



Educational Visits Policy

Date	October 2025
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Approved By	Joe Creswick
Date Approved	October 2025
Review Date	October 2026

This policy applies to all stakeholders within Ridgeway School

Introduction

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of Ridgeway, and which take place outside the school grounds. Off-site activities can supplement and enrich our curriculum and provide valuable opportunities for personal development and developing cultural capital. Pupils have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom; visits help develop a pupil's investigative skills and longer visits in particular, encourage greater independence.

Research shows that children and teenagers with a learning disability partake in fewer activities and participate less frequently than their peers without a learning disability. They also tend to have fewer friends (Solish et al., 2010).

Taheri et al., 2016). <https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/research-and-statistics/friendships-research-and-statistics>

We recognise that educational visits are particularly important for our pupil population, as having a learning disability can impede access to the community. Our pupils deserve to be able to access the community with confidence, and to feel that they belong. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) recognises that our pupils need support to develop their social, emotional and mental health needs; educational visits can provide excellent opportunities to build these skills.

The purpose of this policy

This policy is designed to confirm expectations, provide guidance around planning and ultimately to help ensure that pupils and staff stay safe on visits.

Training

Educational visits at Ridgeway are overseen by our Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), **Lauren Steels** and **Joe Crewsick**. The EVC must have accessed EVC training from Bedford Borough (our local authority - LA), and subsequent re-accreditation courses as required.

When reviewing visit plans, an EVC and the Executive Headteacher must satisfy themselves that staff leading visits are competent to lead the visit and activity. This will be dependent on the individual staff member's training and experience, and the nature of the visit.

Where third party providers are used, the EVC, Executive Headteacher, Ridgeway staff and the local authority should be satisfied and seek assurances that activities are led by appropriately trained/qualified and competent individuals.

Lauren Steels is able to offer support / training for new teachers to ensure that they understand the processes, and that they are able to access and use Evolve effectively, which is an online system used for planning, approval and management of educational visits.

Planning

The planning stages of educational visits is vitally important, and there are a number of elements that staff need to consider. The visit leader must consider the documentation needed:

- EVOLVE form to be submitted via the website – 4 weeks before https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco10/evchome_public.asp?domain=bedfordboroughvisits.org.uk
- Visit proposal form to be completed and submitted with the EVOLVE – this needs to be emailed to EVC 4 weeks prior to the trip to seek permission.
- Risk assessment to be completed in detail and submitted to EVOLVE.

- Consideration of first aiders, bus drivers (if required), trip leaders and back up plans to be organised.
- Information to be shared with parents/carers with regards to the trip.
- Kitchen to be informed of any changes.

All visit leaders will complete the going out form on the day of the trip, so the office is aware of who is off site. This will be removed on return. The visit leader will a copy with them at all times and maintain confidentiality in line with the GDPR policy. **This must be done for every off site visit.**

For activities going beyond the local area, visit leaders must prepare a field file. All visit leaders will complete the field file as outlined in Appendix Five. This will be taken on the visit; staff must be informed of the location of this field file, and a copy should be left with a member of SLT remaining on site.

Finance

Charging for educational visits will be carried out in line with the Charging and Remissions Policy. Staff organising a visit should consult a member of SLT if they have queries around funding a visit.

Insurance

Insurance is provided through Ridgeway School and by individual providers where relevant. Proof of appropriate insurance is required from external providers where necessary. A copy of providers' insurance certificates will be uploaded to the Evolve system by the visit leader.

Medical needs:

For all visits/activities, there should be a responsible member of staff with a good working knowledge of First Aid appropriate for the activity/environment; one member of staff accompanying any EYFS pupils off site must have a current paediatric first aid certificate. We recognise that it might not be possible to have a First Aid trained member of staff for short, small group visits to the local area. The location of the nearest Accident and Emergency Department should be obtained for all visits/journeys which extend beyond the local area. First aid kits should be taken with the group if they are accessing a venue which is unlikely to have their own first aid supplies, such as visits to a park.

On educational visits, a designated person will be appointed in order to administer medications if required. The 'Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy' must be adhered to.

