



About this document:

Purpose

Our educational visits policy and procedures follow guidelines set by the Local Authority “Northamptonshire Employer Guidance Policy Document for Off-site visits” which in turn meet the requirements set out in the National Guidance of the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel. Planning and preparation for visits must be thorough but also reasonable and proportionate. The volume of paperwork is not an indication of intended safe practice.

Complied by: LGB	Date: June 2024
Committee: LGB	Date agreed by Trustees: May 2022
Review Cycle: 2 Years	Review Date: June 2026

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Wellbeing in our Trust

We are all affected by poor physical and mental health at times during our lives and it is important the appropriate support is available in a timely manner.

Health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we encourage an open and honest culture whereby anyone can discuss any issues they may have.

The Trustees of Creating Tomorrow take the health and wellbeing of all employees seriously and are committed to supporting our staff. The Trustees ensure that support for staff is available through:

- Effective line management
- Commitment to reducing workload
- Supportive and professional working environments
- Employee support programs
 - Health Assure (confidential counselling support available through Perkbox account).
 - Education Support: telephone number 08000 562561 or website www.educationsupport.org.uk

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School Educational Visits Policy for all Off-Site Visits

Introduction:

Our educational visits policy and procedures follow guidelines set by the Local Authority “Northamptonshire Employer Guidance Policy Document for Off-site visits” which in turn meet the requirements set out in the National Guidance of the Outdoor Education Advisors Panel.

Planning and preparation for visits must be thorough but also reasonable and proportionate. The volume of paperwork is not an indication of intended safe practice.

Local Authority Policy:

Requirements for all off-site visits

- It is a requirement that each LA school should have a trained EVC.
- The EVC should be a senior member of staff who will act as a focus for good practice on visits from that establishment.
- The policies and procedures outlined in this section must be followed for any off-site visits.
- In particular all Category C visits (higher risk visits) must be approved by the County Council's Outdoor Education Adviser.
- **Off site visits will not take place if there is no trained EVC on the staff.**

NB arrangements can be made to cater for long term sick leave or similar absence – contact the County Outdoor Education Adviser

The following policy from the LA on educational trips and visits applies to all educational establishments where the County Council is the employer.

Policy Statement

The County Council will fully comply with the “Northamptonshire Employer Guidance Policy Document for Off-site visits” document. This includes:

- Establishing and maintaining a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator for each establishment or cluster of establishments
- Maintaining an Outdoor Education Adviser
- Adopting and following the best practice in the “National guidance of the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel” document.

All Educational Visits Co-ordinators must undertake a DCSF approved training course and ensure that they attend refresher training at least every three years.

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The County Council recognises three categories of trip/visit. For further details for each category please click on the appropriate link below.

1. [Category A activities](#) – These comprise activities that present no significant risks with no need for the group leader to have National Governing Body or other accreditation
2. [Category B activities](#) – Activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and / or location
3. [Category C activities](#) – Higher risk activities which need approval by the County Council Outdoor Education Adviser

Category A and B visits can be approved at establishment level. Each establishment should establish a protocol for agreeing trips / visits. This may include approval by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator, Headteacher or Governing Body.

All educational establishments must seek and obtain the approval of the Outdoor Education Adviser before undertaking any trip or visit which falls into Category C.

The County Council will provide each Educational Visits Co-ordinator with an Off-site Visits Guidance pack containing agreed forms which should be used.

Responsibilities

The **County Council** is responsible for reviewing and revising this policy on a regular basis and ensuring the provision of an Outdoor Education Adviser.

Governing Bodies are responsible for monitoring that their school or unit follows this policy.

Head-teachers and Centre Managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed by their establishment including ensuring that they have, or have access to, an appropriate Educational Visits Coordinator.

The **Outdoor Education Adviser** is responsible for: providing advice on trips and visits to educational establishments, ensuring the provision of adequate training for Educational Visits Co-ordinators, approving Category C visits; monitoring and implementation of this policy.

Categories of trips recognised by Northamptonshire County Council

Within this document the term “remote” locations means:

- Any moorland (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level)
- Any mountain, woodland and cultivated land from which it would take more than 30 minutes

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Travelling time to walk back to an accessible road or refuge.

Accessible road is a road accessible to an ordinary road going ambulance.

Refuge is a building, either occupied or with means for summoning help, which can offer shelter for the party in an emergency

Do you need help?

