

Balcombe C E (C) School



LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM (LOtC) AND OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Adopted by Governors: July 2021

Reviewed:

Next Review: July 2022

Introduction

Balcombe C E Primary School provides many opportunities for its pupils to enrich and enhance their experience through Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC). This encompasses both on-site and off-site learning, residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities and adventurous activities.

Learning is brought alive by trips and visits **inspiring** children to **achieve** high quality work on their return to school, these trips are often the things children remember most about school long after they have grown up!

Opportunities for Learning Outside the Classroom provide pupils with the chance to build confidence and resilience and enhance mental health and well-being. For some pupils these trips provide a real chance to shine, perhaps shining a light on skills not always evident within the school environment. Learning Outside the Classroom also provides pupils with an opportunity to develop valuable life skills such as teamwork and risk assessment skills. The structure of outside learning develops social skills and often enhances friendships and builds mutual **respect**. Finally, for many children the chance to engage with the outdoors, nature and adventurous activities leads to a lifelong enjoyment and **respect** for nature and the outdoors.

The value of LOtC is well recognised by the Balcombe Primary staff and the Governing Body and is fully supported throughout the school. It is emphasised that a culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory procedures. 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.

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

- WSCC's Learning Outside the Classroom and Off-Site Educational Visits Regulations and Notes for Guidance;
- OEAP National Guidance.
- Departmental advice on health & safety for schools, regularly updated. See: <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>

Roles and Responsibilities

The **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 LOtC activities and off-site visits that are residential need to be approved by the Governing Body. Such approval must be recorded in the minutes of the Governing Body meeting. *Appendix 2 Governors checklist*

The **Head Teacher** is delegated by the Governing Body to approve all LOtC activities and off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature. This is recorded through the use of EVOLVE and/or internal permission forms.

The **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** (EVC) is the Head Teacher, she ensures that all LOtC activities and visits follow the correct procedures. The person with these responsibilities will approve the Visit Leader 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 Emergency Contact Duty Officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event.
- Keep records and make reports of incidents, accidents and 'near hits';
- 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.

The Visits Leader is responsible for identifying the purpose and outcomes for the visit. (Appendix 1 visits checklist) A robust risk management process is necessary for all LOtC activities and visits. Significant hazards and their control measures (risk assessment) will need to be recorded and attached to the EVOLVE visit form.

This will take account of:

- Generic hazards;
- 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 processes.

Children are also encouraged to consider hazards involved in LOtC activities and off-site educational visits and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies. They will be made aware of the purpose and outcomes of the visit and understand expectations of behaviour. In preparation for trips and residential visits children will be briefed and teachers will plan for pupils to write, or contribute to class, group or individual risk assessments.

Guidance Notes for LOtC Activities and Off-Site Educational Visits

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

- All Visit Leaders will familiarise themselves with the published advice and guidance. Further information is available from the EVOLVE website (www.westsussexvisits.org).
- Training for staff and Visit Leaders 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.

In order to plan LOtC activities and visits the EVC should be involved in discussing plans at an early stage. Routine or local visits such as sports fixtures 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.

Parental consent and contact details must be available for the Emergency Contact and the Visit Leader to take on the visit.

An internal permission form is used for local trips and sporting events in the locality.

An EVOLVE visit form must be completed for all whole class trips, residential visits, visits abroad, visits out of county and or for all adventurous activities whether on-site or off-site. For residential visits, the form must be submitted to the LA, four weeks in advance of the activity or visit date and before becoming financially committed. Residential visits need the Governing Body's approval. School Journey Insurance should be purchased for educational visits and evidence should be attached to the EVOLVE form. Visit Leaders should avoid duplicate of cover being provided by a tour operator, or external provider.

The OE2 form 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 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 LOfC Quality Badge are considered as suitable to offer activities and have achieved a nationally recognised accreditation.

On return the **Visit Leader** must report to the EVC and, where necessary, an evaluation report should be completed in order to achieve any learning about a 'near hit' 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 back at School.

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 EVOVE visit form.

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). If this is the case, the provider's licence number should be quoted instead of copies of their risk assessment documentation.

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.

Appendix 1 – visits checklist

Visit Leader Checklist



6

If financial arrangements are needed for my visit, I check with my EVC before committing the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have met all of my employer's requirements and my establishment's policies relevant to the visit.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have the confidence and competence required to lead this visit effectively and this has been confirmed by my Head/manager in line with our employer's requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have planned and prepared for the visit, involving staff and young people in the planning and risk management process to ensure wider understanding.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have kept my EVC informed at each stage of the planning process.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have undertaken a preliminary visit if appropriate or required by establishment policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have defined the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and have appointed a deputy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have shared details of 24/7 emergency contacts and emergency arrangements with key staff (if appropriate).	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have obtained parental consent forms (where required), medical details and contact details and the information from these has been considered in the visit plan, and shared with the leadership team and relevant third party providers.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have checked whether insurance arrangements are adequate.	<input type="checkbox"/>

When a provider is being used I undertake appropriate checks, and ensure that there is a clear contract/agreement in place about what they are responsible for (supervision/activities etc).	<input type="checkbox"/>
If accompanying adults take a family member on a visit, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child protection issues are addressed, including DBS checks and processes where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have disseminated relevant information to supporting staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is access to first aid at an appropriate level.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relevant information has been provided to parents and young people, and pre-visit information meetings have been arranged where appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>
All aspects of the visit (both during and after the event) are evaluated.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on the nature of the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, likely behaviour and any other information relevant to the planned activities; the nature and location of the visit.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The visit is effectively supervised - staffing ratios meet requirements and good practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff and third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Governor Checklist



There is a trained EVC in place who meets employer requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We are aware of our responsibilities as explained in National Guidance (www.oeapng.info) and our establishment policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
If we are the legal employers, we are fully aware of all the responsibilities this entails.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have had access to training to ensure that we understand the guidance provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visits are included on our meeting agendas.	<input type="checkbox"/>
All visits are planned in accordance with our employer's and establishment policies.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We are aware of which visits may require our specific approval or involvement as a "critical friend".	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suitable and sufficient emergency procedures are in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We are aware that we may be involved in adjudicating parental complaints or dealing with an emergency.	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are monitoring procedures in place.	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have clear written policies about charges and remissions for visits and these	<input type="checkbox"/>

