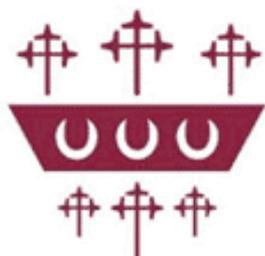


# Educational Visits



# OLNEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Head Teacher	Glenn Young
Chair of Governors Name	Katrina Rodden
Last reviewed on:	September 2023
Next review due by:	September 2024
Review Frequency	Annually
Educational Visits Coordinator.	Karl Dean

**Educational Visits Policy**

**Statement**

Olney Middle School will comply with the law, the requirements of Milton Keynes County Council and recommended best practice. This will include:

- Establishing and maintaining a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who must undertake the approved training course and will attend refresher training at least every three years.
- Offering Visit Leader Training to all staff who will be involved in off-site visits.
- Following the requirements of NCC's Visits Policy and Off-Site Visits Guidance.
- Adopting and following best practice in the 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits' document.
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### **Categories and Permission to proceed**

The County Council recognises three categories of visit:

- **Category A** – these comprise activities which present no significant risks – they should be quick and easy to organise with procedures and risk management being part of establishment policy.
- **Category B** – activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and/or location. These visits must be approved by the establishment EVC.
- **Category C** – higher risk activities which require authorisation and acknowledgement from Plumsun.

A list of activities in each category is given in appendix 1.

### **Responsibility**

See appendix 2.

### **Definitions**

Visit Leader:	Person who is in overall charge and control of the visit
Group Leader:	Person in charge of a group of children
Coach Leader:	Person in charge of a coach and responsible for ensuring accurate head counts take place. This person is also responsible for any decisions regarding the coach in the absence of the visit leader or indeed if they are the visit leader. It should be noted that the coach driver has responsibility for the coach and for safe driving – the school staff have responsibility for their group whilst on the coach.

### **Risk Assessments**

Risk assessments and risk management are legal requirements. For any visit they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during a visit and the identification of suitable and sufficient control measures. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The control measures should be understood by everyone involved. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how special educational and medical needs are to be addressed. The resulting risk assessment should be used as a 'lesson plan' or guidance document for that visit.

There are three levels of risk assessment:

- Generic risk assessments - which are likely to apply to the activity whenever and wherever it takes place. Generic risk assessments e.g. sports matches, swimming,

choir, coach, etc. exist electronically on the school's Shared Documents – they must be made specific to your individual needs.

- Visit/site specific risk assessments - the risk assessment for your visit. It can be based on a generic risk assessment and is your legal requirement. It must be produced by those staff intending to run the visit. The EVC may offer help and advice.
- Ongoing/dynamic risk assessment – dealing with circumstances as they arise during the visit.

### **Liability**

Before undertaking any educational visit, it is good practice to consider what educational objectives the visit will achieve and then how the visit will help to achieve them.

The school will organise off-site visits for pupils to places of educational interest such as museums, the theatre and galleries. Some visits may be connected to school teams playing away at other schools. We may also have visits to commercial and industrial enterprises to give pupils an insight into different types of organisations and there might also be residential visits involving overnight stays. This policy recognises the school's responsibility towards all pupils and staff during all off-site visits.

### **Planning and Supervision**

Planning must be thorough, but reasonable and proportionate. It is the duty of the EVC and/or the Headteacher to ensure that the leader of the off-site visit is competent and has suitable experience. Planning and supervisory skills of staff are tested to the full when it comes to off-site visits. Staff must take suitable precautions to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of each member of the group. This is a 24/7 responsibility and cannot be passed to a third party at any time.

### **Negligence**

All paid staff must understand their responsibilities and can be held liable for negligence whilst carrying out their professional duties. This applies to the actions of staff both on and off the school premises. Therefore, it is essential that staff who are involved in organising and taking pupils on school visits are aware of what is expected of them and know how to achieve this.

### **Preliminary Steps**

- Potential problems can be minimised by good planning and preparation.
- The establishment EVC is 'a focus of good practice' and will help and advise you.
- A pre-visit to the planned location is strongly recommended for any off-site visit to a new location.
- Approval for any visit must be gained from the EVC and Headteacher or in his absence, the Deputy Head. **If the visit should be a Category C visit**, approval must be sought from Plumsun.
- Any elements of the visit, which could present a particular hazard to the group, must be fully disclosed to parents in advance.
- Parents must give an informed consent in writing for their child to go on any visit – see detail below.

