



Gosfield School

Policy for Educational Visits

Throughout this document, extracts have been taken from the National Guidance which can be found at www.oeapng.info.

Gosfield School has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom and beyond the school premises. We will seek to provide a broad and balanced range of learning outside the classroom opportunities for all pupils.

Each year the school will arrange activities that take place off the school site, during the school day (both the main curriculum day and during the activities programme), and out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. We aim to provide at least one visit per term per year group.

The range of activities which the Governing Body has given its approval to includes (but is not limited to):

- Daily activities programme (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework etc.)
- School sports practice and team fixtures
- Regular local visits (swimming, other local amenities etc.)
- Day visits
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits and exchanges
- Adventurous activities

To comply with safeguarding regulations:

1. The governing body will have a nominated educational visits co-ordinator.
2. The governing body approves the delegation to the school and the educational visits co-ordinator the following duties:
 - Ensure that visits are properly planned and comply with regulations and guidance;
 - Ensure that visit risk assessments are undertaken and include detailed notes around pupil concerns;
 - Approving the staffing ratios for visits, taking account of the planned arrangements for the visit and the nature of the pupils involved;
 - Verify the competence of visit leaders and assistant staff to undertake the duties that will be expected of them;
 - Ensure that requirements are followed with respect to insurance and indemnity;
 - Organise and monitor the training/induction of visit leaders and assistant staff as appropriate;
 - Ensure parents are properly informed and give their written consent;
 - Organise emergency planning for educational visits at school level;
 - Monitor visits, receiving incident and near miss reports, and keeping school procedures under review
3. Although there are no legal requirements for ratios for pupils above the EYFS stage the Gosfield School governing body determines the following **suggested** staff/pupil ratios for visits:
 - Age 17 – 18 (years 12 – 13): 1 to 15
 - Age 10 – 16 (years 7 – 11): 1 to 15
 - Age 8 – 11 (years 4 – 6): 1 to 10
 - Age 5 – 7 (years 1 -3): 1 to 8

- Age 3 – 5 (Reception and Nursery): 1 to 8
 - Age 2 – 3 (Nursery): 1 to 4
 - Overseas trips – 1 to 10 (senior school ages 10-18)
 - Overseas trips – 1 to 8 (prep school ages 10-11)
 - Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions – 1 – 7 (Supervisor per expedition group)
4. Parental consent must be obtained for all educational visits. In the case of regular, routine off site visits such as swimming or walks in the vicinity of the school, annual consent will be obtained.
 5. The governing body endorses the nomination of the following persons as emergency contacts in relation to educational visits;
 - Principal
 - Vice Principal
 - Educational Visits Coordinator
 - Other members of the Senior Leadership Team as required
 6. The educational visits coordinator shall approve in advance, on a visit by visit basis, all educational day visits.
 7. The principal shall approve in advance, on a visit by visit basis, all educational residential and adventurous visits.
 8. The chair of the governing body shall approve in advance, on a visit by visit basis, all educational overseas visits.
 9. The governing body will receive information on visits in the termly Principal's report

1. Provision of Employer Guidance

Gosfield School has formally adopted the "National Guidance" from the "Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel". The educational visits guidance can be found on the following web site: www.oeapng.info

The DfE Guidance for Health and Safety in Schools is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>

It is a legal expectation that Gosfield employees must work within the requirements of their employer's guidance. Gosfield employees should also follow National Guidance (NG) recommendations. Where there is any variance of policy between the national guidance and Gosfield policy the Gosfield policy requirements take precedence over any guidance.

Where a Gosfield employee commissions a Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) activity, they must ensure that such commissioned agent has either:

- a LOTC Quality Badge
- or
- adopted Gosfield or OEAP National Guidance
- or
- has systems and procedures in place where the standards are not less than those required by OEAP National Guidance

Providers with a LOTC Quality badge are shown on Evolve. The LOTC Quality badge assures the fact that risk assessments have been written and are used by the activity provider such that Gosfield will not be required to specifically risk assess those activities supervised by the outside provider. Risk assessments can however be checked by the visit leader and a copy kept on file as part of the trip planning.

2. Scope and Remit

The national guidance document “Basic Essentials: Status Remit and Rationale” clarifies the range of employees whose work requires them to use the guidance. In summary, it applies to employees whose work 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 Educational visits and Learning Outside the Classroom;
- 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

This applies regardless of whether or not the activities take place within or outside of normal working hours, including weekends and holiday periods.

