



Educational Trips and Visits Policy

May 2024



Educational Trips and Visits Policy

Overview

The Staff and Governors of Watling Academy acknowledge the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people, and fully support and encourage those that are well planned and managed.

This document provides concise and supportive guidance for the planning and management of off-site visits and related activities. It is available electronically on the school's Shared Drive and on 'EVOLVE', along with a number of other supporting documents.

All visits and 'Learning outside the classroom' (LOtC) activities will be planned in such a way as to ensure that the benefits and intended learning outcomes are clearly identified and understood by the supervising adults beforehand and can form the basis for objective evaluation afterwards.

Watling Academy uses the online system, 'EVOLVE', to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own 'EVOLVE' account, which is set up by the school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Arrangements and considerations for all visits and LOtC activities will be recorded, either on 'EVOLVE', by means of standard operating procedures using generic risk assessments, or in standard lesson plan format, as deemed most appropriate by the Headteacher in order to minimise the associated bureaucracy.

Scope and Remit

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements their employer's guidance. This policy relates to Educational Trips and Visits at Watling Academy, and it is the expectation that all staff will follow its requirements.

This policy applies to all members of establishment staff, and other adults associated with Watling Academy who take responsibility for children and young people participating in learning and recreational activities in environments that are different from where the young people are usually based. It therefore applies when organising and supervising children and young people taking part in off-site activities and visits, as well as when taking part in on-site activities outdoors.

This policy provides the key reference for sound planning for learning and recreational activities that involve taking groups of children and young people away from their usual operational base. Watling Academy encourages all forms of educational visits including Curricular, Extra Curricular and Sporting Fixtures/Competitions. It should be implemented when using places such as:

- the establishment's own grounds
- the local environment
- places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres, Sports venues and museums etc.
- residential venues
- learning ventures abroad

and involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC);
- facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base.

Staff must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

Guidance

This policy and the responsibilities of the individuals identified is detailed in line with National Guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel (OEAP), DfE document 'Health and Safety on Educational Visits' (Nov 2018) along with support from EVASSA EVOLVE Ltd.

Roles and Responsibilities

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), health and safety responsibilities lie with the employer. This might be a Local Authority (LA) or Governing Body or an Academy Trust. An employer has the legal responsibility to carry out the duties imposed by the Act. However, employers can delegate the tasks necessary to discharge these duties, even though the overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the employer.

At Watling Academy, the tasks of scrutinising and approving arrangements for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities are delegated to the Headteacher of the school.

Headteacher

The Headteacher may choose to further delegate the tasks of scrutinising and approving Offsite Visits and LOtC activities to another member of the senior leadership team (SLT) in which case, the name and position of the person(s) to whom these tasks have been delegated will be clearly included in this policy document.

The Headteacher will ensure that: -

- All off-site visits and LOtC activities comply with employer guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required;
- All staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they may be allocated;
- There is a clearly defined EVC and that person meets employer requirements, including undertaking EVC Training, as required by their employer's policy;

- If taking part in the visit or activity as either an Assistant Leader or as a group member, s/he is clear about his/her role and that s/he should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader (who will have sole charge of the visit);
- Suitable safeguarding procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. Where access to the young people is regular or significant, DBS checks must be in place as required;
- S/he is assured that the EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated;
- Sufficient time is assigned for staff to organise visits properly;
- A culture of apprenticeship / succession planning, to ensure sustainable visits and the development of competent visit leaders and EVCs, is supported within the school;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visit information has been shared with parents in a timely manner and that consent has been sought where necessary;
- In Exceptional circumstances, at the Headteacher's discretion, a decision may be made that a student may not attend a trip or visit. This decision would normally be made before confirming a place but could also be made once a place has been confirmed on the trip.
Examples of exceptional circumstances could be:-
 - A serious safeguarding concern
 - A serious or persistent breach of the school's behaviour policy
- Arrangements are made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff;
- Inclusion issues are addressed;
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- Details related to the visit (including person details of both participants staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident (*this can be achieved via the "Other Users allowed to view visit" function when identifying Staffing on EVOLVE*);
- That there are contingency plans in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled (Plan B);
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as are required by the establishment visit policy;
- Staff are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- Establishment visit policy should identify the types of visit that require a preliminary visit (see **Approval of Visits**);
- All visits will be recorded on EVOLVE either using the standard Visit Form;
- Where the activities or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been sought; national schemes e.g. LOfC Quality Badge, AALA licence, Adventuremark, or a clear Provider Statement, are recognised in keeping with HCC's recommendations and make further seeking of provider assurances unnecessary;
- All visits are evaluated on EVOLVE with regard to how closely they met intended outcomes, teaching and learning, quality of experience(s) and best value, together with addressing issues raised by any serious incident and to inform the operation of future visits;
- The establishment visit policy includes appropriate emergency procedures in case of a major incident (see **Emergency Procedures**);
- The establishment visit policy includes a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident (see **Emergency Procedures**);
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) Watling Academy

