Lincoln Christ's Hospital School

Educational Visits Policy

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Context

We believe that educational visits are an important part of every student's entitlement to a broad, balanced and enriching curriculum. Well-planned visits provide valuable opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom, strengthen curriculum understanding and support students' wider personal development.
At *Lincoln Christ's Hospital School*, educational visits and learning outside the classroom play an important role in creating engaging and meaningful learning experiences. The benefits of participation can include:

- Developing confidence, independence and the ability to adapt to new situations and experiences.
- Building resilience, curiosity and a willingness to embrace appropriate challenges.
- Providing opportunities for creativity, problem-solving and learning in different ways.
- Developing positive relationships and increasing trust between students, their peers and staff.
- Supporting achievement and progress across a range of curriculum areas through active and practical learning.
- Providing meaningful, real-world experiences that allow students to apply their learning in different contexts.
- Developing students' ability to recognise, assess and manage risk, helping them to become risk-aware rather than risk-averse.
- Encouraging a greater sense of personal responsibility and independence.
- Strengthening teamwork, cooperation and communication skills.
- Increasing students' appreciation, knowledge and understanding of different environments, communities and cultures.
- Developing awareness of sustainability and responsible attitudes towards the environment.
- Providing opportunities to develop physical skills and encourage active, healthy lifestyles.
- Creating memorable experiences that can raise aspirations, broaden horizons and contribute positively to students' personal and social development.

Application

This policy applies to all educational visits and activities that take place off the school site, whether they form part of the curriculum, take place during the school day, or occur outside normal school hours.
In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Lincoln Christ's Hospital School (LCHS):

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'** (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff involved in planning, leading or supporting educational visits are required to follow this policy, the Local Authority's guidance and relevant national guidance. Staff must ensure that they understand and fulfil the roles and responsibilities applicable to them, as set out within the relevant guidance.

Types of visit & approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the very local area that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day** (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**
   These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Headteacher for approval.
3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
   These follow 2. above, but the Headteacher then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Headteacher or EVC before planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

The Trips and Enrichment Abroad coordinator will support and advise colleagues in the planning and execution of trips and visits. They are the first point of contact for all visit-related matters. They will ensure Visit Leaders renew their EVOLVE Visit Leader training every three years.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is responsible for trips and visits and will therefore advise the Headteacher about new proposed trips. They will also check final visit plans, including risk assessments, on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Headteacher. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, uploads generic school documents and is required to renew their EVC training every three years.

The Headteacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE to fulfil this role.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role;
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits;

- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Headteacher will consider the following factors:

- Relevant experience;
- Previous relevant training;
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency;
- Knowledge of the students, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

A **critical incident** is any incident or situation that goes beyond the normal experience, resources or coping capacity of the Visit Leader and visit leadership team.

The school has an established emergency plan for managing critical incidents that may occur during an educational visit (see **Appendix 2**). All staff involved in educational visits must be familiar with these procedures. The emergency plan will be reviewed and tested **at least every two years**, and following any significant staffing or organisational changes.

Where an incident exceeds the school's capacity to manage effectively, involves a **serious injury or fatality**, or is likely to attract significant **media or public attention**, appropriate support and assistance will be sought from the Local Authority.

Educational visits checklist

LCHS's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities and can be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources for guidance. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

Parental consent

Consent for trips and visits taking place within the normal school day is covered by blanket consent obtained at the beginning of the year through ParentMail forms.

Consent is not legally required for activities within the very local area (within walking distance) that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. However, as a matter of courtesy to ensure that parents/carers are aware, we do ask Visit Leaders to gain consent and/or inform parents of the trip via ParentMail.

It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to check that appropriate parental/carer consent is in place for all participating students and, where consent has not been provided through the school's annual consent process at the beginning of the academic year, to obtain the necessary consent before the visit takes place. Consent information can be found at: **T drive/ Trips Evolve/ Student Consent.**

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw consent for a specific trip or visit and should contact the relevant Visit Leader.

Consent for residential trips is given by Parents/Carers when paying the deposit for the trip through ParentMail.

Where places are limited on trips, the Visit Leader should make the selection criteria for students clear on the initial parental letter which invites parents to bid for places.

Inclusion

As a minimum consideration of inclusion, it must comply with the Equality Act 2010. We are an inclusive school and, as such, will always attempt to include all students unless such inclusion would jeopardise the safety of other participants or have a potentially detrimental impact on the student. Visit leaders will consult with the EVC to attempt to mitigate the barriers to participation and to add measures that will protect the safe participation of all.

