Applecroft School



Offsite Visits Policy

Person Responsible:	Deputy Headteacher
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Issue:	September 2026
Review Date:	September 2027

Offsite Visits Policy

School Vision:
'To be a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life.'

School Mission Statement:
'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'

School Values:
- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

1) Introduction:

Offsite Visits are activities arranged by, or on behalf of, our school, which require pupils to leave the school premises, having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher or other designated member of staff.

The Staff and Trustees of Applecroft School acknowledge the immense value of off-site visits and related activities to young people and fully support and encourage those that are well planned and managed.

This policy sets out our approach to planning and operating educational offsite visits, to ensure the health and safety of our pupils and staff, and to make sure that our visits are available to all pupils. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of staff, pupils and volunteers when it comes to visits. It is available electronically on the school's Google Shared Drive and website.

All visits and LOtC (Learning Outside of The Classroom) activities will be planned in such a way as to ensure that the benefits and intended learning outcomes are clearly identified and understood by the supervising adults beforehand and can form the basis for objective evaluation afterwards.

The school uses Hertfordshire's Internet-based system, 'EVOLVE', to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff who lead or accompany visits can access their own 'EVOLVE' account, which is set up by the Offsite Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Arrangements and considerations for all Level 2 visits and LOtC activities will be recorded on 'EVOLVE' using generic risk assessments.

2) Scope and Remit:

It is a legal expectation that employees must work within the requirements of their employer's guidance. This policy relates to Hertfordshire's "Guidance for the Management of LOtC and Offsite Visits" and it is the expectation that all staff will follow its requirements.

This policy applies to all members of our staff, and other adults associated with Applecroft who take responsibility for children and young people participating in learning and recreational

activities in environments which are different from where the young people are usually based. It therefore applies when organising and supervising children and young people taking part in off-site activities and visits.

This policy provides the key reference for sound planning for learning and recreational activities that involve taking groups of children and young people away from their usual operational base. It should be implemented when using places such as:

- visits to places of interest in the local environment
- day visits to places further afield e.g. visits to local libraries, theatres, museums and other educational institutions etc.
- sporting activities
- adventurous and recreational activities
- residential visits organised by the school
- trips abroad organised by the school

and involves any one of the following:

- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- direct supervision of young people undertaking experiences that fall within the remit of Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC);
- facilitating experiences for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base;
- deploying staff who will supervise or facilitate experiences of or for young people undertaking experiences beyond the boundary of their normal operational base.

Staff must ensure the young people are supervised in accordance with the contents of this policy, regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

When a child joins the school, the parents sign an offsite visits form allowing the school to take their child for visits in the local area. For these journeys within the local area to places such as church visits, local schools and sports facilities, parents are informed by letter or email that their children will be attending.

3) Legislation and Guidance:

This policy is based on the Department for Education's guidance on health and safety on educational visits, and the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4) Roles and Responsibilities:

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), health and safety responsibilities lie with the employer and the Board of Trustees. An employer has the legal responsibility to carry out the duties imposed by the Act. However, employers can delegate the tasks necessary to discharge these duties, even though the overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the employer.

In Hertfordshire, the tasks of scrutinising and approving arrangements for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities are delegated to the Headteacher of the school. The Headteacher may choose to further delegate the tasks of scrutinising Offsite Visits and LOtC to another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The EVCs at Applecroft School are Paul Wyatt, Deputy Headteacher and Lisa Withe, Headteacher.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- All off-site visits and LOtC activities comply with employer guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required;
- All staff involved are competent to carry out such responsibilities as they may be allocated;
- The EVC meets employer requirements, which include undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required by the employer;
- If taking part in the visit or activity as either an Assistant Leader or as a group member, s/he is clear about their role and that they should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader (who will have sole charge of the visit);
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all voluntary helpers. Where access to the young people is regular or significant, DBS checks must be in place as required;
- That the EVC, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers are appropriately trained and competent to carry out such tasks as they are allocated;
- Sufficient time is assigned for staff to organise visits properly;
- A culture of apprenticeship /succession planning, to ensure sustainable visits and the development of competent visit leaders and EVCs, is supported within the establishment;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of staffing;
- The EVC is supported in ensuring that visit information has been shared with parents and that consent has been sought where necessary;
- Arrangements are made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the young people and staff;
- Inclusion issues are addressed;
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- Details related to the visit (including personal details of both participants and staff) are accessible at all times to a designated 24/7 emergency contact(s) in case of a serious incident;

- That there are contingency plans in place should the visit plan be significantly changed or cancelled.
- Arrangements are in place for the Board of Trustees to be informed of such visits as are required by the school's offsite visit policy;
- Staff are aware of the need to obtain best value. Appropriate consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- The school's offsite visit policy should identify the types of visit that require a preliminary visit;
- The school's offsite visit policy adopts a set format for recording written risk-benefit assessments. Such risk-benefit assessments should be proportional, suitable and sufficient and based on the 'Principles of Sensible Risk Management'. The adoption of EVOLVE will reduce bureaucracy;
- Where the activities or visit involves a third party provider, appropriate assurances have been sought; national schemes e.g. LOtC Quality Badge, AALS licence, Adventuremark, or a clear management Statement of Competence, are recognised in keeping with Hertfordshire's recommendations and make further seeking of provider assurances unnecessary
- All visits are evaluated with regard to best value, teaching and learning, quality experiences, addressing issues raised by any serious incident and to inform the operation of future visits;
- The offsite visits policy includes appropriate emergency procedures in case of a major incident
- The offsite visits policy includes a procedure to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident;
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by employer guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

Establishment Visits Coordinator (EVC)

To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, the school has a specifically designated EVC who supports the Headteacher.