Category C forms and other supporting paperwork to save you work – including generic risk assessments - are available on the EVC Website: www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/evc

Your EVC and the County Outdoor Education Adviser are there to help you:

County Outdoor Education Adviser: Matt Roberts

Tel: 01604 368731

studentservices@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Procedures at Wren Spinney School

Staffing structure and responsibilities:

- A trained EVC is on the Leadership team at school (Mike Tebbutt) and is supported by an EVC Assistant Head Teacher Toby Widdicombe.
- All visit notification forms are passed to the administrative EVC any which are category B or C are then passed on to the EVC on the Leadership team.
- Category A visits can be passed by either of the school EVCs.
- Category B can generally be passed by the Leadership team EVC.
- Category C visits must be passed by the Leadership Team EVC, Principal and the County Adviser.
- It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that all information contained in the notification forms is correct and that these forms are given to the EVC in good time.
- It is also the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that all elements contained within the list of 'things to do' on the front of the notification form have been carried out.
- It is recognised that clear communication across the staff team is necessary throughout the planning process

Training:

- All staff are made aware of procedures to follow when planning and undertaking a visit off school grounds. (See appendix 2 – flow diagram)

Learning opportunities:

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- The school recognises that some of the best learning takes place outside the classroom. It is requirement that all visits should have clear aims and objectives, and be justifiable within the broad objectives of the school curriculum.

Disability:

- Pupils will not be excluded from school trips on the grounds of disability. As far as is reasonable issues of physical access will be examined and risk-assessed and provision made for full access to all activities. Where an activity cannot be safely accessed an alternative will be offered.
- Activities will be planned in accordance with the teacher's/visit coordinator's prior knowledge of the pupils. Where pupil behaviours need particular consideration these will be factored in at the planning/risk-assessment stage, and appropriate staff support and other resources will be arranged to enable as full access as possible to the planned trip/activities.

Planning:

- Staff should think about their planning being SAGED:
Staff: who is going; what is their experience; individual staff members' strengths and weaknesses; etc
Activity: what activities are planned; how accessible are they; what resources are required; duration of activities; additional costs; etc
Group: personalities; individual strengths and weaknesses; meeting individual needs; compatibility; support needs; behaviour; medical; etc
Environment: terrain; accessibility; weather; etc
Distance: how far from school; distance of activities from main site; transport issues; cost; etc

Risk assessments:

- Generic risk assessments for a wide variety of activities are available on the EVC Website
- These generic risk assessments must be made specific to your visit and used on the trip as guidance for all leaders
- Individual risk assessment may be required. This should be used when individual students may be at risk due to behavioural / medical conditions and extraordinary provision may have to be made to accommodate them safely on a visit.
- There is no set adult:pupil ratio. This will entirely depend on the nature of the trip planned and the specific needs of the individuals taking part
- Pre-visits to the site venue are usually necessary, unless sufficient information can be gleaned through direct contact with the venue/activity provider and internet
- Where appropriate, as part of the learning process, pupils may be involved in thinking about risk assessments associated with the proposed visit

Consent:

- Parents/carers must give their written consent for any visit that lasts beyond the usual school day and for all Category C trips
- It is still good professional practice to inform parents of intended trips, whilst their consent may not be required

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Safeguarding:

- All staff accompanying pupils on a visit will naturally have a DBS. Parents and other volunteers may accompany pupils on a trip but they should not be left in sole charge of a pupil or group of pupils at any time
- **For all other safeguarding issues please see the Wren Spinney Safeguarding Policy and Appendix, below**

Charging:

- **For all issues related to charging, please see appendix 4, below and the school's Charging and Remissions policy**

Administering medication when on a school visit:

- There is no requirement to administer medication – staff undertake this with goodwill.
- A medication trained member of staff accompanying the students should take responsibility for this.
- Prescribed medicines must be in the box that they originally came in with the prescribed dosage and students name clearly labelled and handed in to staff before embarking. Parents must sign to say that they have handed this medication to the member of staff.
- Any invasive procedures cannot be carried out by school staff and parents should contact school as soon as possible if their child needs this provision and wishes to go on a visit.
- Any non prescription medicines must also be in clearly named containers and handed in to staff before departure. Parents must also sign to say that they have handed these over.
- Every time the designated member of staff administers any medication it should be recorded on the relevant sheet and witnessed.

Insurance:

- The LA insurance policy covers most eventualities – a copy of this is held at school.
- Sometimes the visit provider may include insurance in the price of the visit. In this case the county policy will also remain in effect. NB. Claims can only be made from one company.

Hospitalisation or need to see a medical professional:

- If a student needs professional medical attention whilst away they will be accompanied by an adult member of the visit staff (who will all have been DBS checked). Preferably this adult will be of the same gender as the student but if this is not possible then an adult of the opposite gender will remain with them.
- In European Union countries it is strongly advised that all students take their European Health Insurance Cards with them so that they are entitled to the same medical care as residents of that country. If they do not have these the visit leader will need to pay for their treatment and claim these expenses back from the insurance company.

