

Matthew Arnold Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

Dated: September 2024

Review Date: September 2025

Contents

Overview

Planning a Visit

Roles and Responsibilities

Staffing Ratios

Risk Assessments

Insurance

Transport

Swimming on

Visits Farm Visits

Finances

Accident / Emergency

Procedures Appendices

1. School's Summary of Trip / Visit Procedures
2. School's Trip / Visit Check List
3. School's Trip Form

Overview

The purpose of this document is to offer support to staff who take part in off-site, educational, residential and adventurous activities. It supports the use of these exciting, highly motivating environments and activities that help our children to learn. It is to be used in conjunction with the Educational Visits Policy produced by School Improvement Liverpool.

This document offers support in managing the process and is clear about individual roles and responsibilities. Risk assessment is an important part of the process and a proforma is included.

Educational Visits Co-Ordinator (EVCs) should ensure group leaders follow the policy and guidance.

The local authority Outdoor Educational Officer will help EVCs by providing training, monitor visits and processing applications for approval. The Health & Safety Unit will also provide advice and support, and review procedures and policies.

The school's Educational Visits Co-Ordinator is **Sam Nuttall**.

Planning a Visit

Pupils can obtain a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with school. They have the opportunity to develop skills and undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Therefore, it is important to ensure the safety of the children and staff on educational visits.

All visits must be recorded. This is carried out by using EVOLVE. EVOLVE is an online tool for planning and managing educational visits. It is currently used by over 19000 schools across the UK.

When planning a trip or visit we also have to consider the activities that will take place. The local authority educational visits approval requirements are based on the latest guidance for the Department of Education, which states that there are three categories of activity ranging from those with no significant hazards to those that are most demanding with a high risk. These categories are broken down further depending on whether the visit involves an overnight stay or travel outside the UK.

The three categories are as follows:

Category A

These are activities that present no significant risks. They should be supervised by a teacher who has been assessed as competent by the LA or EVC, where appropriate, to lead the activity.

Category B

These comprise some higher risk or higher profile activities. LA approval is required for this category of activity. Safe supervision is required by the group leader and staff.

Category C

This is the most demanding category. It includes all those activities that if not school led, would be in the scope of Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. LA approval is required for visits in this category.

Examples:

- a. Visit as part of a regular curricular activity within school hours with non hazardous activities – **Category A**. (eg a visit to the local park or library)
- b. Visits not usually part of the school day that may be extend beyond the end of the school day with no hazardous activities – **Category A**. (eg a visit to Chester as part of the 'Romans' topic)
- c. Visits including an overnight stay – **Category A/B**. (a visit to any destination where you will stay overnight)
- d. Visits of one day or less involving hazardous activities – **Category B/C**. (a visit to do rock climbing or abseiling)
- e. Visits including an overnight stay and involving hazardous activities – **Category B/C**. (eg staying in an outdoor activity centre and taking part in canoeing or other hazardous activities)

LA approval is not required for visits in categories a. and b. but approval would be required for all visits in categories c., d. and e.

The LA will undertake sample monitoring of all educational visits.

Hazardous activities must be approved by the local authority. All details must be completed on EVOLVE and submitted at least 28 days in advance of the trip. Hazardous activities include:

