Educational Visits Policy

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Review Date	**January 2027**

An academy within:

"Learning together; to be the best we can be"

1. Statement of Intent

1.1. This policy applies to any visit that leaves the school grounds, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

1.2. We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Lotus Academy a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning, making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. i.e., encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

2. Employer Policies and Procedures

2.1. In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Lotus Academy uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

2.2. All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document). Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

3. Approval Process

3.1. The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

- Local visits follow the Educational Visits Policy. These are entered on EVOLVE via the Local Visits function for notification/for approval by the EVC*
- Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE and should be submitted to the EVC for checking at least **20 working days** in advance, and then forwarded to the Headteacher. The intention of visit form to be submitted by email to the Headteacher (SLT).
- Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous'). These are entered on EVOLVE and should be submitted to the EVC for checking **30 working days** in advance with the intention of visit form to the Headteacher before EVOLVE is completed. Applications should then be submitted to the LA **20 working days** in advance.

4. Roles And Responsibilities

4.1. **Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE. They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any financial or other commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

4.2. **The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** are Daniel Nelis, Chelsie Eccles and Adele Hetherington who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Headteacher. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

4.3. **The Headteacher** has responsibility for approving type 1 and 2 visits, and authorising type 3 visits which are then work flowed via EVOLVE to the LA.

4.4. **The Headteacher** has responsibility for approving all visits. Type 3 visits are work flowed via EVOLVE to the LA.

4.5. **The Headteacher** will advise as to whether the visit should be approved and recommend what actions if any needs to be taken before approval should be granted.

5. Staff Competence

5.1. We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role. The EVOLVE process is also covered in annual staff CPD training sessions.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

5.2. In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Headteacher will consider the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

5.3. Records will be kept on the staff HR systems of induction, training, relevant qualifications, and competence.

6. Volunteers

6.1. Any volunteers who accompany a visit or activity will be vetted and be directly supervised by a member of staff. If volunteers are to have substantial unsupervised access to young people, then an enhanced DBS disclosure will be obtained, and they will undergo induction and training in their role and responsibilities. Reference should also be made to Lotus Academy's safeguarding policy and school volunteer policy if in place.

6.2. Any volunteers must be pre-agreed and approved with a risk assessment being done around this person, with also an induction for this person.

6.3. See Appendix 3 for guidance for parents and carers who are supporting an educational visit

7. Emergency Procedures

7.1. **A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

7.2. The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is reviewed annually and following any major staffing changes.

7.3. When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the Trust.

8. Parental Consent

8.1. Each establishment should set out their approach to monitoring which should address the following issues as appropriate:

- When parental consent is required how is this obtained?
- What methods are used to fully inform parents?
- If consent gained electrically via which system?
- Does school use the annual consent form?
- Is individual written consent required for each visit?
- When consent is not required and not obtained how are parents informed?
- How are parents informed of use of the local learning area?
- Medical form – do you ask for this to be completed for a visit such as a residential?

8.2. **Annual consent:** Written consent will be gained annually for routine local visits and activities which are a normal part of our educational provision. This can include visits and activities beyond the normal day such as after-school sports fixtures and information regarding the nature of the types of visit will be included. We will fully inform parents by letter and text of the nature of each visit, activity, or series of a similar nature, remind parents that they have already consented, and give opportunity to update information and emergency contact details.

8.3. **Individual consent**: Written consent which may be electronic via Microsoft forms, email or letter will be gained for every individual visit, activity or series of a similar nature which involve a higher level of risk including, but not limited to longer journeys, residential visits, adventurous activities, those which fall outside of normal hours and non-routine activities which are not a normal part of educational provision. We will fully inform parents by letter, text or email of the nature of each visit, activity, or series of a similar nature.

8.4. **Medical information:** We will use the medical information on record in our Student Information Management system alongside any updated information which parents will be given the opportunity to provide for most visits and activities. Where visits or activities involve a higher level of risk it may be appropriate for separate medical information and consent forms to be completed.