Medication must only be taken off site in its original container. Relevant medication charts need to be taken out too and completed at the time of administration, not retrospectively when back on site. Where appropriate, staff must ensure that pupils always have immediate access to emergency medications such as asthma inhalers. **Emergency medication must be taken on all visits.**

Permissions

Ridgeway school families complete a permissions form (online) which includes permission for local area trips / sports events etc. Visit leaders should check these details before arranging their visit/trip. Parents/carers will be provided with full information of all potential routine visits for the duration of the year, and they must be fully informed of the details of non-routine visits/journeys - they are able to withdraw consent if they wish to.

Risk assessment

An accurate understanding of risk is key to ensuring safe, successful visits. The welfare of pupils, staff and volunteers is always paramount. Ridgeway recognises that no educational visit is without risk, however, the benefits of the visit must outweigh the risk.

Visit leaders must carefully consider all activities for the duration of their educational visit. Thorough risk assessments **must** be produced for all activities that pupils, staff and volunteers may undertake. Visit leaders will seek to minimise risk and reduce it to acceptable levels. A risk assessment format is provided by Ridgeway; if this is not suitable for the activity, the visit leader will need to contact the EVC. The appropriateness and effectiveness of risk control/mitigation measures will be evaluated and quality assured by the EVC and the Headteacher.

Generic risk assessments are available for some regular activities such as travel on the school minibuses and swimming at the local pool. These generic risk assessments will be reviewed by the visit leader whenever they are used. Adaptations will be made to generic risk assessments where necessary.

Risk assessments must be uploaded to Evolve, along with a visit itinerary two weeks prior to the date of the planned visit, and all staff supporting the visit must have read the risk assessment.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process. The visit leader will maintain an overview of the risk associated with visits during the visit itself. This 'dynamic risk assessment' must happen throughout the visit.

Staff have a responsibility to raise any concerns about safety of visit participants with the visit lead immediately. They should telephone the visit emergency contact or Ridgeway office if they feel that their concerns are not being dealt with appropriately.

Supervision

We recognise that different pupils within school will require very different levels of supervision. The overall responsibility for deciding appropriate staffing levels rests with the Headteacher. The staffing ratios and the pupil/staff ratios will be decided for each visit/journey according to circumstances (for example age/ability/nature of activity/mode of transport/staff experience etc.) and in line with the visit leader's risk assessment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework states that a teacher and a member of staff with a current paediatric first aid certificate must accompany any EYFS off-site activity.

If staff are considering lone working with a pupil in the community, they must consult the lone working risk assessment for further guidance, available within school.

Supplies needed

Visit leaders should carefully consider in advance any supplies required to take with them, including (but not limited to):

- Staff mobile phones (ensure appropriate numbers are saved)
- Calming activities or resources, or motivating items that support positive behaviour
- Any supplies needed to meet personal care needs
- Medication needed (see section above)
- Any alternative & augmentative communication (AAC) devices that pupils need access to

- Food / drink requirements. The kitchen can provide packed lunches for pupils eligible for Free School Meals; this must be arranged in advance (at least 2 weeks). Families must be given reasonable notice to organise packed lunches if required.

Transport

Visit leaders must carefully consider all logistics for transport:

- If using the school minibus, guidelines for use must be adhered to. Visit leaders must ensure that they have enough vehicles available, enough trained drivers joining them on the visit, and they might need to pre-arrange the configuration of the minibuses to ensure space for any wheelchair users.
- Staff cars can be used as a last resort, in an emergency situation only, drivers must have business insurance if using a personal car. Unless specific clearance is obtained from the Headteacher, there must be a second member of staff in the car.
- If the visit involves trains, staff will need to consider whether any accessibility requirements need to be prearranged.
- If transporting abroad by coach, ship or plane, further advice should be sought from the LA via Evolve.

Behaviour expectations

The welfare of pupils, staff and volunteers is paramount. Good behaviour and proactive positive behaviour support (PBS) ensure that educational visits are safe and successful. If behaviour of a pupil falls short of Ridgeway's behaviour policy or behaviour support measures prove ineffective, the pupil will be returned to school to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

Unless an educational visit is specifically recognised as a 'reward', we would not expect withdrawal from a visit to be used as a punitive measure. Individual circumstances should be discussed with a member of the senior leadership team.