The EVC will:

- Be specifically competent, ideally with practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by Applecroft. Commonly, but not exclusively, such competence will be identified in a person on the senior leadership team of the school. Where the EVC role is attached to an administrative post, or where a post holder is not an experienced visit leader, s/he will receive structured support in the form of regular (twice Termly) supervision meetings from a designated establishment colleague who has that practical experience
- Attend training, and update training, as required by Herts for Learning.
- Support the Headteacher in ensuring that competent staff are assigned to lead and accompany visits and with approval and other decisions.
- Ensure that a policy is in place for offsite visits and LOtC activities, that it is updated as necessary, and is readily available to staff, (e.g. via EVOLVE) and that procedures should aim to minimise bureaucracy, taking full advantage of any national schemes that provide assurances regarding safety and quality of provision. (E.g. there should be no need to seek assurances from

adventure activity providers who hold the LOtC Quality Badge, or a current AALS Licence, or Adventuremark).

- Have an understanding of the Manifesto for LOtC and the supporting rationale.
- Ensure Offsite and LOtC activities meet employer guidance requirements.
- Ensure the Headteacher, Visit Leaders, assisting staff and voluntary helpers understand that all staff involved in visits require access to training at an appropriate level to ensure that employers' guidance and school's procedures are properly understood.
- Ensure Offsite activities must be led by competent leaders and that assistant supervisors are competent to carry out the tasks to which they are assigned.
- Organise the training of leaders and assistant leaders, including voluntary helpers.
- Support the Headteacher with approval and other decisions.
- Monitor visit planning and arrange for sample monitoring in the field as appropriate.
- Ensure DBS checks are in place where required.
- Provide sufficient guidance to visit and activity leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each and every visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.
- Ensure that emergency arrangements include emergency contact access to all relevant visit records, including medical and next of kin information for all members of the party and including staff.
- Ensure that visits and LOtC activities are reviewed and evaluated; this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

Visit Leaders

Every educational visit will have one member of staff designated as the visit leader.

The Visit/Activity Leader will:

- Have the overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit. S/he must be an employee and not a volunteer.
- Be competent to take on such responsibilities and tasks as may be allocated or required for the duration of the visit/activity and be formally approved to do so.
- Plan and prepare for the visit, taking a lead on risk management. The school sees it as good practice to involve all participating staff in the planning and risk management process for any given offsite visit or LOtC activity to ensure wider understanding. It is also seen as good practice to involve young people in these processes wherever appropriate;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff (and young people) to ensure effective supervision, and appoint a deputy wherever possible;

- Ensure that where any accompanying staff includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, there are adequate safeguards to ensure that this will not compromise group management;
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed. e.g. DBS checks;
- Collate, make available and disseminate relevant information to support staff, parents and young people as appropriate;
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level;
- Arrange pre-visit information meetings where appropriate;
- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event;
- Ensure that staff and other supervisors have been appropriately briefed on:

1. The young people making up the group, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that seems relevant in the context of the planned activities.
2. The nature, location and duration of the activity.

- Ensure the visit is effectively supervised; the overarching duty of care remains with the accompanying school staff, even when partial responsibility is shared with a provider. Should the provider run the activity in a way that causes concern, the accompanying staff should consider stopping the activity at the first appropriate moment. Such an intervention will need to be used with great sensitivity and discretion to ensure that it does not result in young people being put at greater risk;
- Ensure that all staff and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details.
- Have met with the EVC in organising the visit so that he/ she is aware of the role and expectations.

Staff

Staff have a responsibility to make sure all pupils and staff who take part in visits are kept safe and understand the proper way to prepare for trips, as well as how to act while taking part. Staff will:

- Seek and obtain approval for all educational visits from the headteacher
- Carry out any required risk assessments and work with the trip lead
- Communicate with parents and carers and make sure trips are inclusive of all pupils' needs
- Look out for the health and safety of themselves and those around them
- Help manage pupil behaviour and discipline as required while on the visit
- Share any concerns or worries with the trip lead and others, as appropriate

Parents and carers

By agreeing that pupils can take part in educational visits, parents/carers agree that they will:

- Provide all information required, such as emergency contact details and health/medicine information if applicable
- Sign and return consent forms and any other documentation required in a timely manner
- Share any concerns or information about the pupil that may affect or impact their ability to safely take part in the trip

Volunteers

Volunteers attending school trips, including parent volunteers, agree to:

- Follow the directions of staff and act accordingly
- Behave appropriately and model good behaviour for pupils
- Report any concerns to the trip lead or other staff present as soon as possible
- Make sure pupils under their supervision are acting safely and appropriately, and raise any issues with staff as soon as possible

Pupils

Our school behaviour policy also applies to all educational visits. This includes the expectation that pupils will:

- Follow instructions given to them while on the trip
- Dress and behave as expected for the length of the trip
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, reporting any concerns to a staff member or trip supervisor

Pupils will always be reminded of our behaviour expectations before going off-site for a visit and will be expected to uphold the school's behaviour policy at all times.

