



## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Forest Prep School including EYFS

V1.1

Approved (Date:	19 September 2024
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Owner (Name, Title):	Deputy Head Co-Curricular (Prep)
Classification:	
Comment:	

## **1 Introduction and Information for Parents**

### **1.1 Introduction:**

While the classroom remains central to School life, Co-curricular activities such as trips, visits and learning off-site exist to complement the academic curriculum and provide pupils with experiences and opportunities beyond the formal classroom. Trips and visits can enhance and develop learning, build a sense of community, develop individuals and stimulate pupils' imaginations bringing their learning to life. Learning outside the classroom incorporates the Forest Learner characteristics:

- Initiative – inquiring, adaptable, communicator
- Perseverance – organised, problem-solving, resilient
- Responsibility – respectful, collaborator, leader

### **1.2 Our Educational Visits**

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher.

1.2.1 Day Visits – These include museums, theatres and other destinations to support the topics taught within the Curriculum. Our sporting teams run a large programme of off-site and home fixtures.

1.2.2 Residential Visits – These include sports tours, music tours and ski trips. Each year group in the Prep School (Y3-6) have the opportunity to attend a residential visit in the Trinity term. Y2 pupils have an opportunity to attend an overnight stay on the school grounds.

1.2.3 The online School calendar lists the visits that are due to take place over the coming term/academic year, together with a list of planned home and away sports fixtures. Notification to parents will be given in advance. Information about day visits needs to be communicated to parents 4 weeks before the visit and for residential visits at least 8 months before the visit departs.

1.2.4 All activities are available to all children irrespective of needs, ethnicity, gender or religion.

### **1.3 Consent**

1.3.1 You will have completed (and updated as necessary) the lifetime Medical Indemnity Form which allows accompanying Forest School staff to act in *loco parentis* in the event of a medical emergency, and includes your contact details and any medical or other welfare details we need to know. However, we require in addition your specific individual written consent if we are to take your child on a visit that extends beyond the normal School day, involves an overnight stay, collection from a different venue, an overseas visit or extra cost to you. A fully completed and signed consent form, which includes details of where you may be contacted in an emergency.

## **1.4. Allergies**

1.4.1 Forest School will always aim to ensure an environment where students with allergies are accommodated and not excluded from visits. However, we cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment for students. Parents should be aware of this before they commit to a visit as it cannot be used as justification to withdraw their child at a later stage. Any concerns must be discussed with a member of staff organising the visit as well as the School nurse, as soon as possible.

## **1.5 Safety**

1.5.1 The school takes the safety of its pupils on visits and off-site activities extremely seriously. All supervising adults must be made aware of the duty of care which is placed upon them. The school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be implemented during all off-site activities.

1.5.2 Where applicable, parental volunteers will be asked for. Parents who have volunteered to accompany the visits must follow the Parent Code of Conduct guidelines that are emailed out to them before the visit. Any adult who has not been DBS checked will not be left alone with children during any activity. Records will be kept of parent volunteers so selection can be a fair and transparent process.

## **1.6 Cost and charges**

1.6.1 It is School policy that day visits are charged to the budget of the Prep School and not the pupil unless the cost of the visit is of an excessive cost. Costs for residential visits not for curriculum-based purposes will be charged to the pupil taking part.

1.6.2 For residential off-site visits where the costs are likely to be higher, payment plans are available, to spread the cost.

## **2 Guidance for staff leading or involved with school educational visits**

Forest School recognises the educational benefits to be derived by pupils from experiencing educational visits and being out of the School environment, either during a school day or on residential visits. We expect that every member of staff endorses the educational value of activities outside the classroom. We encourage all teaching staff to participate in them and to assist with the arrangements. We always welcome suggestions from staff for new educational visits to use the changing curriculum. The School is also very appreciative of the drive and willingness of staff to organise and accompany such educational visits.

### **2.1 Role of the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC)**

The Deputy Head Co-Curricular and Operations (DHC&O) supports the Leadership Team in the process of approving visits, ensuring that they are spread through the different age groups, and the School year, assists staff involved in organising visits, keeping records of all previous visits, ensuring the risk assessments meet requirements, organising training and induction and overseeing the organisation of emergency arrangements, reviewing systems, monitoring practice and evaluation.

The EVC will ensure the staffing on any visit or trip will have the necessary experience and competence needed to ensure the trip runs safely. The DHC&O will support and challenge staff 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, before they are submitted to the Health & Safety and Compliance Director. Where a trip is using an external provider, the Visit Leader will ensure they hold the appropriate qualifications and certifications before a trip approved. If a staff member of Forest School is responsible for leading an activity, the EVC will ensure the relevant levels of competence, experience, and certification is met, before the visit is approved. The EVC will set up the visit onto Operoo and any forms that are required to be completed.

