



**Five  
Rivers®**

# FIVE RIVERS CHILDCARE LTD

## School Educational Visits Policy

**'Five Rivers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'**

Policy Owner	Headteacher
Authoriser	Head of Education
Date of Original Issue	01/09/2022
Date of Last Review	01/09/2025
Date of Next Review	01/09/2026
Version	V2

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## Table of Contents

1. Educational Visits Policy.....	2
1.1 Policy Statement.....	2
1.2 Terms and Conditions .....	2
1.3 Data Protection .....	2
1.4 Disclosure of Information.....	2
2. Responsibilities .....	3
2.1 Senior Management .....	3
2.2 Lead Teacher/ Staff Member .....	3
2.3 All staff .....	3
2.4 Support Workers .....	4
2.5 Young People .....	4
2.6 Role of Parents/ Carers .....	4
2.7 Further Duties and Responsibilities .....	4
3. Planning Procedures .....	5
3.1 Activities .....	6
3.1.1 Specific Activities .....	6
3.1.1.1 Water based activities .....	6
3.1.1.2 Farms .....	7
4. Use of External Organisations .....	7
5. Procedure for takings Students Off-Site .....	7
5.1 Risk Assessments .....	9
5.2 Pre-visit .....	9
5.3 Records .....	10
5.4 First Aid .....	10
5.5 Supervision .....	10
5.6 Emergency Procedures .....	10
5.7 Transport .....	10
5.8 Communication and Consent .....	11
6. Residential Visits .....	11
7. Evaluation .....	11

# 1. Educational Visits Policy

## 1.1 Policy Statement

Five Rivers education value the role of educational visits and regard them as an important part of school and home life. We encourage educational visits of all kinds as part of the experience that we offer to our pupils. All such visits off the school premises require careful planning before permission for the journey is sought, using the current trip planning procedures set out in this policy.

This policy applies to all members of staff working in the school who take young people off-site. It is applicable to the young people participating in the activity and to staff.

At Five Rivers, all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/ staff. This policy has been written taking all aspects of safeguarding into consideration.

This policy sets out the responsibilities, requirements and guidelines for planning, organising and managing school trips to ensure that young people and staff may experience the best possible benefits from these activities whilst at the same time minimising risks to their health, safety and wellbeing.

## 1.2 Terms and Definitions

The below table sets out a number of terms and definitions used within this document:

Term	Definition

## 1.3 Data Protection

Five Rivers Child Care supports the objectives of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and other legislation relating to Data Processing, including the Human Rights Act 1998, Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Five Rivers Child Care has a statutory obligation to process personal data in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Every member of Five Rivers Child Care has an obligation to ensure that the information they process (use) is collected, maintained and disclosed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Five Rivers Child Care Data Protection Policy.

## 1.4 Disclosure of Information

It is a criminal offence for a person to knowingly or recklessly sell, disclose or retain personal information outside of the Five Rivers Group under section 170 DPA 2018 without a legitimate purpose and legal basis. The Five Rivers Group considers these actions unauthorised and will take all necessary action to ensure personal data is not disclosed, retained or sold without a valid legal reason including referral to the criminal investigations team of the information commissioner's office (CRIT ICO).

## 2. Responsibilities

All adults and young people have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating.

### 2.1 Senior Management

The Headteacher should be satisfied that risk assessments have been undertaken and that appropriate safety measures have been put in place and that training needs have been addressed.

They must ensure that:

- They are notified of all visits
- Every visit has a specific and stated objective
- The group leader shows how their planning complies with regulations and guidelines, including the schools/homes health and safety policy document.
- The group leader reports back after the visit
- They are informed about less routine visits well in advance

### 2.2 Lead Teacher/staff member

Lead Teachers have a duty of care towards the pupils in their charge.