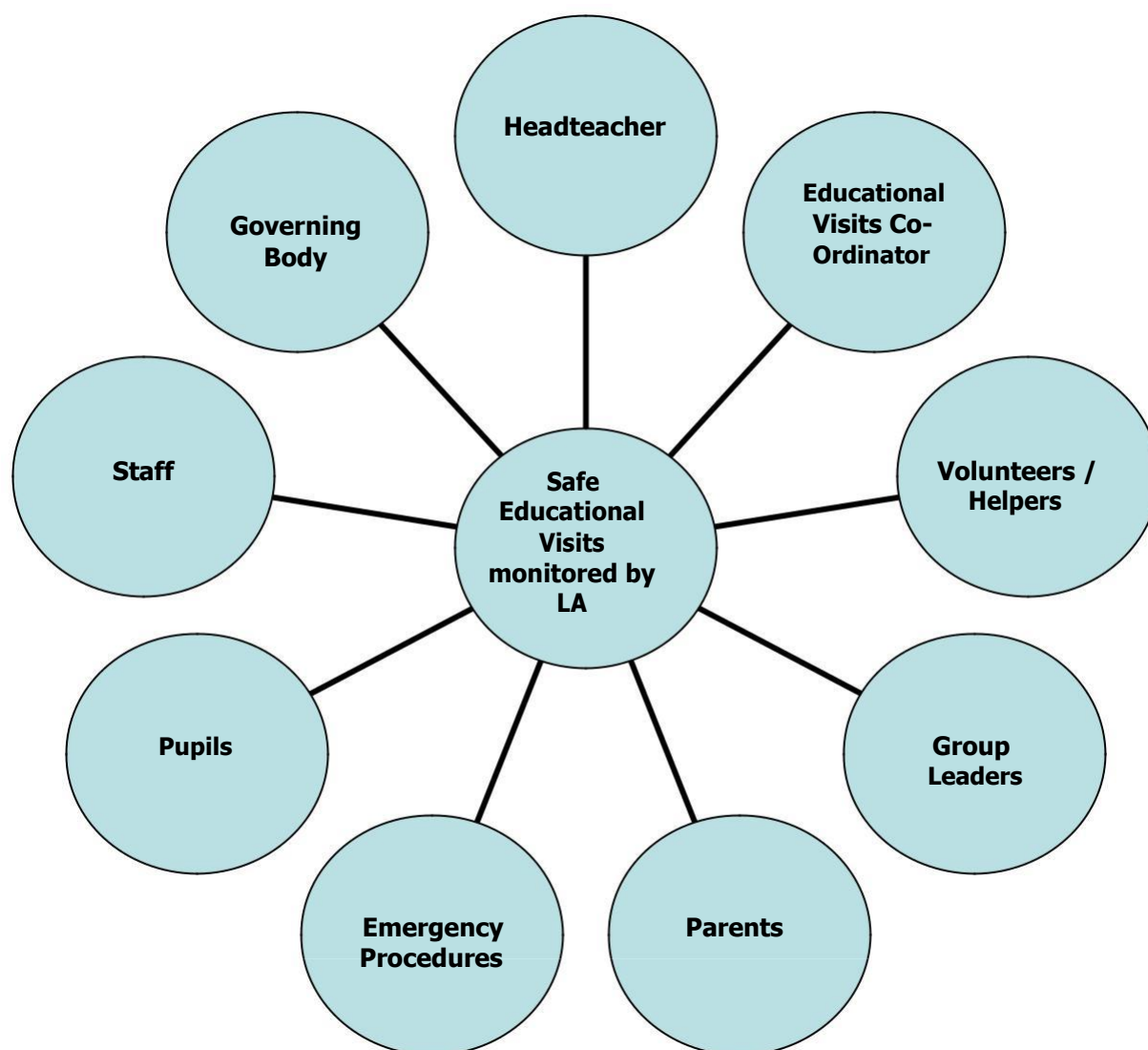
- Multi Activities – led by External Provider such as Kingswood or PGL
- Abseiling
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- All activities in 'open' country
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Archery
- Bouncy Castles – Must be run and managed by an independent company not the school
- Camping
- Canal boating
- Canoeing
- Caving / potholing
- Climbing
- Coasting / coastal scrambling / sea level traversing
- Expeditions – including DofE and pre-expedition training
- Farm visits – both onsite and offsite visits
- Forest School – sessions involving knives and or campfires
- Fishing
- High level ropes courses
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Horse riding

Ice skating
Kite flying / kite surfing
Low and high rope courses
Moorland, fell and mountain activities
Motor skills – all forms
Mountain biking
Off road cycling
Open country activities and field studies
Orienteering
Paintballing
Rafting or improvised rafting
River / gorge walking or scrambling
Rock climbing
Rowing and sculling
Sailing and power boating
Sea-level traversing and coasteering
Shooting and archery
Skiing
Skiing - indoor or dry slope
Snorkel and aqualung activities
Snowboarding
Surfing
Swimming (all forms, excluding UK public pools)
Theme park visits
Trampoline parks – visits to trampoline parks is not allowed and will not be approved
Underground exploration
Use of powered safety / rescue craft
Walking near water (such as beach or canal)
Water skiing
'Extreme' sports

This list is not exhaustive.
If in doubt please seek advice.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following will outline the responsibilities of those involved with undertaking a trip / visit.



Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing Body of the school should have an agreed policy on educational visits. The policy should contain details on the methodology of policy implementation and review. In addition the Governing Body should:

- Ensure the Headteacher and EVC are supported in matters relating to educational visits
- Assess the suitability of visit aims, objectives, value, risk assessment, general visit arrangements, insurance cover and emergency arrangements.
- Ensure staff on the visit are qualified, experienced and competent Consider concerns of parents and staff
- Evaluate post visit reports

Responsibilities of the Headteacher

Headteachers should ensure that educational visits comply with relevant regulations and guidelines provided by the LA, the Governing Body and the school's own Health & Safety policy. The Headteacher should ensure that there is a school EVC who will be responsible for all off-site educational visits. That person should be fully aware of current LA guidelines and other advice. In addition, the Headteacher should:

- Liaise with the Governing Body
- Provide sufficient resources for visit, its planning and funding
- Agree the following with the EVC, visit aims, objectives and value, risk assessment, general visit arrangements, insurance cover exploratory visit and contingency plans
- Ensure staff on the visit are qualified, experienced and competent Consider concerns of parents and staff
- Authorise trips through EVOLVE when required Liaise with the LA if necessary
- Evaluate the visit if required
- Ensure training needs are met

Responsibilities of the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator

The EVC should be directly responsible to the Headteacher as much of the responsibility of that position relates to assisting the Headteacher in the effective implementation of the Health & Safety policies. The EVC should be involved in the planning and management of all trips led by the school staff and receive specific training for the LA. In addition, the EVC should:

- Support the Headteacher
- Agree the following with the Headteacher, visit aims, objectives and value, risk assessment, general visit arrangements, emergency arrangements, contingency plans and training needs
- Ensure staff on the visit are qualified, experienced and competent Consider concerns of parents and staff
- Authorise trips through EVOLVE when required
- Vet and monitor contractors eg tour operator or activity providers Evaluate the visit if required
- Liaise with the LA and Safety Unit
- Maintain overall co-ordination of visits

Responsibilities of Group Leaders

The group leader should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of those on the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. They are also responsible for the recording of the visit through EVOLVE. The list below is not all inclusive but the group leader should:

- Appoint a deputy
- Define each group supervisor's role is required
- Undertake planning of the visit with EVC including risk assessments, emergency procedures, required training etc
- For residential trips, permission to attend for Looked After Children must be sought via their Social Worker

- Ensure ratio of supervisor to children is suitable Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure supervisors are aware of pupil's special needs
- Attend any briefings for parents, Governing Body etc
- Evaluate and review the visit

Responsibility of Staff and Adult Volunteers / Helpers

Volunteers on a visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. They must be aware of the aims and objectives of the visit and of any special needs of group members. Staff and volunteers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act, as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances. In addition, they should:

- Follow instruction of the Group Leader
- Consider stopping activities, notify the Group Leader if risks to children or themselves is unacceptable

(Please note: Volunteers must **not** be left in sole charge of children)

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a particular visit or undertake an off-site activity. Parents must therefore be informed in writing about the visit unless it forms part of the school curriculum which parents will have given consent through the annual consent form. In addition, parents should:

- Prepare the child for the visit
- Agree visit and emergency details
- Agree / supply any required information or payment
- Attend a pre-visit meeting if required
- Agreed to children Code of Conduct

(Please note: If parents withhold consent the pupil should **not** be taken on the visit)

Responsibilities of Children

The children should:

- Always follow the instructions of the group leader
- Adhere to the agreed Code of Conduct
- Dress / behave sensibly
- Not to take unnecessary risks
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or others
- Inform supervisor of any hazards or dangerous situations

Staffing Ratios

For every visit there should be a designated group leader who oversees the entire visit and has the overall responsibility for supervision during the visit. It may be necessary for groups to be split during a visit therefore each group must have a competent supervisor. Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of children must take place. When undertaking the head count, the checker must physically see the child before marking off their name on a list.

The required staffing levels will vary depending on the activity, age of participants, group size, the location of the visit and the efficient use of resources.

