



EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2026

1. Scope

This policy applies to all External Visits involving children, young people and vulnerable adults. It applies regardless of whether the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

2. Definition

External Visits are defined as events that involve children, young people or vulnerable adults being away from their normal school, centre or residential home premises, while in the care of the school or other service. This includes educational visits, outings, school trips and off-site activities such as:

- local visits to parks, museums, libraries and sports facilities
- cultural, educational, recreational and exchange trips
- outdoor activities
- residentials
- field trips

3. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy has been drawn up with regard to the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) National Guidance, and the following legislation and statutory guidance currently in force:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), where applicable
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 (duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (DfE statutory guidance)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 (DfE/HM Government statutory guidance)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework, where the visit involves early years children
- Health and safety on educational visits — DfE non-statutory advice (GOV.UK)
- Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) National Guidance

- Council for Learning Outside the Classroom (CLOtC) — LOtC Quality Badge

4. Benefits

All children, young people and vulnerable adults should be given the opportunity of benefiting from participation in a wide range of visits and activities, including Learning Outside the Classroom, local activities, day visits, residentials, field studies and outdoor adventure activities. Whether their emphasis is adventurous, academic, sporting, cultural, spiritual or creative, off-site visits and outdoor learning provide first-hand experiences that inspire and enhance learning and development in ways which are powerful and lasting. They provide a foundation for life-long learning and healthy lifestyles, as well as complementing classroom learning and enriching the curriculum.

5. Inclusion and Equality

In line with the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, no child, young person or vulnerable adult will be excluded from a visit because of a protected characteristic, disability or special educational need. Before any visit, the visit leader and EVC will consider what reasonable adjustments — for example to staffing ratios, transport, activities or medical support — are needed to enable full participation. Where, following that consideration, full participation genuinely is not achievable, the school will discuss this with the pupil and their parents/carers and offer an alternative experience of comparable educational value.

6. Assessment of Risk

As an employer, Michael Faraday School has a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure that risks are managed — requiring them to be reduced to an “acceptable” or “tolerable” level. Risk is a natural part of everyday life: all activities involve risk, and it is impossible to entirely eliminate it. Indeed, the human spirit thrives on adventure and journeys into new territory, both physical and metaphorical. It is important that children, young people and vulnerable adults learn to understand and manage risk and uncertainty for themselves. If we attempt to ‘wrap them in cotton wool’, they not only miss huge opportunities for growth but also emerge into society unable to cope with the uncertainties and challenges of adult life.

Well-managed external visits, including outdoor and adventurous activities, play a vital part in helping children, young people and vulnerable adults to learn about the real world, and to understand and manage risks for themselves. Schools are therefore encouraged to provide such opportunities for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Good planning and management of activities should be about

reducing risks to an acceptable level, considering the potential benefits. The starting point for such a risk-benefit assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is acceptable.

Employees who follow this policy, work within the limits of their own competence, and use their common sense and professional judgement will be fully supported by the school.

Although some paperwork is required in order to record and communicate the decisions made, risk management should be largely a common-sense process centred upon competent staff. It should focus on significant risks, not trivial ones, and it should not become a restrictive and onerous bureaucratic exercise.

Risk assessment is a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and assessing risks associated with external visits is no different. It is simply a systematic examination of what might harm people, and should be based on common sense, current OEAP National Guidance and, where relevant, the Local Authority's Educational Visits Adviser.

7. Procedures

7.1 Staff wishing to plan and undertake a visit (prospective visit leaders) should apply verbally to the headteacher or educational visits co-ordinator (EVC) for permission to plan the visit. Once granted they should submit the details on the school's outing request form, to the headteacher or EVC, and receive outline permission to undertake the visit.

7.2 Outline permission will be granted when all the requirements identified have been considered using the school's Risk Assessment procedure, the visit can be accommodated within the school timetable, and the ethos of the visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated. The staff undertaking the visit will meet with the EVC to discuss potential risk, including any adjustments needed under Section 5 (Inclusion and Equality) above.

7.3 When the visit involves additional or high-risk activities, foreign travel or is a residential visit, details of the visit will also be sent to the Local Authority Educational Visits Adviser by the headteacher or EVC for approval that all the procedures have been satisfactorily completed.