The named EVCs for the Preparatory School are Sarah Hall, Deputy Head Co-Curricular and James Sanderson, Head of the Preparatory School.

## **2.2 Role of the Visit Leader**

2.2.1 The visit lead should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the group.

2.2.2 Every visit, no matter how short, must be planned in advance by the member of staff who is responsible for organising and running it. Visit leads need to be experienced in accompanying School visits before taking on the role of Visit Leader. The EVC provides guidance and support for all potential Visit Leaders, which covers practical advice on conducting risk assessments, emergency procedures, budgeting and action to be taken in an emergency.

2.2.3 Visit Leaders are directly responsible for pupils' behaviour whilst on the visit and for any necessary preparation.

2.2.4 Every visit must have two or more members of staff who have a valid Paediatric First Aid qualification. If anyone attending has other medical needs such as diabetes or is at risk of anaphylactic shock, the visit leader must ensure appropriate adults have received training and are competent to assist, take any urgent remedial action required, and be able to seek additional assistance without delay.

2.2.5 The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the learning, development and supervision of the participants and the safety of all, including the rest of the staff as appropriate.

2.2.6 There must always be a single designated leader, or a clear handover if this role changes during the visit. Visit leads cannot take on the role of designated First Aider as their primary responsibility is the whole visit group. The Deputy Head Co-Curricular & Operations will have the final say on whether a member of staff is currently competent to act as the Visit Lead.

2.2.7 If you are designated as the Visit Leader, you must:

- Be specifically competent
- Be approved to carry out the lead role for the specific activity
- Liaise with the EVC to ensure that visits have clear aims and are planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks.
- Ensure that there is effective supervision
- Provide relevant information to other staff including travel, itinerary of the visit, emergency contact number, and arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate.
- Ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary.
- Ensure there is a designated Paediatric First Aider.
- Liaise with the EVC to book transportation.
- Ensure that all adults attending the visit and third-party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Comply with the step-by-step time frame guideline when booking day and residential visits.
- Evaluate all aspects, both during and after the event.
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses onto Operoo and email to the Health & Safety Office
- For residential trips, meetings with parents need to be held a term in advance.
- Check that the visit can be found on Operoo and that registers are taken regularly during the visit.

2.2.8 When working with third-party activity providers there should be a clear handover before and after any activity led by a provider. Should a provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying leader should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention should be undertaken with sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in children being put at greater risk.

## **2.3 Accounts**

The Visit leader has responsibility for:

2.3.1 All sums of money which are collected prior to the visit should be payable direct to Forest School, deposited in the School's bank account and recorded by the School's Accountant.

Payment by Bacs or through PayPal+ are the preferred methods of payment.

2.3.2 Collecting payments and liaising with the Operations Manager administrator for the Preparatory School.

2.3.3 Only paying a deposit to tour operators once all first instalments have been received by the Bursary or through the Preparatory School budget.

2.3.4 Providing a copy of the final costing for the visit. (Final accounts and receipts must be produced for the Bursar within one week of return from the visit or at the earliest moment after the school holidays. Returning any unused cash to the Bursary.

2.3.5 Understanding that if any pupil's school fees are outstanding, that pupil will not be permitted to attend a school visit.

2.3.7 Understanding that last-minute withdrawal of a pupil from the visit will result in a non-refund process of the money due for the visit. This decision is to be at the sole discretion of the School.

2.3.8 Producing a schedule of all expenditure on the visit using the budget form.

## **2.4 Transport: minibuses and use of personal vehicles**

2.4.1 No one should drive the School minibus unless they have qualified as a minibus driver. The School will arrange and fund First Aid courses, as well as courses in driving minibuses for all staff who are involved in visits. At Forest School, we expect every member of staff to comply with the school policy on the use of minibuses, including following the School's guidelines on checking roadworthiness and general suitability for use. Please refer to the Driving policy for further information, especially relating to health and safety.

## **2.5 The timing of educational visits**

2.5.1 Educational visits may be arranged by any year group with a limit of two visits per term. Class teachers may arrange additional visits throughout the year following authorisation from the Head of the Preparatory School providing the costs for the school year are not excessive.

2.5.2 Timing of educational visits should be discussed with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular & Operations, prior to any communication being sent to parents.

2.5.3 Final decisions rest with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular & Operations and Head of the Preparatory School.

## **2.6 Safety of Staff and Pupils on visits**

2.6.1 The visit summary and risk assessment for any visit must be completed through the relevant intranet pages based at least four weeks in advance for day visits and at least 2 months in

advance for residential visits to ensure the risk assessment can be scrutinised thoroughly by the EVC and the Health & Safety Office

2.6.2 Any gaps or questions will be directed back to the visit leader to complete in more detail or add in additional controls, such as extra supervision, designated meeting points, lost child, injury or illness to staff etc.

