

Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Policy

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1 Introduction

The Cavendish School acknowledges the immense educational value of off-site visits, outdoor learning and related activities to young people, and requires all such events to be properly planned, managed and approved. Educational visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the headteacher or other designated member of staff.

Safely managed educational visits and outdoor learning with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum and a vital part of this school. Visits give the opportunity to extend pupils' learning, enrich their appreciation and extend their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. Visits can be the catalyst for contextual learning, improved engagement with learning, increasing academic performance and a lifetime interest. Outdoor learning and visits are to be encouraged.

'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development.'

(Ofsted – 'Learning Outside the Classroom: How far should you go?', 2008, <http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Ofsted-Report-Oct-2008.pdf>)

'Education in its broadest sense is not just about delivering a curriculum. It is about giving children the chance to extend their lifeskills. It is about developing their confidence. It is about fostering their resilience and sense of responsibility. And – let us not forget- it is about the enjoyment, engagement and excitement about venturing out into the real world, with all its capacity for uncertainty, surprise, stimulation and delight.'

Tim Gill, Nothing ventured...Balancing risks and benefits in the outdoors, 2010, English Outdoor Council, p22.

There are a huge number of benefits to learning outside of the classroom. For example, following a four-year research programme based in the SW of England involving 125 schools, Natural England found that:

- 95% of young people enjoyed participating in outdoor activities/learning
- 92% of young people said it helped with their engagement with learning
- 93% of young people reported that it helped develop their social skills
- 85% of young people felt that there was a positive impact on their behaviour

The research also highlighted that learning outdoors:

- Had a positive impact on both pupil and staff health and wellbeing
- Encouraged the development of a number of features of character education such as:
 1. Confidence and self-esteem
 2. Social Skills
 3. Engagement with learning
 4. Behaviour
- Impacted on attainment by encouraging the four foundations for learning outlined above

'Natural Connections Demonstration Project: Final Report', 2016, produced by Natural England, <http://tinyurl.com/h8vwznz>

There are enormous benefits to be gained from broadening pupils' horizons and raising aspirations through a wide range of educational visits that directly support the school curriculum such as fieldwork, visits to historical and cultural sites, visits abroad and sporting activities / tours. Many of these activities form a core element of the wider Enrichment Programme offered by TCS. This programme is aimed at ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential in terms of employment, further education and becoming a thriving member of society.

1.1 Purpose

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

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

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- ∞ Every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from outdoor learning and educational visits;
- ∞ All visits are safe, well planned, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of those taking part;
- ∞ The school identifies roles, responsibilities, training, monitoring and support for those from the school working in this area;
- ∞ The School Policy for Educational Visits and outdoor learning keeps up to date with further advice;
- ∞ DfE Health and Safety Advice is met;
- ∞ When further advice is sought, it comes from technically competent people.

Educational visits should be available to all of the pupils concerned, and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given, especially when selecting venues and organising transport, to any pupils who have some sensory impairment or physical handicap. Just as all other elements in course programmes, educational visits should have clear, relevant and achievable aims and objectives which should be communicated clearly in the trip application.

A major consideration in the organisation of any visit must be the safety of the participants, and in this, as in all other respects, both the Local Authority (LA), guidelines and appropriate TCS policies must be complied with. The minimum adult-to-pupil ratio is dependent on the nature of the visit and the age of the pupils - staff must therefore check that they comply with all TCS and LA requirements and regulations. The organiser must be satisfied that the venue is a suitable one, with all that this entails, and, where applicable, that any officials from the venue who will be involved in the visit, are qualified and dependable.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the duty of care and the safeguarding of pupils at TCS are fulfilled at all times whilst they are undertaking such activities. This responsibility also extends to the members of staff and volunteers involved in supervising outdoor activities.

2 Legal Framework

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 made under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 require employers to:

- ∞ assess the risks of activities
- ∞ introduce measures to control those risks
- ∞ inform their employees about the measures

In addition, employees must:

- ∞ take responsibility for their own and others' safety
- ∞ co-operate with their employers over safety matters
- ∞ carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions
- ∞ inform the employer of any serious risks

These responsibilities apply to all Cavendish School visits.

