

# Rougemont School

Educational Visits  
Policy

2023-2024



# Policy for Educational Visits at Rougemont School

## Introduction

At Rougemont School, we recognise the immense educational value of Off-Site Visits, and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOC) experiences. These activities offer pupils unique opportunities for personal development, academic enrichment and a deeper connection with their environment. This policy outlines the guidelines, procedures, and safety measures to ensure the successful implementation of such activities in compliance with the National Guidance provided by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP), Department for Education requirements, and Welsh Assembly Government requirements.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for planning, risk assessment, and supervision of off-site visits and LOC activities and comply with the National Guidance from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) to ensure the highest standards of safety and educational value.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, and volunteers involved in off-site visits or LOC activities organised by or on behalf of Rougemont School.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It also sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

This policy applies to activities taking place within and outside of normal school hours, including weekends and holiday periods. It includes, but is not limited to:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to places such as museums and other cultural and educational institutions
- Sporting activities
- Adventurous and recreational activities
- Residential trips organised by the school
- Trips abroad organised by the school

## National Guidance, Department for Education, and Welsh Assembly Government Requirements

OEAP National Guidance: Rougemont School fully embraces and adheres to the National Guidance provided by the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) for the planning, execution, and evaluation of off-site visits and LOC

activities. All staff involved in these activities must be familiar with the OEAP guidelines. <https://oeapng.info/about-national-guidance/>

Department for Education Requirements: The school will comply with all relevant Department for Education requirements concerning the provision of off-site visits for educational purposes.

Welsh Assembly Government Requirements: For activities taking place in Wales, Rougemont School will follow all requirements set out by the Welsh Assembly Government, ensuring full compliance with applicable regulations.

## **Roles and responsibilities in effectively management of Educational Visits**

Rougemont School is committed to guaranteeing the proficiency of our Educational Visits Coordinators (EVCs) and Party Leaders, ensuring their competence is substantiated through transparent approval procedures, induction and training programs, including the essential training for EVCs.

It is imperative that Party Leaders and accompanying staff possess a thorough understanding of the purpose behind their participation in activities. This includes a clear comprehension of learning outcomes, effective risk management, and the ability to evaluate activities. Additionally, they should be capable of demonstrating the impact of these identified activities on the learning experience. Party Leaders are required to acquaint themselves with this policy and the associated planning procedures to ensure the successful execution of these when organising visits.

### **Head of School**

The head's responsibilities encompass:

1. Granting approval for staff requests concerning educational visits, with ultimate authority to approve any visit.
2. Ensuring that all staff, including the Educational Visits Coordinator EVC, have undergone the requisite training.

### **Educational Visit Coordinator**

A crucial aspect of our policy and procedures involves the appointment of capable Educational Visit Coordinators (EVCs). These individuals, having successfully completed an accredited EVC training course, are required to participate in regular online updates at least once every three years. Given the inherent responsibilities of the role, the EVC must be an experienced staff member who is either part of or possesses the capacity to influence the Senior Management Team. This includes having sufficient authority to assess the competence of any staff member to lead an off-site visit and to make informed decisions regarding the approval or declination of visits planned by other staff members.

Key requirements of the EVCs:

- Ensure that all visits are planned and approved in accordance with this policy;
- Support the Head and Governors with approval decisions;

- Assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit;
- Complete monitoring of visit leaders to identify further training needs;
- Work with the visit leader to provide parents/carers with information about the visit and obtain the necessary consent from parent/carers;
- Ensure emergency arrangements and contacts are in place for each visit;
- Keep records of individual visits including what worked well, what didn't and any accident/incident reports.

## **Party Leaders**

The Party Leader holds the role of being responsible for the visit, encompassing overall accountability for the safety and conduct of both participants and accompanying staff. It is imperative that Party Leaders secure approval for the visit from the EVC in adherence to this policy.

Key requirements of the Party Leader:

- Must be competent, confident and accountable to lead a visit.
- The Party Leader must have the ability to lead to the level demanded by the visit, and has sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the activities, the group and the environments they will operate in.
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of group members and parents/carers.
- Ensure the ratio of staff to young people is appropriate for the environment/activities and the needs of the group.
- Identify significant hazards and safety measures to reduce risk to a tolerable level and make known to parents, EVC and Head and others the level of residual risk that needs to be managed.
- Have enough information about the young people to assess their suitability for the visit or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed.
- Ensure that all accompanying staff are familiar with these procedures.
- Make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies in conjunction with the EVC.
- Carry out dynamic risk management while the visit takes place and consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the young people is unacceptable. Ensure procedures/alternative plans for such an eventuality are in place.

