

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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# EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

## Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every student 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 the Karalius Foundation (KF) a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to students 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 practising 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. Students 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. i.e. encouraging students 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
- Therapeutic Intervention

## Application

Any visit that leaves the site is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during the foundation day or outside the normal hours.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, KF:

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](http://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, which are deemed to be adventurous activities or residential.

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

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## 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 overseas, and/or 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 of Foundation 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 Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Alex Harding 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 before submitting them to the Head of Foundation. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic documents, etc.

The Head of Foundation has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Directors roles are that of a 'critical friend'. Directors will be briefed on Educational Visits which are outside of the Extended Learning Locality. Individual Directors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

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

## Staff Competence

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

- A mentoring 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 of Foundation 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

## Approval

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

1. Local visits follow the 'Extending Learning Locality', a generic class risk assessment, which is to be used but does not need to be handed in until 24 hours prior unless it has changed. For details around the extended learning locality, please see Appendix 1.
  2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 3 working days in advance, and then forwarded to the Head of Foundation for approval.
  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 of Foundation to the LA for approval.
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## Emergency procedures

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

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

KF 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'. KF Educational Visits Checklist can be found in Appendix 3.

As part of the pre-visit checks for some adventurous activities trips, residentials and overseas trips, a large amount of information is gathered to inform risk management. The Essential Information Form can be found in Appendix 4.

## External Providers

Where providers of experiences have achieved the LOTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) kitemark, these are held on the Evolve database and can be automatically selected on the Evolve Risk Assessment.

Where providers are not holders of the LOTC kitemark, visit leaders must complete a Provider Statement (Appendix 5) which details all information necessary to obtain prior to booking to ensure that adequate insurance and legal health and safety standards are met.

## Student Supervision Procedures

It is essential that all staff are aware of the risk reduction plan in place for each individual student as this will impact on arrangements for educational visits. It is possible that students may become emotionally aroused whilst off-site and staff must have a full understanding of how students may respond in a given situation and the possible outcomes, eg verbal or physical aggression, absconding. Please refer to Appendix 6 which outlines the foundation supervision procedures.

## Consent from home settings

The foundation obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for activities that fall within the 'Extended Learning Locality.'

Where trips or visits take place outside of school hours, specific (i.e. one-off), consent must be obtained from home settings. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available (via letters, meetings, etc.), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

## Inclusion

KF complies with the Equality Act 2010.

## Transport

Where staff use their own vehicles to transport pupils, they must be in possession of business insurance and are to hand in a photocopy of the policy and their registration document to the Health & Safety Manager.

## Insurance

Additional insurance is required for overseas visits. This needs to be put in place by the Visit Leader and checked by the Head of Foundation, EVC and the Chief Operating Officer.

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## Appendix 1 - Extended Learning Locality

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the locality extend to a two-mile radius of the foundation.

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the EVOLVE visit approval process prior to engaging in a visit provided they follow the Operating Procedure below.

### Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

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

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head of Foundation must give verbal approval before a group leaves if the generic risk assessment has changed or not all pupils are able to attend due to emotional or mental health issues or illness.
- All staff are judged competent to take students out into the immediate locality.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Extended Learning Locality' is explained to all members of home settings when their child joins the KF.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults, unless the generic risk assessment states otherwise.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Students have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group and will be supervised on all crossings.
- Where appropriate, students are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Students' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving KF.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available including that which may be required for emergencies.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A School mobile is taken with each group and the office has a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles).

### Off Site Register

For a visit that is not out for either a full morning or afternoon then the Off-Site Register must be completed. This is held by the Student Support Officer in the office.

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## Appendix 2 – Critical Incident Plan

The foundation response to a critical incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during foundation hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be:
  - a) An experienced member of the senior leadership team or
  - b) An individual who will be able to contact an experienced senior leader 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 leaders and the base contacts 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:
  - a. A fully charged mobile phone
  - b. A paper copy of this appendix
7. This Critical Incident Plan is tested through both desktop exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

## Before the Visit

### Emergency Procedures

Visit Leaders should agree Emergency Procedures with the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and/or Head of Foundation. These should include instructions of how to alert the 24-hour (i.e. constant cover) Emergency Contact in the event of an emergency, as well as other actions for the visit leadership team.

All members of the visit leadership team should have easy access to a copy of these Emergency Procedures throughout the visit and be able to take action if there is a problem.

### Training and Practice

During an emergency you will not have time to read this guidance – you will be reliant on training and effective practised systems. Emergency Procedures should be regularly tested, and all members of a visit leadership team should be able to deal with an incident, including alerting the establishment in the event of an emergency.

Practical training and practice can help leaders and participants to switch into emergency mode when needed. The EVC will organise regular sessions to rehearse various realistic scenarios and emergency drills relevant to the type of visits you lead (e.g. coach or minibus breaking down on a motorway, rapid group collection/head count in a public place, fire drills at any accommodation). Given the needs of the students at the foundation, it is important that they are involved from time to time in planning and practising the procedures for incidents and emergencies.

### Communications

Communications can become swamped during an emergency, particularly if home settings/media are trying to call for news. Phone numbers which are not in the public domain should be agreed to maintain communications in the event that primary channels become overwhelmed. In order to maintain tight control over communications, home settings will not be given the telephone numbers that activate the foundation's Critical Incident Plan.