2.6.3 Where these cannot be met satisfactorily the Health & Safety Office will endeavour to find suitable solutions equal to but certainly no less equivalent measures.

2.6.4 Final decisions rests with the Health & Safety Office.

2.6.5 Pupils are expected to uphold the School's behaviour policy at all times during Educational Visits. Any incidents of misconduct will be addressed according to the School's disciplinary procedures and with the Head of the Preparatory School.

## **2.7 Preparations to a visit**

2.7.1 The Visit Leader will staff and parents are well prepared before the visit take place so they understand what the visit will entail, health and safety and the behaviour expected.

2.7.2 On matters not normally covered by School policy, organisers should make any decisions in the light of their *loco parentis* responsibilities i.e. being able to justify their decisions as those which would be reasonable if made by a responsible parent. Visit leaders will also be aware of any pupils requiring medication during educational visits and ensure that such pupils are able to either (a) manage their own medical needs or (b) sufficiently cared for by the accompanying staff. Visit leaders and designated first aider to meet with Matron to discuss the necessary medical supplies.

2.7.3 Visit leaders need to coordinate the ordering of the packed lunches with the support of class teachers.

2.7.4 Emergency contact information to be shared with accompanying adults – school phone booked out via Helpdesk.

2.7.5 For abroad residentials taking place out of the school term, a telephone contact tree with parents needs to be set up. Each parent at the top is required to contact the rest of their group, passing on the information sent to them.

## **2.8 Supervision Staff/Pupil Ratios:**

2.8.1 All trips should be individually risk assessed to ascertain the safe level of adult supervision required. Below are the minimum adult-to-pupil ratios that Forest School is committed to implement. These are to be adhered to unless there are exceptional circumstances and/or permission has been given by the Head of the Preparatory School.

Ratio	Pupils' Year Group
1:4	EYFS
1:6	Years 1-2
1:8	Year 3
1:10	Years 4-6
1:10	All visits abroad

2.8.2 If a child with an Education Health Care Plan is participating in the visit, this pupil must have the same support that is ordinarily available to them during the school day.

2.8.3 Newly Qualified teachers must be accompanied by an experienced member of the teaching staff on their first visits.

## **2.9 Risk Assessment**

2.9.1 The risk assessment must be completed and signed off by the EVC for the Prep School and Wayne Bishop, Health & Safety and Compliance Director 2 months before departure for residential visits and 4 weeks before for Day visits. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is Plan B?

2.9.2 All Visit Leaders at Forest School have been trained in conducting risk assessment on potential hazards involved in a visit or activity that they are planning. They receive annual training during the staff Inset by The Prep School EVC or by an external organisation. Visit Leaders should consider the following when preparing their risk assessments:

- Identifying the potential hazards of the place being visited
- Indicating the document of potential hazards when travelling and using any transport
- Listing the groups of people that are especially at risk from the significant hazards, including pupils with learning, medical or other difficulties or disabilities.
- Listing existing controls or notifying where the information may be found.
- Considering how he/she would cope with the hazards which are not currently identified or fully controlled.
- Carrying out continual monitoring of hazards throughout the visit.
- Identifying areas involving safeguarding such as public areas.



2.9.3 Risk Assessment must be used as the template on the Cognito Form. However, please ensure all hazards and risks are identified. Expand the form if required or see the Health & Safety Compliance Director for advice.

2.9.4 Additionally, guidance can be sought from the EVC who hold a number of standard risk assessment templates that cover previous visits and walks around the local area such as the forest.

2.9.5 Certain visits fall within a group of visits that are called 'Urban Visits'. Low-risk activities such as taking pupils to a nearby School for a debating competition, singing at a local care home, walks outside the School grounds. These visits may not require a risk assessment but the visit leader will need to confirm this through the Deputy Head Co-Curricular and check the Risk Assessment on file and add anything specific that needs to be factored in. The visit leader remains responsible for the visit and conducting any risk assessment that may be required.

2.9.6 Professionally operated licensed activity centres and tour operators specialising in School visits will conduct their own risk assessments. The Visit Leader should ask for copies at the planning stage. Provided he/she is satisfied, it will meet the requirements will probably be needed to ensure complete coverage of all aspects of the visit. Risk assessments carried out by the School for previous visits can generally be updated and re-used, unless there has been a change of circumstances.