9. Inclusion

9.1. We endorse the principles for young people of a presumption of entitlement to participate, accessibility through direct or realistic adaption or modification and integration through participation with peers.

9.2. We acknowledge that it is unlawful to treat a young person with a protected characteristic less favourably or fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that young people with protected characteristics are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

9.3. We also acknowledge that expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a young person) is within their competence and is reasonable.

10. Behaviour

10.1. Appropriate behaviour is essential for the smooth running of learning beyond the classroom activities and ensures that effective memorable learning can take place. Young people, parents and carers will be made aware of the school's behaviour policy. In addition, parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities for removing/collecting young people in prescribed circumstances.

11. Charging / Funding For Visits

11.1. We will keep all charges for trips to an absolute minimum and also use Pupil premium to cover these where possible.

12. Transport

12.1. Where possible the school minibus will be used for all visits. The driver will complete the daily checks on the vehicle before setting off. All driver must hold up to date MIDAS test certificates.

12.2. If outside agencies are needed these are usually selected from pre-approved providers.

12.3. **Use of staff/private cars to transport pupils –** This is allowed as long as the staff produce documents as necessary (business insurance and a valid MOT certificate and driving license)

13. Insurance

13.1. All visits are covered by the Academy insurance for visits which is currently through RPA.

14. Monitoring

14.1. The monitoring role of the EVC Manager, other senior staff is done by the Headteacher.

14.2. All accidents, near misses, incidents and concerns and reported to the School Office Manager in line with those procedures and policies.

14.3. Staff will be encouraged to complete review forms after visits.

14.4. New staff will be buddied up with an established visit leader to undertake peer on peer support.

14.5. The focus and extent of monitoring through field ('out-of-classroom') observation.

14.6. Decisions about the focus and extent of field observation should be informed by risk assessment. There are many ways of targeting or sampling the range of provision, for example:

- Observe a representative sample from the full range of provision.
- Focus on frequent or routine activities.
- Focus on activity that is more complex and requiring enhanced planning and
- management.
- Focus on areas where leaders or the establishment are less experienced.
- Training records for all staff are kept updated and in their personal file.

15. Swimming Lessons

15.1. Each lower school class has a term of swimming in the curriculum that is delivered by a swimming instructor. This is done on an termly or half-termly basis but if there are any updates or changes needed during this time the form will be revisited.

16. Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

16.1. Parents are to wait outside the main school entrance and pupils will be handed over to them directly after the session has ended.

16.2. Times will be confirmed on the letter for each individual session.

Appendix 1 – Local Learning Area

Visits/activities within the 'Local Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- must be recorded on EVOLVE via the 'Local Area Visit' module.
- Only need annual parental consent, parents will then be notified in advance if they are going out on a trip.
- Risk assessments will be done for each visit.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the locality are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- Sheffield Town Centre
- Parson Cross Park
- Hillsborough Leisure Centre
- Meadowhall
- Ice Sheffield
- Concorde Leisure
- Vue Cinema
- Botanical Gardens
- Sheaf Training
- Nacro
- Bowling
- Grenoside woods
- Allotment at Parson Cross Park

'No-go' areas within the Boundaries e.g.

- This will also be based upon local intelligence, media, police information, information obtained from the LA and these will be reviewed each time a trip is requested,

Operating Procedure for Local Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.

- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, must give written approval via email before a group uploads the visit onto the EVOLVE system.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- Staffing levels will always be in line with the needs of that group of pupils and this will be clearly shown on the risk assessments for each visit.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return. A mobile contact number should also left on this form.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed, HI VIS jackets are available for staff to wear in the local area and also on the minibus's should these be needed. (e.g., gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

For further guidance on emergency procedures see National Guidance Emergencies

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority / Trust if the incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency

response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.

