

Matching Green C of E Primary School
Educational Visits Policy



February 2025

Establishment type	Primary School
Name of establishment	Matching Green CE Primary
Who is employer	Essex County Council
Responsibility for offsite visits (possibly EVC, or deputy head)	Headteacher – Vicky Childs EVC – Vicky Childs
Date Trained	September 2024
Policy agreed	
Signed off by	Full Governing Body
To be reviewed	September 2026
Other Policies Related	Staff Handbook Child Protection policy Code of Conduct policy Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy First Aid policy

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'
- DfE (2013) 'Driving school minibuses'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Business Continuity Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Minibus Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- DBS Policy

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 Matching Green C of E Primary 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.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Matching Green:

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 are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the 'Extended learning locality' (See Appendix 1).
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visit that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

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 Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements. The designated visit leader selected to be in charge on an individual trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all pupils on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the headteacher.
- Undertaking any relevant training or courses which are arranged by the educational visits coordinator.
- Completing all essential documentation for the trip and ensuring it has been approved by the educational visits coordinator.
- Conducting a risk assessment prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- Creating an itinerary prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to pupils, parents and staff to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity in advance and distributing permission slips to parents.
- Implementing safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.
- Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the DBS Policy.

In some cases, there may be a designated deputy leader who supports the designated trip leader and will assume the designated trip leader's responsibilities if the designated trip leader is no longer fit to lead the trip, e.g., is unwell at short notice. They are also responsible for supporting the designated trip leader in completing all their relevant responsibilities by assuming any delegated tasks. They and other staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring they are competent and comfortable with their delegated responsibilities, undertaking training where necessary.
- Ensuring the safety of the pupils is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.

Volunteers on the trip are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Supervising and ensuring the safety of pupils by following the procedures outlined by the designated trip leader.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Vicky Childs, 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 on EVOLVE. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc. The EVC is responsible for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties, including the local outdoor education adviser, during the planning and organising of extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Partaking in relevant additional training to ensure they remain up-to-date with relevant educational trip information and health and safety guidance.
- Overseeing the planning of the educational trips, by ensuring all essential documentation, including risk assessments, is up to date and appropriate for completion by the designated trip leader.
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- Appointing an appropriate and competent member of staff to be the designated trip leader for each trip.

Ensuring the competency of the designated trip leader, in consultation with the headteacher, by organising training for staff and volunteers.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing an educational visits coordinator, liaising with the [LA](#) as necessary.
- Liaising with the educational visits coordinator and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents.

- Liaising with the governing board regarding the organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities, including settling any disputes.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the educational visits coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education and arranging for training to be undertaken, as necessary.
- Completing relevant paperwork, including risk assessments, for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring suitable safety measures are in place prior to each trip or activity.
- Overseeing the work of the educational visits coordinator, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in place in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Many Governors are invited to attend educational visits to support the school and have access to the Educational Visit process. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on pupils' lives, teaching them life skills and providing new experiences.

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.

Definitions

'In loco parentis' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over the pupils in place of a parent.

'School trip' means any educational visit, foreign exchange trip, away-day or residential holiday organised by the school which takes pupils and staff members off-site.

'Residential' means any school trip which includes an overnight stay.

Activities of an **'adventurous nature'** include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Trekking
- Caving
- Skiing
- Water sports
- Climbing

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 Head Teacher 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.

Planning School trips

Prior to planning a school trip, the following guidance will be read by the organisers:

- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'

A thorough risk assessment will be conducted by the designated trip leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure pupil and staff safety.

When partaking in adventure trips, activities will always be identified at the planning stage and never added during the trip. When planning water sport activities, the need for instructors and lifeguards will be taken into account, particularly when using facilities which may not have a trained lifeguard present.

The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all pupils are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all pupils. Where there is a maximum capacity of pupils for a trip, places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. This will be clearly communicated to parents.

Approval

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local visits are agreed in advance with the Headteacher and a local visit risk assessment is carried out, notifying parents in advance.
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 14 days in advance.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous') are then submitted by the Head to the LA for approval.

Risk assessment process

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced to the fullest extent. The individual carrying out the risk assessment process will have the skills, status and competence needed for the role, understand the risks involved, and be familiar with the activity.

The process is as follows:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record findings and implement them
- Review assessment and update if necessary

A risk assessment will be conducted for each school trip before it is undertaken to identify hazards and control measures specific to the trip.

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 1). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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 local authority.

Educational Visits Checklist

Matching Green's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. Matching Green's Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within the local area. Parents have the option of consenting online via Teachers2Parents, or through a traditional paper consent form.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online via Teachers2Parents or through a traditional paper consent form.

Equal opportunities

Inclusion is at the heart of our vision, values and ethos and we endeavour to meet the needs of all children within the mainstream classroom. The SENCo supports the delivery on One Plans to meet individual needs. The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of pupils when organising a trip. The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to pupils will provide new experiences and develop life skills.

