Fairfields Primary School

Outdoor Education, Educational Visits and off-site activities 2026-2027

At Fairfields Primary School high expectations of learning, behaviour and respect for each other underpin everything we do. Our teachers strive to create independent, articulate thinkers and learners who have the confidence to achieve their ambitions. This drives us in our pursuit for excellence every day.

This policy is written with regard to the DCSF guidance document; 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' (HASPEV) and 'Health and Safety, Department for Education Advice on Legal Duties and Powers for Local Authorities, Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies (2011)'and Outdoor Education Advisory Panel's guidelines for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits (OEAP) Updated in line with current Department for Education guidance, OEAP National Guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Introduction

Fairfields Primary School positively promotes the active involvement of all children and young people in educational visits and journeys or 'learning outside the classroom' activities. Off−site activities have great potential for enhancing the educational, personal and social development of children and young people by enabling them to participate in experiences which are not available to them within the classroom or other education or childcare setting**.**

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability or circumstances.

These often the most memorable learning experiences, help us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside the classroom and vice−versa.

The benefits of educational visits and outdoor education include the opportunity to:

- Enhance learning and raise achievement
- Develop independence
- Develop team work
- Extend, enrich and support the curriculum
- Develop resourcefulness
- Develop problem solving skills
- Face challenges
- Question values
- Raise confidence and self−esteem
- Develop social skills
- Appreciation of the world at large and environmental awareness
- Extend personal horizons

The management of visits and off−site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, Headteacher, the party leader, members of staff and volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This policy on visits and off−site activities therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.

It is a priority of the school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial.

Fairfields Primary School has adopted, Milton Keynes Council Offsite Visits and Related Activities guidance together with current OEAP National Guidance and local authority procedures (2026), and the use of PlumSun Educational Visits Health, Safety and Risk management System.

Responsibilities

- **The Governing body** will:

- will satisfy themselves that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed.

- **The Head** will:
- ensure all visits and off−site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- ensure off−site programs are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- check that the staffing is suitable for each visit
- check that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety measures are in place.

- The **Educational Visits Co-Ordinator**, has delegated responsibility from the Headteacher and approval of the Governors to authorise all off−site School visits and to ensure that all visits are prepared and conducted in accordance with the required standards.

  The Educational Visits Co−Ordinator requires regular updated training and must stay abreast of updated guidance and best practice.

- **The party leader will:**
- take overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and continue to monitor the arrangements to ensure the on−going health and safety of the group.
- obtain the Headteacher's approval (or the EVC on his /her behalf) before any off−site visit or activity takes place
- follow policy and procedures of the Council and the school
- assess the risks involved and amend as appropriate any previously recorded risk benefit assessment
- use the school planning checklist to ensure all procedures have been followed
- inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate
- reassess risks while the visit or activity takes place

- ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the program be necessary due to weather etc.

- The **Manager of an establishment other than a school** has responsibility to ensure all of their establishment procedures and practices are adhered to by their staff and that all of their safety measures and practices are up to date.

- **Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:**
- Assist the party leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people
- on the visit
- Be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity.

- **Responsibilities of parents**
  Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off−site activity is suitable for their child. Subject to their agreement to the activity parents should:
- support the application of any agreed code of conduct
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number
- sign the consent form. (This may be digitally signed)

- **Responsibilities of pupils**
  Whilst taking part in off−site activities pupils also have responsibilities about which they should be made aware by the party leader or other members of staff, for their own health and safety and that of the group. Young people should:
- Avoid unnecessary risks
- Follow instructions of the party leader and other members of staff
- Behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct
- Inform a member of staff of significant hazards

<u>Approval Procedure and Consent</u>

- Before a visit is advertised to parents the Headteacher, the EVC and Governors must approve the initial plan.
- The visit leader will follow the SAGED procedure to assess viability and to inform further exacting plans.
- Risk benefit assessments and plans for the visit should be submitted for approval by the governing body.
- Once approved bookings can be confirmed and parents informed.
- Written parental consent must be sought confirming that they have understood the purpose, estimated cost and arrangements for the visit and give permission for their child to go on the visit.
- Parents of children with individual needs should be contacted prior to any written communication.
- For level 2 and 3 visits, parents are requested to provide up to date emergency contact and medical information so that the appropriate first aid arrangements can be put in place.
- Level 1 visits do not require consent as long as parents have been made aware that the visit is taking place (parents should choose to opt out in writing if they do not

wish their child to attend the visit) PROVIDING THE OFF−SITE ACTIVITY OCCURS DURING THE NORMAL HOURS OF THE SCHOOL DAY.

Types of Visit

Level 1: These are visits which last up to one day and:

- Do not involve an overnight stay
- Do not involve adventurous activities
- Are within the UK
- School sports fixtures /enrichment events
- Short visits in walking distance of the school
- Whole day visits needing transport

Level 2: These are visits which include one or more of the following:

- An overnight residential experience
- A visit abroad (including day trips)

Level 3: These are visits which involve adventurous activities,

- Ski Trip

Effective supervision on visits

Staffing arrangements for off−site visits must be sufficient to facilitate safe and effective supervision of children and young people.