2.1 Duty of Care

Where a non-specialist or non-professional adult takes on responsibility for the supervision of young people, the legal expectation of the standard of care is described as that of a 'reasonable person'. Originally, the standard of care expected of school staff was described as being in loco parentis: in place of a prudent parent.

When the adult taking on the duty of care has a particular expertise or specialist knowledge, then the law may expect a higher standard of care – that of the 'reasonable professional'.

For an employer the standard is somewhat higher, as they are required to have safety management systems in place to ensure 'as far as is reasonably practicable' that people are not harmed by their activities. Those establishments which undertake the care, supervision or control of vulnerable people (including children) have, in certain circumstances, a non-delegable duty of care and so are not merely required to 'take reasonable care' of those in their charge but to ensure **'that reasonable care is taken'**.

3 Provision of OEAP National Guidance

The Cavendish School has formally adopted the national online guidance resource [Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel \(OEAP\) National Guidance](http://oeapng.info/) (**Guidance for the Management of Off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activities**) which is available at:

<http://oeapng.info/>

It is a legal expectation that employees **must** work within their employer's guidance; therefore, TCS employees must follow the requirements of "OEAP National Guidance", as well as the requirements of this Policy Statement.

Where an employee commissions Outdoor Learning or an Off-site visit activity, they must ensure that the supplier/commissioned agent has:

- ∞ Systems and procedures in place to ensure that the standards are not less than those required by OEAP National Guidance.

3.1 Scope and Remit

The National Guidance (NG) document Section 1 **"Basic Essentials MUST Read - Status and Remit"** clarifies the range of employees whose work requires them to use the guidance. In summary, it applies to employees whose work involves any one of the following:

- ∞ direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- ∞ direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of Educational visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC)
- ∞ facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- ∞ deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;

This applies regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods. For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the NG document: Section 3 **"Underpinning Legal Framework"**

3.2 Ensuring Understanding of Basic Requirements

The Cavendish School is required to ensure that its employees are provided with;

- ∞ appropriate guidance relating to visits and LOfC activity;
- ∞ employer-led training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood;
- ∞ suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated;
- ∞ access to advice, support and further training from an appointed Adviser that has proven expertise and professional understanding of the guidance, the training and expectations set by current good practice.

The appropriate guidance for the management of outdoor learning and educational visits at The Cavendish School is the National Guidance web site www.oeapng.info

The relevant training courses are

1. Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Training - this establishment is required to have a current, trained EVC in post. , **Fran Sandall (Senior Administrator) is currently TCS's EVC.**
2. Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Revalidation – EVC's are required to undertake a formal revalidation from time to time. Currently this is every three years.
3. Visit Leader Training – this is strongly recommended for all those who lead visits and off site activities. This may also include role specific training / assessment courses.

For the purposes of day-to-day updating of information, The Cavendish School's EVC and Visit / Activity Leaders are directed to the posting of "Information Updates" from Cambridgeshire County Council on Evolve. Where an employee experiences problems with finding the material they are looking for, or require clarification or further help and guidance, they should contact their Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), or the Outdoor Education Adviser

The Outdoor Education Adviser for the Academy is: **Stephen Brown**

Contact Details: stephen.brown@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Office phone. **01480 379677**

Office Email outdoor.education@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

3.3 Approval of Activities and Visits

3.3.1 Categorisation

Every off-site visit or outdoor activity must be either notified or approved by the Head of School before the event takes place.

To assist in the planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits, The Cavendish School employs the EVOLVE web-based management system. As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources and information, staff records and visit history, gateway access for parents, etc.

EVOLVE must be used to plan and approve all visits. The Cavendish School uses an online system for notification and approval called Evolve. It is a requirement that visit planners use the Evolve system; for further advice and help using the system, staff should see the EVC.