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To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, Watling Academy, has a specifically designated EVC, who supports the Headteacher with decisions about arrangements for offsite visits

The EVC will: -

- Be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment. At Watling Academy, the EVC will be identified as a person on the leadership team.
- Attend training, and update training, as required by their employer.
- Support the Headteacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions.
- Ensure that a policy is in place for offsite visits and LOtC activities, that it is updated as necessary, and is readily available to staff, (e.g. via EVOLVE) and that procedures should aim to minimise bureaucracy, taking full advantage of any national schemes that provide assurances regarding safety and quality of provision.(e.g. there should be no need to seek assurances from adventure activity providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge, or a current AALA Licence, or Adventuremark)
- Have an appreciation of the value of LOtC and educational visits
- Ensure offsite and LOtC activities meet employer guidance requirements
- Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that employers' guidance and the school's procedures are properly understood.
- Ensure offsite activities must be led by competent leaders and that assistant supervisors are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders, including voluntary helpers.
- Support the Headteacher with approval and other decisions.
- Monitor visit planning and arrange for sample monitoring in the field as appropriate.
- Ensure that safeguarding issues are addressed and that they have paid due regard to the Trust Safeguarding Policy;
- Provide sufficient guidance to visit and activity leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include emergency contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated (this process may require the reporting of accidents and incidents) and that any "lessons learned" are recorded for future reference.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

Visit Leaders

The Visit/Activity Leader will: -

- Have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. S/he must be an employee and not a volunteer.
- Be competent to take on such responsibilities and tasks as may be allocated or required for the duration of the visit/activity and be formally approved to do so.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management. This establishment sees it as good practice to involve all participating staff in the planning and risk management process for any given

offsite visit or LOtC activity to ensure wider understanding. It is also seen as good practice to involve young people in these processes wherever appropriate;

- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and appoint a deputy wherever possible;
- Ensure that where any accompanying staff includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management;
- Ensure that safeguarding issues are addressed and that they have paid due regard to the Trust Safeguarding Policy;
- Collate, make available and disseminate relevant information to supporting staff, parents, and young people as appropriate
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level;
- Arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate;
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event;
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
 1. the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour, and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities.
 2. the nature, location, and duration of the activity.
- Ensure the visit is effectively supervised; the overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying establishment staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run an activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk;
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Have attended either Watling Academy Visit Leader Training..

Student

The student will: -

- Facilitate the communication of information between the Academy and home where appropriate.
- Be aware of the risk assessments
- Know who their supervisor is at any given time and know how to alert him/her if someone is missing or in difficulties.
- Understand the need to have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated.
- Understand and meet the Academy's expected standards of behaviour both before and whilst on the trip.
- Be aware that poor behaviour before the trip may result in a student not being able to participate in the trip.
- Uphold the rules and expectations of the Academy at all times

Parent/Guardians

The Parent/Guardians will: -

- Carefully read all information regarding the proposed visit before giving consent.
- Work with appropriate contacts at the Academy to agree an action plan in respect of reasonable adjustments if necessary, for a disabled student to take part in a trip.
- Provide up to date medical and emergency contact details, informing the Academy in writing of any changes before the visit commences.
- Make all payments by the deadlines provided, taking note where payments are non- refundable.
- Inform the Academy immediately if their child has to pull out of the trip for any reason, honouring any outstanding commitments to further payments.
- Arrange to collect the student promptly at the end of the trip unless alternative arrangements

have been agreed with the Academy.