Lead Teachers must recognise their responsibilities:

- Obtain the Head Teacher's prior agreement before any off-site visit
- Clearly define staff members role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- Be suitably competent to instruct pupils in the activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity takes place
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of those involved with the visit
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- Ensure that all staff are fully aware of what the proposed visit entails
- Have enough information on the young people proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed – read IBSP's
- Ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such emergency. If the trip doesn't take place, then the pupils will simply follow a pre-planned timetable for the day.
- Ensure all staff know about the emergency procedures, which all staff are informed of the night before and on the morning of the trip, via a team meeting.
- Ensure that all staff have details of the medical or special needs of the pupils

### 2.3 All staff

All staff must read the risk assessment before they attend the visit.

Staff members on school visits act as employees of the company whether the visit is during normal school hours or not.

They must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any responsible parent would in the same circumstances.

## 2.4 Additional Staff

Additional staff on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

Additional staff must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group, working with the Lead Teacher and be responsible for control and discipline. They must speak to the Lead Teacher if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

## 2.5 Young People

The Visit Leader must make it clear to young people that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the Visit Leader and staff including those at the venue
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader about it
- The visit may be stopped if the behaviour of the young people is unacceptable.

## 2.6 Further duties and Responsibilities

All staff should be aware of the expectations placed upon them and should appreciate the nature of their relationship to the pupils and other staff.

All staff must:

Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.

Inform the Visit Leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them.

Recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.

Report to the leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and wellbeing during the visit.

# 3 Planning Procedures

The planning procedures are designed to ensure that the following are adhered to. Responsibilities regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children/staff. Visits and trips should be monitored, and every effort made to minimise disruption to lessons.

The safety of both staff and young people is paramount. All students should have equal opportunities to access visits and trips. Trips and visits should be added to the school calendar.

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the Headteacher and based on factors including:

- Cost (including any potential cost to parents/carers)
- Timing in the school year and any potential clashes
- Educational purpose and value
- Disruption to the normal running of the school

- Health and safety considerations
- Staff-to-pupil ratio
- Any other factors deemed appropriate and relevant

As part of the planning stage, information will be gathered by staff proposing the visit, including:

- Location and travel distance
- Travel plans or options
- Full cost breakdown, including multiple options where available
- Resources, including staffing, volunteers, and physical supplies
- Accommodation options, where needed
- Insurance detailed, where needed
- Risk assessment plans and first aid provision
- What safety measures can be put in place in order to reduce any risks
- Add any additional minimum standards, depending on the age of the children

**The Headteacher must approve all visits.**

No trips will take place without all pre-planning requirements being completed on time and approved using the Evolve system for new planned trips/visits and also to review and replace existing trips/visits.

For staff planning a trip for the first time, there are many colleagues who can provide help and advice based on experience.

In cases where a trip involves activities for more than 24 hours, an overnight stay and/or travel overseas, the headteacher will seek approval of the governing board.

Once the risk assessment has been approved by the headteacher, and the governing board where relevant, staff will communicate with parents/carers and provide trip information.

Written parental consent will be required for trips that take place outside of normal school hours, and for any trips requiring a higher-than-normal level of risk assessment.

We will evaluate each visit after its conclusion, from the planning through to the visit itself, to continually improve the planning and experience of our future visits.

### 3.1 Activities

A wide range of activities are offered and are covered by this document including, but not limited to:

- Day visits using transport
- Day or part day visits on foot
- Sporting activities
- Swimming pool and gym visits
- Farm visits
- Visits to Cinema and Theatre
- Visits to alternative education provider.

### 3.1.1 Specific Activities/Trips

#### 3.1.1.1 Water Safety in the Sea or Lakes and Rivers

The following rules will help reduce risk when undertaking these activities planned in advance. Staff should be very wary of allowing children to paddle or bathe as an impromptu activity, as inevitably these circumstances are less planned and therefore, present higher levels of risk.

