

Falcons Primary School



Off Site Visits Policy

Approved by GB Date: October 2024

Review Date: October 2026

School Vision and Ethos Statement

We encourage all members of the Falcons Community to respect one another, to know that everyone has an important part to play in making the school as good as it can be, to take responsibility and be responsible, to strive for excellence and to try one's best in everything we do.

Our vision for Falcons Primary School is to be recognised as a school that values uniqueness, where children are provided with the skills to enable them to become:

- * successful learners
- * responsible citizens
- * creative thinkers and
- * reflective individuals.

SIKH ETHOS

The school draws on the teaching of the Sikh faith and is committed to providing not only an academic education, but one that will also encompass an underlying message of unity, equality and respect. High morals, discipline, love, compassion and selfless service towards all regardless of faith, gender or colour. Falcon School will embrace a universal, inclusive approach to spirituality.

AIMS

To achieve our vision, we aim for all pupils, staff, governors and parents to:

- Work in unity to make Falcons School a welcoming, stimulating and successful school. Encourage good manners, self-discipline and the desire to be enthusiastic learners who grow into forward thinking responsible citizens who respect, value and care for themselves and others.
- Provide an ethos with clear boundaries and expectations, enabling all children to succeed and to reach their full potential confidently, in a safe and supportive environment.
- Become excellent lifelong learners who are independent and prepared for the wider world and aim high to achieve aspirational goals.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Governors and staff of Falcons Primary School acknowledge the great value of learning beyond the classroom as a way of broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

Trips, visits and opportunities to explore the environment are a vital part of the children's experience. Children learn best by getting out into the world around them and experiencing it at first hand. We aim to include a visit out of school or visitors into school into every topic. This does, of course, depend on the support of parents.

Health and safety is paramount, but we don't allow this to deter us from providing children with a rich and exciting range of experiences from which they can learn. We aim to include some experience of the outside world, through a visit into school or out of school, as part of every topic.

The School's safeguarding (child protection) policy and procedures will apply during School trips and visits (see Safeguarding Policy.)

Under statutory guidance, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet statutory requirements.

Our current EVC is **Dajinder Kaur**

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit, it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the regularly updated information provided by our Health and Safety partner (Leicester City Council.) This is also available on the EVOLVE system.

School visits benefit young people in many ways, including:

- Being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom.
- Enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the National Curriculum, experiential (first hand) and memorable learning.
- Assessing and managing risks (safety).
- Developing talents, abilities and interests, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance.

EVOLVE system

EVOLVE is an online educational visits notification approval and database system. The main drive for change is so that everything is all in one place and everyone has access to it instantly. All staff within the school has had training on how to use the system to arrange visits.

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the Headteacher and the EVC.

Approval of day visits will usually be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

However, visits which are either:

- overseas
- residential
- involving an adventurous activity

will be 'approved' by the Health and Safety service provider of the school (currently Leicester City Council). Approval of the Governing Body is also required for visits of this type. It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to complete the necessary paperwork. It is the Headteacher and the EVC's responsibility to check that all the necessary paperwork has been completed correctly before the Group Leader submits it for approval.

Planning a Visit

Firstly:

- Get approval from the Headteacher to see if visit can take place.

If approved:

- Book Visit
- Book Transport
- Send letter home (this should be done at least two weeks before the planned date of the visit).
- Write up risk assessments and ensure that all staff/volunteers going on the trip have read and signed copies of the risk assessments.

Once all the information has been gathered, then the group leader should place the information onto the EVOLVE system by following the step by step process. Risk assessments, letters and itinerary should all be uploaded on to the system too. This in turn will then be submitted to the Principal and the EVC to authorise.

On the Day of the Visit:

- Collect first aid kit(s) and accident forms.
- Collect or send pupils for asthma inhalers
- Send children to the toilets.
- Remind children about the rules.
- Give supervising adults their group list (if not previously done) and at least one adult should take with them a copy of the risk assessments.
- Give signed risk assessments, notification of visits form to the school office, who will keep this for reference.
- Ensure that at least one supervising adult is contactable by mobile phone and that the school office has the number.
- Count pupils before you leave school and at regular intervals during the day.

Mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire visit, including outward and homeward journeys.

After the Visit:

It is important that after each visit an evaluation takes place. This should happen within a week of the visit date and should involve the Group Leader, accompanying staff and, if

appropriate the other supervising adults and children. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify what went well and what could be improved or changed in order to inform future planning.

Evaluation of the visit can be done through the EVOLVE system.

Teachers, volunteers, pupils and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating.

Governing Body

The Governing body needs to:

- Ensure that the Headteacher and the EVC have adhered to the LEA guidelines.
- Ensure that visits are approved as necessary by the LEA before bookings are confirmed
- Agree to all residential visits, trips abroad and those involving outdoor and adventurous activities. In these instances, to ensure that bookings are not completed until external providers have met all the necessary assurances
- Ensure that that all aspects of risk management have been considered and that risk assessments for travel, accommodation and activities have been carried out prior to departure. It is not expected that Governors should become directly involved in risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.
- Ask questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met. Are the objectives appropriate to the age and abilities of the pupil group? Why is a particular venue being used? Is the visit inclusive for all students? Is the visit value for money?
- Ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information, to investigate parental complaints.
- Review annually the Educational Visits policy, risk assessments and procedures including incident and emergency management systems.