In some cases, the needs of specific children may require a bespoke risk assessment depending on the individual situation. Where there is a risk to the individual child or themselves, this will be risk assessed and recorded. Where we required, we will seek parental or carer support to manage risks and consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary. Where this is not possible, an alternative activity of equal educational value will be arranged for all pupils. Pupils with SEND will be accompanied by a responsible adult during the extra-curricular trip or visit. All children are encouraged to participate equally in the full range of activities the curriculum offers.

Charging / funding for visits

The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.

The school will act in accordance with the DfE's guidance document 'Charging for school activities' (2018) and, therefore, will only charge for trips which are classed as an 'optional extra'. This is education provided outside of school time which is not:

- Part of the national curriculum.
- Part of a syllabus for an examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
- Part of religious education.

Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.

All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen in the event that the trip is cancelled or a pupil cancels their place on the trip. In the event that the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

In the event that a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else. Where a pupil has previously cancelled a space on a school trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits. The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all pupils are treated equally. Any charge made in respect of pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

Transport

We follow National Guidance when organising transport for Educational Visits. On some occasions, staff may transport pupils and we follow Essex Local Authority Guidance on this with regular checks for license details, MOT and insurance.

Insurance

When planning activities of an adventurous nature in the UK, the educational visits coordinator will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence. Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place. Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.

Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible. Medical expenses will be recorded and stored in the school office.

Accidents and incidents

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the First Aid and Health and Safety Policy.

The headteacher will keep written records of any incidents, accidents and near misses. Media enquiries will be referred to the headteacher or, if they are not available, the Senior Teacher or the clerk to governors.

Staff will use guidance as set out in the Business Continuity Plan, in particular the 'initial response' section, to ensure the safety of pupils and staff should anything happen, e.g. a terrorist attack. Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip, including for points of interests such as museums and hotels. Pupils and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Missing person procedure

The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips.

Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with this policy. The educational visits coordinator will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

When travelling with a pupil with SEND, the educational visits coordinator will ensure an adult is with them at all times and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the pupil's needs in accordance with this policy.

Everyone on the trip will be provided with a contact sheet for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group. All staff members and pupils will be required to carry mobile phones with them at all times. If a pupil doesn't own a mobile phone, they will be paired up with a pupil who has a mobile phone.

Upon arriving at every venue, the designated trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where pupils and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group. Pupils will wear school branded clothing, in order to make them easily identifiable unless otherwise mentioned in a school letter.

Regular head counts of all pupils and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times. In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip domestically:

- The designated trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining pupils and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
- The designated trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person and another adult to contact them via phone, these people will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
- Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
- If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities will be contacted.
- If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the headteacher, or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.

If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.

If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school. If this is not possible, the educational visits coordinator will make arrangements to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

Appendix 1 – 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 senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority 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 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry either:
 - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (Available via www.oeap.info)
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.
6. For visits that take place outside the 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry an LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources).

Appendix 2 – education visit booking procedures

To be completed by the visit leader in advance of a school trip booking.

Educational Visit Form

If you are planning an educational visit or experience, please complete the form below and hand into the office.

Lead adult			
Class or year group			
Number of children attending			
Number of adults attending			
Location/venue	Address	Workshops/activity detail	
Purpose and outcomes			
Visit details	Intended date of visit	Time leaving school	Time returning to school
Agreed by Headteacher	Headteacher:		
	Class teacher		

Office use only

Cost

Travel: <i>3 quotes from transport company</i>		
Venue	Travel	Others
Total cost: <i>Details of subsidising:</i>		
Total contribution for parents per child:		

Education visit checklist

Details	Deadline	Actioned by	Date completed	Signature
Venue visited for pre risk assessment	Prior to any preparation	Class teachers or lead adult		
Educational visit form completed and given to office, shared with Headteacher	6 weeks prior to visit	Class teachers, with some support from the office team		
Check venue availability	Within 2 days of the form	Office		
Check coach availability		Office		
Date of trip confirmed		Office		
Add to school diary		Office		
Confirmation of volunteers and staff members with Headteacher		Class teachers		
Letter to parents with consent reply slip, including information to request school lunch for FSM.		Office		
Copy of letter added to website		Office		
Trip monies received and all permissions completed	At least 2 weeks before visit	Office		
Evolve risk assessment completed and sent to EVC	At least 2 weeks before visit	Class teachers or lead adult		
Plan of the day established		Class teachers or lead adult		
Notify kitchen of any FSM requirements	2 weeks before visit	Office		
Medical kits prepared (medical file checked for individual pupil needs)		Class teachers		
Adult/pupil groups established		Class teachers		
Copy of risk assessment shared with all staff and school office.	Once approved by Headteacher and office	Class teachers		
Pre-visit meeting with all staff and volunteers attending the trip completed (share plan of the day, risk assessments, medical needs and contact details)		Class teachers or lead adult		