



Visits Policy

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

Governor's Committee Responsibility:

**Curriculum & Student Welfare
Committee**

Date Approved:

Autumn Term 2023

Review Period:

Three yearly

Next Review Date:

Autumn Term 2026

The Limpsfield Grange Values:

At Limpsfield Grange we believe in working together to make a difference.

We are a tolerant community; we accept value and understand others.

We care for all members of our community without judgement.

We are responsible for our own learning, behaviour and actions.

We accept that sometimes things go wrong. We work together to take responsibility for our mistakes and for putting things right.

We are a respectful community and we treat others as we would like to be treated, even if they have different views and opinions to our own.

We understand that good behaviour helps us to prepare for life beyond Limpsfield Grange.

We are positive and resilient. We celebrate difference in everything that we do.

We are all proud to be part of the Limpsfield Grange community.

July 2023

Limpsfield Grange School Visits Policy

Aims

A visit is any activity that involves students leaving the school premises to undertake an activity organised through Limpsfield Grange (including our residential provision) and having being authorised to do so by the Headteacher and/or the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Limpsfield Grange acknowledges the immense value of visits to our students and fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed. The value of such visits is recognised by the Governing Body and fully supported throughout the school. A culture of safety must prevail and there is a need for careful planning and adherence to statutory requirements.

Visits should:

- Enhance curricular and social opportunities for students to gain cultural capital
- Have educational and/or social value and be related to the school's established aims and curriculum, including our WACI curriculum
- Be suitable for the students involved, having regard to their ages, abilities, needs and aptitudes
- Aim to be inclusive

In order to do this Limpsfield Grange will:

- Regularly monitor and evaluate existing and potential opportunities to sustain and develop a range of activities that benefit the students
- Seek to reflect the associated staffing and/or cover implications in calculating the cost of a visit, where appropriate
- Have appointed an Educational Visits Coordinator with responsibility for the implementation of agreed procedure and risk assessments

This policy has been informed by:

- Surrey County Council Guidance for Outdoor Educational Activities and Offsite Visits 2023-2025. The LA adopts the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP) National Guidance in their document
- Department for Education's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) (November 2018)
- Equality Act 2010

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants because of their disability, without material or substantial justification. We will make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act does not require employees or participants to be put at inappropriate risk if a health and safety issue arises. It is also the case that the adjustments

made to include a disabled young person should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity.

Scope

This policy applies to all adults who lead, organise or participate in visits involving students from Limpsfield Grange School, including staff, parents, Governors or volunteers. This policy applies to all visits that occur during the school day, in the residential provision and at weekends and during school holidays, where they are organised and led by Limpsfield Grange staff. Work experience and attendance by students at link courses provided at partner educational institutions during the school day, are not defined as visits in the context of this policy. All visit leaders must follow the guidance issued by Surrey County Council 'Guidance for Outdoor Educational Activities and Offsite Visits 2023-2025'.

Roles and Responsibilities

The **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** places overall responsibility for health and safety on visits with the employer, which is the Local Authority.

The **Governing Body** satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All visits that are residential, overseas or adventurous need to be approved by the Governing Body and Local Authority. Approval by the Governing Body is delegated to the Chair of Governors.

The **Headteacher** is delegated by the Governing Body to give final approval for all visits with the exception of overseas visits, residential visits and adventurous activity visits. These require Local Authority approval. When the Headteacher authorises a visit on EVOLVE, she confirms that the visit complies with school and local authority policy, and that in her opinion the visit leader and any accompanying staff are competent to supervise the visit.

The school has appointed an **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)**. This post is held by Emma Phillips, Deputy Headteacher who has practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits. She has attended the initial EVC training run by the LA. Her role is to:

- support the Headteacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions
- oversee and guide other staff to arrange and organise visits
- assess the ability of staff to lead visits and designate a suitable visit leader for each visit
- ensure that a policy is in place for visits, and that this is updated as necessary

The **Visit Leader** will:

- identify the purpose of the visit
- plan the proposed visit, taking into account the health and safety risks to students and staff
- ensure they have accurate information about the visit destination to be included in the risk assessment
- ensure the needs of everyone participating are considered

- ensure parents/carers are given accurate and timely information about the visit, including any costs or necessary equipment
- communicate key details about the visit to staff, students and parents/carers including roles and responsibilities and expected behaviour.
- prior to the visit , ensure that all students and staff understand what is expected of them and this should be re-emphasised during the visit
- complete a risk assessment

Our school Behaviour Policy applies to all visits. The school will withdraw students from participating in a visit, either prior to or during a visit, if they are not able to adhere to the policy.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

‘Risk assessment’ is a process, and not a document. HSE legislation dictates that the significant findings of the risk assessment process must be recorded, but it does not state any particular format for this. The ‘significant findings’ are a combination of the identified issues and what is being done about them. As there is no legal requirement to document the findings of the risk assessment process in any particular format, it is up to the school to decide what format works best and will be most useful for them.

The visit leader will complete a risk assessment using the school’s risk assessment template at least 4 weeks (for overseas and residential visits), 3 weeks (for adventurous activities) and 2 weeks (for local visits) before the proposed date of visit. The visit leader should discuss the risk assessment with the EVC before uploading it to EVOLVE.

The risk assessment will identify and include details of:

- all activities that will be undertaken as part of the visit, along with the associated risks and appropriate control measures
- generic risks that would be expected to be managed in any relevant experience or activity
- event Specific Risks as identified from a pre-visit or through knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the leader’s competence, the group and other factors such as transport
- on-going risks identified by the staff responding to changing circumstances. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures
- the individual needs of the students and how they will interact with the planned visit
- the medical needs of the students and staff involved and Individual Healthcare Plan, where appropriate.

It is not possible to eliminate all risks, but these should be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity. An activity should only take place if, in the professional judgement of the leader, the residual risk following implementation of any control measures is deemed to be acceptable.

Students are encouraged to consider risks involved in a visit and to assist in the design of appropriate risk management strategies that support their learning.

Alternative arrangements (a Plan B) should be included within the planning process where appropriate, for example, where weather conditions or water levels might be critical or where an overcrowded venue might necessitate an alternative option.

The ongoing monitoring of all aspects of the visit by the leader and other staff is the single most important aspect in the risk management of visits and hence safety. Where appropriate activities must be modified or curtailed to suit changed or changing circumstances. This is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff.

To inform future visits, it is good practice to record any significant issues following the visit.

For all visits there should be a responsible adult with a good working knowledge of first aid appropriate to the environment. General life experience is suitable for routine urban visits. A first aid kit appropriate to the visit should be carried.

On all visits there must be an 'effective level of supervision' that has been approved by the EVC and Headteacher. The EVC and Headteacher 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 requirements of individuals within the group, including those with medical needs.
- The experience of staff and other adults.
- The venue, time of year and predicted conditions
- The contingency, or 'Plan B' options.

Students must be supervised throughout all visits, even though they may not be accompanied at times.

Direct supervision is where a member of staff is with a young person/group.

Indirect supervision is where young people are unaccompanied by a member of staff, but where there is a member of staff in the vicinity, for example as might occur in a museum or shopping centre.

Remote supervision is where young people are unaccompanied by a member of staff, and the supervising member of staff is not necessarily in the immediate vicinity.

Adventurous Activities

We use the list of adventurous activities that is included in the 'Surrey County Council Guidance for Outdoor Educational Activities and Offsite Visits 2023-2025. document'.

The following activities are typically regarded as 'adventurous':

- All activities in 'open country' (Open country' is normally defined as land above 300m, or more than 1km from vehicular access)
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Abseiling
- All forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)

- Camping
- Canoeing / kayaking
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- 'Extreme' sports
- High level ropes courses
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Horse riding
- Motor sport – all forms
- Off road cycling
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- River/gorge walking or scrambling.
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Sailing / windsurfing / kite surfing
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly lifeguarded pools)
- Shooting / archery / paintballing
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Snowsports (skiing, snowboarding, and related activities), including dry slope
- Trampoline Parks
- Underground exploration
- Use of powered safety/rescue craft
- Water skiing
- Other activities (e.g., initiative exercises) involving skills inherent in any of the above

Limpsfield Grange acknowledges the immense benefits that adventurous activities can potentially bring to our students and fully supports and encourages adventurous activities that are correctly planned, managed and conducted. Staff should ensure that the intended outcomes of the activity are balanced with all reasonably practicable safety precautions. The responsibility for the safety of participants in an adventurous activity will rest with the external provider. However, the visit leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for students' health, safety and welfare. If the visit leader believes that it is not safe to continue with an activity, they must inform the external provider of this. If there is disagreement between the external provider and visit leader, the visit leader must contact the EVC by phone immediately.

An 'External Provider' is defined as where there is an element of instruction, staffing, or guiding, for example, an activity centre or educational tour operator. The decision about the use of an external provider is the responsibility of the visit leader, EVC and Headteacher. The LA does not maintain a list of 'approved' external providers or tour operators. To confirm that all aspects of the operation of the provider are satisfactory, the school must ensure that either:

- The Provider holds a LOtC Quality Badge or
- A 'Provider Form' has been satisfactorily completed by the provider

The following activities are not regarded as adventurous, however these activities must be supervised by a member of staff who has previous relevant experience and who in the opinion of the EVC and Headteacher is competent to supervise the activity:

- Walking in parks or on non-remote country paths

- Field studies - unless in the environments stated in 'open country'.
- Swimming in publicly lifeguarded pools
- Theme parks
- Tourist attractions
- Pedal go-karts
- Ice skating (rink)
- Farm visits
- Local traffic survey
- Museum, library, etc.
- Physical Education and sports fixtures (other than the above)
- Water-margin activities. Water-margin activities are those that take place near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water (water that is hardly moving at all and up to the knees of the participants).

Parent/Carer Consent

When students join the school, parent/carers consent is obtained for local visits. A local visit is one that is within 30 miles of Lingsfield Grange and does not involve adventurous activities. Additional consent will not be sought for these visits, however parents should be informed of the intended visit, usually through the weekly 'Friday email' from their daughter's form tutor. Parental consent will be sought for residential (overnight) visits, visits that are not defined as local and visits that involve adventurous activities.

Charging

We will follow our school Charging and Remissions Policy.

Emergency procedures

Emergency planning will be defined as planning for:

- Serious and unexpected risk
- Serious and life threatening injury
- Students going missing
- Serious breach of safeguarding expectations

In case of an emergency, the visit leader or other supervising adult will contact the EVC. The EVC will co-ordinate the response.

Related policies and documents:

Appendix 1 is the school's guidance for the planning and organising of visits.

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| • Behaviour Policy | • Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy |
| • Charging and Remissions Policy | • School Vehicle Policy |
| • Equality and Diversity Policy | • Student Health Medication and Administration Policy |
| • Health and Safety Policy | |

The Governing Body of Limpsfield Grange School adopted this policy on:	
It will be reviewed on:	
Signed:	
Dated:	

Appendix 1: Guidance Notes

		Visits within 30 miles of LGS and that do not involve adventurous activities	Visits further than 30 miles that do not involve adventurous activities e.g. London	Day visits that involves adventurous activities	Residential visits (regardless of whether they involve adventurous activities)	Overseas visits
1	Meeting with EVC to discuss visit	At least 4 weeks before planned visit date	At least 6 weeks before planned visit date	At least 6 weeks before planned visit date	At least 24 weeks before planned visit date	At least 24 weeks before planned visit date
2	Risk Assessment completed and sent to EVC	At least 3 weeks before visit date	At least 4 weeks before visit date	At least 4 weeks before visit date	At least 8 weeks before visit date	At least 8 weeks before visit date
3	Evolve Submitted	At least 2 weeks before visit date	At least 3 weeks before visit date	At least 3 weeks before visit date	At least 3 weeks before visit date	At least 3 weeks before visit date
4	Parents informed and consent) Students can be informed at this stage too	Inform via Friday email at least 1 week before the visit date (no consent needed)	At least 4 weeks before visit date	At least 4 weeks before visit date	At least 20 weeks before visit date	At least 20 weeks before visit date

1. Discuss visit with EVC.

- This should be an in person discussion.
- This discussion needs to take place before students and parents are informed of the visit and before any financial commitment is agreed.
- Unless the visit is in response to an opportunity that has arisen e.g. a last minute invitation to a significant event, this must be in line with the timescales outlined above.
- Provide EVC with details of proposed visit, including date(s), time(s), aims of the visit, the students involved, travel arrangements, total cost (to include staff and

travel costs), and if using an external provider confirmation that they hold an LOTC badge or whether a Provider Form will need to be completed.

- The EVC will decide on the staff and students involved. When deciding whether staff can be released for a visit, the EVC will give consideration to the needs of the students involved, but also the needs of the students that remain in school. When deciding whether students should be involved in a visit, the EVC will give consideration to behaviour and attendance.
2. When EVC has agreed visit, the visit leader will:
- Obtain any provider risk assessments and use these to inform their own risk assessment
 - Complete a risk assessment in line with timescales above
 - Inform parents/carers of the visit in line with timescales above
 - Put the visit on the school diary (detailing which staff and students are involved) and book the school car/minibus
 - Inform kitchen if visit involves being out over lunchtime/teatime, either ordering packed lunches or letting the Chef know that a number will be absent for lunch/tea
 - submit the EVOLVE , including all risk assessment(s) to the EVC in line with timescales above
 - share the relevant parts of the risk assessment with participating students
 - give a copy of the risk assessment to accompanying staff
3. On the day of the visit the visit leader will:
- Ensure a copy of the Evolve and Risk Assessment are left in the school office and that all accompanying staff have their own copy
 - Ensure all students are signed out in the school office
 - Take First Aid kit, Offsite Trips pack, emergency medication and Individual Healthcare Plans.

On return the visit leader must report to the EVC and, where necessary, an evaluation report should be completed in order to achieve any learning about a 'near miss' or where an incident took place but fortunately did not require the completion of an Accident/Significant Incident report form. Perhaps such a form was completed at the venue, however, this does not remove the need to place such an occurrence on the record at the school. A general evaluation of the visit will inform future visits and may be a useful check on the value of the risk assessments undertaken.

For all residential visits, an emergency pack must be with the EVC for checking 5 working days before the departure of the visit.

Visit Leader Guidance Notes

- Accidents do happen, but it is important that we do all we reasonably can to prevent them. Managing risks helps us to achieve our objectives and help prevent things going wrong. Visit leaders must show what they have done to manage potential risk. We need to demonstrate that the potential risks have been considered and steps taken to minimise them.
- The visit leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for students' health, safety and welfare. If the visit leader believes that it is not safe to continue with an activity, they must inform the

external provider of this. If there is disagreement between the external provider and visit leader, the visit leader must contact the EVC by phone immediately.

- The visit leader must plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks.
- The visit leader must define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and students and ensure effective supervision of what they do.

How to carry out a risk assessment

A risk assessment is a considered evaluation of how the hazard and risk can be controlled and reduced so that people do not suffer injury or illness. It is vital that, once identified, the control measures are understood and implemented by those involved.

The key elements of a risk assessment are:

Identifying significant hazards

Consider the activity and look for what could reasonably cause harm. Bear in mind that what is a safe situation for one person may be extremely dangerous for another. Below is a list of points that should be considered when looking for hazards:

- The nature and location of the journey or visit;
- Transport and route issues;
- Equipment standards and their suitability;
- Special educational or medical needs;
- Staff ratios, qualifications, experience and competence;
- The composition of the group, including age, sex and ability;
- Weather conditions;
- How changing circumstances will affect the risk assessment.

A risk assessment should not contain trivial or highly unlikely risks, only those that are reasonably likely to happen and cause harm, and over which you have control. To do this, try to look afresh at the situation and gain the views of both the experienced and inexperienced. Lastly imagine how the hazards may change as circumstances alter.

Establishing who is at risk

Consider who could be affected by the activity:

- Students;
- Visitors;
- Leaders and supervisors;
- The general public.

Evaluating and implementing control measures

Consider if the hazard is likely to cause harm. The aim is now to decide what control measures can be put in place to reduce the risk as much as possible. Control measures should be considered based on these two questions:

- (i) Can I get rid of the hazard altogether either by removing it or the group from it?
- (ii) How can I control the risks so that harm is either unlikely or reduced to an acceptable degree, given the nature of the activity?

NB: It is important to be honest when answering these questions. For example, an activity such as skiing carries with it certain inherent risks, some of which cannot be removed.

Consider the following control measures:

- Referring to existing guidance.
- Ensuring information is shared and understood.
- Specific training.
- Good active supervision and appropriate ratios.
- Proper emergency procedures.
- Appropriate ethos.
- Suitable first aid provision.
- Site-specific controls.
- Cancelling or cutting short or moving to a 'Plan B'.
- Reducing risk as far as reasonably practicable.

Recording risk assessments

It is a legal requirement to record and keep risk assessments. It needs to be shown that:

- A proper check was made.
- Those who might be affected were considered.
- Action was taken to deal with all the significant hazards.
- The precautions were reasonable and the remaining risk was acceptable

Ultimately this information must be available, as it could be required by a court of law.

Reviewing risk assessments

A risk assessment needs to be a 'living' document, constantly being improved and updated in the light of new experiences and practice. The risk assessment should be reviewed:

- (i) Every time there is a change to the activity, type of group, location, etc.
- (ii) Every time a group returns from a journey or visit. The assessment need not be extensive but should cover any safety aspect of the visit or journey that could be reasonably improved.
- (iii) Every time there is a 'near-accident'. A 'near-accident', can be simply defined as an incident that almost happened and which would have resulted in injury or harm.

Involving young people in risk assessments

Young people involved in risk assessments are likely to have a safer, more responsible approach to off-site activities and will have improved the risk management skills essential for adult life.

- All risk assessments that young people undertake should be finally checked and agreed by an appropriate adult competent to do so.
- Care must be taken to make parents and carers completely aware of the real risks young people will be involved in.

It is sound practice to involve all young people in risk assessment and risk management to a degree that is appropriate to their age, experience and abilities.

Young people should learn to identify risks and be encouraged to decide on ways to manage those risks. As an example, very young children are taught about the dangers of traffic and crossing the road and learn about the Green Cross Code. Similarly, they learn about germs and hygiene and should be encouraged to apply this knowledge to off-site activities such as farm visits.

Older students involved in off-site activities should identify risks relevant to their situations and be encouraged to develop risk-control measures. Examples of this might include getting lost or separated and being in remote locations with distant supervision (such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme). In short, risk assessment and risk management is not done *to* participants, but *with* them.

Three levels of risk assessment

A good risk assessment consists of three levels: a generic assessment, a site-/visit-specific assessment and an on-going assessment. These are covered in detail below.

Generic risk assessments

All providers or venues will have risk-assessed a comprehensive list of the activities or amenities it offers and will have produced operating procedures covering the general safety management issues of each. The procedures identified are appropriate to the activities whenever and wherever they take place, and are for visit leaders to use as a basis for running or participating in the activity. It is recommended, however, that visit leaders do not rely solely on the generic operating procedures: rather they should undertake their own risk assessments to become familiar with the activities' risks as they might affect the staff and young people attending.

Generic risk assessments apply to the particular activity wherever it takes place. For example, there will be some potential risks associated with an urban study such as roads, getting lost or separated, being approached by strangers, etc. that will apply in all cases. A generic risk assessment identifies these and their control measures. Similarly, adventure activities such as rock-climbing involve potential risks that are common to any rock-climbing event.

Event Specific risk assessments

This type of assessment should be undertaken by a person trained and competent to assess risks. This is usually the visit leader. By their very nature, generic risk assessments cannot take into account the individual risks and hazards of every situation. Therefore visit/site-specific assessments must be made to ensure that risks peculiar to that journey or visit are at an acceptable level. It is important that these assessments, while informing the school's policies and procedures, should remain consistent with those of the LA.

On-going risk assessments

Throughout the duration of the visit the visit leader and the other supervisors should be continually reassessing the risks. This reassessment should be based on the generic and site/visit-specific assessments and should take account of local expertise on factors such as changing weather or tides. The need for on-going risk assessments is outlined in the following examples:

- Emergency situations can be unforeseeable and therefore control measures may not have been definitively formed prior to the incident. It is down to the experience and expertise of the visit leader and supervisors to quickly establish the nature of the emergency, who is at risk and what control measures should be put in place to prevent harm to members of the group.
- Changes to the group, such as tiredness, illness or misbehaviour, or a change in the weather, may require an alteration to the programme or a switch to Plan B.

Visit leaders should trust their professional judgement and understanding of their young people. Ultimately the visit leader is responsible for the group and should be able to use their own judgement to cancel or alter hazardous activities, even if contracted activity leaders are running them.

Significant hazards

Although no attempt is made here to identify the specific problems that have led to high-profile accidents and tragedies, some significant contributing factors are clear.

- Water has been the most common cause of fatal accidents on offsite activities. Particular care must be taken in or near water.
- Activities that have not been thoroughly risk-assessed and prepared for pose significant risks. It is clear, therefore, that spur-of-the-moment, opportunist decisions – for instance, to go swimming – are not acceptable. Ensuring that all potential opportunities have been thoroughly explored beforehand can mitigate any lack of spontaneity that might result. This again is evidence of the need for the preliminary visit.
- Accidents have happened where no contingency plan has been pre-organised. Where a supervisor feels they have no alternative, they are more likely to carry on with an activity, in spite of an increased risk. A vital control measure when reducing the risk of an activity is that of being able to abandon it and take up another more appropriate activity if necessary. Risk assessments must also be done for the contingency programme.
- Local advice and expertise have either not been sought or acted upon.
- The competence or qualification of the leaders has not always been sufficient to recognise and understand the nature of the hazards involved.
- There has been a lack of understanding between ‘real’ and ‘apparent’ danger.