Member of the Board of Trustees

There will be a member of the School's Board of Trustees who is designated as specifically responsible for Offsite Visits and LOtC activities. At Applecroft School this is the Safeguarding Trustee.

This person's role is to "enable and ensure" by acting as a "critical friend".

S/he will ensure that:

- S/he has an understanding of how outdoor learning supports a wide range of learning outcomes;
- S/he has access to employer guidance as well as school policy, and a training package to support it;
- School policy clarifies his/her involvement in the visit approval process;
- There is an EVC in place that meets with employer requirements;
- There are formal notification and approval procedures in place that meet with employer recommendations and requirements;
- The school's offsite visit policy supports the principles of inclusion;
- There are monitoring procedures in place.

5) Competence:

Competence is a combination of experience, training/qualifications and common sense.

The competence of the visit leader is the single most important contributory factor in the safety of participants.

Consideration will be given to the following when assessing the competence of a member of staff to lead a visit:

a) What experience has the leader in leading or accompanying similar or other visits? (Check Visit History on 'EVOLVE').

b) Is the leader competent in planning and managing visits?

c) What are the leader's reasons for undertaking the visit?

d) Is the leader an employee at the school?

e) Does the leader have the ability to manage the pastoral welfare of participants?

f) Does the leader exhibit sound decision-making abilities?

g) What experience has the leader of the participants he/she intends to supervise?

h) What experience has the leader of the environment and geographical area chosen?

i) If appropriate, what is the leader's personal level of skill in the activity, and fitness level?

j) Does the leader possess appropriate qualifications, especially if leading adventurous activities?

k) Is the leader aware of all relevant guidelines and able to act on these?

This school operates a process of apprenticeship and succession for all staff likely to be involved in organising, leading or accompanying offsite visits and LOtC activities.

The school undertakes to ensure that all such staff, will undergo an induction process that typically entails Visit Leader Awareness training, either in-house or from the Herts for Learning Offsite Visits Adviser, access to (and training where required) the school's 'EVOLVE' site and practical experience of accompanying visits and LOtC activities *before* being tasked with leading a visit for themselves.

6) Planning:

The extent of planning required is related to the complexity of the visit, based on STAGED:

Staffing, Timings, Activity, Group, Environment, Distance.

Risk Assessment

Risks are expected to be reduced to an *acceptable* or *tolerable* level, and not necessarily eliminated. Planning should achieve a rational balance between potential adverse risks and the intended benefits and outcomes of the activity.

Due to the complex nature of off-site visits, conventional 'risk assessment' as a stand-alone tool is not particularly useful and can on occasion be misleading. It is of greater benefit to consider the overall 'risk management' of visits by taking all aspects of visit planning and management into account. This can be achieved effectively through a combination of the 'EVOLVE' visit form itself, and where appropriate, any event specific notes or attachments.

Visit planning includes consideration of the question: *'What are the really important things that we need to do to keep us safe?'* It should focus on those issues that are specific to the individual event, taking into account the needs of the group (including special and medical needs), the experience and competency of the staff team, and the leader in the context of the event.

Significant issues must be recorded on 'EVOLVE', either notes or as an attachment, and shared with all parties.

This planning process by the leader may be compared to the expectation of a teacher or youth worker to plan a lesson/session which is relevant to the needs of the group.

Planning that includes adventurous activity commonly involves delivery by an external provider and the provider will have responsibility for risk assessing and managing the activity. As such, the provider's risk assessment is not the concern of the establishment leader, does not need to be requested from the provider, and does not need to be attached to 'EVOLVE'.

Use of generic risk assessments

A selection of generic risk assessments is available in Word format from the Health & Safety pages on the Grid and for use on 'EVOLVE' as well as on the school's Google Drive.

Whilst not exhaustive, the control measures contained within this selection are probably sufficient to cover most eventualities likely to be encountered in the course of most offsite visits and LOtC activities.

Staff are encouraged to compile their own "event-specific" risk assessments which can then be reviewed and re-used as required.

Note: whilst it is not possible to "clone" visits on 'EVOLVE', it is possible to re-use risk assessments and other documents that have been attached to previous visits. Staff should liaise with their EVC about this.

Plan B

Alternative arrangements 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.

Where appropriate, all alternative activities should be fully considered and risk assessed beforehand.

Seeking Assurances from Provider / Use of a Provider assessment Form (OV6)

Herts County Council provides the OV6 'Provider Assessment Form' to help provide an audit trail for arrangements and checks if required.

Many providers have websites and offer information packs which contain the sorts of information asked for on the OV6, including a Safety Management statement, so it may not be necessary to use one.

The OV6 is a generic form, for use for all kinds of provider, so if one is sent to a provider, it should be specified that they only need to complete the parts applicable to them/their services.

Once an OV6 has been received, signed and dated by a manager or person in authority, it is not always necessary to send a new one to the same provider each time you use them. It is sufficient to annotate the existing form already held by the establishment to show the school has checked

back with the provider and that there have been no major or significant changes since the form was originally signed; this will not apply if the time interval is not more than 12 months or so.