Member of Local Governing Board

There will be a member of the School's Local Governing Board who is designated as specifically responsible for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities.

This person's role is to "enable and ensure" by acting as a "critical friend".

S/he will ensure that: -

- S/he has an understanding of how outdoor learning supports a wide range of learning outcomes;
- S/he has access to employer guidance as well as establishment policy, and a training package to support it;
- This policy clarifies his/her involvement in the visit approval process (*see **Approval of Visits***);
- There is an EVC in place as defined in this policy document
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements;
- Watling Academy's policy supports the principles of inclusion;
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

Competence

Competence is a combination of skills, knowledge, awareness, judgement, training, and experience.

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants.

Consideration will be given to the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

- a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (check Visit History / Awards & Training on 'EVOLVE').
- b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?
- c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?
- d) Is the leader an employee at the establishment (*see above*)?
- e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?
- f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision-making abilities?
- g) What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?
- h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?
- i) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?
- j) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications, especially if leading adventurous activities?
- k) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

Watling Academy operates a process of apprenticeship and succession for all staff likely to be involved in organising, leading or accompanying offsite visits and LOtC activities.

The school undertakes to ensure that all such staff, will undergo an induction process that typically entails some form of in-house visit leader awareness training and access to (and training where required) the establishment's 'EVOLVE' site. Other than in exceptional and specific circumstances, the member of staff should have practical experience of accompanying visits and LOtC activities *before* being tasked with leading a visit for themselves.

Planning

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, based on STAGED: - Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.

Risk Assessment

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the 'EVOLVE' visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes or attachments.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question: *'What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?'* It should focus on those issues that are specific to the individual event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event. Significant issues must be recorded on 'EVOLVE', either notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is relevant to the needs of the group.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity.

Use of generic risk assessments

Watling Academy has a defined Risk Assessment template for trips, which will be used in every case of an LoTC or educational visit. For activities taking place within a trip additional resources are available in Word format from the Guidance Policies and Documents pages in the Resources section of 'EVOLVE'.

Whilst not exhaustive, the control measures contained within this selection are probably sufficient to cover most eventualities likely to be encountered in the course of most offsite visits and LoTC activities.

Plan B

Alternative arrangements should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical, or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

Where appropriate, all alternative activities should be fully considered and risk assessed beforehand.

Home Contacts

- All trips and visits that occur beyond the timetabled day (School closes to students at 4:30pm) will have a home contact from the Leadership Team who will follow the guidelines laid out in the 'Trips and visits: Roles and responsibilities while on the trip: quick summary' document.
- All trips and visits will also be issued with Grave Emergency Contacts (GEC) as per the Grave Emergency Guidelines Booklet.

Seeking Assurances from Provider

National Guidance provides the Provider Statement form to help provide an audit trail for arrangements and checks if required.

Many providers have websites and offer information packs which contain the sorts of information asked for on this form, including a Safety Management statement, so it may not be necessary to use one.

The Provider Statement is a generic form, for use for all kinds of provider, so if one is sent to a provider, it should be specified that they only need to complete the parts applicable to them/their services.

Once a Provider Statement form has been received, signed, and dated by a manager or person in authority, it is not always necessary to send a new one to the same provider each time you use them. It is sufficient to annotate the existing form already held by the establishment to show the school has checked back with the provider and that there have been no major or significant changes since the form was originally signed; this will not apply if the time interval is not more than 12 months.

To reduce bureaucracy for both Visit Leaders and Providers, leaders should take advantage of national schemes e.g. **LOtC Quality Badge, AALA Licence and 'Adventuremark'** that have been established to eliminate the need for additional questionnaires and forms

Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of Health and Safety, and Visit Leaders. The LOtC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.

Preliminary Visits

Wherever reasonably possible, it is good practice for the Visit Leader to make a preliminary visit to a venue or provider beforehand in order for them to familiarise themselves with the layout and surroundings, and any site-specific procedures or issues which may have an impact on the visit or members of the group.

Within the UK, highest priority for preliminary visits will be where no serving member of staff from the establishment has visited before, then when the Visit Leader has no experience of the venue/activity.