Headteacher should ensure that:

- The Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) is competent to oversee the co ordination of all off-site education, and support the EVC in attending relevant training courses
- Visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LEA, schools governing body and the schools own health and safety policy
- The group leaders are competent to monitor risks and supervise the trip throughout the visit
- Adequate child protection procedures are in place

- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- Ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- The LEA or governing body has approved the visit if necessary
- Parents have signed consent forms
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- Adequate first aid provision will be in place
- The mode of transport is appropriate
- Travel times out and back are known in school
- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- They have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- The group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures/risk assessment form
- The group leaders and helpers have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments are legal requirements. They involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken, or whether more should have been done. The aim is to ensure no-one gets hurt or becomes ill. Risk assessments should explicitly cover how SEND and medical needs are addressed. The programme of the visit, as set out in the risk assessment and consent form should not be deviated from and should, if necessary, include details of contingency measures.

Staff are responsible for conducting risk assessments on the elements of the visit over which they have control. Risk assessments that have been written by organisations can only be used if they hold the 'Learning outside the classroom' quality mark badge. If this is not the case, then another risk assessment must be written. Staff should ask to see risk assessments drawn up by those providing services for them.

The written risk assessment, which is the responsibility of the party leader, should be given to the Headteacher and EVC well in advance of the visit, so that they can see that effective planning has taken place. The group leaders should continually re-assess risks throughout the visit.

Three levels exist for risk assessments for school visits:

1. Generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place, for example travel arrangements.
2. Site specific risk assessment, which will differ from place to place and group to group.
3. On-going risk assessments that take account of, for example, illness of staff or children, changes of weather, change of activity etc.

Risk assessments should be based on the following:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

The following factors should be taken into consideration by the party leader when assessing the risks:

- The type of visit/activity and level at which it is being undertaken
- The location, routes and mode of transport.
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervising staff.
- The ratio of teachers and supervisory staff to pupils.
- The group members age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity.
- The SEND or medical needs of children.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.
- Emergency procedures.
- How to cope when a child becomes unable or unwilling to continue.
- The need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Risk assessments should be copied and given to all accompanying the visit, to the EVC, to the LEA (for a residential) and to the Headteacher and Governing Body (for a residential).

Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be preferable in most cases to undertake a pre-visit, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- the previous experience of the group undertaking off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year
- the travel arrangements
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience and quality of staff and volunteers
- 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
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

Supervision ratios

Staffing must be determined by the risk assessments. Adequate consideration must be given for the maintenance and welfare of the whole party in the event of one or more adults having to leave the group for any length of time.

Day visits and local activities - the following ratios are considered the best practice:

- Reception (F2) 1 adult for every 4 -5 pupils
- Years 1, 2, 3 1 adult for every 6- 10 pupils
- Years 4, 5, 6 1 adult for every 10 – 15 pupils.

Where possible we aim to exceed the minimum.

Residential visits - 1 teacher for every 10 pupils accompanied by at least 2 adults with a member of staff of each sex for mixed groups. One adult must hold a valid first aid certificate.

Duties and Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- Recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.
- Report to the visit leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and well being during the visit.

Teachers

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

- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is too great.

Adult Volunteers

- Additional adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. They must
- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment.
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisor and help with the control and discipline
- Speak to the group leader or teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

Pupils

The group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks.
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue.
- Dress in uniform and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader or helpers about it

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

Head counts

Whatever the length of the visit, regular head counts should be taken of the children, particularly before leaving any venue. All adults should carry a list of all the pupils and adults involved in the visit.

First Aid

There should be a suitable number of qualified first aiders on every visit. First aid kits should be taken on every visit.

Communicating with Parents

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parentis’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit.

Parents should:

- provide the school with emergency contact number(s);

- give consent:
For local visits (e.g. local places of worship, nature walking, library etc.) consent is obtained during the admissions process. For all other visits consent is obtained via the SchoolMoney system at the same time that payment is made.
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Financial and Charging Arrangements

The office will keep official and separate accounts for all costs and payments.

Costs itemised for a visit are: transport, entrance fees for all involved and in the case of residential visits, extra staffing/supply cover, board and lodgings, materials, hire of equipment, any additional insurance or charges for activities.

When organising school trips or visits which enhance the curriculum and educational experience of the children, parents are invited to contribute to the cost of these. All contributions are voluntary, but if insufficient voluntary contributions are received, we may have to cancel the trip. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, the child is still allowed to participate fully in the trip as long as parental consent is given.

Useful links

- [EVOLVE Login](#)
- [OEAP National Guidance](#)
- [DfE Health and Safety on Educational Visits Learning through landscapes lesson plans](#)