



Educational Visits Policy (Whole School including EYFS)

Independent Day School

Our Lady of Sion School

Last Reviewed:	June 2025
Frequency of Review:	Annually
Next Review Due:	June 2026

1. Aims and Scope

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 a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Educational visits are activities that take place outside the school grounds that are arranged by, or on behalf of, a school. They allow pupils to encounter experiences that are not available in the classroom and can play an important part in developing their initiative, resourcefulness, and independence.

Getting out of the classroom and experiencing the wider world can bring new perspectives to classroom subjects, enabling pupils to engage with fresh content in a variety of ways that make concepts of learning more memorable. Whether this be on an outdoor adventure day, a residential school trip or even a visit to a museum, pupils will be physically and emotionally challenged, and their independence will improve as they engage with their peers and teachers.

Away from the formal context of the classroom, pupils and teachers will be able to develop a better rapport as they cultivate shared experiences, and pupils will have the opportunity to form deeper bonds with each other.

Educational visits abroad will expose students to fresh cultures and experiences, giving them a wider understanding of the world and an appreciation of the lives of different people and their cultures.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits.

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

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#), and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[SEND Code of Practice](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024](#)

Sections of this policy are also based on the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#).

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Approving staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visit of less than 24 hours
- Making sure staff, including the educational visits co-ordinator, have received any necessary training
- Working with the governing body to approve residential trips of more than 24 hours

3.2 The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) role is delegated to the Bursar. Their role is to:

- Oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise educational visits
- Assess the ability of other staff to lead visits
- 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

3.3 Trip Lead

Every educational visit will have 1 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

3.4 Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure 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

3.5 Parents and carers

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

3.6 Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

3.7 Pupils

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

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit, and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

A copy of the behaviour policy can be found on the school website.

4. Planning and preparation

The decision on whether or not a visit will take place will be made by the educational visits co-ordinator 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, volunteer, 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

See **Appendix 1** for our trip information form for the planning and approval of a visit.

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.

4.1. Inclusion

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

If a pupil with a disability, statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an education health and care (EHC) plan, or any other specific needs (e.g. medical conditions including allergies) is participating in the visit, they will have the same support that is available to them during the school day.

We will adjust the trip programme where necessary, working with parents/carers to provide additional support, making reasonable adjustments to itineraries, providing additional support staff, and other adjustments as appropriate.

Additional risk assessments may be carried out to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils.

5. Risk Assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips.

This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template, which can be found on the learning platform, and approved by the headteacher/EVC. Existing risk assessments can also be found on the learning platform, these can be used alongside those provided by the destination itself to support this process.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where a risk assessment is not provided by the venue, staff are encouraged to make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the EVC, and a copy taken on the visit and another copy left with the headteacher.

5.1 Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- At least one supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips
- For EYFS settings - At least one qualified paediatric first aider is present on all trips
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies. These can be found on the learning platform.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or roll-calls

5.2 Transport

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

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

5.3 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.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

6. Volunteers

Where appropriate, parents and carers may be asked to volunteer to attend and supervise pupils alongside staff members on trips. Where more parents/carers volunteer than required on the visit, those invited to attend will be selected as fairly and transparently as possible, whilst taking into consideration:

- The needs of the pupils going on the trip
- The setting and circumstances of the trip
- Volunteers' skills, attitude and past behaviour, including previous volunteer experience

Parents/carers selected to volunteer will be informed at least 2 weeks ahead of the visit, and asked to confirm their attendance in writing. They will also be asked to confirm they agree with the expected behaviour. See **Appendix 2** for our volunteer code of conduct for educational visits.

Volunteers will receive a full induction from staff members on the day of the visit, prior to departure, including on their responsibilities, expected behaviour, the process for raising concerns, emergency procedures and contact details, and the expected timetable of the trip.

Where practical and as required by the nature of visits (ie, when volunteers may be left with children without staff members present), volunteers may be asked or required to undergo safeguarding checks, including DBS checks.

At no point will volunteers on whom no safeguarding checks have been carried out be left alone with pupils or given sole responsibility for the care of a pupil.

7. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit at least one month before the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via email, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location
- Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school
- Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards

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. A termly consent form is provided to Junior School parents for local school time trips. This enables flexibility to visit local attractions – beach, library, park, etc – at short notice. 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.

We will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits, and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

We will always get written consent before taking nursery-age children off-site.

In the case of overseas trips, they will be asked to provide passport information and European Health Insurance Card or UK Global Health Insurance Card information, if available.

8. Emergency procedures and incident reporting

Generally, emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life-threatening injury
- Individuals going missing
- A serious breach of safeguarding expectations

The trip leader will be familiar with these plans for each visit.