Some pupils will be known to find elements of educational visits challenging. This does not mean that we shouldn't afford them the same opportunities as their peers, rather this must be considered in the visit risk assessment, and there must be appropriate supports put in place, such as working with known staff who are familiar with their PBS plan, and having standby options to help the pupil return safely to school. Some pupils might find elements of educational visits anxiety-inducing or overwhelming. Personalised support should be in place to help prepare pupils, such as social stories or 1:1 discussions, and staff should carefully consider - supported by discussions with families - whether the visit is likely to cause unnecessary distress to the pupil.

If a member of staff or volunteer breaks the staff code of conduct, the visit leader will contact a member of the senior leadership team immediately. Ridgeway staff and volunteers are **not** permitted to consume any alcohol whilst on educational visits, including during residential visits.

Ridgeway recognises that all pupils should be allowed the opportunity to engage in age-appropriate activities. Students over the age of 18 are therefore permitted to purchase alcohol with the agreement of staff and their parent/carers whilst on a residential visit. However, this must be in moderation and Ridgeway reserves the right to prevent adult students purchasing alcohol at any time on a residential visit. Students who purchase or consume alcohol without the express permission of the visit leader will be sent home immediately.

Emergency situations

Emergency procedures must be discussed at the planning stage of each visit/journey.

The visit leader must have a charged mobile phone and the school office number saved. The phone must be switched on at all times with a charger for overnight stays. We generally advise all staff on educational visits to carry their own mobile phone with them in case of emergency during educational visits.

Where an accident or incident occurs on an activity, this must be reported in line with Ridgeway reporting procedures. It is also good practice to report near misses to inform future planning.

Visit leaders will ensure that they have a copy of the Emergency Card in (Appendix 3) when leading trips and visits. This card will be used in the event of an emergency.

In the unlikely event of a terrorist attack, staff and pupils should follow the RUN HIDE TELL guidance, which can be applied to many situations and places. More information can be found here: <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/response/run-hide-tell>

Roles and responsibilities

The Local Authority will:

- review and approval of all residential, overseas and adventurous visits.

The Executive Headteacher will:

- approve this policy
- review and approve trips and visits
- give final approval for all visits, including residential, overseas and adventurous visits
- select and monitor the Educational Visits Coordinator
- authorise the named staff to lead a trip or visit though approving an Evolve form.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will:

- review and approve visits prior to submission to the Headteacher
- ensure that resources are available for the visit including vehicles, prepayment, etc.
- quality assure the risk assessments produced and ensure the risk assessments have been written to cover all activities for the duration of the visit.
- complete the Local Authority EVC training course
- monitor quality assurance of venues and external providers.
- Support the visit leaders with processes for trips

Teachers/Visit Leaders will:

- ensure that all off-site activities serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our pupils' learning experiences, and define the objectives in their planning
- plan and prepare education visits in line with this policy.
- ensure that risk assessments are prepared for all activities for the duration of the visit.
- enter the visit details into Evolve, including any travel requirements.
- provide the Admin and Finance teams with relevant information
- liaise with the kitchen manager in a timely manner if packed lunches are required
- keep parents/carers informed regarding any planned visits
- ensure that parent/carer consent is obtained/prior permission is in place.

Teaching Assistants will:

- support the teacher to prepare and lead educational visits. Duties may include ensuring that adequate supplies are packed and driving vehicles (subject to appropriate licences and checks).

The Finance Team and Admin Team will:

- support the teacher to plan and organise visits including the use of vehicles, managing payments and returned permission forms from parents/carers.

Parents / carers will:

- provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip, for example if the visit involves walking by a pond, it would be pertinent to inform staff if their child has tried to jump into ponds before.

Legal framework & statutory guidance**Linked national/local guidance:**

Guidance for Educational Visits and Journeys (Bedford Borough)
Equality Act 2010
Keeping Children Safe in Education (current version)
SEND Code of Practice

Linked policies:

Charging and remissions policy
First Aid policy
Safeguarding & Child Protection policy
Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions policy
Use of School Vehicles policy
Behaviour policy
Equal opportunities policy

Equalities & inclusion

Staff are expected to take all reasonably practicable measures to include all pupils / students in appropriate learning outside of the classroom. Ridgeway is committed to equal opportunities and supporting all pupils to access educational visits. No pupil, member of staff or volunteer will be prevented from participating in an educational visit due to a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010. All educational visits are evaluated for accessibility and inclusion, and we will always consider reasonable adjustments.

