



Educational Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (LOTCC) Policy

Reviewed November 2021

1. **AIMS**

- 1.1 To be a Catholic school where all members of the community live according to Gospel values and the principles and teachings of Mary Ward, promoting the virtues of freedom, sincerity, justice, truth and joy, to allow all members of the community to feel secure and able to work and live in an atmosphere of courtesy and respect.
- 1.2 The Governors seek to ensure that the values of Mary Ward are reflected in the planning and delivery of all policies. The principle values covered by this policy are:
 - Joy – This policy enables pupils to experience visits which widen the learning experience.
 - Truth – This policy encourages pupils to recognise that searching for truth involves looking outside their normal environment.
 - Freedom – External visits allow staff and pupils to give of their best and so enhance learning.
- 1.2 To create a caring and stable environment, in which each person is respected as an individual with unique gifts, talents and ambitions, and is given the freedom and confidence to develop these.

2. **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 The Governors and School recognise their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation and the principles of keeping children safe in education. They also take due note of Health & Safety legislation. To this end they adopt the policies suggested by Hertfordshire County Council.
- 2.2 The staff and Governors of Loreto College recognise the value of educational visits and LOTCC, Learning outside the Classroom, to pupils as enrichment to their studies, and to their personal and social development. Such activities can strengthen pupils' sense of belonging to the school and help generate positive relationships with their teachers and peers.
- 2.3 It is vital that such visits and LOTCC events are competently planned and run, in terms of the health and safety of all participants, and in order to achieve the aims and objectives set. It is the responsibility of the Head teacher and governing body to ensure that such visits and events conform to the county guidelines and this policy.
- 2.4 The Head teacher's approval must be sought initially before planning a trip. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) can offer advice and guidance and will check that all visit leaders are following the school and county procedures vigorously.
- 2.5 Loreto College uses the Hertfordshire's Internet-based system, 'EVOLVE', to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or

accompany visits can access their own 'EVOLVE' account, which is set up by their Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

2.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with the current Hertfordshire LEA Off Site Visits Manual

3. **SCOPE AND REMIT**

3.1 This policy relates to Hertfordshire's "Guidance for the Management of LOtC and Offsite Visits" and it is the expectation that all staff will follow its requirements.

3.2 This policy applies to all members of establishment staff, and other adults associated with Loreto College who take responsibility for children and young people participating in learning and recreational activities in environments that are different from where the young people are usually based. It therefore applies when organising and supervising children and young people taking part in off-site activities and visits, as well as when taking part in on-site activities outdoors.

3.3 This policy provides the key reference for sound planning for learning and recreational activities that involve taking groups of children and young people away from their usual operational base. It should be implemented when using places such as:

- the Loreto grounds;
- the local environment;
- places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres and museums etc;
- residential venues, and
- learning ventures abroad.

and involves any one of the following:

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

3.4 Staff must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

4. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 **Headteacher**

- All off-site visits and LOtC activities comply with employer guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required.
- All staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they may be allocated;
- The designated person appointed as EVC meets employer requirements.
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. Where access to the young people is regular or significant, CRB checks must be in place as required.
- The EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated.

- Sufficient time is assigned for staff to organise visits properly.
- A culture of apprenticeship /succession planning, to ensure sustainable visits and the development of competent visit leaders and EVCs, is supported within the establishment.
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing.
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visit information has been shared with parents and that consent has been sought where necessary.
- Arrangements are made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff.
- Inclusion issues are addressed.
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements.
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate.
- Details related to the visit (including person details of both participants staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident.
- That there are contingency plans in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled (Plan B).
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as are required by the establishment visit policy.
- Staff are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships.
- Establishment visit policy should identify the types of visit that require a preliminary visit.
- Establishment visit policy should formally adopt a set format for recording written risk-benefit assessments. Such risk-benefit assessments should be proportional, suitable and sufficient and based on the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management'. The adoption of materials made available by employers to reduce bureaucracy is good practice.
- Where the activities or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been sought; national schemes e.g. LOtC Quality Badge, AALS licence, Adventuremark, or a clear management Statement of Competence, are recognised in keeping with Hertfordshire's recommendations and make further seeking of provider assurances unnecessary.
- All visits are evaluated with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any serious incident and to inform the operation of future visits.
- The establishment visit policy includes appropriate emergency procedures in case of a major incident.
- The establishment visit policy includes a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident.
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

4.2 **EVC**

4.2.1 To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, this establishment has a specifically designated EVC, Mrs S Ireland, who supports the Headteacher.

4.2.2 The EVC will: -

- Be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the establishment.
- HCC recommends that the EVC should attend training and refresher training every 3 -5 years. Support the Head Teacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions.
- Ensure that a policy is in place for offsite visits and LOtC activities, that it is updated as necessary, and is readily available to staff, (e.g. via EVOLVE) and that procedures should aim to minimise bureaucracy.

- Have an understanding of the Manifesto for LOtC and the supporting rationale.
- Ensure Offsite and LOtC activities meet employer guidance requirements.
- Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that employers' guidance and establishment procedures are properly understood.
- Ensure Offsite activities must be led by competent leaders and that assistant supervisors are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders, including voluntary helpers.
- Support the Head/Manager with approval and other decisions.
- Monitor visit planning and arrange for sample monitoring in the field as appropriate.
- Ensure CRB checks are in place where required.
- Provide sufficient guidance to visit and activity leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include emergency contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated; this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

4.3 **Visit Leaders**

4.3.1 The Visit/Activity Leader will: -

- Have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. S/he must be an employee and not a volunteer.
- Be competent to take on such responsibilities and tasks as may be allocated or required for the duration of the visit/activity and be formally approved to do so.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and appoint a deputy wherever possible.
- Ensure that where any accompanying staff includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management.
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed. e.g. CRB checks.
- Collate, make available and disseminate relevant information to supporting staff, parents and young people as appropriate.
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level.
- Arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate.
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event.
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:
 - a) the young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities; and
 - b) the nature, location and duration of the activity.
- Ensure the visit is effectively supervised; the overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying establishment staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment.

Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk.

- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Have attended either HCC's 'Visit Leader Awareness' or the OEAP's ' Visit Leader' training.

4.4 **Member of the Governing Body**

4.4.1 Mrs S Kerry is the nominated Governor. This person's role is to "enable and ensure" by acting as a "critical friend". She will ensure that: -

- She has an understanding of how outdoor learning supports a wide range of learning outcomes.
- She has access to employer guidance as well as establishment policy.
- There is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements.
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements.
- The establishment visit policy supports the principles of inclusion.
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

5. **STAFFING AND SUPERVISION**

5.1 For all visits the visit leader, EVC and Head of establishment will make a professional judgement regarding the number and suitability of staffing on an individual visit basis after consideration of the following factors:

- the type, level, and duration of activity;
- the nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions, and
- the contingency or 'Plan B' options.

5.2 **Remote Supervision:**

5.2.1 The decision to allow remote supervision will be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff, and
- the emergency systems in place.

5.3 **Emergency Procedures:**

5.3.1 Staff involved in a visit will be aware of, and adhere to, the establishment's policy on emergency procedures. Loreto College maintains a number of mobile 'phones specifically for use during offsite visits. It is each Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure these 'phones have:

- the correct details programmed into them beforehand;
- fully-charged batteries (and chargers available if necessary), and
- sufficient credit available for the duration of the visit.

- 5.3.2 For all “out of hours” and residential visits there will be a nominated person(s) that can provide 24/7 cover as an Emergency Contact and that the person(s) so nominated will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit. This will include medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff as well as young people.
- 5.3.3 Visit Leaders should also complete and carry an Emergency Contacts sheet (OV9).
- 5.3.4 Where appropriate the Visit Leader will have an “Emergency Events” card, as issued by HCC to all CS establishments.

5. **FIRST AID**

- 5.1 It is not always necessary that qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit or LOTC activity. First aid issues for any LOTC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is “appropriate” will be determined by:
- The nature of the activity.
 - The nature of the group.
 - The likely injuries associated with the activity.
 - The extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.
- 5.2 A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:
- Know how to access qualified first aid support.
 - Have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.
- 5.3 It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

6. **APPROVAL OF VISITS**

- 6.1 Approval is delegated to the Head of Establishment for all visits.

Level 1: Trips that take place within one day.

Level 2: Trips that are residential or involve adventurous activity.

Level 3: Trips that are overseas

- 6.2 The following types of visit are required to be notified to the LA: -

- Overseas (anywhere that involves crossing a substantial area of open sea, including Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides and the Channel Islands).
- Those involving one or more adventurous activities to be led by a member of establishment staff.

7. **PROCEDURES FOR ORGANISING OFF SITE VISITS**

- 7.1 The Group Leader is to complete and submit the approval form to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) (Mrs Ireland). The forms are available in RMstaff/off site visits/ADMIN.
- 7.2 EVC will inform Group Leader of SLT decision.
- 7.3 The Group Leader will advise staff at briefing about the proposed dates and targeted group.

- 7.4 The Group Leader submits the bursars form and letter to EVC and agrees any appropriate deposit and payment schedule required.
- 7.5 The letter must include:-
- The purpose and full details of the trip.
 - Precise information on the activities.
 - Consent slip for level 1 trips, to include parental signature, up to date medical information and contact number for the duration of the trip, or an OV7 form for level 2/3 visits
- 7.6 The group leader must then give a copy of the letter and a list of intended participant (or targeted group) to the EVC who will forward to the Bursar. Letters will then be distributed and put on parent pay.
- 7.7 The Group Leader must arrange a meeting with the EVC to add the trip to Evolve and confirm staffing. They must also liaise regularly with the bursar to check payment status and ensure that deadlines are being met.
- 7.8 For level 3 trips an Information Evening for parents must be held to confirm final details.
- 7.9 The Group Leader must submit evolve at least one week prior to departure for level 1 trips and 4 weeks for level 2 & 3.
- 7.10 One week before the trip the dining room must be informed if relevant, regarding packed lunches (for those with free dinners) and numbers not requiring dinner.
- 7.11 Prior to departure on Level 2/3 visits, the Group Leader must provide Mrs Lynch with a hard copy of OV8 and staff contact information and Itinerary.

After the Visit complete the OV12 evaluation on Evolve.

The EVC is available to offer advice and guidance throughout this process.

Check list for Group Leader:

	Date completed
Approval form to EVC	
Trip approved by SLT	
Inform staff at briefing	
Submit the bursars form and letter to EVC	
Trip added to Evolve	
Information evening arranged and date given to EVC	
Evolve to be submitted	
Provide hard copy of OV8, staff contact information and itinerary to EVC and Mrs Lynch	