For the purposes of approval, off-site visits are classified into 3 zones, see figure 1 for a summary:

Zone 1 – Local and regular activities which are defined in this policy in terms of the nature of the activity and their location; for example, sports fixtures, swimming, local parks, places of worship, libraries, theatre, cinema, city centre, museums, allotments etc

All of these visits MUST be entered on EVOLVE. One application can cover a range of similar visits or a series of activities.

For the purposes of this policy, the establishment defines **Zone 1** ('regular and routine' visits that take place in the 'local' area as part of a planned programme of activity over a given period of time and within the school day) as follows:

- ∞ *Those activities that take place as part of a planned curriculum. Such activities might include: Visits to Libraries, Art Galleries, Swimming Pools and Leisure Centres, City Schools, Sports Fixtures, and activities on the delivery site of a non-adventurous nature;*

That can operate within the following locations (for example):

- ∞ *Within the local neighbourhood or local built-up area, town or city,*

Beyond these areas of working, the visit becomes a **Zone 2** visit. Staff should be trained in the operation of this policy in relation to Zone 1 visits.

Zone 2 – Usually termly or less common visits to attractions or locations beyond the ‘local’ area; for example, visits to the seaside, major visitor attractions, UK cities etc.

All of these visits MUST be entered on EVOLVE and will require the approval of the OVC and Head of School.

Zone 3 – Includes: **all residential visits, visits abroad** and activities in **hazardous environments** or involving **‘adventurous’ activities**, see **Figure 2** for more detail.

All of these visits MUST be approved using EVOLVE and will require the approval of the OVC and Head of School .

3.3.2 Political issues and views

Any viewpoints or political issues that may be brought to the attention of pupils on a trip/visit must have due consideration within the whole experience and curriculum. Where this happens, there must be evidence, within either the curriculum or teachers’ planning, that this has been addressed to ensure balanced points of opposing views.

3.4 Risk Management

The Cavendish School has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an “acceptable” or “tolerable” level. This requires that proportional (suitable and sufficient) risk management systems are in place, requiring TCS to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. The Cavendish School strongly recommends a “Risk-Benefit Assessment” approach, whereby the starting point for any risk 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”. HSE endorse this approach through their “Principles of Sensible Risk Management” and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves.

There is no legal requirement to produce a risk assessment in a particular format; but there is a legal requirement for the process to be recorded and for suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual, or harm several people.

The Cavendish School through the EVC have placed suitable templates on EVOLVE and on the staff shared area under trips and visits.

National Guidance document Section 4 - Risk. Risk Management an overview

3.5 First Aid

The Cavendish school already have in place a risk assessment which determines their first aid provision on site. Off-site provision should simply be an extension of this.

The determination of the appropriate requirements should take into account:

- ∞ The nature of the activity.
- ∞ The nature of the group e.g. any underlying medical issues with pupils or staff, staff:pupil ratio etc
- ∞ The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- ∞ The extent to which the group will be isolated from the support of the emergency services (both in terms of distance, response time, reliability of mobile phone signal).

Qualified first-aiders may not be necessary for all off-site activities and visits, such as some Zone 1 visits, and if this is the case a specific risk assessment must be undertaken and attached to the EVOLVE form for that visit.

However, a basic level of first aid support must be available at all times: this could be someone who previously held a first aid qualification; someone who is confident and competent to give basic first aid due to experience, or access to nearby first aid support or external first aiders including the emergency services.

If suitably qualified first aiders are attending a visit, a specific risk assessment will not be necessary and the assessment will be part of the overall generic risk assessment for the visit.

3.6 Medication

Children and young people with medical needs should be fully included in activities and visits. Individual risk assessments may be necessary, and reasonable adjustments should be made to enable individuals to participate, unless evidence from a clinician states otherwise. For example, a carer or an additional supervisor such as a parent or other volunteer might be needed to accompany a particular child.

A copy of any healthcare plans and emergency procedures should accompany the individual.

Parents should be asked to provide written details of medical conditions including mental health issues and of any medication required (including instructions on dosage/times), and for their consent for staff to administer medication, or for their child to administer their own if this is appropriate.

