

Testwood School Educational Visits Policy

Key Responsibility	DM
Last Review:	October 2025
Next Review:	October 2027
Article 31	(leisure, play and culture). Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities

Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
2	03.12.19	Updated review dates	JB
3	03.11.20	Parents/carers added, pupils changed to students, governors changed to Trustees	JB
3.1	12.10.21	Updated review dates Under Supervision (H) –Supervision ratios are at headteacher's discretion	JB
3.2	11.01.23	Updated review dates	JB
3.3	04.10.23	Updated procedure for any specific medical or health issues of students	NG
3.4	20.10.25	Updated to align with OEAP and Equality Act guidance; clarified safeguarding, DBS, training, and reporting procedures Text edited and streamlined	DM

A) Rationale

Testwood School is strongly committed to learning beyond the classroom. Educational visits provide invaluable opportunities to extend learning and personal development. We believe the educational value of these activities far outweighs the inherent risks when they are properly managed.

This policy follows best practice as described in the *DfE: Health and Safety – Advice on Legal Duties and Powers (2014)*, *Hampshire County Council Off-Site Activities Guidance*, and *OEAP National Guidance* (www.oeapng.info).

B) Purpose

All educational visits and trips must take place in a calm, safe and well-prepared environment. The focus remains educational enrichment. Each visit must be:

- Appropriate to the age, ability and needs of the students.
- Linked to the curriculum through preparation and follow-up activities.
- Organised to ensure minimal disruption to other learning.

C) Aims and Objectives

Educational visits aim to:

1. **Develop key skills** – applying knowledge, cooperation, communication, independence, and risk awareness.
 2. **Raise achievement** – through engagement, self-esteem, and motivation.
 3. **Promote social education and citizenship** – cooperation, tolerance, and respect.
 4. **Encourage sustainability awareness** – appreciation of the natural world and interdependence.
 5. **Support health and wellbeing** – promoting active lifestyles and resilience.
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D) Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Every effort will be made to include all students, irrespective of additional needs, medical conditions, disability, gender, ethnic origin, or religion. Reasonable adjustments will be made in accordance with the **Equality Act 2010**. Inclusion decisions will balance accessibility with the safety of all participants.

Communication with parents/carers is key to ensuring safe and inclusive participation.

E) Behaviour

Students represent Testwood School when participating in visits and are expected to behave responsibly. The school discipline plan applies in all circumstances.

Serious breaches that pose a health and safety risk or bring the school into disrepute may result in removal from the trip. Parents/carers may be required to collect the student at their own expense, without refund.

F) Procedure for Organising Visits

1. **Initial Approval** – Group Leader completes an Initial Visit Form and budget form to seek approval from the Headteacher.
 2. **EVOLVE Submission** – Once approved, the Group Leader uploads to EVOLVE:
 - Risk Assessment(s)
 - Parent/carer letter and consent form
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3. **Approval Check** – The EVC and Finance Director review and approve/disapprove the submission.
4. **Booking & Logistics** – Group Leader arranges bookings, transport, cover, and ensures medical and emergency documentation is complete.
5. **Pre-Visit Briefing** – Group Leader briefs staff and students; holds parent/carer meetings for residential or overseas visits.
6. **Emergency Contacts** – At least two emergency contacts must be recorded and accessible to the school office.
7. **Post-Visit Evaluation** – Group Leader completes EVOLVE evaluation within five working days and shares lessons learned with the EVC.

Records should be retained for **a minimum of three years** (or longer if incidents occur).

G) The Group Leader

The Group Leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the visit, including pre-planning, supervision, and emergency management. They must:

- Clearly define the purpose and objectives of the visit.
 - Conduct and record comprehensive risk assessments.
 - Have prior knowledge of the venue (preferably through a pre-visit).
 - Verify insurance cover for all planned activities.
 - Ensure all adults are briefed and competent.
 - Confirm medical and additional needs have been accounted for.
 - Liaise with parents/carers and obtain informed consent.
 - Continuously monitor risks and adapt as necessary using **dynamic risk assessment**.
 - Review and evaluate the visit afterwards, including any near-misses or lessons learned.
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H) Supervision

Minimum supervision ratios are:

- **Within 60-mile radius:** 1 adult per 20 students.
 - **Beyond 60 miles, Isle of Wight, or overseas:** 1 adult per 10 students, minimum 2 adults.
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These are **minimum ratios**. Lower ratios must be used where risk is greater, for students with SEND, or as recommended by OEAP guidance. The Headteacher retains discretion to adjust ratios as necessary.

I) Use of Parents/Carers and Assisting Adults

All assisting adults must be briefed on their roles and responsibilities. Adults with no relevant training must not take sole responsibility for students in high-risk settings.

Any adult given unsupervised responsibility must hold an **enhanced DBS certificate** verified by the school. Parents accompanying their own child cannot be counted in staff ratios.

J) Risk Assessment and Management

Risk assessment is a **legal requirement** and forms part of sound professional practice. The Group Leader and team must:

1. Identify potential hazards.
2. Assess associated risks.
3. Decide on control measures to eliminate or minimise risks.
4. Record and review findings before, during, and after the visit.

Dynamic (on-the-spot) risk assessments should be undertaken during visits as circumstances change.

K) Communication with Parents/Carers

Parents/carers must receive clear, full, and timely information about:

- The purpose and programme of the visit.
- Travel, supervision, and accommodation arrangements.
- Costs, insurance, and emergency procedures.

Informed consent is required for each visit beyond routine local activities. Annual blanket consent may be used for low-risk, local visits.

L) Safeguarding Children

All children have the right to be protected from harm. During educational visits, the school will:

1. Ensure all supervising adults are DBS-checked and aware of safeguarding responsibilities.
 2. Maintain clear communication lines between staff, parents, and agencies.
 3. Ensure staff are familiar with the **Testwood School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.
 4. Empower students to recognise and report unsafe situations.
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M) Safety and Emergency Procedures

The Group Leader has an overriding duty of care and must take all reasonable steps to ensure safety and welfare.

Each trip must have:

- At least two designated emergency contacts.
- A first aid kit and, where possible, a qualified first aider.
- Access to student medical and emergency information.
- A working mobile phone for communication with the school office.

In a medical emergency, the Group Leader will act *in loco parentis* as consented and contact parents/carers as soon as possible.

N) Evaluation and Reporting

- All visits are recorded and evaluated on EVOLVE.
- Lessons learned are shared with the EVC and incorporated into future planning.
- The Headteacher reports annually to the Trustees on educational visits, including outcomes and incidents.
- This policy will be reviewed **bi-annually** by the Board of Trustees.