Safeguarding implications

The planning and preparation of educational visits must include measures to safeguard children, young people and accompanying staff from harm. If a member of staff has concerns about the welfare of a pupil or the behaviour of another member of staff/volunteer, they must share their concerns in line with the Ridgeway safeguarding policy.

Ridgeway has a high staff to pupil ratio, so volunteers are rarely required for educational visits. However, where volunteers are required for a visit the visit leader, EVC and Headteacher will ensure that the volunteer is suitable to work with vulnerable children and young people in line with the safeguarding policy. Visit leaders will not allow volunteers to engage in regulated activity when on educational visits. The visit lead must take regular headcounts and/or roll calls.

See also the section above regarding supervision.

Appendices

- 1 – Going out slip
- 2 – EVC checklist
- 3 – Emergency card
- 4 – Field file Appendix One - nominal roll

Appendix 1 Going out slip – Ridgeway

Name of Group	
Place of visit, address and telephone number	
Date(s) of visit	
Name of Group Leader	
Group Leader's contact details during the visit	
Total number in group (please see table on reverse)	
Supervisors	Group members
Local point of contact	
Ridgeway School Hill Kempston, Beds, MK42 7EB	
Telephone (Day) 01234 402402	Telephone (Evening) (if appropriate)

Please list all supervisors first followed by all young people	Emergency contact telephone number

Appendix 2- EVC checklist

All visits		
1	Adhere to guidance; Bedford Borough Educational Visits and Journeys, Policy Document regulations and Guidance and Ridgeway policy	
2	Set clear objectives for the visit or journey	
3	Seek EVC approval before informing young people and parents or making a financial commitment	
4	Consider insurance arrangements	
5	Identify competent adult supervisors	
6	Ensure appropriate staff to young people ratios are met	
7	Check DBS clearance for adults where appropriate	
8	Do a preliminary visit where appropriate or seek advice	
9	Consider the medical, behavioural and special needs of young people	
10	Consider the risk assessment and risk management of the visit (to include First Aid and a Plan B)	
11	Begin to draw up the itinerary	
12	Confirm bookings of transport, accommodation, etc. in writing and keep all correspondence	
13	Consider the financial arrangements (charging policy, contingency funds)	
14	Gain written parental consent (where required)	
15	Consider the communication strategies that will need to be in place	
16	Ensure every member of staff is aware of the Emergency Procedures and contact numbers	
17	Complete an Independent Provider's Contract where necessary, and send to provider to complete and sign as early as possible, and before any financial commitment is made	
18	Identify the local point of contact and telephone numbers	
19	Collate all documentation for Field File to include all travel documentation, tickets, bookings etc.	
20	Complete going out form (appendix 1)	
21	Brief all young people and all accompanying adults, (including partners abroad if required) to ensure they understand their responsibilities	

22	Hold a final briefing meeting for all staff and young people, e.g. safety information, country code, personal and protective clothing requirements, behaviour etc.	
23	Report any accident/incident or near miss to the person(s) who approved the visit as soon as possible following the visit.	

Visits involving transport		
24	Complete an Evaluation Form on Evolve	
25	Choose a reputable company (if necessary)	
26	Discuss and agree the itinerary with the transport company prior to departure	
27	Refer to the Bedford Borough policy Chapter 18 for specific guidance on particular types of transport	
28	Create specific risk assessments and risk management strategies for transporting young people	
Overnight and residential visits		
29	Ensure DBS clearance for all accompanying adults	
30	Send out the Parental Information and Consent (PIC) form for completion	
31	Agree downtime arrangements with all accompanying staff	
32	Consider any security implications of the accommodation or centre visited	
33	Complete an Independent Provider's Contract and send to provider to complete and sign as early as possible and before any financial commitment is made	
34	Consider gender issues for staffing, young people and accommodation	
35	Complete Medicine Record Sheet as required	
36	Invite parents and group members to a briefing meeting	
37	Identify pupils with specific dietary requirements and agree suitable menus with all parties (caterers, parents, visit leader and staff). Ensure caterers are committed to the arrangements and are aware of the possible consequences of deviating from the agreed menu.	
Adventure activities		
38	Seek LA approval - do this early and before you are committed financially	
39	Check the qualifications of staff and instructors	
40	Complete an Independent Provider's Contract and send to provider to complete and sign as early as possible and before any financial commitment is made	
41	Use approved centres (AALA)	
42	Consider additional insurance	
Visits abroad		