For a more expansive explanation of legal expectations, all users of the guidance are strongly recommended to read the NG document: “Underpinning Legal Framework and Duty of Care”

This Policy relates to the following Gosfield School policies (Health and Safety Policy and Critical Incident Policy)

3. Ensuring Understanding of Basic Requirements

As an employer, Gosfield School is required to ensure that its employees are provided with

- appropriate guidance relating to visits and LOTC activity
- employer-led training courses to support the guidance to ensure that it is understood
- suitable systems and processes to ensure that those trained are kept updated
- access to advice, support and further training from an appointed Adviser that has proven expertise and professional understanding of the guidance, the training and expectations set by current good practice

The relevant training courses for Gosfield School are:

1. Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Training – Gosfield School is required to have a current, trained EVC in post for the Senior and Prep schools.
2. Gosfield School Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC) Revalidation - all Gosfield School EVCs are required to undertake a formal revalidation from time to time (Every 3 years).
3. Visit Leader Training – all visit leaders have training (where needed) and support from the EVC. All members of the teaching staff are encouraged to organise visits and, where possible, staff with less experience will normally be paired with an experienced visit leader.

Where an employee experiences problems with finding the material they are looking for, or require clarification or further help and guidance, they should consult the EVC.

4. Approval and Notification of Activities and Visits

All visits must be submitted for approval via the Evolve system. All visits will be subject to an Outline Approval process where the nature of the trip, age range, timing and cover implications will be checked.

All non-adventurous day visits are approved at EVC Level. Approval of the Principal is required for all residential visits and all adventure activities, with final Governor approval required for all overseas visits.

Sport fixtures as part of the normal sporting programme are approved by the Head of PE. All sporting activities outside the normal sporting programme e.g. ISA competitions, GCSE PE activities need approving using the Evolve system and must be treated as day visits.

The competence of the visit leader is the key component in ensuring the safety of the participants. Assessment, training and support of visit leaders is a priority of the EVC. All school trips will have a named leader who must be a serving employee at Gosfield School.

All trips need to be planned through Evolve, with as much notice given as possible. Evolve can be found on https://evolve.edufocus.co.uk/evco10/evchome_public.asp?domain=essexvisits.org.uk and all members of staff can be given a login.

The trips planning process works as follows:

1. Outline trip approval submitted on Evolve, normally at least 1 month before the visit is due to go out. For residential, overseas and adventurous visit, at least 6 months notice should be given. This includes approval and inclusion on the school calendar.
2. Letter to parents submitted for approval by **SLT and EVC** (Copying in HODs/Head of Prep as needed). Please note that letters may be formatted/edited to meet the Gosfield format for trips letters.
3. Once outline approval is given and letter is approved, this can go out to parents via BromCom/MyChildAtSchool, including relevant permission forms. You must also have had financial approval from the EVC.
4. Once outline approval is given, the remainder of the information on Evolve must be completed, including all risk assessments, proposed registers, final staffing etc.,
5. You will also need to complete the following tasks:
 - a. Book any minibuses/drivers needed
 - b. Book a first aid kit from the nurse
 - c. Obtaining from the nurse any required medical details
 - d. Book any lunches required from the kitchen
6. Once the remainder of the information on Evolve is submitted, final approval is given.
7. On the day of the trip:
 - a. On the day of the trip, collect the trips information pack and school mobile phone (if appropriate) from the EVC
 - b. Complete the trip register on Evolve, ensuring that the Attendance Officer has an accurate list of all pupils and staff on the visit
8. After the trip, complete the brief evaluation form on Evolve

All paperwork required for trips (lunch orders, blank risk assessments etc. can be found on the One Drive in:

Staff Shared
Documents
Trips

5. Risk Management

As an employer, Gosfield School has a legal duty to ensure that risks are managed - requiring them to be reduced to an "acceptable" or "tolerable" level - and not to eliminate risks, as would be a reasonable expectation when risk assessing a piece of machinery, workshop or manufacturing process. This requires that proportional (suitable and sufficient) risk management systems are in place, requiring Gosfield School to provide such support, training and resources to its employees as is necessary to implement this policy.