Insurance policies should be checked to ensure that they cover staff and participants with pre-existing medical needs.

Arrangements should be made for taking sufficient supplies of any necessary medicines on visits, and for ensuring that they are safely labelled, transported, stored (refrigerated if necessary), controlled and administered, and that records are kept of their use.

All staff supervising visits should be made aware of individuals' medical needs and any medical emergency procedures. This will be done via summary sheets, containing details of each individual's needs and any other relevant information, to be held by all staff.

It is illegal to give a medicine which has been prescribed for one person to another.

3.6.1 Asthma Inhalers

Schools are allowed to hold salbutamol inhalers, and to use these in an emergency if they have written parental consent to do so. Use of emergency inhalers should be subject to a protocol forming part of the establishment's medical conditions policy. Government guidance is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-asthma-inhalers-for-use-in-schools

The well-being of children and young people should always be given the highest priority: if a child suffers from a life-threatening asthma attack and does not have their own inhaler, then the benefit of giving a blue inhaler from elsewhere is likely to outweigh the risks of not doing so.

3.6.2 Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2017 allow schools to buy adrenaline auto-injector devices (EpiPen etc) without prescription. These must be for administration to a pupil at the school who is known to be at risk of anaphylaxis and requires the product in an emergency. Use of emergency auto-injectors are covered within the medical conditions policy.

Such 'spare' auto-injectors should not be seen as a replacement for the young person's own medication. All young people at risk of anaphylaxis should carry two auto-injector devices at all times. Government guidance is available at:

3.7 Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a visit or an offsite activity. If an accident occurs the priorities are to:

- ∞ Assess the situation
- ∞ Safeguard the remaining members of the party
- ∞ Attend to the casualty(ies)
- ∞ Inform the emergency services
- ∞ Inform the SLT contact
 - a. For minor injuries, the visit leader/supervisor should:**
 - ∞ Arrange for the visit first aider/s to give appropriate assistance
 - ∞ Phone the Principal or SLT member so they can inform the parent/carer of the injury
 - ∞ Fill in an accident form on return to the Academy

 - b. For injuries which could have serious implications the visit leader/supervisor should:**
 - ∞ Arrange for the visit first aider/s to give appropriate assistance
 - ∞ Call for an ambulance
 - ∞ If an ambulance is called and you need to go to hospital with the injured pupil try to find out which hospital so that you can inform the SLT contact who will in turn inform the parent/carer (do not call the parent/carer yourself)
 - ∞ Phone the SLT contact – mobile numbers will be given to the visit leader
 - ∞ Arrange for a member of staff to remain at the hospital with the pupil until an SLT member arrives
 - ∞ The visit leader must write a full written account of events ASAP with photographs of the scene etc. if safe and possible to do so
 - ∞ Complete an accident report form on return to the school

 - c. The Principal/SLT member will take responsibility for:**
 - ∞ Phoning the parent/carer – the visit leader/supervisor should not make this call
 - ∞ Going to the hospital to be with the injured pupil and taking over the responsibility from the visit leader/supervisor. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to remain with the pupil at the hospital until the Principal/SLT member arrives
 - ∞ This information will help if there is an investigation and/or insurance claim

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has:

- ∞ either suffered a life threatening injury or fatality;
- ∞ is at serious risk;
- ∞ or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

As an employer, TCS is committed to providing emergency procedures to support staff in the event of a critical incident. Cambridgeshire County Council Children's Services Learning offer this support to all Cambridgeshire Academies as a free service, and this should be reflected in school plans.

NG documents **Section 4 "Emergencies"**

To activate support from The Cavendish School, visit leaders, and other staff should carry at least two numbers of SLT members who can activate the school Critical Incident Plan if required.

These numbers should be carried by leaders at all times during an off-site activity but should only be used in the case of a genuine emergency. Under no circumstances should these numbers be given to young people or to their parents or guardians.

3.8 Monitoring

As an employer The Cavendish School ensures that there is sample monitoring of the visits and outdoor learning activities undertaken by its staff. Such monitoring should be in keeping with the recommendations of National Guidance. There is a clear expectation that the monitoring function is a delegated task, principally carried out through systems put in place by the EVC.