For overseas visits, advantage should be taken of any offers by tour operators for "leaders' orientation"-type visits.

Staff/Students

It is good practice to outline the reasons for specific aspects of planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so, participants will make more informed decisions, and will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

Outcomes

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Up to four 'intended' outcomes may be recorded on 'EVOLVE' during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.

Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas, and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including:

- **R**elationships
- **E**moional & spiritual
- **C**ross curricular and Careers
- **I**ndividual
- **T**eamwork
- **E**nvironmental

Preparatory work could take place in advance of the visit if this is deemed appropriate. This, in conjunction with activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow-up work.

'High Quality Outdoor Learning' can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place.

Staffing and Supervision

We will ensure there is an **appropriate level of supervision at all times** for all visits and that such supervision is 'effective'. This must have been approved by the EVC and Headteacher and, where applicable, in accordance with Governing Body policy.

For all visits the visit leader, EVC and Headteacher will make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;
- the contingency or 'Plan B' options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Staff and volunteers who work *frequently* or *intensively* with or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process. For the purpose of this policy:

- 'frequently' is defined as 'once a week or more'.
- 'intensively' is defined as 3 times in a 30 day period or overnight (2am - 6am).

While each visit will be assessed to identify the appropriate levels of supervision, here are some examples of the **minimum** level of supervision for Educational Trips and Visits at Watling Academy:

Non-Adventurous Day Visits within the UK - Adult to student ratio: One staff member for every 15-20 students (minimum two adults; unless it is a very small group and has been agreed by the Headteacher). Where appropriate the designated trip leader will be additional to the ratio outlined above.

All Adventurous Activities (residential and non-residential) and Overseas & Residential visits - Adult to student ratio is dependent on the activity, but should be a minimum of 1:12, and must be checked and agreed with the Academy's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and Headteacher. It should normally be a minimum of two adults; if it is a mixed party there should be a minimum of one male and one female teacher.

Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Award Expeditions - As a minimum, this will follow the guidance of 1:12, but will also follow DfE Guidance and our Direct Licence Centre Agreement.

Remote Supervision

Young people must be supervised throughout all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision.

'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits, and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken. This should be included with a trips risk assessments.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff;
- the emergency systems in place.

Use of Voluntary Helpers

The use of parents and other adults with a clear association with the establishment, as helpers or supervisors on offsite visits or LOtC activities, is seen as a valuable means of encouraging or maintaining closer links with the local community and accessing a wider set of skills and experience than may exist amongst the school's staff.

Such volunteers will need to understand and consent to the fact that they will be answerable to the visit/activity leader.

It is a fact that a volunteer will not be accountable through a legalistic audit trail (as would exist were their involvement based on a contractual relationship) and is therefore the case that a volunteer helper cannot be appointed as a Visit Leader.

It is good practice that all adult helpers and volunteers are subject to DBS checking; however, this may not be required where there is no possibility for unsupervised direct contact exists.

Clear DBS checks must have been returned before a volunteer adult helper may participate in a residential visit or activity.

Emergency Procedures

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of, and adhere to, Watling Academy's policy on emergency procedures.

The School maintains a number of mobile 'phones specifically for use during offsite visits which should have all relevant contact details pre-programmed into them. It is each Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure these 'phones have:

- the correct details programmed into them beforehand;
- fully-charged batteries (and chargers available if necessary)
- where appropriate that sufficient credit available for the duration of the visit

For all "out of hours" and residential visits there will be a member of the Leadership Team that can provide 24/7 cover as an Emergency Contact and that the person(s) so nominated will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit. This will include medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff as well as young people.

Consideration will be given to the following:

- Criteria for identifying the nominated Emergency Contact(s)
- Is more than one Emergency Contact required?
- Procedure for lodging visit plans to enable them to be accessed in the event of an emergency?
- Have procedures been tested?
- Is it possible to demonstrate a proactive response, to any pattern that can be recognised within incidents?

Visit Leaders should also keep with them a student/staff information and emergency contacts pack, which also contains medical and next-of-kin information for all staff and students on the trip.