The risk management of an activity should be informed by the benefits to be gained from participating. Gosfield School promotes a "Risk-Benefit Assessment" approach, whereby the starting point for any risk

assessment should be a consideration of the targeted benefits and learning outcomes. This appreciation of the benefits to be gained through participating provides objectivity to a decision that any residual risk (i.e. the risk remaining after control measures have been put in place) is “acceptable”. HSE endorse this approach through their “Principles of Sensible Risk Management” here: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm> and advocate that it is important that young people are exposed to well-managed risks so that they learn how to manage risk for themselves. DfE also make clear that they support this approach through their guidance here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools#assessing-and-managing-risks>

Gosfield School requires visit leaders to complete a risk assessment using the Gosfield School risk assessment form which should be uploaded to Evolve. This will ensure suitable and sufficient control measures to be identified for any significant risks i.e. those that may cause serious harm to an individual or harm several people. HSE case study examples of sensible school trip risk management are available here: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/example-risk-assessments.htm>. Where visits and venues provide their own specific risk assessments, these should also be uploaded to Evolve. A blank Gosfield risk assessment form can be found in **Appendix C**.

For a clear justification for the Risk/Benefit approach to risk management see the article by Professor David Ball here: <http://davidjball.com/2014/09/risk-benefit-assessment-the-latest-august-2014/>

6. Emergency Planning and Critical Incident Support

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an off-site activity has:

- either suffered a life-threatening injury or fatality;
- is at serious risk;
- or has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period.

As an employer, Gosfield School is committed to providing emergency planning procedures to support establishments in the event of a critical incident. All Gosfield trip leaders are provided with a Critical Incident card (**Appendix B**) detailing our emergency procedures and contact details for the Gosfield School Critical Incident team. A member of the Senior Leadership Team will be nominated as the emergency contact for each visit who is always ‘on call’. All major incidents should immediately be relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency contact, including the home contact details of parents/carers and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back and recorded following normal school procedures for reporting and investigating accidents.

7. Monitoring

As an employer, Gosfield School ensures that there is monitoring of the visits and LOfC activities undertaken by its staff. Such monitoring should be in keeping with the recommendations of Employer Guidance. There is a clear expectation that the monitoring function is a delegated task put in place by the EVC and principally carried out by experienced staff acting as mentors/advisors for colleagues.

8. Approval of Visit Leaders

Gosfield School recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing visits. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit. Staff will be suitably qualified and experienced for proposed activities.

Gosfield acknowledges the immense educational benefits that adventurous activities can potentially bring to young people, and fully supports and encourages adventurous activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted. Competences to lead outdoor activities should be demonstrated by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where it exists. Where there are queries regarding the competencies/experience required the EVC will contact outdoor professionals for advice. All centres and providers used by the school for the provision of adventure activities will hold a current AALS licence.

A current list of adventurous activities can be found in **Appendix A**

The school values and recognises the contribution of volunteer adults and parent/carer helpers assisting with educational activities and visits. Any volunteer will be approved by both the Principal, Educational Visits Coordinator and the Visit Leader and is entered on the voluntary helpers list kept by the school. They will be carefully briefed on the scope of their responsibility. Where it is appropriate the school will ensure that DBS screening is available for volunteers. A risk assessment must be completed by the Visit Leader for all adults who attend a trip without a DBS e.g. when a parent attends to provide 1-to-1 support for their child. Where a member of staff is able to take their own child(ren) on a trip who are not members of the school, these children can either be included in the supervision ratios or separate to the ratios meaning the member of staff cannot be included as a supervising member of staff. This should be discussed with the EVC in the first instance.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and/or other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

Other Areas

Staff competence in first aid, minibus driving, life saving etc may also be needed, depending on the activity. Volunteers will also require induction training prior to a specific visit. Training requirements in these areas should be identified as part of the risk assessment process.

9. Role-specific requirements and recommendations

Employer Guidance sets out clear and detailed responsibilities and functions of specific roles that relate to roles to be found at Gosfield. These are:

1. Member of Board of Governors

- If the management board/governing body is the direct Employer of Establishment staff you are fully aware of the Employer's responsibilities under health and safety law.
- There is an Establishment Visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures – including emergency procedures.
- There are formal notification and approval procedures for Visits, and you are clear about your role in these.

2. Principal

- You are familiar with your employer's policies for outdoor learning, off-site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom;
- All activities and visits comply with this guidance and are notified or submitted for formal approval as required;
- You have ascertained that all leaders are appropriately competent, confident and accountable to carry out the responsibilities they are allocated;
- You have clearly designated either yourself or a suitable member of staff as the EVC and that the designated person meets your employer's requirements, including undertaking EVC Training as recommended or required;

- Where needed, you have access to expert advice such as from a competent outdoor education adviser;
- Outdoor learning is included within the process of self-evaluation providing evidence that may support how it contributes towards school improvement and overall effectiveness;
- When you take part in a visit or activity, you and other members of the Visit Leadership Team are clear about your role;
- If you are not leading the visit, you should follow the instructions of the designated Visit Leader (who should have sole charge of the visit);
- Suitable child protection procedures are in place, including vetting at an appropriate level of all adults including volunteers, helpers and visitors - decisions need to be made about when these adults are engaged in regulated activity and so should be subject to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks;
- You have assigned sufficient time for leaders to organise activities and visits properly;
- You support an apprenticeship/succession planning culture to ensure sustainable activities and visits and the development of competent leaders and EVCs;
- You support your EVC in ensuring that: all activities and visits are effectively supervised with an appropriate level of leadership, information has been shared with parents and consent has been given if required;
- Arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all participants and staff;
- Inclusion issues are addressed;
- Suitable transport arrangements are in place and meet any regulatory requirements;
- Insurance arrangements are appropriate;
- Details related to off-site activities and visits (including personal details of both participants and leaders) are accessible at all times to designated 24/7 Emergency Contacts in case of a serious incident;
- Arrangements are in place for the governing body to be informed of such visits as are required by your Establishment Visit Policy;
- You obtain best value. Consideration must be given to financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- Where charges are made to parents, these are within legal and employer requirements;
- Proper procedures are in place to account for the visit finances;
- Establishment policy identifies the types of visit that require a preliminary visit by staff;
- Risk Management is proportionate, suitable and sufficient;
- Where the activity or visit involves a third party provider: appropriate checks have been made and assurances obtained, a clear contract is in place setting out what the contractor is to provide, the provider holds sufficient indemnity insurance;
- All visits are evaluated against their objectives - this should also cover best value, teaching and learning, quality of experiences, addressing issues raised by any incident, and informing future visits;
- There are contingency plans in place to deal with changing circumstances during a visit (Plan B);
- There are suitable emergency procedures in place for each visit, and your establishment has an Emergency Plan for off-site visits, including procedures to ensure that parents are appropriately informed in the event of a serious incident;
- Serious incidents are reported to the employer as required by your employer's guidance, meeting the requirements of RIDDOR.

3. EVC

- Be a champion for all aspects of visits and outdoor learning;

- Challenge colleagues across all curriculum areas to use visits and outdoor learning effectively in order to provide a wide range of outcomes for children and young people and contribute towards establishment effectiveness;
- Support/oversee planning so that well considered and prepared arrangements can lead to well-managed, engaging, relevant, enjoyable and memorable visits/outdoor learning;
- Mentor leaders and aspirant leaders, supporting their ongoing development and training and sample monitor their activity to identify any further training needs;
- Ensure that planning complies with your Employer's requirements and that the arrangements are ready for approval within agreed timescales;
- Support your Head/Manager and Governors/Trustees in approval decisions so that all those with responsibility have the competence to fulfil their roles;
- Ensure that activity is evaluated against its aims for learning and development, that good practice is shared, and any issues are followed up and comply with statutory and employer's requirements;
- Keep your Senior Leadership Team and Governors/Trustees informed about the visits/outdoor learning taking place and their contribution to establishment effectiveness.