Effective supervision should be determined by risk assessment which includes proper consideration of:

- **Staff** competence and experience
- The nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing environmental conditions)
- The ability, age and nature of the group and young people, including their behavioural, medical, emotional and educational needs
- The location and environment of the visit (including all areas)
- The distance away from your local area and means of transport/travel

This is the **SAGED** procedure.

Staffing ratios for visits will vary according to these aspects. It must be stressed that staff numbers are decided based on the SAGED procedure not merely the amount of children on any given visit.

In all cases, there must be a minimum of two accompanying adults, whatever the size of the group. The actual ratios required of adults to children and young people will be determined through the risk assessment process and may need to be in excess of the above levels. The use of suitable parents or other adult helpers may be appropriate provided any necessary checks e.g. DBS are in place.

When authorising visits, the establishment's Educational Visits Coordinator and Headteacher will ensure that ratios are sufficient to enable effective supervision in accordance with this guidance. These ratios for each visit be agreed by the Governing Body.

Outdoor Learning (on school−site)

Any planned activity or curriculum session should follow the SAGED procedure before carried out.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort will be made to support them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage. If medication has to be given, then staff will need to have received training in administering the medication. Extra training may need to be arranged.
All medication that is given is recorded.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SLT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next− of−kin, as appropriate. (This may be via Teacher App BromCom)

The Visit Leader will take with them a copy of the schools Critical Incident Procedures, along with the contact details of the appointed emergency school contacts.

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off−site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the school health and safety policy.

Staff must ensure that they keep emergency contact details for pupils and staff with them at all times, and that they have the correct insurance information readily available.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Visit Leader in any emergency that occurs in the UK or abroad.

Risk Control

Effective risk management is a fundamental part of the planning and execution of all off−site visits and activities. Staff have a common law duty of care towards all children and young

people in their charge, and the purpose of risk assessment and management is to help children and young people to undertake activities safely, not to prevent activities taking place.

Managing Risk Benefits – an educative process

- Risk management is a fundamental life skill.
- As educators we have a statutory responsibility to teach young people how to manage risk.
- It is an essential ingredient of the teaching and learning process both indoors and outdoors.
- We strive to teach children how to deal with and manage the challenge and adventure that life can offer.
- We there is an unmanageable risk we should act to make it manageable –
  you cannot eliminate all risk however absolutely no unnecessary risks should be taken if there are any doubts about the nature of the cause and the possible outcomes.

Risk benefit assessments do not need to be complex but should address any significant risks and be an active document. However, the Headteacher or the EVC must ensure that the person assessing the risks is competent to do so.

Risk benefit assessments should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards and what level of risk do they pose?
- What are the benefits and do they significantly outweigh the risks?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The risk benefit assessment will take into account:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is undertaken
- The age, competence, fitness and temperament of the group members
- Any additional educational or medical needs of individuals within the group
- Supervision ratios
- The competence, experience and qualifications of the supervisory team
- The location, routes and modes of transport to it
- Security for residential or overnight stays

There are three levels of risk assessment that should be undertaken:

- **generic activity risk assessments,** which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. They are useful to cover activities which are likely to be repeated and that do not need doing again unless the activity, the environment and/or the nature of the learners change significantly.

- **visit or site specific risk assessments** are completed by the group leader and are unique to each occasion. They should take into account the site, learners' needs and activity specific needs (environment, group, accommodation, staff, transport, etc). Site specific risk assessments available from activity providers will support this aspect.

- **ongoing risk assessments** involve professional judgements during an activity in response to changing situations, e.g. weather conditions or ill health of participants. This applies to all categories and is critical to the success and safety of any activity.

All local (establishment level) processes will include checks to ensure that all applicable risk assessments have been appropriately completed before visits are approved.

It is the responsibility of the Trip Organiser to ensure that all accompanying staff are familiarised with the risk assessment and to continue to brief staff throughout the trip.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Headteacher, the governing body and all adults supervising the trip.

Preliminary visits and provider assurances

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. A 'virtual tour', where available, using the internet could support this.

It may also be useful to learn from other establishments' experience of using particular providers and gaining verbal or written references from fellow professionals

Where a provider holds accreditation through one of the national provider assurance schemes there should be no need to seek further safety assurances. Examples of such schemes include:

- The Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge
- AALS licensing
- Adventuremark
- NGB centre approval schemes (applicable where the provision is a single, specialist activity)

Insurance cover

The Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that adequate insurance cover is in place for any off−site visit, including for transport arrangements through arranging annual school insurance. Visit organisers should clarify through the school what insurance cover already exists, to identify whether additional cover needs to be obtained.