Agree whose phone should be used for incoming calls during an emergency and whose will be used to call out. Base staff at the foundation should have this information prior to departure.

Ensure that mobile phones have enough credit, are charged and, if necessary, are waterproof/weatherproof. Include a power pack and lead in the event that a phone's battery life may deplete. Check whether there is mobile coverage from your provider in the area of your visit.

Carry alternative means of raising the alarm where necessary.

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If the visit is overseas, ensure that your phone(s) are enabled for roaming and that the foundation's phones (including the Emergency Contact phones) are enabled to make overseas calls.

## First Aid and Medical

A qualified first aider from the foundation will form part of any visit team. Ensure that first aid kits are appropriately stocked and accessible.

First aid training is also given to all students.

Visit leaders should be aware of all individual medical needs and that they have had the necessary training to be competent to handle them.

Staff need to be aware of the possibility of participants developing sepsis, and to know what to do. It is a medical emergency and staff should call 999 if they suspect that a member of the visit group has symptoms.

If the trip is overseas, ensure that contact numbers for all emergency services are noted before departure.

## During the Incident

### Immediate Action

The Visit Leader should take charge of an incident and follow the agreed Emergency Procedures unless and until relieved by the emergency services or by an appropriate member of foundation staff. If the Visit Leader is incapacitated, all members of the visit leadership team should be able to take charge and to at least initiate the Emergency Procedures.

1. Assess the situation, establishing the nature and extent of the problem but ensuring that they do not put themselves or others at further risk.
  2. Make sure all members of the party are:
    - a. accounted for;
    - b. safe;
    - c. adequately supervised;
    - d. briefed to ensure that they understand what to do to remain safe;
  3. Allocate roles to other leaders and/or suitable participants. This will include but is not limited to attending to casualties, ensuring that others in the group are moved to a safe place and kept safe, calling for help from the emergency services, instigating the Emergency Procedures and keeping notes of the incident.
  4. If there are injuries, take action to establish their extent and administer appropriate first aid. Aim to:
    - a. Preserve life;
    - b. Prevent the condition worsening;
    - c. Promote recovery: treat for shock; reassure and keep warm.
  5. Contact the appropriate emergency service(s) – in the UK dial 999 or 112 for the police, fire and rescue, ambulance or coastguard (for mountain/cave/mine rescue ask for the police). The emergency services will require the following information:
    - a. Your name and the name of the group/establishment;
    - b. Location;
    - c. Nature of emergency and number of injured persons;
    - d. Action taken so far.
  6. Alert your Emergency Contact, who will need accurate information.
  7. Control any communications by the rest of the group. Rumours spread very quickly and can cause serious and unnecessary upset.
  8. Avoid splitting the group – unless it is the only way to get help – and leave nobody on their own.
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### Secondary Action

Uninjured group members should be moved to shelter or away from the immediate vicinity of any casualties. Ensure that they:

- are adequately supervised throughout;
- are returned as early as possible to base;
- receive appropriate support and reassurance.

Ensure that an appropriate adult accompanies any casualties to hospital, taking with them the necessary consent forms and medical information for the injured persons.

Consider other people who may need contacting, and who should make the necessary calls to the following:

- Other groups who are part of your visit;
- Embassy/Consulate/High Commission if abroad;
- Local accommodation/contact;
- Tour operator/provider;
- Insurer.

Direct contact with the home setting of a group member from the scene of the incident should be avoided at all costs. This task should be carried out only by the foundation home base by senior staff.

Refer all media or legal enquiries to the appropriate person at the foundation and do not engage in any exchanges with the media or insurers.

Keep an accurate record of events and actions as close to real time as possible. Any leader with spare capacity should, therefore, keep notes – see the section below on Recording the Incident.

Maintain contact with the emergency services and the foundation contact until the emergency is over.

Continually monitor, reassess and review – ensure nothing has been forgotten and all leaders and participants are coping, cared for and secure.

## Recording the Incident

Make an accurate record of all details as soon as possible – if this is left until later, your memory of details may be confused. If it is appropriate to do so, take photos. If it is impossible to make a written record, use the voice note function on a mobile phone.

Record the following:

- Time and date of the incident;
- What happened;
- Accurate location;
- Names of casualties and details of injuries;
- Names of others involved but not injured;
- Relevant environmental information (e.g. weather, ground/water conditions);
- Actions taken, including all communications;
- Details of any moves from the incident site (times, who moved, where to, how);
- Names and contact details of witnesses;
- Registration numbers of any motor vehicles involved;
- Proposed actions.

## After the Incident

Consider the emotional needs of any staff, participants and others who may have been adversely affected. The foundation will require detailed statements in order to implement a thorough wellbeing plan on the group's return.

Ensure that all reporting requirements have been fulfilled, including completing any accident and incident forms and complying with RIDDOR regulations.

The EVC should schedule a debrief with senior leaders and the visit team where lessons learned are reviewed in order that that these feed into future visit plans, emergency plans and staff training. A subsequent debrief should be held with the whole foundation staff in order to share the outcomes of the review.

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