4. Visit or Activity Leader

- Be specifically competent for the type of visit, and for any activities you plan to lead;
- Be approved by your employer to carry out the lead role, including for any specific activities you will lead;
- Be able to use the chosen environment or venue(s) to provide a wide range of learning or development outcomes;
- Liaise with your establishment's Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) to ensure that the visit has clear aims and is planned to appropriately balance benefits and risks, and that all staff accompanying the visit meet establishment requirements;
- Ensure that an appropriate form of transport is chosen and booked. Several options should be considered before deciding upon a most reliable and cost effective solution.
- Ensure that there is always effective supervision during the trip.
This includes the management of students on transport. - Where a coach is used with large numbers of students, visit staff should be positioned throughout the coach to avoid misuse of mobile phones, food and to ensure the driver can remain undistracted and able to be attentive to the journey at all times.
- Take a lead on risk management. It is good practice to involve all the visit leadership team to ensure wide understanding and to give clarity about what they need to do. It is also good practice to involve young people wherever appropriate;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other leaders and helpers (and participants) to ensure effective supervision throughout the visit, appointing a deputy wherever possible;
- Ensure that any Activity Leaders are competent and confident to lead their planned activities, and are approved to do so if this is necessary (e.g. for adventure activities);
- Ensure that child protection issues are addressed;
- Provide relevant information to other leaders including the aims and how they can contribute to achieving these, the location, the participants (age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues);
- Ensure that informed parental consent has been obtained as necessary;
- Provide relevant information to parents and participants, and arrange pre-visit information; meetings where appropriate;
- Make sure there is access to first aid at an appropriate level;
- Ensure that if the visit leadership team includes someone with a close relationship to a member of the group, this is managed to avoid any possible compromise of effective supervision;
- Ensure that all leaders and any third party providers have access to emergency contact and emergency procedure details;

- Evaluate all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event;
- Report any accidents, incidents or near misses.

5. Assistant Visit leader

- Be sufficiently competent and confident that if the Visit or Activity Leader is incapacitated you can take over and ensure the safety of the group;
- Know and understand establishment and employer policies/procedures, in so far as they affect the responsibilities you have been assigned;
- Be meaningfully involved in the planning and preparation for the activity/visit, including contributing to the organisation of risk management;
- Ensure that you understand the role and responsibilities that you have been assigned and how you work alongside other staff and the Activity/Visit Leader;
- Be clear about any arrangements to hand-over and hand-back responsibility for supervision between members of staff and to/from any third-party provider;
- Ensure that you and other staff have been briefed on:
 - 1. The young people, including age, health characteristics, capabilities, special educational needs, behaviour and any other information that is relevant.
 - 2. The nature and location of the activity.
- Contribute to the ongoing monitoring of the activity/visit, including the quality of any activities provided by a third-party provider;
- Contribute to the evaluation of the activity/visit.

6. Volunteer Adult Helper

When using volunteers it is essential that they meet the requirements for the role that they have been assigned (Visit Leader, Activity Leader, Assistant Leader, Helper). The engagement of any volunteer must involve an appropriate level of vetting and induction. They must be sufficiently competent and confident to carry out their responsibilities. The level of competence and the thoroughness of the engagement process depend upon the role that the volunteer is to take, and the degree to which they will be working independently or under supervision. Where they are working independently it should be to the same standard as would be expected of an employee or contractor taking on the role.

7. Parents

- Make sure you understand the role, responsibilities and limitations that you have been assigned and how these fit with other staff including the Visit Leader;
- Be competent and confident for the role and responsibilities that you have been assigned;
- Know about establishment and employer policies and procedures, insofar as they affect the responsibilities you have been assigned, and work within these;
- Ensure that you have been briefed about the nature and location of the visit and about the participants (including age, health information, capabilities, special needs, safeguarding and behavioural issues);
- Report any concerns you have during the visit to the Visit Leader/Assistant Leaders as soon as possible;
- Be prepared to contribute to the evaluation of all aspects of the visit, both during and after the event;
- If you are a Parent of a young person taking part in the visit, you must be aware of the potential for your parental instincts to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management, particularly if there is a serious incident - where you may be distracted by the needs of your own son or daughter, rather than looking to the needs of the whole group. This means that in most situations, unless it is an agreed part of the plan, the Visit Leader should avoid assigning to you a leadership role that gives you direct responsibility for your own child.

10. Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits

Gosfield School makes a charge for all visits where appropriate. Where the cost of the visit is not paid by parents/carers, then pupils may not be able to attend the visit.

The Gosfield School excel costing planner should be used to work out a final trip charge per student.

Financial approval must be sought from the finance department before a visit is advertised to parents/carers. The following non-exhaustive list reflects the items that should be covered in the cost charged for a visit:

- Any entrance fees, including any fees for residential visits etc.
- Cost of transport, including return visits e.g. if the school minibuses return to school during the visit
- Cost of driver hours, where school drivers are used
- Cost of staff mileage, where staff vehicles are used
- Any visit specific items e.g. souvenirs, hoodies etc.
- Any staff sustenance (if appropriate)
- Any items required from the kitchen, above and beyond the usual school pack lunch e.g. boxes of biscuits
- Parking charges and journey tolls.
- Emission zone (e.g. ULEZ) charges
- MIS transaction charge
- An administration/contingency charge, usually 5-10% of the total cost, which covers items such as credit for the school mobile phones

Packed lunches provided by the school are included in school fees and do not need to be charged for as part of the visit cost.