Charging for visits

In all cases group organisers must ensure that there is a clear financial audit trail for all income and expenditure in respect of off−site visits.

As a school we may charge or request voluntary contributions for educational visits and journeys in accordance with our agreed and published Charging and Remissions Policy. Policies must be in line with Sections 449−462 of the Education Act 1996.

Letters Home

Letters home must be approved by the Head. They must follow the standard school format and be free of errors. Extra copies should be left with reception, extra letters sent as required and finance be fully involved with all monetary correspondences.

Parental Information/Correspondences Home

Once initial letters home parents should be offered the opportunity to attend a Visit Information Evening at the school.

Parents can then ask any questions they may have and make an informed decision as to whether they can commit to the visit with a deposit.

Parent Packs

Parent packs with key information will be shared including elements such as:

- Medical/Dietary arrangements
- Travel Itinerary
- Journey Info.
- Accommodation
- Food/Meals info.
- Resort/Hotel Details
- Emergency Contact Info
- Packing List
- Spending Money

Practice Whilst Away

Contact Home

Contact appointed person (SLT) upon arrival and prior to departure. Keep the school informed of any delays. In an emergency the Headteacher should be the emergency contact. Always phone Head first but have second and third contacts.

Pupils should not have mobile phones so discretion is required when it comes to pupil contact home. Make sure all staff have each other's mobile phone numbers and that the school can get hold of you at all times.

Website/MCAS Updates

This is the parent's primary point of information. On the website/MCAS should be safe arrival, perhaps a midweek touch base and departure time with expected arrival time back at school.

Visit Evaluation

- All visits will be evaluated by the Group Leader with the EVC. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.
- The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments on the trip are dated as having been evaluated and/or modified as a result.
- The Group Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the school's procedures.

Organising an Educational Visit – Flowchart

Initial conversation within Year teams / Phases to discuss the viability of the educational visit (in terms of purpose, links to the curriculum, links to the Childhood pledge, resources etc…).
Trip leader to make initial contact with venue to check availability (**Rachel** to support if needed)
If costings or transport quotes are required – Finance Team needs to be informed at least 1 WEEK prior to Stage 2. Finance team to advise on costings

Trip leader seeks approval that trip is cost effective and meets requirements - Bring to SLT
Where? When? Why? Staffing? Students? Costs?

Trip Leader to start the process of adding visit to PlumSun
The EVC will review and the trip will either be accepted – or returned for further consideration and review.

Trip Leader working alongside the **Rachel**, Finance – book the educational visit**. *This needs to be completed AT LEAST 8 weeks prior to the date of the visit***, preferably more depending on cancellations policy of venue. Venue. Activities. Transport. Payment schedule to be considered.

Trip leader to prepare parental communications and submit to SLT for proof reading.
Once approved Parental communications to be sent to Office Staff.
Office Staff to send to all involved, Parents/admin team. **Office Staff** to notify the Pantry and request the lunch options are changed to packed lunch for relevant groups

Finance Team to create a consent/payment spreadsheet for the trip and save on the portal. To be checked for full consent even if a bursary has been provided 2 working days before the trip leaves to allow time for parents to be contacted.
Finance Team to update trip leader as and when consent/payments are received and regularly check and chase and outstanding consent/payments.
Trip Leader to check for full consent (if a bursary has been provided, please ensure permission has been received from the parent) 2 working days before the trip leaves to allow time for parents to be contacted.

Trip leader to obtain venue Risk Assessment and save on PlumSun.
Trip leader to prepare Fairfields Risk Assessment (examples can be found on PlumSun). Individual SEND/medical needs may require further Risk Assessments. All first aid staff and the expiry of their first aid qualification should be listed on the risk assessment and identified if they are taking the lead or have a child they are focussing on regarding medication. All epi pen users should be listed including staff and the person identified for overseeing this care including the date of their training also. ***EVC Approval required.***

Finance Team to check payments & consent, monitor and chased if required.
Office Team to provide copies of medical /dietary /emergency contacts/parental consents
Trip leader to complete group details/staff contact details/coach lists/itinerary/where possible plan to be a spare member of staff on the trip.
Office Team to create Visit packs X2 – (X1 for Group Leader/X1 for EVC/Head of School)
Trip Leader to meet with staff attending to discuss risk assessment/itinerary/code of conduct etc…

ON DAY OF VISIT

Trip Leader to collect medical kits/medication. Take Register and advise office of any non-attendees – update paperwork as required. Dynamically risk assess environments throughout the visit. Maintain lines of communication with SLT. Provide SLT/Office Team with updates for social media/website as required.

UPON RETURN

Trip Leader to return any medical resources. Collect and dispose of any confidential materials (in line with GDPR).

Visit Evaluation All visits will be evaluated by the Group Leader with the EVC. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.

This policy was ratified by the Governors

Date: September 2026

Signed: Penelope Beesley-Evans

Next Review on or before:

September 2027

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Governors at on an annual basis.