6. For visits that take place outside the 'local learning area', the visit leader will carry an emergency procedure reminder. See National Guidance 4.1c Emergencies and Critical Incidents - Guidance for Leaders
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Appendix 3 –EDUCATIONAL VISITS PARENT HELPER GUIDANCE

Educational visits are an integral part of learning at Lotus Academy and afford many children opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. We are pleased that you have come forward as a volunteer helper. You will have an important role to play in the success and safety of the school trip.

This document sets out what we do to make off-site trips successful and safe. It forms part of our school's off-site visit planning and risk assessment.

Please sign and return the form at the bottom of this agreement and return to the school in advance of the trip.

Role of the Volunteer Helper

- To be responsible and look after, in equal measure in conjunction with school staff, all of the children in your group.
- To stay with your allocated group of children at all times ensuring that their well-being and safety is maintained for the total duration of the school trip.
- To stay with school staff except where the teacher has asked volunteers to lead separate groups within agreed boundaries and periods of time (e.g., to view museum exhibits in small groups).
- To promote polite, respectful and courteous behaviour towards each other and members of the general public.
- To ensure that the group you are with keep up with the body of the school visit party, be it walking, entering or exiting from transportation, or following speakers for the trip.
- To contact your child's class teacher/school member of staff if there are issues with first aid, safety and/or behaviour.

Working alongside School Staff

School staff expect volunteer helpers to:

- Comply with all of the above whilst being under the direct line management of school staff.
- Show commitment to their group and an interest in the focus of the visit
- Assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, and by asking questions that encourage children to think and reflect on the experience.
- Follow any further guidance from the school staff.

What is not permitted Volunteer helpers are not allowed:

- to leave the visit site/premises.
- to bring additional siblings on the school trip.
- to re-organise school visit groups.

- to smoke, drink alcohol or engage in any illegal practices.
- to take photographs of children.
- to give / buy their group any treats - e.g., ice-creams, biscuits, sweets, or any other gifts - before, during or after the school trip.

Volunteers will be under direct supervision of school staff and will not be allowed to carry out duties - such as escorting children to the toilet (unless essential in the circumstances) or leading a small group of children - without a member of the school's staff explicit instruction.

First Aid

You will be informed if any child in your group has medication / needs. If medication needs to be administered, this will be done by a trained member of staff.

Emergencies

You will be given the number of the mobile phone(s) being used by the Visit Leader. Inform a member of staff as soon as possible if you become separated from the rest of the school party or encounter any problems by mobile phone or call the school directly on 0114 245 6305 if necessary.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS PARENT HELPER AGREEMENT

Dear Parent/Carer

We really appreciate your support for Lotus School and thank you for helping make our off-site visits run smoothly.

Please complete the short form below. The completed form will be kept on file for future visits and will be retained in line with the school GDPR policy.

Thank you

Your Name	
Child's Name	
Relationship to child	
Your mobile phone number	
Emergency Contact	Name:
	Telephone Number:
	Relationship:
Details of any disability, health or medical information that our first aider should be aware of, or which may affect your participation in the trip.	

- I confirm that I have read and will abide by the guidance in the Educational Visits Parent Helper Guidance
- I have signed the Volunteer/Student Confidentiality Agreement
- I will support the young people in enjoying the trip and actively contribute to the smooth running of the occasion.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Lotus Academy – trip request form

Part A – initial approval (submit to Head/Deputy at least **4 weeks** in advance)		
Venue:	**Date:**	**Duration:** AM ☐ PM ☐ Day ☐
Trip Lead: **Trip arranged by:** *(If different to lead)*	**Class(es):**	**Expected staffing**: (Please state minibus drivers)
Basic outline of trip (Reason for trip; learning opportunities etc.)		
Transport Arrangements: Walking ☐ Car ☐ Minibus ☐ Public transport (please specify) ☐ _____		
Please tick to confirm that you have **checked the whole school calendar** to confirm no issues with availability of pupils or staff? Yes ☐		
Approved by Head/Deputy? Yes ☐ No ☐	**Head/Deputy signature:** _____ **Date:** _____	