To reduce bureaucracy for both Visit Leaders and Providers, leaders should take advantage of national schemes that have been established to eliminate the need for questionnaires and forms as advised in LA guidance e.g. **LOtC Quality Badge, AALS Licence and 'Adventuremark'**.

Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of Health and Safety and Visit Leaders should seek no further verification. The LOtC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.

Visit Leaders should **not** ask for copies of risk assessment documentation but may seek assurance of a provider's competence to deliver their activities safely by means of a Safety Management statement if this is not already provided.

National Institutions and Public Buildings:

By their very nature these venues and providers are extremely unlikely not to conform to current Health & Safety legislation so it should not be necessary to require them to complete an OV6 or send out copies of their risk assessment documents.

Preliminary Visits

Wherever reasonably possible, it is good practice for the Visit Leader to make a preliminary visit to a venue or provider beforehand in order for them to familiarise themselves with the layout and surroundings, and any site-specific procedures or issues which may have an impact on the visit or members of the group.

Within the UK, highest priority for preliminary visits will be where no serving member of staff from the school has visited before, then when the Visit Leader has no experience of the venue/activity.

For overseas visits, advantage should be taken of any offers by tour operators for "leaders' orientation" type visits.

Participants

It is good practice to involve participants in the planning and organisation of visits, as in doing so they will make more informed decisions and will become more 'risk aware' and hence at less risk. They will also have greater ownership of the event.

7) Outcomes:

Clarity regarding the intended outcomes of the visit will help to ensure that the potential benefits can be achieved. Up to four 'intended' outcomes may be recorded on 'EVOLVE' during the planning process, for subsequent evaluation.

Work that takes place outside the classroom can provide a very powerful means of developing learning in all curriculum areas and raise attainment. Experiential learning can also provide opportunities for development in other areas, including:

- **R**elationships
- **E**motional & spiritual
- **C**ross curricular
- **I**ndividual
- **T**eamwork
- **E**nvironmental

Preparatory work should take place in advance of the visit where appropriate. This, in conjunction with activity that will take place during the visit, should feed into any follow-up work.

'High Quality Outdoor Education' can be used as a tool by visit leaders to assist in both identifying outcomes and in the evaluation of the learning taking place.

8) Staffing and Supervision:

The LA requires establishments to ensure there is an **appropriate level of supervision at all times** for all visits and that such supervision is 'effective'. This must have been approved by the EVC and Headteacher and, where applicable, in accordance with the Board of Trustees.

Ratios for Early Years are specified and must be adhered to; see Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

For all other visits, the visit leader, 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 nature and requirements of individuals within the group, including those with additional needs;
- the experience and competence of staff and other adults;
- the venue, time of year and prevailing/predicted conditions;
- the contingency or 'Plan B' options.

A visit must not go ahead where either the Visit Leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

A useful 'starting point for consideration' is 1 adult: 10 young people. Where departure from this starting point, results in fewer staff, the justification should be recorded as a note on 'EVOLVE'.

Staff who are assigned to support the special needs of an individual cannot be included in the overall staffing ratio. Their responsibility should not include the wider group.

Particular consideration should be given to the additional implications that may arise if staff are to be accompanied by family members (or partners) on visits.

Staff and volunteers who work *frequently* or *intensively* with or have regular access to young people or vulnerable adults, must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process. For the purpose of this policy:

- *'frequently'* is defined as 'once a week or more'.
- *'intensively'* is defined as 3 times in a 30 day period or overnight (2am - 6am).

Remote Supervision

Young people must be supervised throughout all visits. At times they may be unaccompanied by a member of staff or other responsible adult, e.g. D of E expeditions, 'down time' in a shopping mall, etc. This is known as 'remote' supervision.

'Remotely supervised' activities can bring purposeful educational benefits and the progression from dependence to independence is to be encouraged.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on professional judgement taking into account such factors as:

- prior knowledge of the individuals (including their maturity and levels of responsibility);
- venue and conditions;
- the activity taking place;
- preparatory training;
- the competence of the supervising staff;
- the emergency systems in place.

Use of Voluntary Helpers

The use of parents and other adults with a clear association with the school, as helpers or supervisors on offsite visits or LOtC activities, is seen as a valuable means of encouraging or maintaining closer links with the local community and accessing a wider set of skills and experience than may exist amongst the school's staff.

Such volunteers will need to understand and consent to the fact that they will be answerable to the visit/activity leader.

It is a fact that a volunteer will not be accountable through a legalistic audit trail (as would exist were their involvement based on a contractual relationship) and is therefore the case that a volunteer helper cannot be appointed as a Visit Leader.

It is good practice that all adult helpers and volunteers are subject to DBS checking; however, this may not be required where there is no possibility for unsupervised direct contact exists; this will be at the discretion and direction of the Headteacher and / or Deputy Headteacher.

Clear DBS-checks must have been returned before a volunteer adult helper may participate in a residential visit or activity.

9) Emergency Procedures:

Staff involved in a visit must be aware of, and adhere to, the school's policy on emergency procedures.

The school maintains a number of mobile 'phones specifically for use during offsite visits which should have all relevant contact details pre-programmed into them. It is each Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure these 'phones have:

- the correct details programmed into them beforehand;
- fully-charged batteries (and chargers available if necessary)
- sufficient credit available for the duration of the visit

In event of an emergency a mobile phone should be used wherever possible.

