



ALTRINCHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Educational Visits Policy

This policy applies to Altrincham Preparatory School including its Early Years Foundation Stage

Author:	Mrs Emma Knighton - Educational Visits Coordinator
Responsible Person:	Mr Nick Vernon - Headmaster
Date of last review:	September 2025
Summary of changes:	Change of staff
Date of next review:	September 2026

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Altrincham Preparatory School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy.

Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (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 onto the [Educational Visits Form](#) by the visit leader, along with a trip specific [Risk Assessment](#) and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits them to the Headmaster for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
These follow 2. above, but the Headmaster then submits the visit to the Governors for approval.

See **Appendix 3 - Visits Process Flow Chart** for the steps to follow when planning visits.

Roles and responsibilities

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Emma Knighton, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters and will check final visit plans before submitting them to the Headmaster. The EVC has oversight of all visits being taken by the school.

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these onto the forms named above. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Headmaster or EVC prior to 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 Headmaster has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the Governors for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. They should ensure that all steps of the Policy have been followed and are responsible for the final approval 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 visit leader 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 Headmaster will take into account 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 pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Governors.

Educational Visits Checklist

The National Guidance [Visit Leader Checklist](#) forms part of the school risk management process for visits and off-site activities. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

For boys from Reception to Year 6, the school obtains blanket consent at point of entry for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, walking between sites and non-adventurous visits carried out within the school day.

For children in Nursery and Pre-school written consent is obtained for every visit undertaken by the boys.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits, such as residential trips, overseas visits or those involving adventurous activity. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (such as letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy, we are committed to providing a teaching environment conducive to learning. Each boy is valued, respected and challenged regardless of religion, background, culture, disability or financial circumstances.

Transport

The school minibuses are regularly driven to take pupils to swimming lessons, games / PE lessons, off-site sports fixtures and between school sites. They are also occasionally used for educational visits for small groups. They are only driven by Nigel Birch and Andrew Lingley, who are fully licenced and insured.

For educational visits outside of these parameters, a coach company is used, with their risk assessments checked and followed.

Insurance

The school's combined insurance covers all visits taken within the country. An additional travel insurance policy is taken out by the school for overseas visits and residentials.

Commented [GU1]: The buses are sometimes used for educational visits so I would also include that.

Commented [AS2R1]: The minibuses? I'll add that in if needed. I'm trying to think when that happens though!

Commented [DB3R1]: When the boys did the Indian cooking class Nige and Lingers took them and picked them up. We've possibly used them more at Prep when doing local trips. Perhaps include a line after the coach blurb that says something like "However, the School minibuses may be used occasionally for educational visits." It just covers us if we do end up using them.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- should be recorded on a [Risk Assessment](#) if regular, eg driving to swimming lessons, walking between sites.

Boundaries

The School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- The 3 school buildings – Bank Place, Highbury and Marlborough Road
- Bell Field
- Forest School area / Outdoor classroom
- Bowdon Cricket Club
- Altrincham Leisure Centre

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by ensuring:

- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC.
- Staffing ratios must always be confirmed with the EVC and Headmaster before the trip takes place.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Where appropriate, parents are reminded of the need for specific clothing and footwear.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- At least one mobile phone is taken with each group, but in most cases two, and the office have a note of the numbers.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)
- **PLUS**
 - When walking between sites, the three pedestrian crossings at the Stamford Road / Ashley Road / Marlborough Road junctions must be used.
 - If more than one class is walking together, the crossings must be used by one class at a time.
 - The group should reconvene to complete the journey once all classes have crossed all three roads.

Commented [GU4]: I would say swimming lessons require a separate risk assessment

Commented [AS5R4]: Agreed. Sorry, this was about travel to/from swimming lessons, which I've added in to make it more clear. Do Andrew and Nigel have a risk assessment for the actual lessons?

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the Prep Leadership Team (PLT) or will be able to contact a member of PLT at all times.
3. For all activities, the trip leader, the EVC and PLT will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the trip leader, the EVC and a member of the PLT will hold emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the Governors in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry a mobile phone and, in most cases, a second mobile phone will also be taken. The office will have a note of the numbers.

Appendix 3 - Visit Process Flow Chart