Part B – further detail (complete after *initial approval* and submit to Head/Deputy)
Cover required? Yes ☐ No ☐ Please detail cover below (lessons, subjects, classes etc.) **Note:** Work must be set for any pupils/classes left in school or those that are normally with teachers on the trip.
Will the group be out for lunch? Yes ☐ No ☐ Please list packed lunches needed below

Note: This will be sent directly to the kitchen staff on your behalf	
Cost of trip: £ _____	**Parental contribution:** £ _____ per pupil
Final authorisation – Head / Deputy only	
Approved? Yes ☐ No ☐	
SLT signature: _____	**Date:** _____
COMPLETED FORM TO BE HANDED TO JOY COOPER	

EVC Guidelines. - Planning a School Trip it is your responsibility to make the booking andf forward to finance once approved

Complete the trip request form - attached and give to Chris Evans (SLT) for confirmation.
Pencil in your trip in the minibus and whole school diary

Trip confirmation received back from **Chris Evans** and given to **J Cooper**
Confirm the trip in pen in the minibus and whole school diary
4 weeks before

Once approved **evolve form** to be **completed** with **costings** and **risk assessments** and **letter to parents** attached to the Evolve for approval
Copies of the risk assessment need to be saved on to Staff Sharing Risk Assessment file

Evolve will be confirmed by EVC and Head
3 weeks

3weeks before
When evolve approved the Letter to parents **MUST** be sent out 3 weeks in advance.
Payment Method for trip confirmed and trip booking sent to J Cooper
Must be signed off by Chris Evans before going to parents / carers.
This also needs to go to Joy Cooper so this can be put on Parent Pay.

Confirm sandwich details with kitchen
2 weeks

Chase up: payments received, Consents if necessary and confirm payment of trip received by provider
Confirm staff cover if this was requested intially
1 week before

Send note / text out to parents/ carers to remind them about trip and what they need to provide i.e. clothing etc.
1 day before

Care plans and medication signed out check children have lunches and confirm numbers with reception. Check all pupils are adequately dressed. Ensure phone numbers are left with reception
The day of the trip

Appendix 2
Educational Visits
Charging for School Activities:
Schools **can charge** for:
- Music tuition
- Materials or equipment, for when product is taken home i.e. food technology
- Board or lodgings whilst on residential