In the case of an emergency, the trip leader or other supervising adult will contact the school office. The school office will then contact parents/carers as required, and inform them of changes to plans or cancellations of trips and/or alternative travel plans. This will form part of a wider communication plan that covers how routine communications should be handled in such situations.

One member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with

them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

9. Charging and Insurance

One curriculum trip, per year, will be provided free of charge.

Parents/carers may be asked to pay for additional educational visits that take place during school hours. They may also be asked to pay for any educational visit that takes place outside of school hours.

We will make sure adequate insurance is in place for all trips, including, but not limited to: cancellation insurance for contracts with external providers, travel insurance, accident and medical cover, and loss of luggage and other personal items.

10. Residential Visits

The headteacher, together with the governing body, 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 – eg, 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 two 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 hold 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.

11. Host Families - Homestay during exchange visits

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 states the following in Annex D:

Host families – homestay during exchange visits

Schools and colleges often make arrangements for children to take part in exchange visits, either to other parts of the UK or abroad. Exchanges can benefit learning across a range of subjects. In particular, foreign visits can enrich the languages curriculum and provide exciting opportunities for pupils to develop their confidence and expertise in the use of other languages.

Schools and colleges have a duty to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This extends to considering their safety and how best to minimise risk of harm to those children during any exchange visit the school or college arranges, and when organising the care and accommodation for a child with a host family (known as homestays) as part of the exchange.

School/college arranged homestay – suitability of adults in UK host families

When arranging a homestay, schools should consider the suitability of the adults in the respective families who will be responsible for the visiting child during the stay. In circumstances where a school or college arrange for a visiting child to be provided with care and accommodation in the UK (including where they engage a company to make those arrangements) in the home of a family to which the child is not related, the responsible adults will be engaging in regulated activity for the period of the stay. In such cases and where the school or college has the power to terminate such a homestay the school or college would be the regulated activity provider. A regulated activity provider commits a criminal offence if it knows or has reason to believe that an individual is barred by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from engaging in regulated activity but allows that individual to carry out any form of regulated activity.

Where the child's parent(s) or a student themselves arranges their own homestay, this would be a private arrangement therefore, the school or college would not be the regulated activity provider. When a school or college arranges a homestay, it should consider what intelligence/ information will best inform its assessment of the suitability of the adults in those families responsible for the visiting child during the stay. It will be for the school or college to use their professional judgement to decide what factors it considers to be relevant. However, to help inform that assessment, schools and colleges should obtain a DBS enhanced certificate with children's barred list information. This check will not only establish whether the adults are barred from engaging in regulated activity relating to children, but where criminal record information is disclosed, it will also allow the school or college to consider, alongside all other intelligence that it has obtained, whether the adults would be suitable hosts for a child. DBS enhanced certificates with children's barred list information for volunteer roles can be obtained free of charge.

In respect of an adult who provides UK homestay and receives no remuneration in respect of the stay or where schools reimburse families only for expenses incurred, to enable a DBS application to be considered as a volunteer role the "Position Applied For" field will need to make clear that the position is unpaid. In addition to those engaging in regulated activity, schools and colleges are free to decide whether they consider it necessary to obtain a DBS enhanced certificate in respect of anyone aged 16 or over in the household where the child will be staying.

Homestay – suitability of adults in host families abroad

It is not possible for schools and colleges to obtain criminality information from the DBS about adults who provide homestays abroad. Schools and colleges should liaise with partner schools abroad, to establish a

shared understanding of, and agreement to the arrangements in place for the visit. They should use their professional judgement to satisfy themselves that the arrangements are appropriate and sufficient to effectively safeguard every child who will take part in the exchange. Parents should be aware of the agreed arrangement. Schools and colleges are also free to decide whether they consider it necessary to contact the relevant foreign embassy or High Commission of the country in question to discuss what checks may be possible in respect of those providing homestay outside of the UK.

During the visit

Pupils should understand who to contact during a homestay should an emergency occur, or a situation arise which makes them feel uncomfortable.

Additional action for extended homestays

Where a period of UK homestay lasts 28 days or more, for a child aged under 16 years of age (under 18 years of age if the child has disabilities), this may amount to private fostering under the Children Act 1989. In these cases, the school or college should notify the local authority of the arrangements. Private fostering legislation places a duty on local authorities to satisfy themselves that the welfare of a child who is being, or proposed to be, privately fostered in their area is being or will be satisfactorily safeguarded and promoted. By notifying the local authority, the school and college will be assisting the local authority in discharging its duty.