- The school must ascertain whether each potential group member is fit to participate in the planned visit.

### **Parental permission**

Parents will be asked to give blanket permission for a range of local visits which are part of the curriculum and run during normal school time. This will be done at the start of each school year. These will be **Category A visits** and **will not require separate parental permission.**

**Category B visits** are those visits which go further afield, go beyond the normal working hours or because there are complex issues which require detailed preparation. **These visits will require parental permission.**

**Category C visits** are those which are potentially hazardous and **will require parental permission.**

### **Research**

An exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a group on an off-site visit. It is also good practice to carry out a visit to and research the choice of venue for the visit to ensure that it is appropriate to the pupils concerned and of educational value. When school teams or choirs take part in events away from home a prior visit is not essential, but staff should be satisfied that all necessary facilities are available. A risk assessment for sports matches, swimming and choir visits is in place and must be used.

### **Supervision and Ratios**

It is important to have a satisfactory ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any visit and at Olney Middle School we will ensure the best possible ratio of adults to pupils that resources will allow. Factors to take into consideration include:

- gender, age and ability of group
- what additional supervision may be needed for pupils with special educational or medical needs
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in off-site supervision
- the competence of supervising adults
- the requirements of the place being visited
- duration and nature of the journey
- the behaviour of pupils
- the need for first aid cover
- the level of supervision required in the event of an emergency

Staff ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe, as they will vary according to the activity, age, group, location and the efficient use of resources. Ratios must be agreed after a risk management / assessment process has been considered.

There will always be a minimum of two teaching staff to accompany the party so that in the event of an emergency the children will remain in the custody of at least one of the

teachers. Support staff for named pupils will accompany the child on any visit where appropriate. Wherever possible, adults of both gender will accompany day and residential visits, but this is not a requirement.

Should it be necessary to invite parents to act as supervisors on an off-site visit, staff must ensure they are paired with an employed member of staff. The Visit Leader is responsible for ensuring that parent helpers are fully briefed, and receive/sign the document detailing their role and responsibilities in relation to the visit; if possible at a pre-visit meeting. It is good practice to hold a meeting for parents.

We will also take into account not only the quantity of supervising teachers on school visits, but also the experience of those accompanying the party. Newly Qualified and inexperienced members of staff will therefore go on visits with other experienced colleagues before they take charge of a school party themselves. Completion of a Visit Leader Training course does not in itself give an indication of competence – competence is decided by the Head and is based on experience gained through an apprenticeship.

Although supervision can minimise the risk of injuries to pupils, incidents are bound to occur from time to time both in and out of school. Even the best-laid plans can come to grief and although there may be the most generous supervision ratios, it is impossible to provide constant watch over every group member throughout a school visit, particularly where it involves overnight accommodation. However, teachers have a duty of care throughout the course of a school visit. We will ensure that the group is split into small units each under the close supervision of an individual member of staff, to minimise the risk of injury to pupils once the party is away from the school premises. Any accident or near miss must be reported to the EVC, recorded on the visit evaluation form and any risk assessments amended accordingly.

The Group Leaders take full responsibility for the safety of the children in their care at all times. The school rules should still be applied to ensure the discipline and control of the pupils. Regular head counts/roll calls should take place throughout the visit, especially before movement to another location. A register of names of staff and children should be kept for each vehicle in use. A copy should also be sent to the office before departure. All Coach Leaders and teachers must ensure that they have full contact details of all children. Each member of the party should wear a distinctive badge with the **school's logo**. **Children must not wear badges with their names on**. At least two mobile phones must be taken in each vehicle on every school visit. Where the group splits into smaller groups, each group must have a mobile phone and all Group Leaders provided with a list of these phone numbers so that every group is contactable.

### **Transport**

Pupils will only be transported in vehicles that have seatbelts. Risk assessments for coach journeys must include evacuation procedures with all staff understanding their role. For coach evacuation, see appendix 3.

