charge can be made for admitting pupils to maintained schools. Where education is provided wholly or mainly during school hours, it should be free.

- It is therefore not possible to levy a compulsory charge for transport or admission costs for swimming lessons or for visits to museums, etc. during school hours.
- Gossops Green Primary follows the West Sussex *Policy for Charging for School Activities* that mirrors the information given in the Department for Education’s advice document published in May 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>) and should be read in conjunction with the information provided in the National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info).
- No compulsory charge will be made for any activity which takes place during school hours.

- When establishing the requested contribution, the school will give the exact figure and not round up.
- Any contribution is entirely voluntary, and the pupils of parents/carers who are unable or unwilling to contribute must not be discriminated against. However, where there are not enough voluntary contributions to make the activity possible, and there is no way to make up the shortfall, then the activity may be cancelled.

## 4.2 Arrangements

To ensure good practice and compliance with the necessary regulations it is expected that:

- All letters regarding contributions for school activities will make it clear that these are voluntary and that children of parents/carers who do not contribute will not be treated differently.
- If any parents/carers have any financial difficulty (no pupil will be prevented from taking part), they will be invited to talk to the Principal who will come to an agreed arrangement.
- Should a visit or event ask for a financial contribution – parents will be informed via letter at least four weeks prior to the cancellation deadline (not the date of the event)

## 4.3 Residential Visits

- If a residential visit takes place covering 50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity within the school week or is to do with the National Curriculum or Religious Education, no charge will be made either for the education or for the cost of travel.
- Charges, not exceeding the actual cost for the individual pupil, can be made for board and lodging.
- Voluntary contributions (as above) will be requested to cover all other costs.
- An activity is deemed to take place out of school hours if 50% or more of the whole time spent on the activity occurs out of the school week and is not a requirement of the syllabus for a public examination or is not to do with the National Curriculum or Religious Education. In this case, this will be considered as an 'optional extra' and a charge will be levied which includes an appropriate element for travel costs, board and lodging costs, materials and other equipment, non-teaching costs and teaching staff costs. This charge will not exceed the actual cost of the provision.

# 5 Gossops Green School Specifics

## 5.1 School Process for Organising and Booking a Visit

**Step 1:** Intended Visit Leader will read the '*Step by Step Guide*' – Appendix B

**Step 2:** Intended Visit Leader will make preliminary enquiries regarding a potential visit and complete Appendix C – Visit Proposal Form, submitting it to the Principal or EVC for approval. Should the visit be seeking a financial contribution, then the proposal needs to be submitted at least five weeks prior to the cancellation date (*not the intended date of the visit/event*).

**Step 3:** Following approval by the Principal or EVC, the EVC will add the initial details to Evolve (before the letter is sent out) and check the provider is approved. The Visit Leader will make any necessary bookings and will send a letter to the parents/carers of the children attending.

**Step 4:** Visit Leader to read Appendix A – West Sussex LOfC Guidance 2021, as well as Appendix B – Visit Step-by-Step Guide.

**Step 5:** Prior to the cancellation deadline (should there be one), Visit Leader to check the contributions and inform the Principal and EVC. Should there be a significant shortfall, a decision will be made by the Principal whether to cancel the visit – before the cancellation deadline (to avoid incurring any costs).

**Step 6:** Prior to the date of the visit, the Visit Leader will work through the step-by-step guide (*Appendix B*). The Visit Leader will complete the appropriate Risk Assessment and submit it to the EVC the Friday before the visit – to be uploaded to Evolve. The EVC will check the Risk Assessment and make any necessary changes with the support of the Visit Leader.

**Step 7:** On the day of departure, the Visit Leader will ensure that all risk assessments are up-to-date and saved on the school server in the correct place. They will complete the Departure Form (*Appendix E*) and leave this with the Office as they depart.

**Step 8:** Upon return, the Visit Leader will complete the Evaluation and Accident Report (*Appendix J*) and share with the EVC.

## 6 Guidance for Specific Occurrences

### 6.1 Standard Operating Procedure for Coach Travel

The following process will be followed whenever a coach is used to transport the pupils of Gossops Green Primary;

- Coaches will only be booked from licenced operator whose details have been checked at <https://www.gov.uk/find-vehicle-operators>
- Where reasonable coach operators with one of the following will be contracted:
  - Coach Marque <https://www.coachmarque.co.uk/operators/?q=>
  - BUSK Benchmark <https://www.busk-uk.co.uk>
  - Road Operators Safety Council Safe Driver Award <http://rosco-uk.org/safe-driver-awards/>
- On arrival, a member of the Visit Leadership team will meet the coach and ensure the driver is fully briefed, to include destination, timings, numbers and specific requirements.
- The member of staff will visually inspect the coach to ensure that it appears safe and that key safety features are present, for example, a fire extinguisher.
- The member of staff will raise any issues found with the driver.
- The member of staff will also satisfy themselves that the driver is fit to drive i.e. does not smell of alcohol, is not unduly tired.
- All participants will be briefed before leaving the school on how to board and disembark the coach. This should include:
  - Wearing seatbelts at all times, if fitted
  - No standing whilst the coach is moving
  - What to do if they become ill
  - Information about eating and drinking on the journey
  - To remain seated on arrival until told to move by staff
- Staff will sit next to all emergency exits. If this is not possible, as a minimum a member of staff will sit in the centre seat at the rear of the coach and either at the middle exit or the front seat of the coach.
- On arrival, a member of staff will disembark first to ensure it is safe for the children and young people and identify a safe rendezvous point.