All Visit Leaders should have a copy of the Watling Academy Grave Emergency Booklet along with contact details of their Leadership Team Emergency contact.

First Aid

A qualified First Aider should accompany any offsite visit or LOtC activity. First aid issues for any LOtC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is “appropriate” will be determined by:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times, including during coach and minibus travel. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- Know how to access qualified first aid support.
- Have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation that requires those leading such activities to hold a current first aid “qualification”.

It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

Approval of Visits

Approval is delegated to the Headteacher for all visits.

However Watling Academy notifies and accesses specialist support at EVASSA EVOLVE for the following types of trip: -

- Overseas (anywhere that involves crossing a substantial area of open sea, including Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides and the Channel Islands)
- Those involving one or more adventurous activities to be led by a member of establishment staff.
- *Other visit types e.g. Residential visits and /or adventurous activities led by a provider*

The process for approval has six stages:

1. Visit/activity proposed by Visit Leader;
2. Headteacher approves trip in principle;
3. Visit/activity planned in detail by trip leader and accompanying colleagues and posted on EVOLVE;
4. Arrangements scrutinised by EVC until satisfied to recommend approval;
5. Arrangements re-scrutinised by Headteacher and, when satisfied, approved;
6. Final trip sign-off by Headteacher on the day before or day of the trip.

An offsite visit or LOtC activity should not proceed without clear evidence of approval.

Additional monitoring

In its evaluation of LOtC, “How far should you go”- 2008, Ofsted recommends that it is good practice to sample monitor offsite visits and LOtC activities by means of field visits.

From time to time the EVC may recommend, or the Head/Governors/Employer may decide to, sample monitoring by field visit as an additional means of ensuring safety of participants and quality of provision.

Consent

Section 35 of the Education Act 2004 states: “Where a visit is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time, then parental consent is not necessary although it is recommended good practice to ensure that parents are informed”.

For visits at Watling Academy, consent will be obtained on an individual visit basis. Information provided to parents prior to granting consent should include full details of the activities and any other significant information.

Insurance

Advice regarding insurance must be sought from the Operations Manager before the trip has been approved. Watling Academy uses the DfE Risk Protection Arrangement but consideration must be given to whether additional insurance should be taken out. The establishment should particularly consider the need for additional insurance for residential activities, or those involving adventurous activities or hazardous environments.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid GHIC or EHIC (Global/ European Health Insurance Card). See [Healthcare for UK nationals visiting the EU - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-and-pensions/about-us/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-the-eu)

Inclusion

Watling Academy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification.

Visit Leaders are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises.

It is also the case that the adjustments made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and normal work practices.

Codes of Behavioural Conduct

Watling Academy encourages the use of codes of behavioural conduct as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young persons' behaviour. Students will be expected to demonstrate the highest standards of respect, responsibility and kindness at all times. Such codes need to be explained to both the young people and those in a position of parental support before the visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where the code is breached.

As part of encouraging social responsibility, young people should be encouraged to sign up to a "behavioural contract" for all residential visits.

As part of the request for consent, parents should sign and accept responsibility for removing young people in prescribed circumstances.

Further examples can be found under 'Resources' on 'EVOLVE'

Weather, Clothing & Survival

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

It is expected practice for non-adventurous activities taking place during the school day that the Academy uniform is worn by students in Years 7 to 11. However, this may be reviewed as part of the risk assessment and approval process to decide if this is appropriate.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;
- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

Charging/funding for trips and visits

All trips and visits should comply with the Governors' Charging Policy. It is the trip leader's responsibility to ensure that the trip is financially viable, and enough time must be allowed for participants to pay.

Trips and visits during the school day may involve a voluntary contribution from parents/carers, this contribution will cover the costs of providing this offsite activity, such as transport, entrance fees and insurance. No child will be excluded from a trip if their parents/carers are unable to contribute but in the event we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may have to make the difficult decision that the trip cannot go ahead. In the event of financial hardship, parents/carers will have the opportunity to contact the school confidentially to discuss the possibility of additional support.

Alcohol/Tobacco

No student should be given permission to consume alcohol or tobacco during an official Academy trip or visit. **Under no circumstances should any member of staff consume alcohol while on an Academy trip or visit.**

Staff with Children

Staff with a supervisory role on an Academy trip are not permitted to take their children unless they are already students at the Academy who would have been going on the trip.