#### **Coach Transport**

- luggage must be stored correctly and not obstruct aisles or exits, or impede the vision of the driver on long journeys, sufficient breaks must be arranged for pupils, staff and drivers.
- The security of the vehicle is the responsibility of the driver

- Seatbelts must be worn and only released when the vehicle is at its destination and stationary. Pupils should remain seated throughout the journey
- In the event of a breakdown or emergency the Evacuation of Coach Plan should be put into action.
- Staff and pupils must be aware of emergency exits and first aid and fire equipment
- provision must be made for travel sickness. Medication can only be administered with written parental consent.
- A full Risk Assessment must be completed for the relevant transport before any visit Commences.

### Transport by Car

In very extreme circumstances where there is the need for staff to carry children in their own vehicles, they will abide by the following:

- Children can only be transported by staff if the driver and vehicle comply with all aspects of the law. They must have a driving licence free from serious driving offences and have fully comprehensive insurance cover for business use.
- Children can only be carried in a car if the requirements of the seat belt legislation are met (see Appendix 4).
- The driver is responsible for making sure that pupils have a seat belt and always use it.
- Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.
- The driver must be aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the pupils in their cars.
- The driver will always be accompanied by another member of staff and never in a position where they are alone with a pupil.

### Plan B and Emergency Planning

On all visits it is essential to have a Plan B in case of programme disruption. This might be as simple as returning to school or an alternative plan of value. In the case of having to action an emergency plan, staff should contact the Headteacher to initiate the Critical Incident Plan. Take an Emergency Procedures Card on all visits – see appendix 5.

AA = Admin Assistant  
FA = Finance Assistant

Task	Deadline	Action
1. Completion of consent form for Category A visits	When child starts school	
2. Thorough research of the location. If a return visit to previously visited location, make enquiries if any changes to site etc. (read previous evaluations). 3. Discussion between Visit Leader, EVC and Headteacher about feasibility of planned visit – obtain authorisation		
4. Complete visit booking form for AA to obtain quote for coach and location. AA to check cancellation period for coach.	Minimum 7 weeks before	
5. Complete 'Notification of an Off-Site Visit' form to leave with EVC		
6. Provide AA with a copy of additional correspondence		

7. If the visit is financially viable, AA to book location and coaches. AA to prepare and send letter to parents confirming visit and requesting payment		
8. Agreement regarding pupil : teacher ratio		
9. Complete risk assessments and paper work. Submit to EVC for approval	3 weeks before	
10. For Category C visits, complete itinerary, risk assessments and evidence of emergency plans and Plan B and submit to EVC for approval	6 weeks before	
11. Complete on-line form and submit itinerary, risk assessments and evidence of emergency plans and Plan B to Plumsun for approval	4 weeks before	
12. Final risk assessments and paperwork submitted to EVC for authorisation	2 weeks before	
13. All payments received – check with AA/Business Manager	At least 1 week before	
14. Hold meeting to discuss information. Parent helpers to sign form agreeing to terms and conditions associated with visit.	1 week before	
15. Check on medications (i.e. has a child with asthma an inhaler in school, any children requiring epipens etc.)	1 week before	
16. Complete paperwork and compile information pack for each adult.	1 week before	
17. AA to contact coach company to double check the booking and also size of coaches	2 days before	
18. Gather first aid and emergency equipment. 1 person to be designated as first aider on each coach. Each group supervisor to be issued with an emergency first aid pack. Organise free packed lunches.	1 or 2 days before	
19. Gather coach travel equipment if needed (buckets lined with bags, paper towel, water etc) Blue boxes of equipment kept in medical room	1 or 2 days before	
20. Request AA to provide pupil data sheet	1 day before	
21. Confirm actual numbers of children and adults going on visit. Leave all details in school office.	On day of visit	
22. Obtain coach company telephone number and mobile number of coach driver (if possible)	On day of visit	
23. Copy of risk assessment to EVC. Shred risk assessments including those which have names, telephone numbers etc.	Immediately after visit	
24. Evaluation to be completed and associated with all letters, destination contact details and risk assessments. Copy of evaluation to EVC	1 week after Visit	

**APPENDIX 1**  
**CATEGORIES OF VISITS**  
**CATEGORY A VISITS**

Includes visits, journeys and environmental studies for which the element of risk is similar to that encountered in daily life.

- environmental and country walks
- field studies – non technical
- historic sites
- local sports tours
- sites of commercial interest
- sites of cultural interest
- walking – not in remote locations

‘Remote’:

- Any ‘moorland’ (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level)
- Any mountain, woodland and cultivated land above 600m from which it would take more than 30 minutes 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 a means for summoning help, which can offer shelter for the party in an emergency.