- If the journey requires rest stops, children and young people should be instructed on what to do and timings before leaving the coach. On return, a register must be taken; head counts are not recommended.
- On the return journey a full register must be taken before departure; head counts are not recommended. The briefing given on the outbound journey should be repeated.

### **Coach Breakdown**

- If a coach suffers a breakdown the Visit Leader will discuss the best course of action with the driver to safeguard the children and young people. On a motorway, the likelihood is that all passengers will be instructed to leave the coach and gather beyond the crash barriers.
- The Visit Leader must notify the Emergency Contact as soon as possible

### **Coach Accident**

- The Visit Leadership Team must check everyone for any injuries and treat as necessary.
- Advice given by the emergency services must be listened to and acted upon.
- The Visit Leader must notify the Emergency Contact as soon as possible.

## **6.2 School Minibus Procedures**

Refer to the TCT Minibus policy

## **6.3 Standard Operating Procedure for Rail Travel**

All staff, children and young people will be briefed in advance of any visits utilising rail travel, including underground trains and trams. This must include behaviour expectations, group members and leader, what to do if they miss the train, not to operate doors or windows.

Large groups will be divided into sub-groups each with a competent adult leader. Children and young people will be assigned a 'buddy' with whom they must remain at all times whilst travelling.

- Group leaders will complete a register before entering the station
- Group leaders will ensure the group moves in an orderly fashion
- Group leaders will ensure everyone stays well back of platform edge
- Where required, only group leaders will press door open buttons
- Leaders will board and disembark last

If trains are overcrowded, the leader may deem it necessary for small groups to travel independently of the main group. If this is the case, pre-determined and agreed meeting points must be known to all adults.

Wherever possible children and young people will be seated.

If a pair miss a train, they should remain on the platform from which the train departed and wait with a member of station staff for the school member of staff to return.

If travelling in London, the Visit Leader should advise TFL beforehand to take advantage of any additional assistance that may be available on platforms and with boarding and alighting from Tube trains.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/schools-and-young-people/>

In the event of an incident or accident, instruction given by the transport staff must be followed.

### 6.3 Lost Child, Young Person or Staff Member

To minimise the risk of a child, young person or adult being lost, **registers will be taken** by the Visit Leader or Group Leader at key points; these include before departure, on arrival, when working in smaller groups, on return from activity, at break times and before departure. **Head counts should be avoided**, especially when volunteers are being used who do not know the children or young people.

Staff, children and young people should be issued with emergency contact details; *Appendices M and N* (Emergency Contact cards, 'Please Help Me!' stickers and cards). The Visit Leader will have the **Visit Mobile (07749 643824)** – all children will have this number on an emergency card and can ask for it to be phoned.

The following suggested actions are dependent on the age of the person missing, time of day, location, ability, known risks and should not be read as a definitive list of actions.

#### On discovering a member of the party if missing

- Gather everyone together, ensure their safety and keep them together,
- Send a member of staff to check the last place the missing person is known to have been,
- Send a member of staff to any key points where the missing person may have returned,
- Try to contact the missing person via phone or messaging service,
- Contact the Emergency Contact,
- Notify local police, tour operator if applicable,
- Discuss with emergency contact/member of school leadership team whether group should continue with the visit as planned or be moved to another appropriate location,
- Group moves on to next destination leaving a member of staff and tour company representative or other local expert to continue search (under direction of leadership team member and local authority),
- Keep in regular contact with the member of staff left behind and with school's emergency contact,
- Warn students and parents in advance of the use of social media and the unnecessary concern this can cause,
- Following any incident, all present not to use social media, mobile phone or text home until you have given them clear information and permission. This will be after you have discussed with the Emergency Contact.

#### Links to Other Policies:

- TCT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- TCT Health and Safety Policy
- GG Emergency Response Plan
- GG First Aid Policy
- GG Behaviour Policy
- GG Staff Handbook
- TCT Staff Code of Conduct
- TCT Minibus Policy

**Appendices – all available on the school server**

**Appendix A – West Sussex LOfC Guidance - 2021**

**Appendix B – Visit Step-by-Step Guide**

**Appendix C – Visit Proposal Form**

**Appendix D – Risk Assessment**

**Appendix E – Departure Form**

**Appendix F – Internal Event Risk Assessment**

**Appendix G – Local Visits**

**Appendix H – Sports Risk Assessment**

**Appendix I – Adult Helper Agreement**

**Appendix J – Evaluation and Accident Report**

**Appendix K – OE2 Form – Venue Provider**

**Appendix L – Example Letters**

**Appendix M – Emergency Contact Card – ADULT**

**Appendix N – Please Help Me Cards – CHILD**

**Appendix N2 – Please Help Me Stickers – CHILD**