Staff should:

- Ensure that all are aware of the children's swimming ability.
- Be aware of the weather forecast and conditions.
- Thought should be given to changing facilities and toilet arrangements for girls and boys to respect privacy.
- Be aware of any local conditions such as currents, weed, rip tides etc.
- Bathing in the sea should only take place in areas, which are marked by safety flags, clear Local Authority signs or where Lifeguards are in operation. Look out for warning signs:
  - A red flag means it is unsafe to swim
  - Yellow flag means that lifeguards are on patrol in the area between flags
  - Black and white flag means it is an area used by surfer and not suitable for swimming.
- Designate a safe area for use by the group.
- The ratio of children to adults should be a minimum of three adults to 9 children.
- It is essential for adults to identify who will supervise the whole group and who will keep their eye on certain children.
- Two adults should be in the water in direct contact with children
- One adult should remain at the water's edge to observe the movements of children. This is the lifeguard.
- Children should be clear about expectations and boundaries, i.e. not going past marker buoys, before entering the water.
- Children should be clear about how to signal distress and how they will know when to come out of the water.
- Staff should carry out regular head counts.
- Staff should not become involved in children's games. Staff must focus on their observation and safety roles at all times.
- Any child who is unable to listen/manage any safety instructions should not be allowed in the water or to remain in the water if already there.
- Ensure if a child is getting cold that they leave the water immediately. If fingers or toes look cold or numb this could suggest the onset of hypothermia.
- Remember that a child in difficulty is unlikely to wave or shout, as all their efforts will be in trying to remain afloat.
- Similar rules should be followed if children are paddling at the water's edge.

A risk assessment of the environment and location must be undertaken in advance.

Staff need to be aware that it is possible to drown in very shallow water. Any signs of distress should always be taken seriously.

#### 3.1.1.2 Farm Visits

Group Leaders should check the provision at the farm to ensure that:

- Eating areas are separate from those where there is any contact with

animals.

- There are adequate clean and well-maintained washing facilities.
- There is clear information for visitors on the risks and precautions to take.

Ensure that children:

- Are well supervised when they have to wash their hands.
- Wash their hands thoroughly immediately after touching animals and before any eating or drinking.
- Do not place their faces against animals.
- Do not put their hands in their mouths after touching the animals.
- Do not eat or drink whilst going round the farm.
- Do not sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Do not play on or tamper with any unauthorized farm machinery.
- Do not play in any unauthorized farm area.

## 4 Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

## 5 Procedure for taking students Off Site

Staff are responsible for the safety and welfare of the children. One person has overall responsibility for the trip. Those on the trip should all be clear about who is ultimately in charge if a difficult decision needs to be made.

You should always check out a venue before you go there with a group. A risk assessment should be completed before you take children to the venue.

A competent person accompanying you on any exploratory visit can help you to identify hazards, and assist you if you get into difficulty. If in the last resort, a pre-visit is not possible then the group leader should obtain information in other ways in order to prepare adequately for the visit.

Risk assessments should be requested from any venues to be visited. It is important to check that the risk assessment is up to date.

It is important that the staffing level is appropriate for all aspects of the type of trip, transitions and destination. Some trips will be more anxiety provoking for certain children than others.

The staffing levels should reflect the needs of the child group being taken.

The needs of the individual children should be thought about as well as the impact of putting them in a particular group.

For class trips, including Forest School trips, one member of staff needs to hold the role of coordinator, with responsibility for knowing where all of the children are at all times.



All staff should carry their School Identity Cards.

At least one mobile phone should be taken on the trip to enable contact in difficult situations to the school or vice versa. The phone should be switched on and the school aware of the number of the phone taken.

It is important to anticipate how children will respond to the periods before going on the trip and on return. Planning should also include these periods of time.

Close attention to the individual child's risk assessments is required to ensure that staff are aware of all issues contained within it.

Consideration should be given to the needs of the children whilst out on the trip. This will include:

**Clothing requirements:** (As well as thinking about the child's needs back at school, once the trip returns and the need for clothing for a weekend home or holiday if the child will return with dirty clothes)

**Medication:** It is important that appropriate and sufficient medication is taken, as well as the appropriate sheets for recording. Staff should be aware of any drug administration protocol.

