



Educational Visits Policy

Chew Valley School

2025-26

School Policy Approved by Local Governing Body

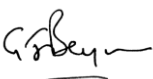
Signed: 

Name: Sarah Cran

Date: 19.11.25

Chair of Local Governing Body

Authorised for Issue

Signed: 

Name: Gareth Beynon

Date: 19.11.25

Headteacher

CHEW VALLEY SCHOOL

Educational Visits Policy

1. Introduction

Students can derive substantial benefit from educational visits. They can contribute significantly to the development of cross curricular skills and to personal and social education through the use of problem-solving methods and approaches and through encouraging responsibility, self-confidence and self-reliance. This policy is designed to help teachers, governors and other stakeholders to ensure that students stay safe and healthy whilst on Chew Valley School visits.

2. Aims and Objectives of Chew Valley School Educational Visits Policy

- To offer children a wide range of high-quality experiences outside the classroom, including residential experience.
- To provide school staff with easily accessible advice, guidance and resources as well as good professional development opportunities.
- To "make the case", so that there is general understanding of the unique contribution that school trips can make to children's lives.
- To encourage parents and carers to support school trips.
- To encourage partnerships between schools, local providers and other organisations over visits and out of school activities.

3. Factors to consider when approving an Educational School Visit

In deciding if a visit application merits approval the school will consider the following:

- There are clear and justifiable objectives for the visit. For example where does it fit into the curriculum and the school calendar? What is the value of the event to individuals and groups?
- The visit leader is clearly identified and sufficiently responsible and capable of taking charge of the particular visit.
- The environmental impacts of the visit taking place should be considered as part of planning and all aspects including transport such be looked at in this respect.
- Parents have been notified and consent obtained.
- Participants are aware of the visit objectives and have been prepared.
- All transport arrangements have been adequately assessed.
- The venue is either known or the visit leader has undertaken a pre-visit in order to assess the suitability of the site and to enable risk assessment(s) to be produced. Occasionally, for a distant destination, this process may be replaced by information and advice received from other sources such as a company specializing in school visits. Where this is the case the risk assessments must take this into account and the leader must be sufficiently experienced.
- Written risk assessments and measures to control the risks must be produced. Control measures must be understood and complied with by all persons staffing the visit.

- A check must be made to ensure any provider has sufficient public liability insurance as well as suitable arrangements for participant welfare.
- Consideration must be given to deciding if contractual insurance (personal accident and travel insurance) is necessary for the participants and staff and for informing parents and carers about any cover applying to the visit.
- The financing of the trip must comply with Chew Valley School regulations.
- An emergency procedure is in place, which includes means by which Chew Valley School and the group are able to contact each other.
- What are the teaching implications due to staff and student absence?
- Can the trip be undertaken at a more convenient time during the academic year?
- Does the trip come under the umbrella of residential or adventurous and if so Designated Services (DS) need to sign it off in addition to the headteacher?

3.2 A final decision with regard to commissioning and enabling a visit or event is taken by the Headteacher, who will base the decision on the above objectives and criteria whilst also giving consideration to the balance of teaching implications and the value of the trip.

3.3 Support in planning and arranging visits is provided by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

4. After the Educational School Visit

4.1 After the visit: Evaluation after the event can be a useful aid to planning future visits, especially for additional and high risk activities.

- The standard RIDDOR accident report form must be submitted to the Health and Safety Officer for any accident that resulted, or could have resulted, in serious injury.
- An incident report must be submitted to the school giving details of any incident that could have had severe consequences to the welfare of any participant or staff member, and any failure of the services offered by a provider.

5. Planning Visits and Expeditions in Chew Valley School

The following is aimed at tackling common questions from staff when planning visits and is designed to encourage good practice. Some of these guidelines only apply to expeditions, longer and overseas visits but you are advised to read through all these guidelines before planning any visit. They should be read in conjunction with the guidelines setting out the procedure for planning visits.

5.1 Planning ahead

The aim, when possible, should be to obtain approval in principle and financial approval four weeks in advance for short visits and for some longer visits. Some longer visits and all overseas visits should normally obtain approval in principle and financial approval four months in advance of the planned visit.

5.2 Staffing

As with all visits, staffing ratios and requirements must be visit-specific according to the number, composition, age range of students, and appropriate to the venue and the activities planned for the visit. Staffing should be discussed with members of the senior leadership team as a matter of course as part of the early planning process before anyone is approached. Staffing needs to be sympathetic to the needs of running the school if the trip is out during school time (eg cover). Where possible under the direction of senior staff the recruitment for staff attending trips should be carried out in a transparent and inclusive manner.