## **Approval of Party Leaders**

Schools must establish transparent processes for approving individuals to lead visits or activities, ensuring that appointed leaders are not only accountable but also possess the confidence and competence required for the specific tasks they are approved to undertake.

- Accountability begins with the leader's engagement in the school's policies and procedures. Leaders should have a comprehensive understanding of the chain of accountability, expectations placed upon them, and familiarity with the Rougemont School's Emergency procedures (Appendix A)
- Confidence in a leader entails the ability to take charge of situations while being cognisant of their own capabilities and limitations. Competence, on the other hand, demands that a leader has demonstrated

effective operation and possesses relevant experience and knowledge pertinent to the activities, the group involved, and the environments of the planned visit. Competence encompasses a blend of skills, knowledge, awareness, judgement, training, and experience, and it is not solely determined by age or position within the establishment.

- It is crucial to note that relevant experience is not solely derived from repeating the same activity multiple times but is enriched by exposure to a diverse range of activities and environments. Approval should never be assumed and should involve professional judgement, coupled with tangible evidence of technical competence. This meticulous approach ensures that the leaders entrusted with such responsibilities are well-equipped to prioritise safety and effectiveness in every educational endeavour.

## **Staff**

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and colleagues taking part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Actively participate in the development of any required risk assessments
- Communicate with parents and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the Party Leader and others, as appropriate

## **Parents**

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents agree that they will:

- Provide all the information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip
- Agree to all terms and conditions set out in a Code of Conduct for a given visit.

## **Pupils**

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or Party leader
- Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times

## **The Planning Phase**

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the EVC in consultation with SLT, and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school
- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-pupil ratio
- Any other factors deemed appropriate and relevant

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by the Party Leader proposing the visit, and presented on doc (00 and 01). This will include:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks
- Add any additional minimum standards, depending on the age of the children

## **Documentation**


To streamline planning and enhance communication, all teachers and staff involved in organising off-site visits, and LOC activities must use the established shared Google Drive documentation provided by the school. This centralised system will facilitate efficient communication, document sharing, and record-keeping throughout the planning process. All party leaders must complete Forms 00 - 06, in full, at least one week prior to the date of departure and share these with the relevant colleagues for approval. No visit may proceed without the necessary documentation being completed, submitted and approved by an EVC.


## **Risk Assessment**


Before any activity takes place, a comprehensive risk assessment must be conducted. The risk assessment should identify potential hazards, evaluate the level of risk, and outline appropriate control measures to mitigate risks effectively. The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Party Leaders should discuss the level of potential risk with the EVC and agree which Risk Assessment form (4a, 4b or 4c) is appropriate. Every risk assessment will be approved by the headteacher.

 (04 - LEVEL 1.1 - Generic Risk Assessment) - Educational Trips and Visits

 (04 - LEVEL 2 - Risk Assessment) - Educational Trips and Visits

 (04 - LEVEL 3.1 - Full Risk Assessment) -

## **Communication, Consent and Medical Information**

A robust communication plan is crucial, facilitating effective information exchange among teachers, pupils, parents, and any external parties involved in the activity. The plan should encompass emergency contact details and contingency measures.

Parents or guardians of participating pupils are required to provide informed consent for school activities. An annual one-time consent will be sought at the beginning of each academic year, covering all visits and activities that do not involve adventurous activities or significantly deviate from the hours and experiences of a normal school day. While this serves as initial consent, it is essential to transform it into informed consent prior to any specific visit. Therefore, when utilising the one-off consent approach, parents must receive detailed information about the visit, their child's proposed participation, and have the option to withdraw if they choose not to grant permission.

In cases where written consent is necessary, parents will be requested to electronically sign, date, and submit Form (03).

For nursery-age children, written consent will always be obtained before any off-site excursion.

For all visits, a comprehensive letter containing vital information will be provided to parents at least one week before the proposed trip date. This communication, typically sent via email, will include details such as the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the attending group. Additionally, communication will cover:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up locations.
- Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where applicable.
- Clothing and equipment requirements, specifying whether these are provided by the school.
- Expected behaviour and consequences for pupils failing to meet these standards.

Teachers are responsible for collecting relevant medical information about pupils to ensure appropriate support during the activity, ensuring compliance with privacy and data protection regulations.

## **Staff Training**

Teachers and staff leading or participating in off-site visits or LOC activities must undergo relevant training to ensure they are competent in providing a safe and educational experience. This is provided in the first instance through the

SSS training platform where Partly Leaders are required to successfully complete the Educational Visit online course. The school will keep records of staff training certifications.