Transport

Private Cars

Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Headteacher (or their nominated delegate), and Private Car or Volunteer Driver form (see 'Resources' pages on EVOLVE) must be completed and retained by the establishment on an annual basis. All students and staff must wear seatbelts correctly at all times when travelling by car.

Coaches

Whilst UK legislation ensures that coach companies are fit for public use, the facilities available on coaches may vary. Liaising with other establishments that have used a particular company (via a search on 'EVOLVE') will help to determine the level of service that may be provided. All students and staff must wear seatbelts correctly at all times when travelling by coach.

Minibuses

Establishments that own or hire a minibus must have an operational policy in place for this. Watling Academy's has developed its own Minibus policy. All students and staff must wear seatbelts correctly at all times when travelling by minibus.

For further information, see also:

- *MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) via [Community Transport Association UK](#). This also contains information on PCV licences, weight limits and towing.*

Public Transport

Watling Academy recognises the social and environmental benefits of travelling by public transport and encourages its use wherever feasible

For public transport within the Greater London area contact '[Transport for London](#),

When travelling with a school group on the London Underground, London Overground or the Elizabeth line, Visit Leaders should speak to a member of staff at the gateline before starting their journey.

TfL staff can confirm the planned route and contact the destination, and any interchange stations, to check there are staff available to help as part of their [Turn-up-and-go assistance service](#). This will help ensure the journey goes smoothly and provides the reassurance of having a member of TfL staff available to support the group if required. It is also helpful for TfL station teams to know that a school group is on the way, especially at popular stations/locations e.g. Kew Gardens, South Kensington.

Walking

When walking: -

- Staff and students must follow the green cross code.
- As a large group a member of staff should be at the front and the rear of the party.

- Wherever possible the crossing of roads should be avoided, where this is not possible a suitable crossing point should be determined by the members of staff who must supervise the students as they cross.

Appendices: -

- **Swimming**
- **Sports & PE Fixtures Procedure**
- **Sports and PE Fixture Risk Assessment**

Appendix 1 - Swimming

Watling Academy acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

Swimming pools (life-guarded)

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For swimming lessons, organising school staff should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.
- Unless suitably qualified, the school's staff will not usually have responsibility for life-guarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.

As part of a wider visit

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Visit Leaders should give particular consideration to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

Hotel (and other) swimming pools

Visit Leaders should check the life-guarding position in advance.

For life-guarded public pools abroad, the school's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.

If life-guarding arrangements are not provided at the pool then the visit leader will bear the full responsibility for ensuring swimming safety.

Staff must be aware of the procedures in the event of an emergency, and who at the venue will provide back up. Staff should also know if they have exclusive use of the pool, as other pool users may increase the supervision role of your lifeguard.

Open water swimming

Should be offered as part of a facilitated programme of supervised activities offered by an appropriately accredited provider.

Appendix 2 – Watling Academy Sports & PE Fixtures Procedure

Watling Academy Sports and PE Fixtures Procedure

General

Sports fixtures which take place at another school and are either in or out of school time follow the Operating Procedure below.

These fixtures:

- should be recorded on the shared calendar detailing Sport, Age group, Lead Teacher, timings and student list.
- require informed parental consent.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments/notes other than following the Operating Procedures below.
- are organised and run by a qualified teacher/competent employee of the school.

Locations

Sports and PE fixtures primarily take place at schools and locations listed below. These include, but are not limited to, the following frequently visited venues: e.g.

- The Radcliffe School
- Shenley Brook End School
- Lord Grey School
- St. Paul's Catholic School
- Denbigh School
- Hazeley Academy
- Walton High School
- Ousedale School
- Oakgrove School
- Sir Herbert Leon Academy
- Milton Keynes Academy
- Stantonbury International School
- The Webber Independent School

Exclusions

This policy does not include sporting events which fall under our main Educational Visits Policy, such as:

- Sports Tours – if overnight
- Tournaments – if overnight or adventurous
- Fixtures or Competitions taking place at a public venue

Standard Operating Procedures for Sports and PE Fixtures

Our standard Watling Academy Risk Assessment covers potentially significant issues/hazards for consideration with Sports and PE Fixtures, such as:

Road traffic, other people, losing a pupil, uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls, weather conditions, issues related to the actual sporting activities being practiced, travel by minibus.