NG document **Section 3 "Monitoring"**

3.9 Assessment of Leader Competence

National Guidance provides clear advice regarding the assessment of leader competence. It is an expectation of this Policy that all leaders and assistants have been formally assessed as competent to undertake such responsibilities as they have been assigned in line with the NG guidance. Staff should maintain their training and qualifications. For D of E leaders, there are clear established standards for leading expeditions, and these are published on Evolve.

NG document **Section 3 "Assessment of Leaders"**

3.10 Role-specific Requirements and Recommendations

National Guidance sets out clear and detailed responsibilities and functions of specific roles that relate to roles to be found within TCS management structures. These are:

- ∞ Eastern Learning Alliance (Employers)
- ∞ Local Governing Body
- ∞ Headteacher
- ∞ EVC
- ∞ Visit or Activity leader
- ∞ Assistant Visit Leader
- ∞ Parents/Volunteer Adult helper

In addition to the National Guidance:

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- ∞ Approving staff requests for educational visits
- ∞ Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training

The EVC's role is to:

- ∞ Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- ∞ Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits and designate a suitable trip lead for each visit
- ∞ Assess outside activity providers
- ∞ Advise the headteacher and governing board when they're approving trips
- ∞ Access the necessary training, advice and guidance
- ∞ Evaluate all visits once complete, from planning to the visit itself, and use this to improve future arrangements

Every educational visit will have a member of staff designated as the trip lead. The trip lead will:

- ∞ Plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to pupils, staff and volunteers
- ∞ Assign staff and volunteer roles, as needed
- ∞ Make sure the school has accurate and up-to-date information about the trip destination, to be used in risk assessments
- ∞ Make sure the needs of everyone taking part are considered, including co-ordinating any additional support needed
- ∞ Make sure parents and carers are given accurate information about educational visits, including any costs or necessary equipment not supplied by the school or a third party
- ∞ Communicate key details about the visit and all locations to staff, pupils and parents/carers, including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour

- ∞ Make sure staff are capable and able to fulfil their roles at all times while responsible for pupils and others

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

- ∞ Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher
- ∞ Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- ∞ Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- ∞ Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- ∞ Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- ∞ Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate
- ∞ Comply with the ELA Code of Conduct, with particular reference to Section 14.

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

- ∞ Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- ∞ Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- ∞ Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

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

- ∞ Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- ∞ Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- ∞ Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

3.11 Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits

TCS leaders, Curriculum Planners, EVCs and Visit/Activity Leaders must take account of the legal framework relating to charging, voluntary contributions and remissions as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996.

NG document **Section 3 Charges for Off-site Activities**

3.12 Vetting Checks

The Cavendish School employees who work frequently or intensively with, or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process. However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) in itself, is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common-sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered.

NG document: **Section 3 "Vetting and DBS Checks"**

3.13 Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision - SAGED

In general terms, the Law does not prescribe activity-specific staffing ratios; but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is "effective". Effective supervision should be determined by proper consideration of:

- ∞ Staff Competence, experience, qualifications (if required)
- ∞ Activity - nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved)

- ∞ Group - age (including the developmental age) of the group; ability of the group (including special learning needs, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc);
- ∞ Environment - nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions,
- ∞ Distance away from the base
- ∞ However, as an exception to the above, Ofsted and DfE guidance prescribe ratios for Early Years.

NG document **Section 4 “Ratios and Effective Supervision “Group management and Supervision”**

3.14 Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management.

If the visit is led and managed by a provider, then a variety of approaches can reduce the need to pre visit. Equally there is no need to receive the risk assessments from a provider that holds one or more of the below accreditations.

It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Examples of such schemes include:

- ∞ The LOTC Quality Badge
- ∞ AALS licensing
- ∞ Adventuremark
- ∞ NGB centre approval schemes (applicable where the provision is a single, specialist activity).

The Cavendish School takes the view that where a provider holds one of the above accreditations, there should be no need to seek further assurances.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit.