43	Seek LA approval - do this early and before you are committed financially	
44	Consider any special staffing competencies e.g. language	
45	Consider passports, visa requirements	
46	Consider additional insurance e.g. EHIC within EU	
47	Consider the customs and cultures of the places to be visited	
48	Ensure correct communication strategies are in place, (with appropriate dialling codes)	
49	Produce identity/contact cards for group members and adult supervisors (in the language of the country to be visited if going abroad)	
Home stays		
50	Consider the special advice given for good practice in Chapter 19 (Overseas Visits)	

Appendix 3 - emergency card

Emergency Card (Visit Leader)

This 'card' must remain with the Visit Leader at all times

In the event of an incident or accident that **does not** involve serious injury or fatality, and/or **is not** likely to attract media attention, the Visit Leader should seek advice from the school emergency contact(s). This should normally include a member of staff on the Senior Management of the school.

In the event of an incident that **does** involve serious injury or fatality, and/or **is** likely to attract media attention, the Visit Leader should adopt the following protocol:

1. Assess the situation;
2. Safeguard uninjured members of the group (including self);
3. Attend to the casualty/ies (if applicable);
4. Call emergency services (999 or appropriate local number if abroad), if appropriate.

Then:

- Contact the School Emergency Contact (see below) and seek further advice. The School Emergency Contact will request the help of the First Contact Officer (FCO)
- Contact the British Consulate / Embassy if abroad.
- If practicable, delegate party leadership to the Deputy Leader, in order that you can be contactable at all times, and to enable you to coordinate all necessary actions;
- Seek further and full details of the incident, how and why it happened so far as can be established at this stage.
- Maintain a detailed written log of all actions taken and conversations held, together with a timescale.
- Prevent group members from using telephones or mobiles, or going on-line until such time as this has been agreed by the LA.
- Refer all press, media, parental, or other enquiries to the Bedford Borough Council Communications Team on **01234 221 623**.

If you are unable to make contact with the School Emergency Contact(s), phone the First Contact Officer on **07468 472517**

This is (your name) from (your school). This is an emergency, my phone number is (give a number you can be immediately contacted back on). I am requesting help from the First Contact Officer (FCO). Give brief details of the incident.

- The **FCO** will immediately contact a Senior Education Officer, and support will be mobilised. Depending on the severity of the incident the Call Centre may call you back to reassure you that your initial call is being acted upon.
- If after 30 minutes you have no response from anyone to your initial call please phone again.

Name	Home	Mobile
Ridgeway School	01234 402402	
LA Emergency No.	07468 472517	

If the visit will be outside normal school hours:

LA Emergency Call Centre	07468 72517	
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Appendix 4 - Field File

Group leaders must take a copy of the Field File on all Visits and Journeys. It may be necessary to take further copies of elements of the Field File where the group members divide into separate subgroups for particular activities during the visit.

A copy of the Field File must be held by the local point of contact, who can be contacted 24 hours a day by the Group Leader or LA if necessary.

Contents may include the following depending on the nature and complexity of the visit:

- Bedford Borough Council Emergency Procedures and contact telephone numbers **including emergency card.**
- Personal Information and Consent Forms. *Used mainly for Visits Abroad and Residential activities or where immediate access to information is not available at the home base, for example, after school office hours*
- completed going out form and group sub-division lists (if appropriate)
- local point of contact details
- copies of all risk assessments
- photograph of each member of the group, when necessary
- a copy of contracts and relevant correspondence with independent providers, e.g. transport, accommodation, activity
- a copy of insurance details and telephone numbers, including medical emergency contacts
- Incident/Accident report forms. A copy will be available from your school office.
- the itinerary for the visit
- operating procedures for staff (arising out of risk assessments)
- a copy of passport details for each member of the group
- a copy of the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) for each member of the group
- contact numbers for the British Embassy or Consulate
- details and contact numbers for all families in home-to-home exchange visits
- list of numbers of travel documents
- the original vehicle and travel documents, certificates and driving licences when taking a vehicle abroad