## **2.10 Emergency Procedures**

2.10.1 In the event of a serious accident resulting in death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Visit Leader's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. The Critical Incident should be made available as soon as possible. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Head of the Preparatory School and the Critical Incident Team of what has happened would be the next tasks for the Visit Leader, who must give a full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he/she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the School are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (using another member of staff) the School's insurers to be contacted as quickly as possible, together with the British Consul, if the accident happened overseas. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

2.10.2 The Health & Safety Compliance Director will be informed as soon as possible by the Head of the Preparatory School and this may result in the HSE being notified under the Reporting of Injuries and Illnesses Regulations (RIDDOR).

2.10.3 Depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own model communications plan for informing as swiftly as possible both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. However, we firmly believe that we have

an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupils who has an injury. We will use mass communication methods (e.g. email, messages on our Website) for communicating with those whose children are not affected. This is in line with the School's Critical Incident Procedures held by the Leadership Team.

2.10.4 Communication with the media should be left to the Warden. The Visit Leader should refer the media to the School. Pupils must not talk to the media.

## **2.11 Return of Visit**

2.11.1 If a visit is delayed, the Visit Leader should phone the School Office or the PSLT Emergency Contact. The Visit Lead is responsible to contact all the parents to alert them via Operoo any delays and the revised time of arrival. On residential visits during the school holidays, the Visit Leader should message the parents daily with updates.

2.11.2 A short evaluation should be submitted after the visit (within one week of return) to the EVC commenting on both the success of the tour and on any problems encountered.

2.11.3 If there is an injury, illness or dangerous occurrence or a medical emergency on a school visit there may be legal obligation to report it to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The Visit Leader will inform the EVC, Prep School nurse and Health & Safety Compliance Director by email in the first instance. If deemed necessary then the appropriate paperwork (RIDDOR) would be completed by the Health & Safety Compliance Director.

2.11.4 Any accidents that may have occurred whilst away must be documented using the appropriate form on Operoo. If a head injury has occurred a 'Head Injury' form should be given to parents on return of the visit and reported using the form.

## **2.12 Devices**

2.12.1 To maximise the educational value and encourage active participation, the use of electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets and handheld gaming devices for pupils is prohibited during all visits.

2.12.2 Teachers and staff members are responsible for enforcing this rule and ensuring that pupils are fully engaged in the learning experience without distractions and having access to social media.

2.12.3 Exceptions may be made for specific educational purposes with prior approval from the Head of the Preparatory School.

## **2.13 Visit Guidelines and Timeframes**

2.13.1 Day Visits

### 2 Terms Before:

#### Step 1:

- Provide 3 dates to when the visit could take place and send to Deputy Head C&O

#### Step 2:

- When date is finalised, book the visit with the venue/company
- Provide the following information to Deputy Head C&O to put into the calendar:
  - Destination
  - Year Group
  - Date
  - Time of departures from school and venue
- Complete the approval part of online Educational Visit form

### 1 Term Before:

- Email Deputy Head C&O to book TFL tickets
- Email Deputy Head C&O with coach booking info

### 4 Weeks Before:

- Complete the packed lunches and send to Catering
- Book out school phone from Helpdesk
- Send out letters to parents
- Discuss with the School Nurse the items you require in the medical bags

### 2 Weeks Before:

- Check Operoo has been set up for the visit.
- Complete the Risk Assessment – email Deputy Head C&O before selecting approve

### Day of the visit:

- Collect packed lunches
- Collect medical bags
- Collect school phone
- Collect blue bands from PS Office
- Print out risk assessments for parents and teachers
- Check you have PS Office numbers for emergency use
- Deputy Head C&O to have meeting with parents volunteering

## 2.13.2 Residential Visits

### 1 Year before:

#### Step 1:

- Provide 2 dates for when the visit could take place and send to Deputy Head C&O
- Discuss costings with Head of the Preparatory School/ Deputy Head C&O

#### Step 2:

- When date is finalised, book the visit with the venue/company
- Provide the following information to Deputy Head C&O to put into the calendar:
  - Destination
  - Year Group
  - Date of departures and return date
  - Time of departures from school and venue
- Complete the approval part of online Educational Visit form clicking on Residential Visit

### 10 Months Before:

- Set up payments on Operoo
- Send letter out to parents – including passport information (if applicable)

### 6 Months Before:

- Email Deputy Head C&O with coach booking info (if applicable)
- Send out Parent Handbooks with information – including itinerary via email
- Email Bursary with how much money you require and in what currency

### 2 Months Before:

- Discuss with School Nurse the items you require in the medical bags
- Find out PSLT Emergency contacts
- Book out school phone from Helpdesk
- Complete the Risk Assessment – email Deputy Head C&O before selecting approve

### 2 Weeks Before:

- Request passports to be brought in
- Give PS Office and PSLT Emergency contact itinerary and any relevant paperwork

### Day Before Visit:

- Collect medical bags and adrenaline auto-injectors from classrooms
- Collect blue bands from PS Office
- Collect school phone
- Collect money from Bursary