### **CATEGORY B VISITS**

Higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and/or location. The leader will be approved as competent by the Principal or by the EVC following guidance from Plumsun. Where appropriate a National Governing Body Award (such as Basic Expedition Leadership Award or NVQ in Activity Leadership) will be a measure of competence.

- camping – not in remote locations
- cycling – on roads or off-road terrain not in remote locations
- farm visits (female staff should be aware of additional risks to pregnancy)
- low level initiative challenges
- orienteering
- swimming lessons in off-site pools
- zoo

### **CATEGORY C VISITS**

The following are examples of potentially hazardous activities which will require approval by Plumsun. This list is not exhaustive.

- abseiling
- archery
- ballooning
- bivouacking
- boating
- building sites
- camping in remote locations
- canal visits
- canoeing
- caving/potholing
- field studies in high hazard environments (e.g. glacial, streams, beaches)

- flying
- gliding
- gorge or ghyll scrambling and river walking
- hang-gliding
- horse riding / pony trekking
- mine exploration
- motor sports
- mountain biking in remote locations
- mountain walking / scrambling
- night activities or activities in reduced / poor visibility
- overseas visits
- parachuting
- parascending
- power boating
- rafting (white-water)
- rock climbing including sea level traversing
- ropes course / adventure playgrounds
- sailing
- skiing and snowboarding (including commercially organised visits)
- sub-aqua and snorkelling
- tobogganing
- unsupervised activities including unaccompanied expeditions
- water based activities
- water based field studies
- water skiing
- windsurfing
- winter mountaineering

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Governors are responsible for:

- ensuring that the correct guidance is available
- monitoring that the school follows the policy
- ascertaining Governor training availability
- agreeing the types of visit that they should be informed about
- asking questions about a visit's educational objectives
- for ensuring that the Headteacher and EVC are supported in matters relating to educational visits
- ensuring that the Headteacher and EVC have taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include SEN pupils

The **Headteacher** is responsible for:

- approving a visit at school level
- ensuring that everyone follows this policy
- making sure training needs are met

- ensuring that the school has or has access to an appropriately trained Educational Visits Coordinator ensuring that the appropriate paperwork is completed
- reporting visits to the Governing Body ensuring inclusivity
- ensuring that best value is obtained
- ensuring that issues raised from exploratory visits are resolved before the visit takes place
- ensuring accreditation of providers
- ensuring that each visit has an appropriately competent visit leader ensuring that there is always a contingency plan
- arranging for the recording of accidents
- ensuring that all staff are aware of emergency procedures
- ensuring all visits are evaluated

The **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** will:

- fulfil the duties of Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) as outlined by both the document
- “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits” (including supplements) and by the Local Authority, in its policy and guidance for Off-site visits
- maintain his/her EVC qualifications and will be aware of requirements, changes and developments to current legislations and policy
- inform the Headteacher, Governors and staff of requirements and relevant changes to ensure that all off-site visits are properly planned and conducted

The **Educational Visits Co-ordinator** is responsible for:

- supporting the Governors and Headteacher
- organising training of staff
- checking that risk assessments are in place
- assigning competent persons to lead and supervise visits
- ensuring that DBS checks are in place
- working with the visit leader to ensure parental consent has been obtained
- organising the emergency arrangements
- approving off-site visits
- keeping records of all visits
- reviewing systems and monitoring practice

The **Visit Leader** is responsible for:

- following the agreed school and local authority policy, procedure and guidelines
- appointing a deputy
- clearly defining the roles of Group Leaders
- controlling and leading the pupils
- being aware of child protection issues
- ensuring appropriate first aid provision
- planning and preparing the visit
- carrying out risk assessments
- evaluating the visit and recording any relevant changes for future visits

- briefing all other adults on the visit
- ensuring the suitability of the visit
- ensuring that adequate adult- pupil ratios allow for adequate supervision
- be aware that the visit must be curtailed if health and safety are compromised
- ensuring that people supervising groups have details of contacts and emergency procedures
- ensuring welfare of pupils and adults with special needs

**Staff** are responsible for:

- following this policy
- following the directions and instructions of the Visit Leader
- being aware of their responsibilities on any visit
- providing a duty of care consistent with their professional training

**Parent Helpers** are responsible for:

- following this policy
- following the directions and instructions of the Visit Leader
- being aware of their responsibilities on any visit

### **APPENDIX 3 – COACH EVACUATION**

#### **COACH EVACUATION - BREAKDOWN OR ACCIDENT**

In the event of an accident always contact the police (ambulance service if injuries are sustained) and act on their advice.