As with the normal ordering procedure, due attention should be given to value for money, ensuring that, for instance, a number of quotes for coach hire are obtained.

School visits should always at least break even. To ensure this, when calculating the cost of the trip, an allowance will be included for pupils who do not attend but have been included in the costings/entrance fees paid.

All visits will be publicised to parents/carers using BromCom/MyChildAtSchool and all payments should be made via this system. For high-value trips, parents/carers will be given the opportunity to pay in instalments.

11. Vetting and DBS Checks - see also Gosfield School Safeguarding Policy

Gosfield School employees must undergo an enhanced DBS check as part of their recruitment process.

The key criterion for a DBS check on a volunteer is whether they are having regular, unsupervised contact with children. - See more at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

However, it must be clearly understood that a DBS check (or other vetting procedure) is no guarantee as to the suitability of an adult to work with any given group of young or vulnerable people. A risk assessment must be completed for all adults who attend a trip without a DBS e.g. when a parent attends to provide 1-to-1 support for their child.

The placement of an adult within a situation of professional trust (where young people could be vulnerable to physical or mental exploitation or grooming) should always be on the understanding that an overview based on a common-sense risk-benefit assessment process has been considered.

12. Requirement to Ensure Effective Supervision

In general terms, the Law does not prescribe activity-specific staffing ratios; but it does require that the level of supervision and group management is “effective”.

Effective supervision should be determined by proper consideration of:

- Staff Competence
- Activity - nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved)
- Group - age (including the developmental age) of the group; ability of the group (including special learning needs, behavioural, medical and vulnerability characteristics etc);
- Environment - nature and location of the activity (including the type of activity, duration, skill levels involved, as well as the time of year and prevailing conditions,
- Distance away from the school

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (updated 3rd April 2017) no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing. The appropriate ratio on an outing is always likely to be higher than the legal minimum (for children aged three and over in early years settings either 1:8 or 1:13

and 1:30 in infant school reception classes in maintained schools). It is not unusual for a ratio of 1:1 to be necessary.

Although there are no legal requirements for ratios for pupils above the EYFS stage the Gosfield School governing body determines the following **suggested** staff/pupil ratios for visits:

- Age 17 – 18 (years 12 – 13): 1 to 15
- Age 10 – 16 (years 7 – 11): 1 to 15
- Age 8 – 11 (years 4 – 6): 1 to 10
- Age 5 – 7 (years 1 – 3): 1 to 8
- Age 3 – 5 (Reception and Nursery): 1 to 8
- Age 2 – 3 (Nursery): 1 to 4
- Overseas trips – 1 to 10 (senior school ages 10-18)
- Overseas trips – 1 to 8 (prep school ages 10-11)
- Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions – 1 – 7 (Supervisor per expedition group)

Visit staff will not be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs such that their ability to recognise hazards or respond to emergencies is in any way restricted.

13. Preliminary Visits and Provider Assurances

All visits should be thoroughly researched to establish the suitability of the venue and to check that facilities and third-party provision will meet group expectations. Such information gathering is essential in assessing the requirements for effective supervision of young people. It is a vital dimension of risk management. Where preliminary visits incur significant costs, these should be factored into the overall cost planning for the trip.

Wherever reasonably practicable, it is good practice to carry out a preliminary visit. The EVC will advise on this in each specific case. A pre-visit is usually required for visits where there is a high complexity factor and the visit has not happened previously, or when the visit is adventurous and led by Gosfield staff. A new DofE day walk for example.

Residentials, visits abroad, exchange visits, adventure led by school staff all have aspects of complexity. If the visit is led and managed by a provider, then a variety of approaches can reduce the need to pre-visit.

It is good practice for Visit Leaders to take full advantage of the nationally accredited, provider assurance schemes that are now available, thus reducing bureaucracy.

Examples of such schemes include:

- The LOTC Quality Badge
- AALS licensing
- Adventuremark
- School travel forum
- NGB centre approval schemes (applicable where the provision is a single, specialist activity).

In line with national guidance Gosfield School takes the view that where a provider holds such one of the above accreditations, there should be no need to seek further assurances.