Poor behaviour and removal from trips

Poor behaviour in school may result in a student being withdrawn from a trip, with no refund provided. Where there are concerns about a student's behaviour before a trip, the Visit Leader will contact the student's parents/carers to discuss these concerns and the improvements required for the student to remain eligible to attend. Where appropriate, clear expectations and criteria for improvement will be agreed in consultation with the Progress Leader and Deputy Headteacher: Safeguarding and communicated to parents/carers. If the required improvement is not demonstrated, the student may be withdrawn from the trip.

Students are expected to follow the school's Behaviour Policy throughout all educational visits and to comply with any additional expectations or instructions set by the Visit Leader. Students attending residential visits may also be required to sign a Code of Conduct before departure. Failure to meet these expectations may result in appropriate sanctions being applied either during the visit or on return to school.

Where a student's behaviour during a trip is persistently poor, presents a significant concern, or places themselves or others at risk, the school may require the student to return home. Any additional costs associated with an early return will normally be the responsibility of the parents/carers.

Except where an immediate response is required for safety or safeguarding reasons, the Visit Leader will contact parents/carers before a decision is made to send a student home. The concerns will be clearly explained and, where appropriate, parents/carers will be informed that the student's continued participation in the trip is dependent upon an immediate and sustained improvement in behaviour. The Visit Leader should also consult an available member of Senior Leadership before contacting parents/carers and deciding for the student to return home.

First aid provision

Appropriate first aid arrangements must be in place for all educational visits, including day trips and residential visits. The level of provision should be proportionate to the nature of the visit, activities being undertaken, group needs, location and access to emergency services, and should be identified through the visit's risk assessment and first aid needs assessment.

As a minimum:

- A qualified first aider **must** attend the visit where a student has a serious underlying health condition and the need for first-aid support is identified within the student's individual risk assessment, healthcare plan or EHCP.
- An appointed person or appropriately qualified first aider(s) must be identified to take responsibility for first aid arrangements. The designated first aider **must** be a separate member of staff from the Visit Leader.
- Where the risk assessment determines that a qualified first aider is not required, an appointed person must still take responsibility for first aid arrangements, including maintaining first aid equipment and contacting emergency services where necessary.
- A suitable and appropriately stocked first aid kit must be readily available throughout the visit.
- All staff must know who is responsible for first aid, where first aid equipment is located and how to access emergency assistance.
- First aid provision must remain adequate and accessible throughout the visit, including during travel, activities and overnight stays on residential visits.
- The Visit Leader must ensure that first aid arrangements are considered as part of the planning and risk assessment process and are appropriate for the needs of the group and the activities undertaken.
- A separate, individual risk assessment must be completed for any student with an EHCP, individual healthcare plan or existing individual risk assessment, where their specific needs may present additional risks or require reasonable adjustments during the visit.

Transport

Only staff who have completed the school minibus driving test will be allowed to drive the minibus. Pre-checks on the school minibus must be carried out and recorded in the minibus log before each use.

After a period of no more than 4.5 hours of driving, a driver must immediately take a break of at least 45 minutes unless taking a rest period instead. The driving period can be continuous or made up of shorter periods totalling 4 hours 30 minutes.

A break can be split into two periods (known as split breaks): the first break period is a minimum of 15 minutes, and the following break is a minimum of 30 minutes. These breaks must be completed after 4.5 hours of driving.

Breaks of less than 15 minutes would not qualify as breaks; however, they would not be classed as driving time either.

On public transport, where staff are responsible for mitigating any risks for the students, i.e. where transport is part of the trip itself (not where parents are responsible for transport), consideration must be given to the age of the students, group size and the distance they are going to travel.

Unless such prior arrangements have been made, LCHS does not insure the driving of private motor vehicles by members of staff on school business. The use of private vehicles by members of staff on school business is not encouraged. Occasionally (in an emergency) it may be that a child/children must be transported in a member of staff's car. https://oeapng.info/16476-guidance-update-transporting-young-people-in-private-cars/

In all other transport matters, we follow National Guidance. https://oeapng.info/category/good-practice-3/transport/

Use of staff cars to transport students

If staff have business cover on their own insurance, then they can use their own vehicles to transport students. The student should always sit in the back of the vehicle, and another member of staff must always accompany the driver. This journey should only be in exceptional circumstances, and we do not recommend that a trip is organised using a member of staff's car.