General guidelines:

- coach leader to assess immediate risks and surrounding area
- if evacuation of coach thought necessary, group leaders to lead groups to safe area as determined by coach leader, conduct head count and raise hand to show all present – ensure regular head counts
- if breakdown/accident occurs on motorway/dual carriageway, it is regarded as advisable for everyone to leave the coach and move to a safe distance (behind barrier if one exists)
- in the event of bad weather, darkness or other serious circumstances the Coach Leader may decide that it is safer to remain on the coach than to evacuate. The police must be informed.
- A 'crumple zone' must be formed at the rear by moving passengers down the coach. This will be a very difficult decision to make and will be the 'least worst' option available.
- If an incident occurs on other A/B roads then coach leader to make decision governed by immediate area and circumstances. Consider the type of road (width, dual carriageway etc.), speed limit, road position, time of day, whether there is a safe area to evacuate to – **if in any doubt as to the safety of your situation then contact the police**
- if any member of party injured then first aider(s) to assess situation before evacuating – contact emergency services
- coach leader to continually assess immediate risks as determined by circumstances, but always to act upon the advice of any emergency services involved

- inform school/EVC (if out of school hours) of the situation if appropriate, return to coach when situation deemed safe by coach leader
- coach leader to conduct full head count

#### APPENDIX 4

##### CHILD CAR SEATS

	Front Seat	Rear Seat	Who is Responsible?
<b>Driver</b>	Seat belt must be worn if fitted.		Driver
<b>Child aged 3-11 and under 1.35 metres (approx 4' 5") height</b>	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used where seat belts fitted. Must use adult belt if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in a taxi, the correct child restraint is not available</li> <li>• on a short and occasional visit the correct child restraint is not available</li> <li>• two occupied child restraints prevent the fitment of a third</li> </ul>	Driver
<b>Adult passengers</b>	Seat belt must be worn if fitted.	Seat belt must be worn if fitted.	Passenger

##### Points to consider:

- not all car seats are universal – fitting instructions have to be checked
- it is the drivers' responsibility to ensure they are transporting children correctly with the appropriate seats for their age and size
- if using parents vehicles to transport pupils, insurance, tax, driving licence and MOT have to be checked
- coaches, taxis, minibuses are exempt from the new law
- during private journeys 14 year olds are responsible for wearing their seatbelts
- if travelling on behalf of the school it is your responsibility to check that the appropriate restraint is being worn

##### Child restraint systems:

Booster cushion – 22-36 kgs, (6th to 12th birthday)

#### APPENDIX 5

##### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES CARD

- THIS CARD TO BE TAKEN ON ALL OFF-SITE VISITS –

In the event of an accident:

1. Establish your own safety
2. Ensure the safety of the group
3. Attend to any casualties
4. Get help

Aim to:

1. Preserve life
2. Prevent the condition worsening
3. Promote recovery

First aid check:

1. Breathing: Clear the airway – artificial ventilation
2. Beating: Check circulation – external chest compression
3. Bleeding: Look and feel – pressure & elevation
4. Breaks: Look and feel for irregularities – support
5. NOTE: Do not move a casualty if you suspect serious neck or back injury – unless their life is in immediate danger

Essentials:

1. Monitor – record all events and details – witnesses
2. Treat for shock – reassure and keep warm
3. Remember the rest of the group – safety, comfort, shock.
4. Do not split the group – unless it is the only way to get help – leave nobody on their own.
5. Control indiscriminate use of mobile phones by the rest of the group.

Action:

1. Get qualified help asap – note your location accurately
2. Contact your School, or Centre, or Base – you may be in shock and need support
3. Do not admit anything
4. Do not sign anything
5. Do not talk to the press – always refer to the county press officer

In the event of a Critical Incident:

School Office: 01234 711323

Glenn Young (Headteacher): Number provided to trip leader

Heather Lamble (Deputy Headteacher): Number provided to trip leader

Plumsun: 08458 622684