As a general rule, the following applies:

- Groups on visits must have at least two members of staff. (In certain circumstances one staff member may be sufficient e.g. sixth formers attending a lecture).
- For Category A¹ visits a staff ratio to students of 1 member of staff to 15-20 students should be followed. Category B² visits require a staff ratio of 1 member of staff to 15 students. Category C³ visits require a staff ratio of 1 member of staff to 10 students.
- All groups on visits must have a nominated group leader.
- Where students are on a residential visit, and the group is made up of male and female students at least one of the staff members must be female and one male (unless staff provided by an external provider such as a field studies centre are able to fulfil that role).
- Staff who are there in a role to support a particular student should not be counted in any ratio and nor should a member of staff who is on the trip where their own child (as a student at Chew Valley) is attending.

5.3 Parents on off-site visits

- *Short visits (non-residential)*: Parents may be invited to accompany a group on a day visit but at no time must a parent be left in charge of a student(s). Parents may be asked to assist in managing a group but only under the overall supervision of a teacher. In planning a visit group leaders must ensure that there is adequate Chew Valley staffing from the outset. Parents do not count as part of the ratio.

¹ **Category A** : Low Risk, locally based, daytime activity where young people are not exposed to any greater risk than they would face in everyday life. e.g. visits to libraries, museums, theatres etc.

² **Category B** : Medium Risk, where greater supervision is required and the group leader would require additional skills / experience. e.g. beach and coastal studies, cycling, horse riding, swimming etc.

³ **Category C** : High Risk, high supervision required, group leader requires considerable experience and a degree of competence defined by a National Governing Body of the Sport. e.g. archery, camping, caving, trekking, water sports etc.

- *Longer visits (residential home and overseas):* Parents and any other adults (including spouses) accompanying the group must be CRB checked and the headteacher's approval obtained. This must be budgeted for when the financial proposals are forwarded to Finance.

5.4 Tour Companies and External Providers

Only licensed providers (e.g. Adventurous Activities Licensing Authority (AALA)) should be used where possible. It is also advisable to obtain recommendations from other schools that have used the provider if the company is otherwise unknown to you.

5.5 Insurance

- The School's insurance policy provides group cover for all members of parties involved in trips. Details can be obtained from the Finance Manager.
- When using a licensed provider you must obtain details of their insurance arrangements and parents should be given a copy of the policy schedule.

5.6 Pre-visit inspection:

Where possible it is good practice to inspect a location prior to planning a visit, in order to check its suitability.

5.7 Travel Arrangements

- When using the school minibus you must be on the list of approved drivers.
- When using your own private vehicle on necessary school business to transport students you must have a valid driving licence and ensure the vehicle is in a safe and roadworthy condition. You must check your own insurance policy and how this is viewed by your insurers.
- Students must be required to wear safety belts in all vehicles. It is Group leaders and staff who are responsible for ensuring that this requirement is enforced on all journeys.
- For travel by train and underground, particular care needs to be given to the risk of some students being separated from the rest of the group and this must be set out in the Risk Assessment.
- When travelling abroad students need to be briefed on matters such as securing passports and visas, baggage security and airport security checks.
- Parents and carers must be clear about the travel arrangements when they sign the consent form.

5.8 First Aid and Medical Conditions

One member of staff must be nominated as being in charge of First Aid and be qualified with the qualification in date.

This member of staff is:

- responsible for the first aid bag. This should be taken on visits, as appropriate.
- to administer basic first aid, though the person responsible must be careful to avoid administering medical treatment beyond their training, skill and knowledge.

- to remain with a casualty while emergency help is summoned and, if needed, accompany the casualty to hospital. You should contact Reception to obtain a first aid kit.
- Students who are taking part in a visit with known medical conditions need to be considered including taking into account the storage and application of any medication in line with supervision. Where appropriate dedicated risk assessments should be carried out for these students to include all aspects including transport and accommodation where relevant.

5.9 Accommodation:

- Where overnight accommodation is involved, fire exits and emergency evacuation procedures should be checked by the Group Leader on arrival. The group should then be given a briefing/fire drill.
- Students should know where staff rooms are located and these should be in the vicinity of student accommodation. Group accommodation should be located in one area rather than scattered in different parts of a residential complex. As far as is reasonably possible, ground floor accommodation should be avoided for students. It is important to have proper details of the accommodation that is being provided before the visit, even if a pre-visit is not possible. The group leader should have a room list.