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Critical incidents during Residential and International visits

If a critical incident occurs during a visit the group leader will contact the designated member of the leadership team who will then contact the Local Authority.

To contact Emergency Planning: 01604 236844 or out of hours 07785 292 851 / 07659 182 932

A suggested **Emergency Advice Card** to be taken on visits, available from Mike Tebbutt or Toby Widdicombe.

Policy written by Toby Widdicombe (EVC)

Date: May 2024

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Appendix 1



Checklist/Planning Tool for outdoor activity education and residential trips

Things To Do	Tick When Completed
Consult the Headteacher or the Educational Visits Co-ordinator on the nature of the trip and complete a proposal form to seek approval for the trip.	
Book the centre and agree on the aims of the trip. Check whether the centre is licensed and check the list of qualified instructors.	
Keep a journey file, which contains a copy of all letters, lists and information given to parents.	
On obtaining approval, ensure that all details are written in school diary.	
The leader should identify staff willing to accompany the trip, and ensure appropriate ratios and a gender balance.	
The leader should make a preliminary visit to the centre to become familiar with the facilities.	
Work out a budget for the trip and ensure that there are sufficient funds, making allowances for unforeseen developments.	

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Send a letter to parents outlining the cost and nature of the trip. Ensure that you have consent forms, signed by parents/guardians. (NB No pupil can participate in an activity without consent.) Ask for details of pupils' medical (NB then you will need latest detail immediately prior to the visit) and dietary needs. Parents sign form giving consent for staff member to administer medication.	
Book transport. If the school minibus is to be used, ensure that you have sufficient appropriately qualified Midas Assessed drivers.	
Make arrangements for the collection and counting of money. Ensure that pupils receive any appropriate grant/pupil premium support. Arrange for cash float.	
Discuss details with Heads of Year/SLT staff of the pupils going on the visit.	
Produce a programme planner which describes a programme for each day, supervision details, alternative plans where needed and emergency arrangements.	
Carry out and produce risk assessments; submit these to the school EVC.	
Approximately one month before the trip, arrange a meeting with parents to discuss arrangements, the expected standard of behaviour and all final details.	
Check location and contact details of nearest hospital(S)	
Arrange for the EVC or a senior member of staff to act as a contact person while you are away. Give him/her a full list of pupil contact details.	
Hold a meeting of all staff involved to arrange supervision duties and other matters. Establish a code of conduct.	
Ensure arrangements are in place for pupils you are usually responsible for who are not going on trip.	
Ensure catering team are informed of any requests/special arrangements.	
Ensure plans are in place for parents/carers collecting pupils; confirm plans for keeping in touch with parents regarding delays/expected arrival time	

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Plan for rest/toilet/food stops, as appropriate.	
On the day of the trip, check: medication; first aid; critical incident forms; emergency contact numbers; going out form personal care items; emergency blankets; food/drink; route; fuel; money. Ensure staff know which pupils they are responsible for	
Make sure you are familiar with the emergency procedures to be adopted if an accident happens.	
Following the trip:	
Medication returned and signed in	
Vehicle forms signed; keys returned	
After the trip, evaluate the programme.	
Report any accidents/problems to the EVC or a senior member of staff.	
Submit receipts and remaining cash to the school business manager	

Signed:

Position:

Name (print):

Date:

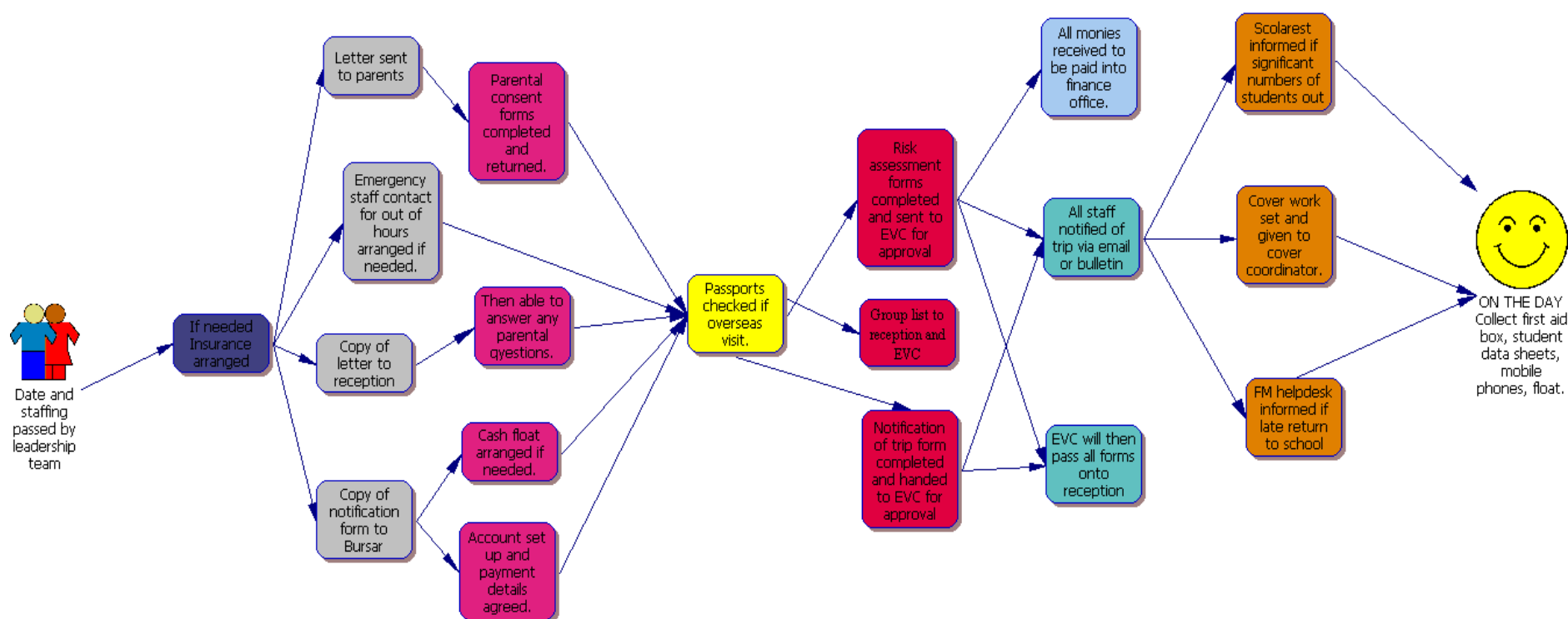
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NB: IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ALL RECEIPTS ARE RETAINED AND WHEN BACK AT SCHOOL SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL BUSINESS

MANAGER. STAFF CANNOT BE REIMBURSED FOR EXPENSES WITHOUT RECEIPTS.

FLOW CHART FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS



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Appendix 3: Safeguarding

It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader, Group Leaders, and all other staff and adults involved, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people during outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom.

Such visits and activities have many benefits but there are also potential safeguarding risks which should be considered during the planning process.

Visits Leaders should ensure that they are informed of any children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable or have specific safeguarding needs, and ensure that other staff/adults are made aware as necessary.

Overnight stays

Where activities and visits involve overnight stays, careful consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements, taking into account issues of privacy and child protection. Children, young people, staff and parents should be informed of sleeping arrangements prior to the start of the trip. Careful attention should be given to ensuring safe staff/participant ratios and to the gender mix of staff.

New places and new people

A key benefit of off-site visits is that children and young people have the opportunity to explore new places and meet new people. This may leave them vulnerable unless they are adequately prepared and appropriate measures have been put in place to control any significant risks.

Relationships and professional behaviour

During outdoor learning, off-site visits and learning outside the classroom, relationships between staff and participants are often less formal than in the usual school or workplace. Young people may also build relationships with each other and with other adults and young people from outside the group, such as students from another school, activity instructors or members of the public. This can have many positive benefits, but it also brings risks, of which all staff involved should be made aware. Adults are in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries. They are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. They should operate, and be seen to operate, in an open and transparent way. The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

Staff should:

- always be publicly open when working with children and young people, and avoid situations where they and an individual child or young person are completely unobserved
- when physical touching is required (e.g. when coaching an activity or fitting a climbing harness), seek permission and do it openly – ideally with other staff present

- comfort or reassure a distressed child or young person in an age-appropriate way, whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries
- follow their employer's reporting procedures if a child or young person makes a disclosure of abuse Staff should not:
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or horseplay
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form
- Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or young person, even in fun

Mobile communications and social media

Mobile phones, smartphones and social media such as Facebook, Twitter and messaging services can be very useful in organising visits. For example, they can be used for keeping parents informed about the progress of a residential visit, about changes in arrangements such as travel times, or in the event of an emergency. They can also present some challenges and risks, of which staff should be aware.