Insurance

Our minibus is insured with Zurich for school trips. Trips, both in the UK and abroad, are insured with RPA.

APPENDIX 1 – SCHOOL LEARNING AREA / VERY LOCAL AREA VISITS

For any trip that is undertaken during the hours of the school day within the local area, the following protocol must be followed:

1) Ensure that all parents are informed via ParentMail of:
    a) times, transport and any changes to preparations for the school day (suitable clothing, food, etc.);
    b) any payment for this trip being voluntary (as stipulated in guidance);
    c) Any visit to a religious building where the students are requested to participate in worship.

2) **These do not need an additional risk assessment.**

Visits and activities within the School Learning Area (Very Local Area) that form part of the normal curriculum and usually take place during the normal school day will follow the operating procedures set out below.

These visits and activities:

- Are covered by the blanket parental/guardian consent obtained at the beginning of the academic year and therefore do not normally require separate parental/guardian consent.
- Do not normally require an additional visit-specific risk assessment, provided the activity falls within the scope of these operating procedures and no additional significant hazards have been identified.
- Must be recorded as a Local Area Visit on EVOLVE.
- Must be approved in accordance with the school's Educational Visits procedures before the group leaves the school site.

Boundaries

The School Learning Area covers locations within the local Lincoln area that can be accessed reasonably and safely as part of the school day. It includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- Lincoln Cathedral
- Lincoln Central Library
- Lincoln Castle
- The Collection
- Museum of Lincolnshire Life
- Lincoln city centre and surrounding public spaces
- Other local venues or areas within a reasonable walking distance of the school, where approved by the EVC.
- Lincoln Bishop University
- Lincoln University

Visits outside these boundaries, or visits involving activities that present additional or unusual risks, must be planned and approved through the school's normal Educational Visits procedures.

Potential hazards

The following are potentially significant issues and hazards within the School Learning Area:

- Road traffic
- Other people, members of the public and animals
- A student becoming lost or separated from the group
- Uneven surfaces, slips, trips and falls
- Weather conditions
- Busy pedestrian areas
- Activity-specific hazards associated with environmental or geographical fieldwork, including nettles, brambles, litter and other environmental hazards.

Operating procedures

These risks are managed through a combination of the following measures:

- The **EVC must approve before a group leaves the school site**. Visits must be recorded and approved through EVOLVE in accordance with school procedures.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise students within this environment will be permitted to lead or accompany visits.
- There will normally be a **minimum of two adults** accompanying a group. Staffing decisions should take account of the location, nature of the activity and the age, maturity, needs and behaviour of the students. Consideration should also be given to how the group would be managed safely should the sole supervising adult become incapacitated.
- Staff must be familiar with the area, including any identified 'no-go' areas, and use appropriate group-management techniques.
- Students must be briefed regarding expected standards of behaviour and the arrangements for safely crossing roads and moving through public spaces.
- For younger students, larger groups, busy or complicated routes, or routes involving narrow paths or roads without suitable footpaths, consideration should be given to having one member of staff at the front and another at the rear of the group. Both members of staff should actively monitor hazards, including traffic and members of the public. The member of staff at the rear should also monitor student behaviour. Unsafe behaviour, including running, pushing or failure to follow staff instructions, must be addressed immediately.
- Where appropriate, students must be fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group. This must include an agreed meeting point identified by the Visit Leader and reiterated by accompanying staff. Depending on the location, distance and circumstances, the designated meeting point may be the school.
- Any remotely or indirectly supervised activity within the School Learning Area must be undertaken by students in **groups of at least three**, unless a specific risk assessment identifies alternative arrangements as appropriate.
- Students' clothing and footwear must be checked for suitability before leaving the school site, taking account of the activity and anticipated weather conditions.
- Staff must be aware of relevant student medical information and ensure that any necessary medication is available and accessible throughout the visit.

- Before departure, the Visit Leader must ensure that the school office has access to an accurate list of all participating students and staff, the proposed destination/route and the anticipated time of return. This should be recorded using the school's agreed signing-out procedure and/or EVOLVE.
- Appropriate headcounts must be undertaken, including before departure from school, when leaving venues and before returning to school. Additional headcounts should be undertaken where appropriate.
- A school mobile telephone must be taken with each group, and the school office must have a record of the relevant contact number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must be provided and used where required, for example gloves or goggles during fieldwork activities.
- Staff must ensure that the school is informed promptly of any significant delay, incident or change to the planned arrangements.
- Staff and Sixth Form students must follow the school's established procedures for signing/fobbing in and out of the school site where applicable.