This policy clarifies the circumstances where a preliminary visit is a requirement.

1. Pre-visit are recommended for visits where there is a high complexity factor and the visit has not happened previously.
2. Additionally required when the visit or activities are solely led and managed by school staff.

Residentials, visits abroad, exchange visits, adventure led by school staff all have aspects of complexity.

NG document **Section 4 “Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances”**

3.15 Insurance for Off-site Activities and Visits

Employer’s Liability Insurance is a statutory requirement and The Cavendish School holds a policy that indemnifies it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury suffered by any person employed by it. This cover should extend to those persons who are acting in a voluntary capacity as assistant supervisors. TCS also holds Public Liability insurance, indemnifying it against all claims for compensation for bodily injury from persons not in its employ, as well as for the accidental loss of, or damage caused to, property. Employees (as agents of the employer) are indemnified against all such claims, as are voluntary helpers acting under the direction of the employer’s staff. The indemnity covers activities such as off-site activities and visits organised by staff for which the employer is responsible. Some level of Personal Accident Insurance is provided for all TCS employees in the course of their employment, providing predetermined benefits in the event of an accident. However, Visit/ Activity Leaders should be advised that they

should consider taking out less limited personal accident cover privately, or obtain cover through a professional association.

The EVC should contact the Insurers to seek clarification of the above, including any circumstances requiring early notification of specialist activities to the insurer. They should also ensure they have obtained current information regarding any special policies that may be available to offer more comprehensive cover.

NG document [Section 4 “Insurance”](#)

[3.16 Inclusion](#)

Every effort should be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. As a specialist school, all visits will cater for young people with special needs: every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

The Cavendish School takes all reasonably practicable measures to include all young people, regardless of their special educational needs.

The principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits and LOtC thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- ∞ an entitlement to participate
- ∞ accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- ∞ integration through participation with peers

Employers, Curriculum Planners, EVCs and Visit Leaders should be aware of the extent to which Inclusion is or is not a legal issue. Under the Equality Act 2010, (previously the Disability Discrimination Act 1995), it is unlawful to:

- ∞ treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- ∞ fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

NG document: [Section 3 “Inclusion as a Legal Issue”](#)

[3.17 Good Practice Requirements](#)

To be deemed competent, a TCS EVC/Activity Leader, or Assistant Leader must be able to demonstrate the ability to operate to the current standards of recognized good practice for that role. **All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities.** National Guidance sets a clear standard to which IVC visit leaders must work.

The guidance states: *“a competent Visit /Activity Leader (or an Assistant Leader where they may take sole responsibility for a sub-group) requires:*

- ∞ Knowledge and understanding of their employer’s guidance supported by establishment-led training.
- ∞ Knowledge and understanding of establishment procedures supported by a structured induction process specified by the establishment.
- ∞ Knowledge and understanding of the staff, the activity, the group and the venue.
- ∞ Appropriate experience
- ∞ In some circumstances (e.g. first aid, adventurous activities) a formally accredited qualification.”

Staff participating in off-site activities and visits must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff. The EVC should view the original documents and certificates when verifying leader’s qualifications, and not rely on photocopies.

Where a Volunteer Helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to of a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the Risk-Benefit assessment.

NG document **Section 4 “Good Practice Basics”**

3.18 Transport

Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it and establishments must follow the specialist guidance provided and all national and local regulatory requirements must be followed. Parents should be informed as to the mode of transport being provided for an educational visit.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey, giving proper consideration to issues of driver-distraction when considering what supervision is required for the specific group of passengers being transported in a minibus.

The Visit Leader should ensure that coaches and buses are hired from a reputable company.

Transporting young people in private cars requires careful consideration. Where this occurs, there should be recorded procedures.

3.18.1 Travel by Coach, Minibus and Private Car

Seat belts must be provided and these must be worn whilst travelling on a school visit. Staff must check before the vehicle is in motion and during the journey that belts are fastened and remind pupils that these must be worn throughout the journey.