## **Supervision and Safety**

Staff-to-Student Ratio: Ensuring the safety and well-being of participants is paramount, and as such, the staff-to-student ratio adheres to the OEAP National Guidance, Department for Education requirements, and Welsh Assembly Government requirements. The ratio is carefully determined based on a number of factors and the final decisions about the staffing and supervision should take account of:

- The nature and duration of the visit and the planned activities
- The location and environment in which the activity is to take place
- The nature of the group, including the number of participants and their age, level of development, gender, ability and needs (behavioural, medical, emotional and educational);
- Staff competence
- The consequence of a member of staff being indisposed, particularly where they will be the sole leader with a group for any significant time.

The following standards apply to all trips:

- For mixed pupil groups on residential trips, there should be at least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult.
- A minimum of 1 supervising adult with first aid capabilities must be present on all trips.
- In Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings, at least 1 qualified paediatric first aider is required on all trips.
- Appropriate first aid equipment, aligned with the school's first aid and health and safety policies, will be taken on all trips.
- Prior to the trip, all supervising adults will be informed about any medical issues or allergies.

Additionally, as a matter of policy, adults lacking a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils under any circumstances.

First Aid and Emergency Procedures: Teachers and staff leading activities undergo training in first aid, and the necessary first aid equipment is readily available. Clear and effective emergency procedures are established and communicated to all participants, with specific consideration given to the location and nature of the activity.

### (05 - EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN) - Educational Trips and Visits

Equipment and Transport: To ensure safety, all equipment used during activities must be suitable, well-maintained, and used in accordance with relevant safety guidelines. Transportation to and from off-site locations is meticulously organised, adhering to transportation safety regulations. This commitment guarantees a secure and regulated environment for all participants throughout the duration of the activities.



## **Inclusive Practice**

**Accessibility:** Rougemont School is committed to providing inclusive off-site visits and LOC activities. Efforts must be made to ensure that activities are accessible to all pupils, regardless of any physical, sensory, or cognitive impairments they may have. Reasonable accommodations should be provided where necessary.

**Curriculum Integration:** Outdoor Learning experiences should be integrated into the school's curriculum to enrich the learning process and reinforce academic concepts taught in the classroom, aligning with the Department for Education requirements and the Welsh Assembly Government curriculum guidelines.

## **Residential Visits**

All residential trips exceeding 24 hours require approval from the headteacher. The meticulous planning and preparation outlined in this policy extend to both residential visits and single-day excursions. Additionally, the Party Leader assumes responsibility for:

- Ensuring that staff have undergone any necessary training.
- Obtaining all required permissions and medical forms at least one month before the trip's commencement.
- Conducting thorough safeguarding checks for all adults, including volunteers. If volunteers are expected to have direct unsupervised contact with pupils, this will involve pertinent DBS checks.


Parents and carers will receive comprehensive information about the visit and a request for permission at least two months before the trip's start. This information will cover:

- Dates and times of departure and return to school.
- Full address and contact details of the destination.
- Planned activities and available options.
- Meal provisions.
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the deadline for payment, aligned with our charging and remissions policy, which includes information about exemptions.
- Clothing and equipment provided, along with items that pupils must bring themselves.
- Public health requirements, including any necessary vaccinations.
- Accommodation options and arrangements.
- Names of staff members attending.

For international visits, we ensure that any organisation providing activities holds the LOtC Quality badge or a comparable local accreditation. Our planning adheres to the guidance provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel and foreign travel advice. This comprehensive approach ensures the safety, transparency, and overall success of all residential visits, fostering enriching experiences for participating students.

## Evaluation and Review

After each Off-Site Visit or LOC activity, a thorough evaluation must be conducted, following the OEAP National Guidance, Department for Education requirements, and Welsh Assembly Government requirements (Form 07). This evaluation should identify areas of success and areas for improvement, informing future planning and ensuring continuous enhancement of these activities.

 (07 Post Trip Evaluation) - Educational Trips and Visits

## Policy Implementation and Communication

This policy will be communicated to all staff, pupils, parents, and relevant stakeholders. It will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect changes in the OEAP National Guidance, Department for Education requirements, and Welsh Assembly Government requirements or any other relevant factors.

## Conclusion

Rougemont School is dedicated to providing pupils with enriching educational experiences through off-site visits and LOC activities. By adhering to this policy, incorporating the OEAP National Guidance, Department for Education requirements, and Welsh Assembly Government requirements, and utilising the shared Google Drive documentation, we aim to create safe, inclusive, and valuable learning experiences that contribute to the holistic development of our pupils.

## Appendix A

Emergency Procedures -  (05 - EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN) - Educational Trips and Visits