The table below offers detailed guidance for staffing ratios:

Activity	Maximum Ratios	Notes
Local Visits Visits in the local area close to support at school / base (minimum of 2 staff recommended)	Reception Better than 1:6 Years 1 – 3 1: 6 Years 4 – 6 1:10 – 15 (one supervisor per activity or supervision group)	A minimum of one qualified and competent Group Leader is needed for every group or class, they can be supported by other responsible adults.
Day Visits More than 60 miles or one hour from school / base (minimum of 2 staff recommended)	Reception Better than 1:6 Years 1 – 3 1: 6 Years 4 – 6 1:10 – 15 (one supervisor per activity or supervision group)	Please note minimum ratios are not recommended but small working groups of 6-12 remain target
Residential Visit, UK or abroad (minimum of 3 supervisors recommended, any less needs a thorough risk assessments and emergency management plan)	Reception Better than 1:6 Years 1 – 3 1: 6 Years 4 – 6 1:10 (one supervisor per activity or supervision group, these do not include any centre residential staff)	Supervisors should reflect the gender of the group wherever possible
Open Country Working by water or away from a road or building	Reception Better than 1:6 Years 1 – 3 1: 6 Years 4 – 6 1:10 (one supervisor per activity or supervision group, these do not include any centre residential staff)	Overall group sizes above 20 are not recommended at any one location at a time (supervision and sustainability issues). Similarly large groups should not be moving together in convoy. The numbers of qualified leaders will depend on the risk assessment

Parents and volunteers may be asked to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school. Anyone who has not had a Disclosure and Barring Service check should never be left in sole charge of children.

Teachers, staff and other adult supervisors should ensure that whenever possible they are not alone with a child. This provides protection for all parties.

The ratios and supervision strategies need to be complemented by a clear knowledge of the competence of those supervisors, volunteers and other responsible adults.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For visits it involves a careful examination of what could cause harm during the course of the visit. It need not be complex but it should be comprehensive. The aim of the risk assessment is to ensure nobody gets hurt or becomes ill during the course of, or as a result of the visit.

A risk assessment involves five simple stages:

1. **Identify the hazards** – Look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Concentrate on significant hazards, or those that could harm several people.
2. **Decide who might be harmed and how** – Consider children, staff, helpers, leaders and others who could be affected by the visit activities.
3. **Evaluate the risks** – Regarding how likely it is that harm will be done and the severity of the likely outcome. You have to decide for each hazard whether the risk is high (*an accident is likely with the possibility of serious injury or loss*), medium (*there is a possibility of an accident occurring causing minor injury or loss*) or low (*an accident is unlikely with control measures in place*). Decide what your safety measures need to be in place to get rid of the hazard, or reduce the risk so harm is unlikely. Your control measures should be practical and be understood by those involved. It is likely that some risk will remain after all control measures have been put into place but this risk must be low.
4. **Record your findings and control measures** – You must record the findings from the assessment. You must be able to demonstrate that a proper check was made, the assessment acknowledges those who may be affected, all significant hazards were dealt with, the precautions to be put in place are reasonable and the remaining risk is low.
5. **Review and revise your assessment** – this should be carried out annually or when necessary. On return to school note any hazards that arose which might affect future visits.

Insurance

No school trip should go ahead without adequate insurance. When organising a visit, we should ensure that venues to be visited are suitably insured eg documentary evidence of Public Liability insurance cover. It is also necessary to ensure transportation has adequate insurance cover.

Insurance has been arranged for educational visit through Liverpool City Council. The scheme will provide cover for the school and will be initiated where permission from the local authority is required for a particular visit to take place.

(Further information is available upon request).

Transport

Using a Minibus

This section is a basic checklist that can be used during the planning of a visit.

The minibus must:

- Be regularly and suitably maintained (documentation should be checked)
- Carry a suitable fire extinguisher (foam / carbon dioxide)
- Have clearly indicated emergency exits
- Have suitable first aid provision (First Aid boxes)
- Have passenger and driver seat belts
- Ideally have high back seats
- Have a register of all staff authorised to drive the minibus and their competences eg undertaken MIDAS training

Drivers must:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Hold a suitable full driving licence
- Have successfully completed suitable training and assessment
- Have appropriate health and driver training records
- Carry out a vehicle check prior to using the vehicle
- Be familiar with the vehicle and the highway codes before carrying passengers

Minibus Driver Entitlement

Voluntary drivers who hold a Category B (post 1997 car entitlement) can drive a minibus if all the following are met:

- The driver has held a Category B licence for at least 2 years
- A non commercial body is using the minibus (Schools are usually considered as being non commercial)
- The driver cannot be compelled by their employer to drive
- The driver is only paid out of pocket expenses and not specifically for driving.

(Further details are available upon request).