3.18.2 On Foot

Pupils should walk in controlled groups. One member of staff should be at the front in control of the group, another at the back or aware of any individuals who are lagging behind. The degree of control will depend upon the nature of the group (age, ability) and the location.

3.18.3 Briefing for Pupils Prior to the Visit

It is good practice to involve pupils in the preparation and planning of any visit and take an active part in the risk management process.

As part of their preparation for the visit, pupils should be made aware of the educational benefits of the visit and the risks involved.

Prior to the visit, the pupils will be made aware of the standards expected of them (Code of Conduct), this will be appropriate for the age group attending the visit.

The visit leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- ∞ not take unnecessary risks
- ∞ follow all instructions given by any staff or supervisor
- ∞ be sensitive to people in the local environment
- ∞ watch for anything which might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone else in the group and advise the visit leader or teacher.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or the group may be withdrawn from the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways where possible. The Head of School's decision will be final in this matter.

NG document **Section 4 “Transport: General Considerations” “Transport in Minibuses” “Transport in Private Cars” “Hiring Coaches”**

3.19 Planning

Planning should reflect the consideration of legal and good practice requirements, ensuring:

- ∞ The plan is based on establishment procedures and national guidance.
- ∞ All staff (including any adult volunteer helpers) and the young people to be involved, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their role in the risk management process.
- ∞ Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained.
- ∞ Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers (making full use of national schemes that accredit that assurances have already been obtained by credible inspection regimes).
- ∞ Designated emergency contact(s) have been identified that will work on a 24/7 basis where required.
- ∞ All details of the activity provision are accessible to the emergency contact throughout the period of the activity.

It is strongly recommended that at a very early stage of the planning process, the provisional staffing team carry out an exercise in order to identify the benefits and learning outcomes that the activity (or range of activities) might achieve. If the outcomes are to be evaluated with any rigor (an Ofsted expectation), then it will be essential that these outcomes are prioritised, and appropriately targeted. A record of these outcomes will help keep the plan focussed and also be a vital part of the risk management process in providing some objectivity in a “Risk Benefit Assessment”. Once the targeted outcomes have been recorded, it will then be possible to identify appropriate on-going review and evaluation strategies, including indicators.

To reduce bureaucracy and encourage activity, the need for formal consent must be considered. When an activity is part of a planned curriculum within normal curriculum time, then a formal consent is not necessary. However, those in a position of parental responsibility need to be fully informed. Parental contributions is separate issue from consent.

The degree of complexity of a particular plan or policy (along with its supporting procedures) will need to reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity. These variables can be remembered as “SAGED” as explained below.

Staffing requirements – trained? experienced? competent? ratios?

Activity characteristics – specialist? insurance issues? licensable?

Group characteristics – prior experience? ability? behaviour? special and medical needs?

Environmental conditions – like last time? impact of weather? water levels?

Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport? residential?

NG document **Section 5 “Planning Basics”**

3.20 Informing Parent/Carers and consent

Both DfE and OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisers’ Panel) National Guidance tell us that:

Schools are not required to obtain consent from parent/carers for pupils to participate in off-site activities that take place during school hours and which are a normal part of a child’s education, such as local studies and visits to a museum or library etc. (Education Act 2002 section 29)

For further information refer to OEAP Guidance on [Parental Consent](#)

Parents/carers should be informed of such activities. This can be done through the school website, prospectus, policy, e-mail or letter home.

However, consent *is* required for visits outside normal school hours and for adventure activities. This should be supplemented by more detailed information regarding the visit or activity so that parents/carers can give ‘informed consent’ for their child to participate.

Consent for such activities can be obtained via a 'blanket consent form', which could be sent home at the start of each year. However, it may also make sense for a further 'consent' form to be sent out to cover residential, visits abroad and adventurous activities as well, as these are slightly higher risk activities. This would be more specific to the event.

General Consent Form, to act as an annual/blanket consent form

This can be used for gaining consent from parents and carers for taking pupils on visits and activities that go beyond the ‘normal’ school day. This will also cover consent for adventurous activities that take place on and away from the school site. It is recommended that parents also complete this to include local area life skills activities that occur during the school day

This could be completed annually or at the start of each term.