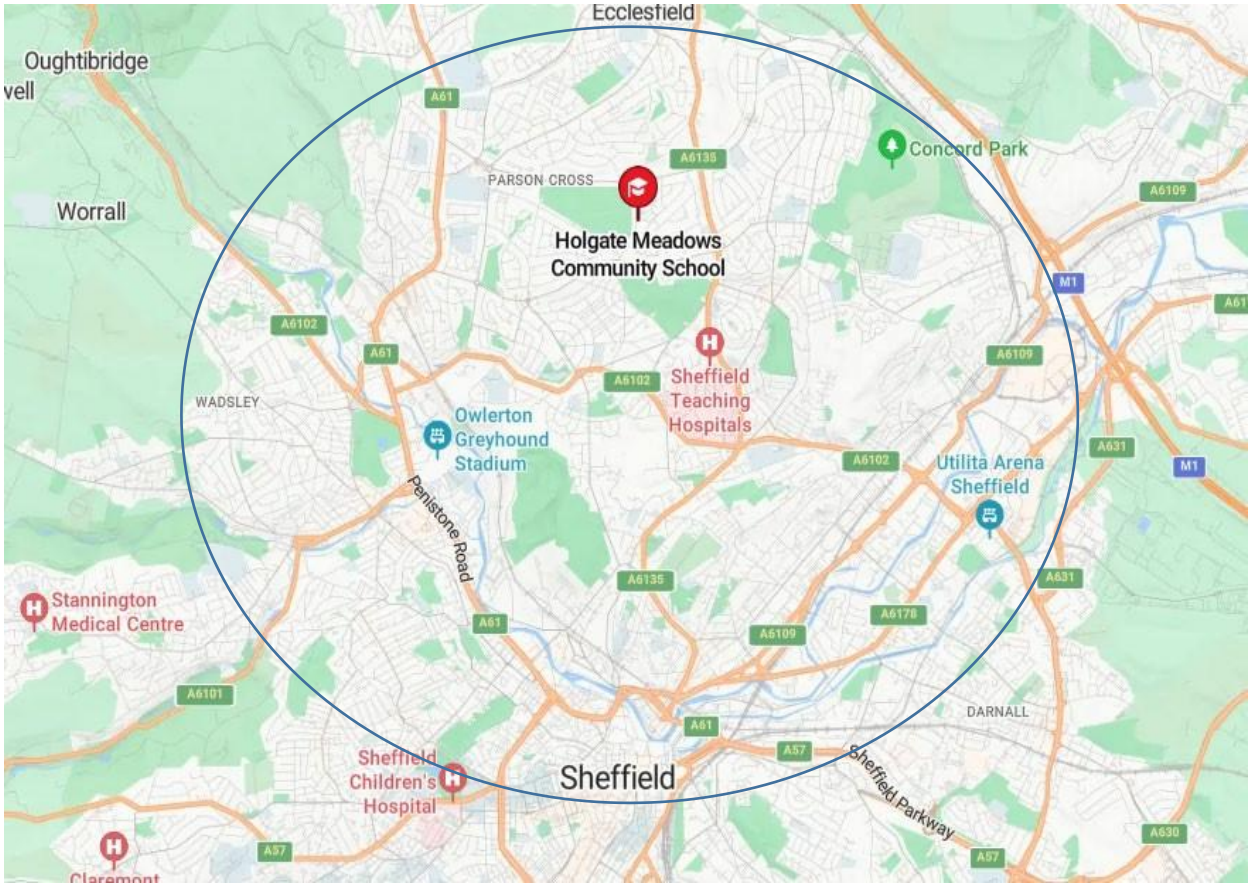
Everything else schools can ask for a voluntary contribution. Schools can:
- Inform parents and carers of the actual cost of a trip
- Inform parents and carers that if not enough voluntary contributions are received, the trip may not go ahead

Charging for Educational Visits:
Please remember to include:
Any admission fees or activity costs
Use of minibus (fuel / wear & tear)*
Insurance**
Spending money
Food & drink – i.e. lunches
* Use of minibus – calculate per mile, 65p
Parking costs
Staff lunches:
There are certain circumstances when school can provide a lunch for staff, please see your Head of Department if you require staff lunches.

Local area map

Main school local area including post 16

Anything that is inside the circle when visiting from the main school site is deemed as a local visit and permission from parents is sought annually for this. For anything that is outside the circle further permission should be sought from parents.



Consent form for school trips and other off-site activities
For academic year: September 2025 – August 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

It will no longer be necessary for you to give separate, written consent for the majority of off-site activities offered by the school, providing that these activities are part of the school's curriculum and are held during a normal school day.

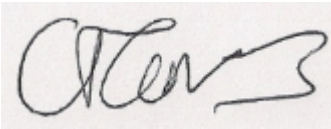
By signing the consent form below, you are agreeing to your child: -

a. Taking part in school trips and other activities that take place off school premises, as part of the curriculum.
b. To be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during any school trip or activity, if needed.

We will continue to send you information about each trip or activity before it takes place but we will no longer ask for consent for each trip. You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular school trip or activity.

If you have any further queries regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely



Chris Evans
Headteacher

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Consent form for school trips and other off-site activities
For academic year: September 2025 – August 2026

Name of Student: …… Year: ……

I give consent for my son/daughter to take part in school trips and other activities that take place off school premises and to be given first aid or urgent medical treatment during any school trip or activity.

Signed …….. Print Name……..Date……