For all "out of hours" and residential visits there will be a nominated person(s) that can provide 24/7 cover as an Emergency Contact and that the person(s) so nominated will have 24/7 access to all details of the visit. This will include medical and next-of-kin information regarding staff as well as young people.

Consideration will be given to the following:

- Criteria for identifying the nominated Emergency Contact(s)
- Is more than one Emergency Contacts required?
- Procedure for lodging visit plans to enable them to be accessed in the event of an emergency?
- Have procedures been tested?
- Is it possible to demonstrate a proactive response, to any pattern that can be recognised within incidents?

One member of staff will always accompany a pupil seeking medical treatment.

In a case of a pupil being unaccounted for, the trip leader will search the area while another member of staff remains in charge of other pupils. In the unlikely event that a pupil cannot be found within 30 minutes, the trip leader will contact the school office who will notify the parents/carers. The trip leader will then contact the police and provide them with the relevant information so they can take over the search, staying with them to comfort the pupil when found. The remaining staff and adults will return to the school with the rest of the pupils.

All incidents and accidents will be reported in line with our health and safety policy, including required reporting to Ofsted and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Smaller incidents, accidents or near misses that do not require external reporting will still be covered by an internal report, to include steps that can be taken in the future to avoid similar incidents.

There will also be a clear process for evaluating all visits and trips once they have been concluded from the planning through to the visit itself. This will help with evaluating whether planning worked and to learn from any incidents that took place.

Visit Leaders should also complete and carry an Emergency Contacts sheet (OV9).

Where appropriate the Visit Leader should have an "Emergency Events" card, as issued by Herts for Learning.

10) First Aid:

It is not always necessary that qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit or LOtC activity. First aid issues for any LOtC activity should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is "appropriate" will be determined by:

- The nature of the activity.
- The nature of the group.
- The likely injuries associated with the activity.
- The extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- Know how to access qualified first aid support.
- Have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation that requires those leading such activities to hold a current first aid "qualification". To be a "qualification", the first aid course must include a formalised assessment process; otherwise any certification will have the status of a certificate of attendance. In practical terms, the course will be a minimum of 6 hours.

11) Approval of Visits:

Approval is delegated to the Headteacher for all visits.

However, the following types of visit are required to be notified to Herts for Learning:

- Overseas (anywhere that involves crossing a substantial area of open sea, including Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Hebrides and the Channel Islands)
- Those involving one or more adventurous activities to be led by a member of school staff.

Regardless of whether a visit should be notified to Herts for Learning or not, there should be a clear, unambiguous audit trail for arrangements with clear evidence of approval. Such evidence will usually be recorded on EVOLVE but where this is not the case a signature of endorsement on a lesson plan will suffice.

The process for approval has three main stages:

1. Visit/activity proposed and planned by Visit Leader and accompanying colleagues;
2. Arrangements scrutinised by EVC until satisfied to recommend approval;
3. Arrangements re-scrutinised by Head and, when satisfied, approved.

An offsite visit or LOtC activity should not proceed without clear evidence of approval.

Endorsement may be required from the Board of Trustees or Management Board; 'Read Only' access on EVOLVE for the relevant member(s) and a Note added for their attention will generate an e-mail alert. Endorsement will take the form of an additional Note from the member(s).

Where applicable, a visit may also need to be notified to the LA; this is done automatically by 'EVOLVE'.

Additional monitoring

In its evaluation of LOtC, "How far should you go" 2008, Ofsted recommends that it is good practice to sample monitor offsite visits and LOtC activities by means of field visits.

From time to time the EVC may recommend, or the Head/Board ofTrustees/Herts County Council may decide to, sample monitoring by field visit as an additional means of ensuring safety of participants and quality of provision.

12) Consent:

Section 35 of the Education Act 2004 states: '*Where a visit is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time, then parental consent is not necessary although it is recommended good practice to ensure that parents are informed'.*

Annual consent is appropriate for regular routine activities that take place during normal school hours.

For all other visits, consent should be obtained on an individual visit basis. Information provided to parents prior to granting consent should include full details of the activities and any other significant information.

13) Insurance:

Advice regarding insurance may be sought from Herts for Learning's Insurance department. Contact details are given on the 'Contact' page and from the 'Insurance' section when completing a visit entry on 'EVOLVE'.

In addition to the standard public liability cover which all schools may have, Herts for Learning has taken out 'blanket' personal accident cover / travel insurance for all trips/visits at home or abroad. This cover only applies to schools which buy into the Annual travel Insurance Scheme. Details are available from the insurance department on 01992 555480 or by email at insurance@hertscc.gov.uk

For those schools who make their own insurance arrangements, like Applecroft, personal accident / travel insurance must be taken out for all visits abroad. For all other visits it is the responsibility of the Governing Board (where applicable), Headteacher, and Educational Visits Coordinator to determine whether additional insurance should be taken out. The establishment should particularly consider the need for additional insurance for residential activities, or those involving adventurous activities or hazardous environments.

For travel within the European Union (plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland), all participants must hold a valid EHIC (European Health Insurance Card), subject to change. See www.dh.gov.uk

14) Inclusion:

All pupils, regardless of background or abilities, should be able to take part in every aspect of our school life, including visits.

The school policy endorses the following principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- Integration through participation with peers.