Hiring of Coaches

The primary consideration in the carriage of children is safety, where numbers make the use of minibuses impractical, coaches should be used. Legislation requires that coaches have seatbelts.

Staff supervision on coaches should check that all group members are all wearing their seatbelts. There is no requirement for younger children travelling on a coach to be held in a car seat or booster seat. They should use the existing seat belt system. The school will ensure a reputable coach company with proven maintenance checks and policies.

Use of Public Transport

Some groups may wish to use public transport as a means of transport or as a learning experience for children, this is a useful exercise.

If used choose times to travel where transport is empty and will have sufficient space for the whole group to be seated.

Risk assess the journey, take sufficient staff to ensure the children are suitably supervised.

The group should remain seated until the stop is imminent. Supervisors should indicate to the children when to stand to leave, a member of the supervisory team should be the last member of the group to leave the vehicle.

Swimming on Visits

The opportunity may arise for children to swim during their visit, either in public pools or in open water. Group leaders must ensure that relevant regulations are adhered to. If the requirements outlined below cannot be met, swimming must not be permitted. Prior permission must be obtained from the parents / guardian prior to including them in swimming activities.

Free swimming in a public pool presents greater risks to the swimmer than organised swimming lessons. A basic rule is that children must be observed at all times. Check if there is a constant supervision by a sufficient number of qualified lifeguards. Group leaders must follow the recommended supervision levels at the pool for their children as a minimum standard. A minimum ratio should be:

School years 4 to 6	1 adult per 12 children
School years 7 onwards	1 adult per 20 children

Staff should monitor the risks of regular swimming activities and adjust supervision level as necessary.

Swimming should not take place within one hour after eating. The group leader must be aware of children with any medical conditions that may affect their safety or that of others during the activity.

Authority regulations prohibit swimming in open inland water. The only exception is where swimming takes place as part of a water-sports activity, which must only be permitted if it forms part of the organised programme and it must be in accordance with relevant local authority regulations.

Farm Visits

Farms can be dangerous places with specific hazards that may arise from slurry or grain pits, potentially dangerous machinery, electric fences, uneven and/or slippery ground, chemical or other stores as well as potentially dangerous live stock. Therefore educational visits to farms require particularly careful planning. Regard should be given to the issues prior to the visit.

All those involved in a farm visit should be informed of the required code of conduct prior to the visit and knowledge of that code checked, it should then be constantly enforced during the visit.

All farms have a degree of bacterial contamination. All animals naturally carry a range of micro-organisms that can be transmitted to humans. Some infections present a serious hazard as they can potentially cause severe illness. The risk from such illness is particularly great to children under the age of six. The risk of infection can be readily controlled by good hygiene practices.

Financing

Charging for Activities

The underlying principle is that education which is provided wholly or mainly during school hours should be free of charge. Although there is no legal obligation, parents can be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards an educational visit or activity but a maintained school cannot exclude any children through parent's inability or unwillingness to pay.

We can recommend an amount of voluntary contribution to be made but must explain to parents it cannot insist that any amount is paid. It must also be explained that a child cannot be prevented from taking part if the contribution is not paid in full. To counter the risk of insufficient funds it should be explained to parents that if contributions are not made, the visit or activity may not be possible.

Accident / Emergency Procedures

Adequate and appropriate first aid provision must be made available for all out of school activities. The local authority's policy for first aid provision during school visits is as follows:

- The person(s) chosen to be the First Aider(s) on a visit should be selected on the basis of being competent, suitably qualified, able to act in an emergency and having a degree of organisational ability.
- For higher risk activities the accompanying First Aider should have passed the 4 day First Aid at Work Certificate
- For lower risk activities the accompanying First Aider should have passed, as a minimum standard, the 1 Day Basic First Aid Certificate.
- There should be, where possible, one First Aider for each group or sufficient appointed persons available for 'cover' purposes.

A record should be made of every occasion when any employee, child or other person received first aid treatment. All accidents must be reported to the Headteacher. The accident book should be filled in carefully and accurately. Accident report forms must be completed where appropriate and in the appropriate timescales.

If a child needs to take medication during a visit, parents must inform the school in writing. This information should be provided to the group leader. Medication must be kept in a securely controlled medical store or held where appropriate by suitable person until it is required.