#### **Food**

The cost of the trip should be calculated and the appropriate finance arranged giving plenty of notice.

If any child is in Individual Therapy, the organiser needs to liaise in advance with the relevant therapist. Negotiation needs to happen to best meet the needs of the child.

Relevant transport should be arranged in advance and staff should be familiar with the vehicles and the school's transport policy. Check that there is enough fuel in the vehicle before departure and on return. (at least a quarter full)

Clear communication should be made to all those who may be affected, about the trip.

Details of the trip, once arranged, should be put in the whole school diary with the times of departure and return as well as the destination and transport booked.

The staff member responsible for coordinating the trip must complete a 'Risk Assessment and upload all relevant documents to Evolve for authorisation.

### **5.1 Risk Assessment**

Thorough Risk Assessments are carried out before each educational visit by the Head Teacher or a delegated member of the team. All staff and young people attending the visit are briefed on the risk assessment prior to the visit.

Generic Risk Assessments are located in the school risks assessment folder via SharePoint. These will be used along with the young person's risks assessments, with addition of any specific risk assessments required.

## 5.2 Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it is advisable to undertake a pre visit. Even when a visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time.

When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables will be taken into account:

- The number of pupils involved
- The age of the pupils, their ability and their general behaviour
- The young person Individual Crisis Management Plans and Individual Risk Assessments.
- The time of day and time of year
- The travel arrangements
- The hazards at the environment being visited
- The numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff
- The nature of the activities
- The special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal weather conditions
- Emergency procedures
- How to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on with the visit
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

## 5.3 Records

Records of a visit can provide a very useful and informative way of demonstrating the accountability of the school towards its pupils.

Pre visit risk assessments, after visit reviews/amendments, and reports of any accidents or incidents will be kept on file via both in SharePoint system and Clear Care.

## 5.4 First Aid

There will be person competent in first aid and a first aid kit on every visit.

## 5.5 Supervision

There are no statutory requirements, but our staffing ratio would depend on the specifications of the visit and the individual young person's Risk Assessment and Individual Behaviour Support Plan.

## 5.6 Emergency Procedures

Visit Leaders have a duty of care to make sure that young people are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a responsible parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take lifesaving action in an extreme situation.

If an accident happens the priorities are:

- To assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform school or the home contact

- Ensure that a member of staff accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised.
- Notify the police if needed
- Ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- No one in the group should speak to the media and no names should be provided
- No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties

In an emergency the Visit Leader would usually be expected to take control of the situation.

### 5.7 Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the school, in line with our transporting children policy. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents/carers, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site.

### 5.8 Communication and consent

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

If it is a trip with higher risks, we will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least 1 month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via letter or email and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

## 6 Residential visits

The headteacher, together with the Head of Education and Board members, will approve all residential trips longer than 24 hours.

The planning and preparation laid out in this policy will apply to residential visits as well as 1-day visits. In addition, the trip lead will make sure:

- Staff have received any necessary training
- All necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained at least 1 month before the start of the trip
- All adults, including volunteers, have had adequate safeguarding checks. Where appropriate – e.g. if the volunteer will be in direct unsupervised contact with pupils – this will include relevant DBS checks

Parents and carers will be given information about the visit and asked for permission at least 2

months before the first day of the visit. Information shared with parents will include:

- The dates and time of departure and return to school
- The full address and contact details of the destination
- Planned activities and options
- Meal provision
- Costs and optional charges, including deposits and the date by which this must be received, in line with our charging and remissions policy (this will include information about exemptions)
- Clothing and equipment provided, and what pupils must bring themselves
- Public health requirements, including any required vaccinations
- Accommodation options and arrangements
- The names of staff attending

For visits abroad, we will make sure that any organisation providing activities holds the LOtC Quality badge or similar local accreditation. We will follow the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office's overseas travel guidance](#) and [foreign travel advice](#) when organising these visits.

## 7 Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often should there be a legislative need.