Sports fixtures

Sports fixtures taking place within the School Learning Area are considered Local Area Visits and should therefore follow the same operating procedures outlined above.
In addition:

- Parents/guardians must be provided with appropriate information regarding the dates and times of fixtures and after-school sporting activities. Where fixture lists are published in advance, any subsequent changes should be communicated to parents/guardians as soon as reasonably practicable. This may be done through ParentMail or ClassCharts.
- Team lists should be prepared in advance and communicated appropriately to students, parents/guardians and relevant staff.
- Where a fixture is expected to return after the school reception or main office has closed, the Visit Leader must have access to relevant student information, including medical needs and parent/guardian emergency contact details. Where available, the appropriate EVOLVE functionality or internal communications, should be used to generate this information securely.
- Where coach travel is used, staff must follow the school's relevant operating procedures for coach travel.
- Where a school minibus is used, staff must comply with the school's minibus procedures, relevant local authority guidance and the applicable generic risk assessment.

Additional hazards associated with sports fixtures

Potentially significant hazards include:

- Injury to participants;
- Inadequate supervision resulting in injury;
- A student becoming lost or separated from the group;
- Inadequate supervision of spectators or changing facilities;
- Transport-related risks.
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These risks should be managed through appropriate arrangements between LCHS staff and, where relevant, staff from the host school or venue. This should include ensuring that:

- Matches and activities are overseen by appropriately qualified, competent or experienced staff, coaches, officials or volunteers;
- Appropriate first-aid provision is available throughout the fixture. Either direct through LCHS, the organiser or venue;
- Arrangements are in place for a member of staff be available to accompany an injured student to hospital where necessary, without leaving the remaining students inadequately supervised;
- Headcounts are completed before departure from school or the host venue and at other appropriate points during the visit;
- Students remain under the responsibility of school staff until they have been collected, dismissed in accordance with agreed arrangements, or returned to school;
- Where a parent/guardian wishes to take their child home directly from a fixture rather than using the planned return transport, this must be agreed with the member of staff responsible for the fixture. Students must not leave with another adult unless appropriate prior permission has been provided by their parent/guardian;
- Any accident, injury, safeguarding concern or significant incident arising during the fixture is reported and recorded in accordance with the school's established procedures.

APPENDIX 2 – EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

The following procedure must be followed in the event of an accident, injury or significant incident during an educational visit.

Immediate response

1. The Visit Leader must ensure the immediate safety of the group and arrange appropriate first aid or medical assistance. 999/112 should be contacted immediately where emergency assistance is required.
2. There must be a nominated emergency base contact for every visit. During normal school hours this will be Main Reception; outside normal school hours, the agreed emergency contact arrangements for the visit must be followed.
3. The Visit Leader must ensure that the school and EVC are informed of any significant accident or incident as soon as reasonably practicable. If the EVC is unavailable, the nominated delegate or appropriate member of SLT should be contacted.
4. Parents/carers should be informed of an accident or injury where appropriate. For serious incidents, communication with parents/carers should be coordinated with the school's emergency contact/SLT.

Recording accidents and injuries

5. Student injuries and first aid: Any first aid administered during a visit must be recorded. A First Aid Record Slip should be completed where available and the details added to the school's first aid record on return. Where the member of staff does not have access to the record, the information must be passed to the member of staff responsible for maintaining it.
6. Staff injuries: Any injury to a member of staff must be reported and recorded in the school's accident book at Main Reception on return. Serious injuries must be reported to school immediately.

7. Treatment provided or recorded by an external venue or medical provider does not remove the requirement for the school to maintain its own record of the incident.

Serious or critical incidents

8. The Visit Leader and emergency base contact should request Local Authority support where an incident:
    - overwhelms the school's emergency response capability;
    - involves serious injury or fatality; or
    - is likely to attract significant media or public attention.
9. For visits outside the Very Local Area, the Visit Leader must carry either the LA Emergency Card available through EVOLVE Resources or the OEAP National Guidance Emergency Action Card.

Following any significant incident, the Visit Leader must ensure that the EVC has been informed and all required accident/first aid records have been completed. The EVC and SLT will determine whether any further reporting, investigation or review of the visit risk assessment is required.