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- There is an acknowledgement from the EVC – Assistant Headteacher that the fixture is taking place.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure for 'Sports and PE Fixtures' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, consent is obtained.
- Minibuses are well-maintained and driven by approved, competent drivers who hold the relevant licences, qualifications, and experience
- There will always be at least one member of staff leading sports and PE fixtures, but if possible or where deemed necessary there may be additional staff allocated.
- Supervising staff are familiar with the locations and are practised in appropriate group management techniques.
- Supervising staff are fully aware of the procedure to follow in the event of an injury to a student, particularly if a hospital visit is necessary.
- There will be a designated Emergency Contact who:
 - is member of school staff not participating in the event,
 - is aware of this designation and its duration,
 - should be "stood down" by the appropriate member of supervising staff once all duties of care have been concluded.
- A mobile 'phone is taken with each group and the office / Emergency Contact has the number.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do should they become separated from the group.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear / sports kit is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Supervising staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available
- Supervising staff leave a completed 'Signing out' sheet with the office which includes names and contact details of all attendees.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, facemasks, bag for waste, tissues, etc.)

- Where pupils are travelling by car, NG 4.5c Transport in private cars and school policy will be adhered to.
- Where parent-arranged transport is used, responsibilities between school, parents, and drivers in relation to how this is organised are transparent and clearly understood by all concerned.
- Prior to the fixture parents/carers will be made aware of the return/collection time. The fixtures lead teacher will remain onsite until all students have been collected or safely departed the school site.
- The school will ensure no lone-working or 1:1 situations arise with dismissal unless by prior arrangement The school site remains open until 9pm and there will be additional support available to the lead teacher. Supervising staff will have designated Emergency Contacts have parents' contact numbers available.

Sporting fixtures minimum staffing

Adult to student ratio: One staff member to every 15-20 students (two adults recommended). Consideration should be given to taking two adults dependent on if a mixed party, distance involved and nature of activity.

Preparation to arrange fixtures at Watling Academy:

In preparation to arrange fixtures there must be:

- A list of approved staff to lead PE fixtures. This list must be maintained by Head of PE and EVC. It should be accessible for the EVC, Head of PE and Admin Team.

The above list should also include:

- Staff who are approved and competent to drive a minibus.
 - Staff with a current first aid qualification.
- Operating procedure for Sports and PE fixtures should be explained to parents/carers when their child joins the school.

PE Fixture Process

When?	What?	Who?
At least 8 days before	1) Fixture confirmed with opposition school 2) Calendar event made on Outlook detailing information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue • Sport • Age group • Teacher Leading • KO time • Collection time • Team list INVITE TO: School Calendar – schoolcalendar@watling.academy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher leading fixture 	RWN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin - VSR • Minibus bookings • Health & Wellbeing Lead - NCR • EVC – Assistant Headteacher <p>3) Team Sheet placed up on fixture board at Sportshall</p>	
At least a Week Before	Parent Mail invites sent out to parents for permission for fixture	Admin
2 days Before	Check parent mail for permissions and get subs/additions of students if needed	Admin Lead Teacher
On the Day	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Take first aid kit, including a copy of the grave emergency information. 2) Print and physically take list of permissions with emergency contact info and medical info – This will be in reception waiting to collect. Check student medication prior to departure. 3) TRIP PHONE 4) Check Registers. A copy of the completed register must be left at reception 5) Take appropriate equipment and ensure students have appropriate equipment/clothing if needed. <p>*** Where appropriate students are fully briefed about what they should do if they become separated from the group.</p>	Lead Teacher
After Fixture	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Class chart House Caps for players 2) Scores recorded on main PE spreadsheet 3) Scores emailed to S Green at Oakgrove 	Staff leading Fixture/ RWN

To note if Fixture/Tournament is NOT being held at a school or sports venue site: It is a TRIP not a fixture so please revert to Trips Process and use Evolve

Approval and Review

Approved by: Local School Board

Review Date: May 2025