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against disabled participants or if they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan because of their disability, without material or substantial justification.

Visit Leaders are required to make reasonable adjustments to avoid participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

However, the Disability Discrimination Act does not require responsible bodies to place employees or participants 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.

Challenging Behaviour

In some cases, it may be reasonable and necessary to prevent a pupil with challenging behaviour from coming on a trip to protect their safety and the safety of the other pupils attending.
We will consider all reasonable options to help the pupil go on the trip safely, such as adapting the trip itinerary and increasing staffing numbers so the pupil can be supervised on a 1:1 basis.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and normal work practices.

15) Codes of Behavioural Conduct:

The school encourages the use of behaviour procedures as a means of establishing appropriate expectations of young persons' behaviour. Such procedures are explained to both the young people and those in a position of parental support before the visit, so reducing the opportunity for misunderstanding both expectations and the sanctions that may be invoked where the procedures are breached.

As part of the request for consent, parents should sign and accept responsibility for removing young people in prescribed circumstances.

Further examples can be found under 'Resources' on 'EVOLVE'.

16) Transport:

Private Cars

Where a private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport young people then this must be approved by the Headteacher, and an OV7D Form must be completed and retained by Applecroft on an annual basis. Staff must not transport children in their car alone; there must always be two members of staff. Any parent helpers must not travel with one child, except if it is their own. All

private cars should adhere law which states that children must normally use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135 centimetres tall, whichever comes first.

Coaches

Herts for Learning does not 'approve' coach companies. Whilst UK legislation ensures that coach companies are fit for public use, the facilities available on coaches may vary. Liaising with other schools within the LA that have used a particular company (via a search on 'EVOLVE') will help to determine the level of service that may be provided.

Minibuses

Schools that own or hire a minibus must have an operational policy in place for this. For further information, see also:

- Herts Minibus Manual
http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/rsu/driving/advice/minibus/
- DVLA www.dvla.gov.uk Select 'Online leaflets', INF28 'Driving a minibus'
- ROSPA 'Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice' 2008
- MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) via Community Transport Association UK. This also contains information on PCV licences, weight limits and towing.

All drivers of minibuses should undertake Herts Minibus Drivers' Assessment Scheme training, and keep that training current (5 yearly reassessments). This applies to pre & post 1997 licence holders operating under the section 19 permit scheme as 'volunteer drivers'. Post 1997 licence holders may drive a minibus provided:

- Drivers are aged 21 years or over.
- They have held their category B driving licence for at least two years.
- The minibus is being used by a non-commercial body for social purposes, but not for hire or reward.
- Drivers are not being paid to drive the minibus, other than out-of-pocket expenses.
- The minibus does not exceed 3.5 tonnes (or 4.25 tonnes if specialised equipment for the carriage of disabled passengers is included) gross vehicle weight.
- No trailer is towed.

When driving a minibus as an employee of Herts for Learning or on behalf of an HCC establishment, a full D1 PCV is required.

Public Transport

For public transport within the Greater London area contact 'Transport for London', who offer special arrangements for school parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. See *Transport for London* Tel. 020 7918 3954.

17) Swimming:

The school acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance. This is particularly important in respect of visits abroad, where for example, a hotel pool may be available.

Particular consideration should be given to the following factors:

- Unknown locations and hazards, especially overseas.
- Changing environmental conditions.
- Supervisor complacency & lack of transferable knowledge.
- Adherence to local advice.
- Preparation and knowledge of young people, i.e. is it a planned activity?

Young people must be supervised by a competent adult at all times whilst undertaking swimming activities.

Swimming pools (life-guarded)

Herts notification is <u>not</u> required

- UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.
- For publicly life-guarded pools abroad, the school's staff must seek assurances that appropriate lifeguard cover is in place prior to participants entering the water.
- Unless suitably qualified, the school's staff should not have responsibility for life-guarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.
- For swimming lessons, the school should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

Open water swimming

LA notification is required via EVOLVE.

The designated lifeguard must be dedicated exclusively to the group, and the location used must fall within the RNLI/RLSS definition of a 'safer bathing area'. Local advice must always be sought.

18) Weather, Clothing & Survival:

Where appropriate, the leader must obtain and act upon recent weather forecasts and local advice.

Participants should be adequately clothed appropriate to:

- The time of year, prevailing weather conditions, altitude and exposure to elements;
- Likely changes in weather;
- The experience and strength of the party;

- The nature of the visit and environment.

When venturing away from immediate help, leaders should consider the need for:

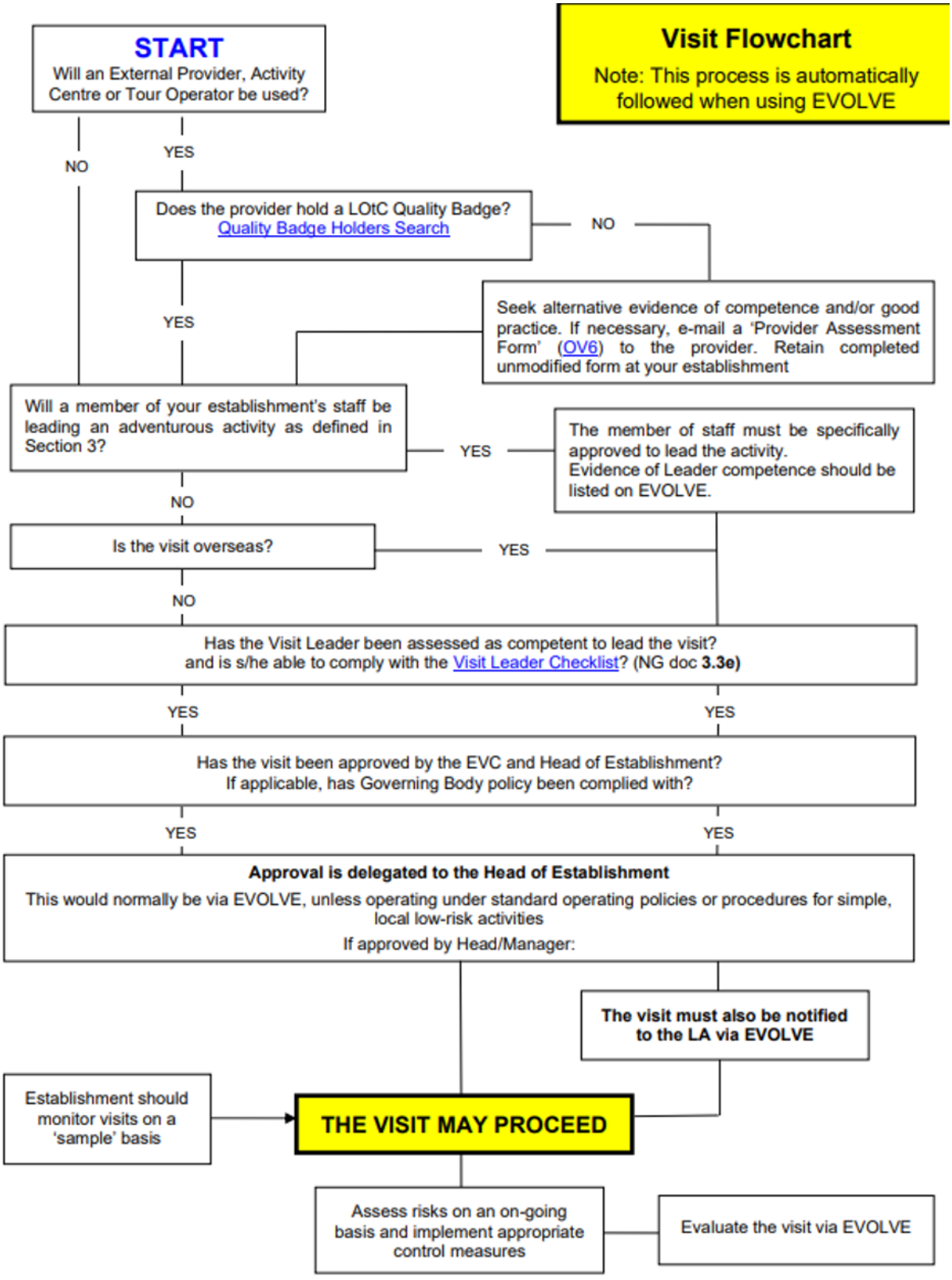
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for a casualty;
- Comfort, insulation and shelter for the whole group;
- Provision of emergency food and drink;
- Torch;
- Possible need of signalling equipment and/or mobile phone (NB. Mobile phones may not work in remote areas);

It is primarily the responsibility of the visit leader, in consultation with other staff where appropriate, to modify or curtail the visit or activity (e.g. Plan B) to suit changed or changing circumstances - for example: over-busy lunch area, rain, rising water levels, etc.

19) Links with other policies

This policy links with the following policies and procedures:

- Health and safety policy
- Charging and remissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- First aid policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Special educational needs (SEN) policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Accessibility plan
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy


Visit Flowchart
Note: This process is automatically followed when using EVOLVE
START
Will an External Provider, Activity Centre or Tour Operator be used?
NO
YES
Does the provider hold a LOtC Quality Badge?
Quality Badge Holders Search
NO
YES
Seek alternative evidence of competence and/or good practice. If necessary, e-mail a 'Provider Assessment Form' (OV6) to the provider. Retain completed unmodified form at your establishment
Will a member of your establishment's staff be leading an adventurous activity as defined in Section 3?
YES
The member of staff must be specifically approved to lead the activity.
Evidence of Leader competence should be listed on EVOLVE.
NO
Is the visit overseas?
YES
NO
Has the Visit Leader been assessed as competent to lead the visit?
and is s/he able to comply with the Visit Leader Checklist? (NG doc 3.3e)
YES
YES
Has the visit been approved by the EVC and Head of Establishment?
If applicable, has Governing Body policy been complied with?
YES
YES
Approval is delegated to the Head of Establishment
This would normally be via EVOLVE, unless operating under standard operating policies or procedures for simple, local low-risk activities
If approved by Head/Manager:
The visit must also be notified to the LA via EVOLVE
Establishment should monitor visits on a 'sample' basis
THE VISIT MAY PROCEED
Assess risks on an on-going basis and implement appropriate control measures
Evaluate the visit via EVOLVE