5.10 Risk Assessment:

- A full written Risk Assessment is required for all visits. The Risk Assessment must a) identify specific hazards/risks b) state who is at risk c) set out measures to control/minimize the risk.
- All Risk Assessments must be visit specific and must cover the full itinerary. Risk Assessments should be reviewed and, if necessary, updated, even for visits/expeditions that occur regularly.
- Individual Risk Assessments should be completed for relevant students who need to be catered specifically on the trip.
- If a licensed provider is responsible for a visit/activity, you are advised to ask for a copy of their own Risk Assessment and to refer to and include this as part of your own.
- There must be on-going risk assessment by group leaders and staff as the visit progresses and as circumstances require. On expeditions and visits involving any hazardous activity, Group Leaders and staff should always have and be prepared to revert to a 'Plan B'. Students must not be made to undertake or to continue with an activity if they are expressing serious concerns about their health, well-being and overall safety.
- Any student who is deemed to be a risk to the safety of other students might not be allowed on a visit. This should be discussed with the headteacher beforehand.
- Generic risk assessments are available and may be helpful (though they must be adapted to the specific visit).
- It is important that students going on a visit are properly briefed before departure and given clear instructions as the visit progresses.

5.11 Code of Conduct and Behaviour

On all visits students should be reminded of the basic requirements of safeguarding the safety of each other, courtesy and consideration towards members of the public and conduct that enhances the reputation of the School. As far as possible, normal School rules apply.

For visits involving overnight stays and overseas visits students and parents must accept the following protocols:

- Students must carry out the instructions of the Group Leader and Staff at all times.
- No alcohol to be bought or consumed by students.
- At least one member of staff must be alcohol free at all times and consumption by all staff on trip should be in real moderation (a glass with a meal for instance).
- Students must be reminded not to carry, have in their possession or purchase (e.g. as a souvenir) any object that might be deemed an offensive weapon.
- No smoking and vaping is permitted by the students

Students must adhere to all deadlines and be in their rooms at the time stated by the Group leader. (Group leaders must make proper arrangements to check this with frequent roll calls).

5.12 Repatriation

For foreign visits parents should be told that in the unlikely event of a gross breach of the code of conduct, a student might be repatriated at their own expense. This would be the decision of the Group Leader and in consultation with the School's emergency contact who is usually the Headteacher.

5.13 Remote Supervision

- At all times group leaders and staff are responsible for students. Any period of 'remote supervision' must be covered by the drawing of clear boundaries for students, emergency procedures and how contact with staff can be made. It is often good practice to issue students with a card giving mobile phone contact numbers of staff and the address and contact numbers of the place of residence if an overnight stay is involved. The associated hazards should be considered in the overall risk assessment. On expeditions students should normally be in groups of at least four and briefed on how to respond to an emergency.
- Parents must be fully briefed on the arrangements for any periods of 'remote supervision'.

5.14 Passports, Visas and GHIC

Group Leaders should make a copy of all passports, visas and GHIC, and retain a copy throughout the visit. A second copy should be given to the 24/7 School Contact before departure. For trips abroad all students should have an GHIC.

5.15 Meeting with parents and students before departure

It is good practice to invite parents and carers of students going on a visit, accompanied by the students themselves, to a briefing meeting at the school, in order for arrangements to be explained and questions answered. This applies to many longer visits and especially to overseas visits.

5.16 Parental Consent

No student may go on a visit without parents having given their written consent by signing the consent form.

- Parents must give this consent on the basis of having been fully informed of the arrangements for the visit. They should not be informed on a 'need to know' basis only. When parents give their consent they should be aware of the following as applicable to the specific visit:
- The full itinerary, including travel arrangements.
- Any hazardous activities, the supervision provided and the risk assessment.
- Details of any period of 'remote supervision' and the control measures in place.
- Insurance arrangements including insurance for hazardous activities. (Longer and overseas visits).
- Medical arrangements e.g. policy on the dispensing of medication. If a student needs to purchase and take any medication, he or she should obtain either in advance or at the time permission from a parent. Paracetamol should not be given to a student who is receiving other medication from a doctor. Aspirin, or preparations containing aspirin, may not be given.
- Full contact details of the hotel/place of residence (Longer and overseas visits) and group leader.
- The Code of Conduct for the visit (longer and overseas visits deemed to be good practice).
- The signed consent forms should be retained by the Group Leader throughout the visit and shared with the home contact.

All staff should be given and retain through the visit a list of staff and students on the visit, along with their mobile contact numbers, their emergency home contact numbers and the contact numbers for the hotel or equivalent if a longer or overseas visit.

5.17 Reporting incidents/near misses

It is a requirement that any accident or 'near-miss' on a visit should be reported immediately on return to the EVC and also through the procedure set out in the School Policy for reporting accidents.

If any area of Health and Safety causes concern it must be reported to the EVC immediately on return.

The schools and the Lighthouse Schools Partnership Critical Incident Procedures are to be used when dealing with an event, usually sudden, which involves the experience of significant personal distress to a level which potentially overwhelms normal responses, procedures, and coping strategies and which is likely to have emotional and organisational consequences.

6. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on Health and Safety on Educational Trips, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[SEND Code of Practice](#)

[Keeping children safe in education 2024](#)

Policy to be reviewed: November 2026