7.4 Once outline permission, and any necessary Local Authority approval, has been received, the visit leader can complete the planning, organisation and bookings for the visit. When all details are complete they must be submitted for final approval. This should be a minimum of 14 days before the visit.

7.5 Regularly repeated visits may receive block annual approval, subject to parents/carers being made aware of every visit, especially any involving a return time outside the normal school day.

7.6 Following each visit the leader will undertake a review. Any incidents or accidents will be reported in accordance with the reporting requirements in Section 9 (Emergency Procedures) below, including under RIDDOR 2013 where applicable. Leaders of visits that have involved considerable time or financial resources, such as residential visits, will produce a short report evaluating the travel and transport, facilities, quality of any providers, and the success and value of the visit, and submit this to the headteacher or EVC.

7.7 All school staff will be made aware of the requirements of this policy and any changes that are made when the policy is reviewed.

8. Safeguarding

All visits are subject to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Before a visit, the visit leader and EVC will confirm that:

- all staff, volunteers and third-party providers with unsupervised access to children hold an appropriate, current DBS check and any other required safer-recruitment clearance
- staffing ratios and the gender/experience mix of the supervising team are appropriate to the age, needs and activity of the group, including any additional needs identified under Section 5
- designated safeguarding arrangements — including who to contact in the event of a concern while off-site — are understood by all staff and volunteers on the visit
- arrangements for the use of mobile phones, cameras and social media during the visit are in line with the school's Safeguarding and Online Safety policies

9. Local Responsibilities

9.1 The headteacher is the responsible officer for ensuring visits are approved as necessary, that all visits approved can be accommodated within the timetable, and that the ethos of each visit is one with which the school wishes to be associated.

9.2 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is a staff member who has received relevant training and induction, and is delegated with the following tasks:

- to grant verbal permission that a leader may plan a visit, after deciding that the timetabling and ethos of the visit are acceptable
- to receive Outing forms, check all visit details are completed, and ensure the annual record of visits is maintained

- to check that all requirements for approving a visit, as identified through the Risk Assessment, have been undertaken
- to liaise with the headteacher and grant outline permission for a visit to go ahead
- to check that the further requirements for residential or foreign travel, and additional or high-risk activities, have been undertaken
- to liaise with the Local Authority on any visit involving residential or foreign travel and additional or high-risk activities
- to grant final permission for a visit when all organisation and planning are complete, and to signify this by signing the Outing Form

The school's current EVC is [Sarah Haley, Deputy Headteacher]. In line with OEAP National Guidance, the EVC will undertake initial training before taking up the role and refresher training at intervals recommended by the Local Authority Educational Visits Adviser (currently every three years).

9.3 The designated visit leader is in overall charge of the group and remains responsible throughout the visit.

10. Emergency Procedures

10.1 The risk assessment for each visit will identify the relevant emergency procedures during the visit. For visits extending beyond the school day this includes designating a home contact from the school who may be needed as a link between the party, the parents/carers, the school and the Local Authority in the event of an emergency.

10.2 In the event of a delay (of more than one hour), or of an incident resulting in harm to any attending participant, staff member or volunteer, the school must be contacted as soon as possible to inform the headteacher or designated deputy, so that they can decide:

- (a) If the incident is of a less serious nature, the next of kin or parents/carers of those affected will be informed about what has happened (for example, that the party will be returning late, or that an incident has befallen a party member) and the action that has been taken so far. In appropriate circumstances the visit leader will be designated to undertake this task.
- (b) If the incident is very serious (for example, it involves a disabling or life-threatening injury, or a fatality), the headteacher, deputy or the home contact will inform the designated senior officer at the Local Authority, and the school will instigate its Critical Incident Plan. Officers of the authority will be allocated to support the school with the immediate incident and any necessary follow-up or inquiry.

10.3 In the event of a party being overdue and without contact for more than one hour, the school, or the home contact, must investigate the reason and may, where appropriate, need to involve the police.

10.4 Where an incident meets the criteria for reporting under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the headteacher or a delegated officer will ensure it is reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) without delay, alongside any Local Authority or insurer notification requirements.

11. The Governing Body

11.1 The governing body will receive reports from the headteacher detailing the school visits that have taken place, and will review this policy at least annually, or sooner if relevant legislation or statutory guidance changes, to ensure it remains compliant with current requirements.

12. Monitoring and review

12.1 This policy was shared with the Governing Body in September 2026 and will be reviewed by September 2029, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes.