

**PRESTON & WINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION**

# **Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits Policy**

## **APPROVAL & ADOPTION**

This policy was formally agreed and adopted by the Governing Body on:

\_\_\_\_\_30.09.2019\_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors**

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be a stylized name, positioned to the right of the 'Signed:' text.

## Introduction

The value of outdoor learning and educational visits are widely recognised as an important tool for supporting the education and development of children and young people, providing direct curriculum-linked activities to improve learning, skills, understanding and activity opportunities to enhance PE and extra-curricular activities. They also provide a wide range of personal development opportunities to support the development of real-life skills.

***“Learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils’ personal, social and emotional development.”***

Ofsted – Learning Outside of the Classroom report

<http://www.lotc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Ofsted-Report-Oct-2008.pdf>

Preston & Wingham Primary Schools Federation believes in the benefits of well planned, high quality outdoor learning and educational visits and encourages schools to provide opportunities for all pupils to experience visits and outdoor activities using a range of environments, geographical, cultural and historical sites and activities to support their curriculum.

## Scheme of Delegation for the Management of Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities

KCC delegates the responsibility for the safe planning and management of outdoor learning and educational visits, including residential and adventurous / more hazardous activities, to the Governing Bodies of maintained schools and Management Committees of Pupil Referral Units.

From 1 September 2017 all maintained schools and establishments will be responsible for approving their own educational visits and activities, including residential and adventurous activities. Schools and establishments must ensure that they have clear and robust systems, policies and procedures in place for the planning, safe management and monitoring of educational visits and activities.

KCC provides all schools with a **Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities** to support and guide schools in the safe planning and management of outdoor learning activities and educational visits. The **Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities** can be found here:

<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/outdoor-education>

KCC also provides maintained schools with a model policy to consider adapt and adopt which forms the basis of this policy.

## Access to Advice, Guidance, Training and Support

Schools and establishments must ensure that their staff members have access to appropriate advice, guidance and training to support their role in planning and managing visits and activities. Preston & Wingham Primary Schools Federation accesses appropriate advice and guidance by purchasing service and support packages from the Outdoor Education Advisory Service. This provides direct access to professional outdoor learning and educational visits support, guidance and technical advice. It also enables the federation to access from the Outdoor Education Advisory Service, including INSET and bespoke training, across a wide range of outdoor learning and educational visit areas - from visit management to practical outdoor learning skills and leadership qualifications.

Contact the **Outdoor Education Advisory Service** for further information on service packages, support and training – [outdoor.education@kent.gov.uk](mailto:outdoor.education@kent.gov.uk) or 03000 410 901.

## Health and Safety Responsibilities

The scheme of delegation for Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits transfers the day to day responsibility for the safe management of outdoor learning activities and educational visits to the Governing Bodies of maintained schools and the Management Committees of Pupil Referral Units.

KCC retains its legal health and safety responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act as the ultimate employer of staff in Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools and Pupil Referral Units. Through the scheme of delegation the Governing Bodies/Management Committees act as the employer in the first instance.

The change in delegation of the management of the health and safety of school educational visits brings this area in line with KCC's general approach to the management of health and safety in schools.

This Guidance Note and Model Policy Statement for Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning forms an extension to the main **KCC Health and Safety Policy for Schools**. The policy can be found here - [http://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0010/41779/health-and-safety-policy-for-school.docx](http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/word_doc/0010/41779/health-and-safety-policy-for-school.docx)

The principals of the KCC Health and Safety Policy for Schools apply to the safe practice and management of educational visits and outdoor learning activities, and this policy statement should be managed and implemented in conjunction with it.

All maintained schools and establishments are required to adopt a policy statement on Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits. The Preston & Wingham Primary Schools Federation has chosen to meet the policy statement requirements through the purchase of an Outdoor Education Advisory Service SLA (Package B)

## Monitoring

KCC will monitor, on an annual basis, compliance with the scheme of delegation and adherence to the Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Activities.

For schools purchasing a service and support package (A or B) from the Outdoor Education Advisory Service, visits and activity compliance will be monitored through the EVOLVE online educational visits system and advisory support included with the SLA. **These schools are not required to submit annual audit information.**

Individual visit / activity planning and management may also be 'sample' monitored or directly inspected as required.

## Useful Information and Resources

- **Kent Framework for Safe Practice on Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning –**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/Curriculum/outdoor-education>
- **Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP) National Guidance for Educational Visits and Activities –** <http://oeapng.info/>
- **DfE Guidance on the Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits -**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/health-and-safety-guidance/curriculum-topics>
- **Emergency Planning Guidelines for Kent Schools -**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/running-a-school/maintenance-and-operations/emergency-planning>
- **Guidance on First Aid for Schools – A Good Practice Guide Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings -**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/health-and-safety-guidance/risk-assessment>
- **KCC Incident/Accident Reporting -**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/health-and-safety-guidance/accident-reporting>
- **KCC Health and Safety Inspection Proforma -**  
<http://www.kelsi.org.uk/policies-and-guidance/health-and-safety-guidance/management-of-health-safety>

## Useful Contacts

- **KCC Health and Safety Unit**  
Health and Safety Advice Line: **Tel:** 03000 418456 / **Email:** [HealthandSafety@kent.gov.uk](mailto:HealthandSafety@kent.gov.uk)  
**Location:** Room 3.32 Sessions House, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ
- **The Outdoor Education Advisory Service**  
**Tel:** 03000 416539 / **Email:** [outdoor.education@kent.gov.uk](mailto:outdoor.education@kent.gov.uk)  
**Location:** The Swattenden Outdoor Centre, Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook, TN17 3PS
- **KCC Insurance and Risk Management**  
**Tel:** 03000 416440 / **Email:** [insurance@kent.gov.uk](mailto:insurance@kent.gov.uk)  
**Location:** Room 2.53 Sessions House, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ
- **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**  
Enforcement of Health and Safety Legislation. -  
<https://extranet.hse.gov.uk/lfservlet/external/F2508IE>  
**Tel:** 0845 345 0055 online reporting.
- **RIDDOR Incident Contact Centre**  
The reporting service for work-related health and safety, RIDDOR incidents to the HSE.  
**Website:** [www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk). **E-mail:** [riddor@connaught.plc.uk](mailto:riddor@connaught.plc.uk)
- **Safe Practice in Physical Education and School Sport**  
Association for Physical Education (AfPE) - [www.afpa.org.uk](http://www.afpa.org.uk)  
**Tel:** 0118 378 6240, **Email:** [enquiries@afpe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@afpe.org.uk)

**Kent County Council  
Children, Young People and Education**

**OUTDOOR LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL  
VISITS POLICY STATEMENT  
of**

**PRESTON & WINGHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
FEDERATION**

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**Statement of Intent:**

The Executive Headteacher and Governors are committed to establishing and implementing arrangements that will ensure:

- Visits and activities are planned to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and volunteer helpers - including appropriate risk management and assessment that is specific to the needs of the group, the planned activity and the location and environment. This includes any significant risk assessment information being communicated with those attending the visit as appropriate.
- The management of overall visit and activity planning, risk assessment and the visit approval process is carried out by a competent staff member with appropriate experience and training; an **Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** will be nominated in each school to carry out this role and they will attend an EVC training course, and an EVC update course every 3 years. This role is delegated to the Heads of School.
- The Governing Body has designated a Governor with direct responsible for oversight and monitoring of Outdoor Learning and Educational Visits as part of their role as the designated Governor for Health and Safety.
- Visits and activities are planned with clear educational aims and objectives, based on pupils' needs and abilities, to support high quality learning outcomes.
- Visits and activities are planned and led by competent members of school or establishment staff, with appropriate qualifications and experience as required by the activities.
- Appropriate technical expertise is sought in relation to the planning and management of more hazardous or adventurous activities, including the verification of activity leader qualifications, safe activity management, appropriate ratios, etc.
- External providers used to provide services and support, have been appropriately checked to ensure they are suitable for use on educational visits e.g. meeting nationally accepted standards and legal adventurous activity requirements (e.g. Adventurous Activities Licence),

have appropriate financial protections in place (e.g. ATOL), etc as appropriate; and hold an appropriate level of Public Liability Insurance for the activities or services provided.

- Appropriate emergency and serious incident procedures are in place to manage accidents, incidents and safeguarding issues, and visit information can be easily accessed by all those who need it in an emergency situation (this may be overnight, at weekend or during holiday periods). All staff and volunteers involved with visits receive appropriate training and briefings on dealing with emergencies.
- Information and documents relating to educational visits are appropriately stored and retained, in line with data protection and document retention requirements, to support incident management and potential investigations / court proceedings after serious incidents and accidents.
- All school and establishment staff are appropriately trained for their roles in leading and accompanying educational visits and activities.
- All visits and activities have been formally approved by the Executive Headteacher or Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) on their behalf. Approval systems should be clearly evidenced, and involve school Governors as appropriate.
- Informed activity and medical consent has been obtained from parents / guardians as appropriate for the type of visit or activity, and that parents / guardians are given enough information to be 'fully informed' about all educational visit activity plans if specific written consent has not been gained.
- Full medical information and details of other issues such as behaviour, special needs, dietary requirements, etc have been obtained from parents and are available to visit leaders and accompanying school or establishment staff. These should be shared with provider staff where appropriate.
- Appropriate monitoring and evaluation of visits and activities takes place, to ensure quality and safety.

### **Forest School**

Forest School is a unique method of outdoor education that allows children to develop confidence, independence, self-esteem and awareness and knowledge of the natural environment. This is achieved by setting small achievable tasks. The child is never put in a position where s/he will fail so success is achieved. It is a child-centred and child-led programme that provides the opportunity for the children to use their personal learning style to complete their chosen tasks.

We are very fortunate that both schools have access to woodland where they can undertake Forest School activities. There is also a designated area at Wingham School where children can engage in Forest School learning.

### **Purpose/Aims of Forest School**

- To provide children with experiences that encourage an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.
- To provide opportunities for children to gain knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the National Curriculum and the EYFS Curriculum.
- For children to develop environmental awareness and to learn to respect and care for their own local environment. Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials are used when appropriate.

- To support children to learn to abide by rules and set standards of behaviour.
- For children to work cooperatively in groups and to develop respect for each other.
- To develop children's self-esteem and self-confidence through the setting of small achievable tasks.
- To support children to develop responsibility for themselves and others.
- To encourage early risk management strategies that will ensure that children start to consider the impact of their actions on themselves, on others and on the environment.

## Organisation

- Forest School sessions take place within the school day (unless a pre-arranged after school club) and in most weather conditions. A decision will be made by the Forest School Leader regarding the weather and possible dangers at any time deemed necessary. This may involve cancelling a session or cutting a session short.
- The school will inform parents of any Forest School sessions taking place offsite.
- The leader will ensure that all children are suitably clothed with waterproof coats, trousers and boots, hats and gloves; suncream and sunhats if necessary.
- The sessions will vary in duration.
- We aim to make Forest School sessions inclusive through providing a variety of activities which meet the needs of all learners.
- The children will be taught a variety of woodland skills through practical hands on activities, linking to the National Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum
- The children will learn the care and safe use of a wide range of tools. This is a tightly supervised activity on a 1:1 ratio of adult to children. It is introduced gradually in small steps which are age and stage appropriate.
- Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and to take responsibility for their actions. This is achieved by games that also encourage respect for the environment.
- The Outdoor Learning Leader will keep the Heads of School, Executive Headteacher and governors informed and updated regarding all aspects of Forest School.
- The federation has 4 fully trained Forest School Leaders, each of whom hold an up to date First Aid certificate. There are also a number of additional adults with suitable training who can lead groups.
- The offsite Forest School sites used by the federation are privately owned and have full public access and liability insurance.
- The leader is responsible for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils at all times.
- The leader will ensure appropriate risk assessments are completed, will undertake a detailed safety check before each session and comply with the federation's safeguarding and health and safety policies. The leader must ensure that any supporting adults are familiar with current risk assessment and emergency procedures at the start of each session. Groups must stay within the agreed boundaries which will ensure they are within earshot of an adult.
- All lessons planned by the FSL will support the learning of all children in relation to the knowledge, skills and understanding of the Early Years and National Curriculums.
- The leader will adhere to the federation's safeguarding policies and procedures at all times.
- The leader is responsible for all equipment and will ensure that it is checked before use and returned to the resource area after use.
- The leader will keep parents fully informed of any incidents that may occur during a session, e.g., trips, falls, stings, etc. and complete any accident reports according to the schools' policy.

## **Appendix 1: Procedures for Lighting Fires at Forest School**

Before lighting a fire at Forest School, the following should be in place:

- Children must have a secure knowledge of fire circle safety.
- The agreement of the Head Teacher.
- The owner has have been informed that fire lighting may take place and is in agreement.
- In addition to the other resources, a large container of water will be taken to the site if necessary.

### **When lighting a fire:**

- A trained person will take responsibility for the fire. This will be their sole responsibility for the session. They shall be responsible for lighting it, manning it while it is burning and putting it out at the end of the session.
- Children will be aware of the fire safety rules through a safety briefing prior to every session.
- The fire will be contained within the area agreed.
- The ground around will be cleared of flammable material and other safety procedures will be carried out in advance.
- FSL will check for low overhanging trees.
- A container of water will be beside the fire to put it out and deal with burns.
- While the fire is being lit, the children will be engaged in activities elsewhere.
- The fire will be extinguished at the end of the session.
- NO fires will be lit during peak fire risk periods.
- A first aid kit will be located nearby at all times.



## **Appendix 2: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**Emergency information is kept in the Forest School bag, along with a mobile phone, First Aid kits and FSL handbook.**

In the case of a major injury:

- Keep calm. The children are more likely to remain calm if the adult appears to be in control. If necessary, remove the danger, or the person from the danger.
- Call “123, Where are you?” Stay with the casualty whilst the children make their way back to the fire circle or base for the day. A member of staff will take responsibility for the children while the leader joins the casualty.
- The leader will carry out necessary First Aid, whilst delegating someone to call for further assistance if necessary. If assistance is required, an adult will be delegated to meet them at a pre-arranged place, according to the Emergency Services information.
- Whoever has called for further assistance will also call the school to inform them of what has happened. The incident must be reported in the accident book and a copy given to the school office.

### **Minor Injuries**

All minor injuries must be recorded in the accident book and reported to the leader. First Aid (including plasters) must only be applied by a member of staff with a current First Aid certificate.

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

The Forest School leader will always carry a mobile phone.

#### **Emergency Telephone Numbers**

Preston School 01227 722235

Wingham School 01227 720277

Emergency Services 999

#### **Location of Forest School Site:**

**Preston – Hardacre Farm, Mill Lane, Preston, Canterbury CT3 1HB**

**Wingham - Woodland behind Holly Cottage, Preston Hill, Wingham.**

### **Appendix 3: Forest School Guide for Assistants**

Before joining our Forest School team please read the following guidance carefully. Thank you!

#### **Before Leaving School**

- Check all equipment against the session list.
- Ensure all clients are appropriately clothed (waterproofs and Wellingtons) and have visited the toilet.
- Be aware of number of children.
- Assist with transportation of equipment to site.
- Accompany children in orderly fashion to and from the site.

#### **Arrival at the Site**

- Assist with transporting equipment to the site.
- Accompany children across the road and then ensure safe progress into the woodland
- Accompany children into the woodland and assist in transporting equipment.
- At all times be alert and aware and cooperate with the leaders.

#### **In the Woodland**

- Encourage and support clients during activities as requested or directed by the leaders. (Please see visitor protocol in FSL's handbook.)
- Allow client time and space to solve any problems and encourage independence by giving constructive suggestions rather than showing them how or taking over the task.
- Assist leaders with any cooking, snacks or drinks that may be needed.
- Be vigilant for any potential dangers and inform leader immediately of any accidents, then assist as directed.
- Assist in clearing the site and transporting equipment back to school.
- Accompany the children back to school.

#### **On return to School**

- Accompany children back to the classroom.
- Assist with clothing.
- Assist in checking equipment back in as directed by the leader.

All assistants must have read a copy of the Forest School Policy document and be conversant with the ethos of Forest School.