- Comments and/or photographs shared by students or staff on social media can appear very different when seen in another context. What appears at the time as a bit of harmless fun, or as a joke within the group, can easily become very damaging to either the individual who is the butt of the joke, or to the reputation of the establishment, students and staff when seen in another context by parents, colleagues or members of the public. Once these things are shared by other users on the social media they become very difficult to remove.
- Allowing personal information to circulate on social media about vulnerable individuals (such as information about where they are spending a residential visit), can pose risks.
- Smartphones may give access to unsuitable web content.
- Individuals may be vulnerable to cyber-bullying.
- It is recommended that:
- Any visit behaviour agreement, particularly for residential visits, addresses the issue of social media use either through applying existing establishment policies or by laying down some basic ground rules.
- Any such policy about the use of social media should take into account whether any children or young people are particularly vulnerable or have specific safeguarding needs.
- Children and young people should be made aware of the risks in an age-appropriate way.
- Staff should take care to keep confidential their personal information, phone numbers, social media profiles, etc.
- Staff should not engage in private texting or messaging with group members.
- Photographs of children or staff taken during visits should not be displayed on social networking sites.

See also the school's related policies: Acceptable use; code of conduct; data protection; internet; mobile phones; positive handling; safeguarding and child protection; volunteers policy

Appendix 4: Charging

Charging for school activities

Local authorities, maintained schools and academies must take account of the law relating to charging for school activities, as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996.

General Principles

No charges may be made unless the governing body of the school or local authority has drawn up a charging policy giving details of the optional extras or board and lodging that they intend to charge for, and a remissions policy.

Schools and local authorities must not charge for:

- education provided during school hours.
- education provided outside school hours if it is part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- transport provided in connection with an educational visit.

Schools and local authorities may charge for optional extras, which include:

- education provided outside of school time that is not:
 - a) part of the National Curriculum.
 - b) part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
 - c) part of religious education.
- board and lodging for a pupil on a residential visit, except to parents in receipt of certain benefits (broadly equivalent to those which qualify children for Free School Meals).

Definition of “School Time” and “Non-school Time”

Where an activity or visit takes place partly during and partly outside normal school hours, the Education Act 1996 prescribes a basis for determining whether the activity is deemed to take place either “in” or “out” of school hours. This depends first on whether the venture is residential or non-residential.

Single Day (Non-Residential) Activities

A non-residential activity is deemed to take place during school hours if 50% or more of the activity occurs during school hours (including any travelling).

Where less than 50% of the activity falls during school hours, the venture is deemed to take place in nonschool time. An example might be an activity that requires pupils to leave school an hour or so earlier during the afternoon and which does not end until late in the evening.

Residential visits

If the number of school sessions taken up by the visit is equal to or greater than 50% of the number of half days spent on the visit, it is deemed to have taken place during school hours (even if some activities take place late in the evening). Whatever the starting and finishing times of the school day, regulations

require that the school day is divided into 2 sessions. A “half day” means any period of 12 hours ending with noon or midnight on any day.

Example 1: Visit during school hours

Pupils are away from noon on Wednesday to 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 9 half days including 5 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place during school hours.

Example 2: Visit outside school hours

Pupils are away from school from noon on Thursday until 9pm on Sunday. This counts as 7 half days including 3 school sessions, so the visit is deemed to have taken place outside school hours.

Voluntary Contributions

The restrictions on charging do not prohibit the Local Authority or school from seeking voluntary contributions in support of an activity or visit. Such contributions must, however, be genuinely voluntary. Consequently, it must be made clear to parents that there is no obligation to contribute, and students must not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution.

It is important to provide written information to Parents. This should explain the nature of the proposed activity or visit, the likely value in educational terms and the financial contribution per student which would be required if the activity were to take place. The information should emphasise that there is no obligation to contribute and that no student will be excluded because parents are unwilling or unable to contribute. However, it must be made equally clear whether the activity or visit is likely to be cancelled if there are insufficient contributions. There is no limit to the level of voluntary contribution, nor is there any restriction on the way in which such contributions may be used. Thus, voluntary contributions may be used to subsidise students of lesser means and to pay the travel and accommodation costs of accompanying teachers.

Summary of Permissible Charges

The extent to which charges may be levied is dependent upon the answers to the following questions:

1. Is the activity or visit regarded as a statutory requirement?
2. Is the activity or visit to be held in school time?

If the answer to either question is “yes”, the only charges that may be levied relate to the cost of board and lodging. No charges may be levied for either the travel or the educational activities.

If the answer to both questions is “no”, the activity or visit is an "optional extra" and the full cost may be levied. However, any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity or visit, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge.

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Further information

Government guidance on charging for school activities is available at the following website. This includes details of the benefits which exempt parents from being charged.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charging-for-school-activities>