Despite good planning and organisation there may be accidents and emergency situations that require an on-the-spot response by those leading the visit. The group leader will remain in overall charge, however when summoned to an accident, the first aider will, so far as is practicable take charge of first aid treatment and render such first aid as is advised or authorised for certificated first aiders. If required and taking into account the advice of the first aider, the group leader should call the emergency services or ensure that they have been called.

On no account should the injured person be left alone or allowed to go to hospital by themselves. Should an ambulance be required, the first aider is to stay with the injured person until it arrives and provide any required details to the ambulance staff. Where possible the first aider should accompany the injured or sick person to the hospital, to the doctor or to their home.

If a person is admitted to hospital, the group leader should refer to the emergency contact list which includes details of relevant telephone numbers to inform parents / next of kin, these details should be kept by the group leader. The group leader should also contact the school to inform them of the accident.

Appendices

The following appendices are attached:

1. School's Summary of Trip / Visit Procedures
2. School's Trip / Visit Check List
3. School's Trip Form

For further guidance, please seek advice from the Headteacher and / or the EVC.

Matthew Arnold Primary School

Trips / Visits – Procedures

A risk assessment must be completed for all trips two weeks prior to visit.

For residential trips, forms must be completed and entered onto EVOLVE 28 days prior to visit. If forms are not completed, the trip may have to be cancelled.

Please ensure that **ALL** the relevant forms are completed by **team leaders**

Team leaders must enter all details on to EVOLVE

(Have staff received training? If not seek advice in order to complete)

For a general school trip – please complete school trip form, Form 2 (Risk Assessment), Form 3 (Parental consent) or own parental consent form and Form 4 (Summary of Pupil Information)

If the trip is a residential or classed as a hazardous trip (please check), Form 1 must also be completed

When writing to parents re costs, we must ask for a voluntary contribution to cover cost, however we must point out that if insufficient funds are received the trip may be cancelled. If there is a set amount for the trip eg Llanberis, this cost must be stated and not a voluntary contribution

All completed forms must be presented to Linzi in order to be entered on EVOLVE.

All trips must also be authorised by Headteacher and/or EVC on EVOLVE

When authorised, any admin duties will be carried out (transport, lunches etc)

After the trip has taken place, Form 5 (Evaluation of the visit form) must be completed and returned to Sam

Payment of Trips

All payment of trips must be paid via ParentPay.

All documentation will be kept in Admin Office.

The school has a legal obligation to complete all forms correctly.

Risk assessments should be written, assessed and owned by trip leader.

Team leader must share information with team.

If visits are repeated a generic risk assessment can be written. Need to be updated with pupil / staff data each time.

If team leader changes on a repeat visit, the risk assessment must be reviewed.
For 'unusual trips', governors must be informed

All staff on trips must be DBS checked

Short trips – First Aider not required, any other trips, First Aider essential.

Always check ratios

If using minibus – must adhere to minibus regulations etc

Matthew Arnold Primary School

Trips / Visits - Check List

The trip / visit:

Reason? How does it fit in with curriculum? Venue? Cost?

Discuss and confirm trip / visit with the Deputy Headteacher

Discuss with any relevant staff with regards to any aspect of trip / visit

Letter to go out to parents with any information they need

Copy of letter to go to the office for information

Forms to be completed:

School Trip Form

Form 1 (Residential / Hazardous Trips only)

Form 2 (Risk Assessment - Travel)

Form 2 (Risk Assessment - Activity)

Form 3 (Parental consent form / School letter re consent)

Form 4 (Pupil / Staff information)

All information entered on EVOLVE?

Following the trip:

Form 5 (Evaluation Form) to be completed

All the above **MUST** be completed in order for the trip / visit to take place.

Trips and Visits

Proposed Trip / Visit: _____

Date of Trip / Visit: _____

Teacher / Class: _____

Number of Adults: Male: Female:

List of Pupils / Adults attached: Yes / No

Contact Details attached:	Yes / No
---------------------------	----------

Transport Required: Yes / No

Departure time from School: _____

Approximate arrival at Venue:

Departure time from Venue: _____

Approximate arrival at School: _____

Packed Lunches needed: Yes / No

Letter to parents required: Yes / No

Other information:

I understand and undertake the responsibilities in connection with this trip as the identified Group Leader.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by Admin:

Form received:

Booked in School diary:

Transport book:

Date booked:

Cost:

Company:

Telephone Number:

Packed Lunches – Cook Notified:

Letter to parents – Copy attach

[illegible]