How to organise an Off Site Visit - Residential

Decide where you would like to visit		
Discuss possible dates with PW		
Discuss which OV forms need to be completed with PW		
Advise GW of the trip and give coach requirements		
Costings – include admission prices, coach, coach parking, extra expenses		
Get coach confirmation from GW		
Advise Sharon (Dolce Catering) of the date		
Write a letter to the parents to include: Where to Date Cost Timings Uniform? Shoes or trainers It must say 'Voluntary Contribution' Return Slip must have child's name, class, parents' / carers' signature, date, how they are going to pay, cheques payable to Applecroft School, If there are a lack of contributions we will have to cancel the trip		
Will they require a packed lunch? No nuts No fizzy drinks In a disposable bag?		
Who is the designated medical person?		
Do you need to take any extra water?		
Do the pupils need pocket money?		
Do the pupils need extra equipment like hats, caps, suncream, pens, paper		
Get the letter approved by PW, ask Gill to send it out on Arbor and set up the Schoolcomms payment		
A week before the trip check all the reply slips have been returned – contact those who haven't		
The day before the trip: Put together first aid kits Check asthma sufferers and make sure you have their pumps Do you have any epipens, are the staff going on the trip authorised to use the epipen?		

Does anyone take daily medication – have you got it? Give PW all the contact details, which staff are going, any children who aren't going (where will they be?)		
Do you need to let the music teachers know?		
Will there be a staff briefing with the staff who are going – is there an information pack?		
Extra Items you may wish to take; Sick Buckets and liners Medicines from Classrooms Inhalers and epipens First aid bum bags Incontinence pads for sick Wet wipes Rubber gloves Kitchen roll/hankies Sick powder Medicine book/diary Sani pads Calpol/neurofen Sudocrem/Savlon Spare water bottles Cleaning Cloths Nappy sacks Hand sanitisers Spare Masks Spare Tests	Lost property bag Bag for life (Spare) Tooth envelopes Pegs Biscuits for return journey Plastic Cups Torch Matches/lighter Firelighters Small sticks Marshmallows/veg Skewers Spare poncho Night lights Whistle Toothbrushes Blu Tac/Sellotape Door name signs Stickers Permanent Markers Air freshener Birthday cake Candles Birthday Badge Balloons	
Do you have any children's birthdays while you are away?		

How to organise an Off Site Visit (Day)

Decide where you would like to visit		
Discuss possible dates with PW		
Discuss which OV forms need to be completed with PW		
Advise GW of the trip and give coach requirements		
Costings – include admission prices, coach, coach parking, extra expenses		
Get coach confirmation from GW		
Advise Sharon (Dolce catering)) of the date		
Ask Sharon which packed lunches she can do for Free School Meals children		
Write a letter for the parents to include: Where to Date Cost Timings Uniform? Shoes or trainers It must say 'Voluntary Contribution' Return Slip must have child's name, class, parents' signature, date, how they are going to pay, cheques payable to Applecroft School, free school meal option, emergency contact number, return to School Office/Year Group, do any of the children suffer from travel sickness? Administer the travel sickness pill before they come to school, give the return pill to a designated member of staff If there are a lack of contributions we will have to cancel the trip		
Will they require a packed lunch?: No nuts No fizzy drinks In a throw away bag?		
Do you need to take any extra water?		
Any lunches need to be pre-ordered by (date)		
Do the pupils need pocket money?		
Do the pupils need extra equipment like hats, caps, suncream, pens, paper		
Get the letter approved by PW, ask Gill to send it out on Arbor and set up the Schoolcomms payment		

How many staff do we need? How many volunteers do we need (they must have a DBS)		
Put the trip on the school electronic calendar		
A week before the trip, check all the reply slips have been returned – contact those who haven't		
Do we need to split the children into groups? How many? How many adults per group		
The day before the trip: Put together first aid kits Sick Buckets/bags Check asthma sufferers and make sure you have their pumps Do you have any epipens, are the staff going on the trip authorised to use the epipen? Does anyone take daily medication – have you got it? Give PW all the contact details, which staff are going, any children who aren't going (where will they be?)		
On the day of the trip; Enter the attendance on Arbor Are there any pupils with travel sickness – they must sit at the front of the coach All children to go to the toilet before getting on the coach Seat belts MUST be worn Staff to check these Count the children repeatedly throughout the day		
Do you need to let the music teachers know?		
Tell Sylwia regarding the milk		
Will there be a staff briefing with the staff who are going – is there an information pack? Should the staff wear casual cloths/jeans?		
Ask the coach driver for their Mobile number should there be a problem		

Applecroft School

CONSENT FORM FOR LOCAL SCHOOL VISITS

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please sign this consent form to give permission for your child…….
to take part in local school visits.

Please note the following important information before signing this form:

- The trips and activities covered by this consent include;

  - all local non-hazardous visits that take place inside and outside of school hours
  - off-site sporting / music event inside and outside of school hours

- The school will send you information about each trip or activity before it takes place
- You can, if you wish, tell the school that you do not want your child to take part in any particular school trip e.g. visits to our local churches.

Written parental consent will not be requested from you for the majority of off-site activities offered by the school – for example, year-group visits to local amenities – as such activities are part of the school's curriculum and usually take place during the normal school day.
We will, however, contact you asking for consent if your child needs to be transported by car or mini-bus.

Signed…… **Parent/ Carer**

Print Name…… **Date**……