See paragraphs 343-346 of Keeping Children Safe in Education for additional information about private fostering and local authority notifications.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher/EVC. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and Safety policy
- Behaviour Policy & Statement of Behaviour Principles
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- First Aid policy
- Pupil Medication policy
- Special Educational Needs (SEND) policy
- Pupil Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy
- Accessibility Plan

Appendix 1: Trip Procedure Checklist 2025

The instructions for submitting a trip proposal are on Reach More Parents, in the Trips, Forms and Procedures section where the risk assessments and trip forms are held. These detail how the trips process works for the Junior and Senior Schools – and included in these checklists is the requirement to have a medical needs meeting with the Senior Leadership Team.

This form should be read in conjunction with the Educational Visits Policy, which is held on the school website.

If any Risk Assessments are not completed correctly or are missing the form will be rejected, or further information requested. Please do not submit an Offsite Activities Proposal Form without all the required information, and particularly the risk assessments, as this will only slow down the process. All risk assessments should take account of the Emergency Procedures which apply to all trips.

Please ensure that the trip form is submitted at least two working weeks prior to the trip date.

1. Submit an Offsite Activities Proposal Form. This can be found on WEDUC (in The Hub section) along with a suite of Risk Assessments applicable to most trips. These are in the **Staff Links** folder where there is a link labelled **Staff Forms and Links**. Please select the relevant risk assessments for your trip; these should be amended, signed and attached to the Proposal Form. Once submitted, WJS will check the information and circulate to the Deputy Headteacher and Bursar for approval. Letters to parents can be prepared but not sent out until WJS has confirmed that the Proposal Form has been approved by all signatories.
2. Once the trip is approved, you will receive notification from WJS. Then you can send out any letters and any other information to parents via SRL. Letters will be sent out electronically and will include a request for consent from the parents for their child to attend the trip.
3. If payment is required, please include details of payment in your letter, including the payment due date. All payments are to be made via ParentPay and parents should be advised to contact WJS if they have any issues with ParentPay. WJS will set up the trip on ParentPay.
4. The Trip Leader will need to check with SRL that the electronic consents have been received by the parents so that you can chase up those who have not replied. You will have been given a ParentPay login by WJS to check what payments have been received. WJS will ask for a list of student names and confirmation of the staff going a few days before the trip so that she can prepare the trip pack for you. The Trip Pack includes: Student List, Parental Contact Details, Dietary and Medical Information, Trip Staff (including next of kin) and School Emergency Contact Information (including DSL).

Electronic copies of the Trip Pack will be emailed to all staff on trips, plus the Headteacher, DDL or DDSL and the Reception team.

5. Once you have the Trip Pack from WJS, the Trip Leader needs to then meet with the SLT to go through medical requirements and check there is an understanding of how to respond to medical emergencies should these arise. SLT and the Trip Leader must complete the Student Medical Needs Trip Form, which can be found on the WEDUC, to confirm this meeting has gone ahead.
6. The Trip Leader should collect the trip mobile phone, first aid kit and any individual medication from Reception as they leave to go on the trip. **Please note that as the trip leader, it is vital that you check that you have the medication with you for any students listed as having an auto injector (epipen or similar) or an asthma inhaler.** These will be listed on the trip pack in the medical details section. These should be returned to Reception after the trip.

Appendix 2: Volunteer behaviour and code of conduct

This code of conduct sets out the expected behaviour for volunteers attending school trips. Volunteers should read and sign this form, showing that they understand and agree to follow this code while acting on behalf of the school. If you feel you cannot agree with this code, please speak to the Bursar at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from the trip.

A copy of this form will be kept in the school office, and you may ask for a photocopy to keep for yourself.

This volunteer code of conduct will be used alongside the school's parental code of conduct, which can be found on the learning platform, and is available from the Bursar.

Volunteers agree to:

- Remain professional and respectful with staff and pupils at all times
- Listen to and act on instructions from staff
- Dress appropriately for the trip
- Arrive at the agreed time and remain until the trip is concluded and they are told they may leave by staff
- Pay attention to potential dangers and raise concerns with staff
- Act responsibly and demonstrate good behaviour to pupils
- Report any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a pupil to staff as soon as possible

Volunteers agree **not** to:

- Exchange contact details with pupils unless told to by a member of staff
- Engage in physical contact with pupils unless appropriate or required
- Share inappropriate personal information (i.e. personal beliefs, religious views, relationship status)
- Use demeaning, offensive, abusive or insensitive language
- Smoke, drink alcohol, use drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those required for medical reasons) for the duration of the visit
- Allow themselves to be left alone with a pupil unless previously agreed with staff
- Take photographs or record pupils without the permission of pupils and staff

As a volunteer, I have read and agree to this code of conduct, and will follow the rules set out above.

Signed:

Date: