

COGNITA



DOWNSEND
SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

LITTLE DOWNSEND

ASHTED • LEATHERHEAD • EPSOM

Educational Visits Policy

January 2026

EUROPE

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy defines the expectations and intentions for educational visits. It applies to situations where the school has responsibility for children and young people who are taking part in learning activities in an environment that is outside of the classroom. It supports the principle of inclusion.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all pupils, including those in the early years.

2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 All schools which are part of Cognita Schools Ltd (Cognita) in Europe are expected to follow this policy and the 'Educational Visits Guidance' document.
- 2.2 This policy and the Educational Visits Guidance document formally adopt the website www.oeapng.info as their source of guidance about educational visits.
- 2.3 Educational visits are valued as an integral part of a Cognita education.
- 2.4 The Headteacher is responsible for the purposeful and safe provision of educational visits and other offsite activities. This includes ensuring that all adults accompanying a visit have appropriate background checks, the staff team are competent, and appropriate risk management has been undertaken.
- 2.5 Delegated duties are given to the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and where appointed a Deputy Educational Visits Coordinator (DEVIC) to oversee the school's educational visits.
- 2.6 Delegated duties are given to Visit Leaders to plan and run specific educational visits, as per the Job Description to be found at www.oeapng.info.
- 2.7 UK Headteachers will ensure residential and overseas trips are booked only with providers who hold either the LOTC Quality Badge, are ALC, or using unmodified provider form.

3 Principles

- 3.1 Cognita will provide all Headteachers, EVCs, and DEVICs where appointed, with access to relevant EVC training and information necessary for them to carry out their duties safely.
- 3.2 Headteachers will ensure that their staff are trained appropriately to lead and accompany any trips according to the training matrix, including ensuring provision for any children with additional vulnerabilities.
- 3.3 Headteachers will ensure all overseas, residential and adventurous offsite visits are entered (as draft) on EVOLVE prior to any bookings or payments being made.
- 3.4 Headteachers will ensure all overseas, residential and adventurous offsite visits are submitted to Cognita no less than 4 weeks before departure (except in exceptional circumstances that have been discussed with our Educational Visits Adviser).
- 3.5 Any off-site extracurricular activities must be added to EVOLVE (such as swimming, horse riding, climbing etc).

- 3.6 Headteachers will ensure all other (non-overseas, residential and adventurous) offsite visits are entered on to Evolve at least 7 days before departure.
- 3.7 EVCs will ensure all Local Area Visits are added to the EVOLVE local area visit section prior to departure and the Local Area Policy is amended and uploaded to the EVOLVE Documents section.

4 Safeguarding

- 4.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Visit Leaders must ensure they uphold the highest safeguarding standards when on trips and visits, including adhering to the school Safeguarding Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One, and Annex A, as well as their local authority child protection procedures. All staff accompanying children on school visits have a duty to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. Visit Leaders must be made aware by the DSL of any pupils who will be attending that have safeguarding vulnerabilities. They must receive information about the type of need/risks posed for the child, what to do in an emergency, and any other additional support that is necessary. If any of these children have a safeguarding risk assessment, these must contain specific information related to the trip, be uploaded onto Evolve, and discussed during planning stages. Hard copies of risk assessments must be taken on the trip if electronic access is a challenge and must be securely stored during the trip for data protection and privacy reasons.
- 4.2 If a safeguarding concern arises about a child during the trip, a member of staff on the trip must contact the school's DSL/DDSL immediately and verbally (records should be made asap using normal school systems). If a child is in imminent danger, the Visit Leader must contact the Police, whilst another member of staff contacts the DSL /Headteacher (or Regional Safeguarding Lead in their absence). There must be no delay but seek advice as needed.
- 4.3 If a safeguarding concern/allegation arises about an adult (staff member/provider/other) during the trip i.e. their behaviour, conduct or attitude, the Headteacher must be notified, or the DSL in their absence, as per the Safeguarding Policy. If the concern/allegation is about the Headteacher who is actually on the trip/visit, then staff must contact the Regional Safeguarding Lead, and/or the Head of HR as per the Safeguarding Policy. There must be no delay.

5 Post Trip Evaluation

- 5.1 Visit Leaders **must** complete and submit one Post-Trip Evaluation form (both Part 1 and Part 2) for each visit (excluding Local Area Visits) to the EVC including elements around safeguarding i.e. what went well and what lessons can be learned for future planning. These must be uploaded to EVOLVE within 14 days of a visit.
The EVC must read and action, where appropriate, any findings from the Post Evaluation Form.

Contact names	
Head of Little Downsend	Laura Fisher – Laura.Fisher@downsend.co.uk
Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)	Annette Burbidge – Annette.Burbidge@downsend.co.uk
Deputy EVC (where appointed)	Catherine Weekes Catherine.Weekes@downsend.co.uk
Cognita Managing Director	James Carroll – james.carroll@cognita.com

Educational Visits Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Chantael Clayton – Chantael.Clayton@downsend.co.uk
Educational Visits Adviser	Jake Wiid - Jake.Wiid@cognita.com
Regional Safeguarding Lead	Alison Barnett – alison.barnett@cognita.com
Regional H&S Lead	Melissa Jones – melissa.jones@cognita.com
Consultant Nurse	Helen Ferguson- helen.ferguson@cognita.com

Source of information on educational visits	
Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel: National Guidance	http://oeapng.info/

Ownership and consultation	
Document Sponsor	Director of Education-Europe
Document Author / Reviewer	Head of Health and Safety- Europe and USA
Consultation & Specialist Advice	Regional Safeguarding Lead – Europe and USA EV Advisor- Europe and USA Head of Compliance – Spain and Italy Consultant Nurse –Europe and USA
Document application and publication	
England	Yes
Wales	Yes
Spain	No
Switzerland	No
Italy	No
USA	
Version control	
Current Review Date	September 2025
Next Review Date	September 2026
Related documentation	
Related documentation	<p> Educational Visits Guidance Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Pupil Supervision, Lost and Missing Children Policy Pupil Health and Wellbeing Policy Anti-Bullying Policy Behaviour Policy First Aid Policy and Guidance Health and Safety Policy Health and Safety Handbook Central Record of Recruitment (SCR) and Vetting Checks Transport Policy Post-Trip Evaluation Form (Evolve) Risk Assessment: Welfare, Health & Safety Policy Data Protection Policy This policy is written in accordance with: OEAP National Guidance www.oeapng.info The DfE Health and safety on educational visits (26th November 2018) and Advice on Legal Duties and Powers (updated February 2014). </p>