It would still be a requirement of schools to inform parents, nearer the time, about such visits and activities, giving greater detail of the visit/activity.

The OV3 Form highlights the information that might be covered in any communication to parents about a visit. If these visits go beyond the school day then parents and carers have a right to withdraw their children from the activity or visit.

Offsite visit Specific, to act as a specific consent form for a particular activity/visit.

This form can be used as both a consent form for a ‘specific’ activity or visit and also enables schools to update personal details of the child and emergency contacts.

Offsite visit Form - To inform parents of a visit. This could be used for visits that do not require consent as well as those that do. This covers the type of information that might be required and can be adapted by schools to fit individual requirements and formats.

All forms are available from the **Resources** section of EVOLVE.

Taking copies of consent forms on visits

There is no requirement for visit leaders to carry evidence of consent on visits in the UK, although it is recommended for day visits, residentials and adventurous activities.

Parental Consent forms **must be taken on any visit abroad.**

4 FIGURE 1

ZONES OF ACTIVITY AND LEVELS OF APPROVAL

Zone	LEVEL OF APPROVAL	ACTIVITY	ENVIRONMENT / LOCATION
1	OVC and Head of School	• Sports fixtures, within the city/ county • School Swimming – formal teaching in life-guarded pools • Regular visits to libraries, places of worship, study support centres, local parks and open spaces, local shops etc • Fieldwork in environments with no technical hazards (Local nature reserves, woods and parkland) • Visits to local/city museums	• Local parks, residential areas and shopping areas
2	OVC and Head of School	• Full Day Visits to museums, attractions and parks some distance from the Academy. (Visitor attractions, historic sites, theatre, cinema, farm visits etc) • Theme Parks and other tourist attractions • Seaside resorts • Zoos • Ice skating • Swimming in public, lifeguarded, pools • Walking in 'normal' country • London and other large cities	• Walks in 'non-remote' country Non-remote Country – enclosed farmland, fields, low land forest – not moorland, mountain (above 600m) and/or where it is possible to be more than 30 mins or 2.5km from a road or refuge • 'Water Margin' activity
3	OVC, Head of School	• Any visit/activity involving a Residential (overnight stay) element including Camping and 'school sleep overs' • Any visit abroad • Any visit involving 'adventurous activities', led either by a Centre, an outside provider or staff member (See Figure 2)	• Visits to hazardous environments • Overseas Expeditions • Any water-based activity • Any activity in winter mountain conditions • Open Country/Remote terrain more than 30mins from a road (above 600m) • Near cliffs or steep terrain • Areas subject to extremes of weather or environmental change • Swimming in non-lifeguarded pools or open water

5 FIGURE 2

DEFINITION OF ADVENTUROUS ACTIVITIES – ALL REQUIRE HEADTEACHER APPROVAL ON EVOLVE

Adventurous Activities covered by AALA Licensing

Rock Climbing Abseiling Ice Climbing Gorge Walking Ghyll Scrambling Sea Level Traversing	Canoeing Kayaking Dragon Boating Wave Skiing White-water Rafting Improvised Rafting Sailing Sailboarding Kite surfing Use of powered craft boats Windsurfing	Hillwalking – in ‘open country’ Mountaineering Fell Running Pony Trekking Off Road Cycling Off-piste Skiing	Pot-holing Mine Exploration Caving
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Adventurous Activities NOT covered by AALA Licensing

Quadbiking Go-Karts Horse Riding	Archery Rifle Shooting Fencing	Orienteering in ‘remote terrain’ Expeditions in ‘remote terrain’ Fieldwork in ‘remote terrain’ and in water.	Climbing Walls High Ropes Courses Dry Slope Skiing Grass Skiing Water Skiing Snorkeling Scuba Diving
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Please seek advice from the Outdoor Education Adviser and Head of School if you intend taking part in the following activities:

- **Paint Balling**
- **Air Sports – paragliding, parascending, gliding, parachuting**
- **activities using high ropes course**