14. Insurance for Off-site Activities and Visits

Where tour companies are used e.g. PGL, NST etc. care should be taken to ensure that travel insurance is included in the price paid. This is especially the case when adventurous activities are included in the itinerary.

For day trips, staff and students are covered under the school's liability insurance.

For residential trips in the UK, insurance should be arranged in consultation with Gosfield School's Director of Operations.

For overseas trips, insurance should be purchased as part of the trip planning by the visit leader and costs incorporated to the financial planning for the trip.

15. Inclusion

Every effort will be made to ensure that outdoor learning activities and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every reasonable effort will be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Gosfield School will take all reasonably practicable measures to include all young people. The principles of inclusion will be promoted and addressed for all visits, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Gosfield School will be aware of the extent to which Inclusion is or is not a legal issue. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, it is unlawful to:

- treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

16. Good practice requirements

To be deemed competent, a Gosfield Visit/Activity Leader, or Assistant Leader must be able to demonstrate the ability to operate to the current standards of recognized good practice for that role. All staff and helpers must be competent to carry out their defined roles and responsibilities.

Employer Guidance sets a clear standard to which Gosfield leaders must work. The guidance states that a competent Visit/Activity Leader (or an Assistant Leader where they may take sole responsibility for a sub-group) requires:

- Knowledge and understanding of their employer's guidance supported by establishment-led training.

- Knowledge and understanding of establishment procedures supported by a structured induction process specified by the establishment.
- Knowledge and understanding of the staff, the activity, the group and the venue.
- Appropriate experience.
- In some circumstances (e.g. first aid, adventurous activities) a formally accredited qualification.

Staff participating in off-site activities and visits must be aware of the extent of their duty of care and should only be given such responsibilities as are in keeping with the above guidance. It is particularly important that careful consideration of competence issues is applied to both newly qualified and newly appointed staff. The School should view the original documents and certificates when verifying leader's qualifications, and not rely on photocopies.

Competency of the visit leader and trip staff is always of utmost importance and so any consumption of alcohol by any members of the visit staff must not compromise the safe and proper running of the trip. If enough staff are present on the trip, then opportunities may allow staff to be off duty and enjoy a social drink of alcohol. Enough members of staff must remain completely free of alcohol to ensure that any emergency that arises can be dealt with by staff who have not consumed any alcohol. A member of staff with driving responsibilities should not drink alcohol under any circumstances and no member of staff should under any circumstances allow themselves to become intoxicated. If the trip leader intends to set up a rota of 'on duty' and 'off duty' staff to allow for a social drink for 'off duty' staff, the rota must be agreed in advance of departure by both the EVC and the Principal.

Where a Volunteer Helper is a parent (or otherwise in a close relationship to of a young person taking part in the visit) they should be made aware of the potential for their relationship to compromise the Visit Leader's plans for group management. The Visit Leader should directly address this issue as part of the risk assessment.

17. Medical

Medical details for pupils and staff taking part in trips are collected by the trip leader either through a specific medical consent form for residential trips, or by reference to BromCom for day visits. The school medical database or professional is also consulted for residential trips. Any specific pupil medical issues are to be included in the trip risk management planning. Emergency contact details for all participants will be held by the Visit Leader and will be destroyed on return to the school.

It is expected that visit leaders will hold a current first aid qualification appropriate to the level and type of trip they are leading. i.e. DofE expedition leaders should hold an outdoor first qualification.

18. Transport

Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is much more dangerous to travel to an activity than to engage in it. All national and local regulatory requirements must be followed.

When the school minibuses are used, it is preferred that the school drivers are also used. Where other members of staff drive the minibuses, it is a requirement that all staff must hold category D1 entitlement on their driving licence and have completed appropriate training, for those vehicles where such requirements are necessary.

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk management process when planning the journey, giving proper consideration to issues of driver-distraction when considering what supervision is required for the specific group of passengers being transported in a minibus.

Transporting young people in private cars requires careful consideration. Staff cars should ideally only be used to transport pupils in 'unplanned' or 'emergency' situations. For example, journeys to hospital, to prevent pupils being stranded etc. The school provides insurance cover for occasional use and cars should be registered with the Director of Operations and Finance for this purpose. Where a staff car is used for a planned visit, a copy of the MOT and insurance certificates for the vehicle in question must be provided to the school in advance. Staff cars should not be used where there is a ratio of 1:1 unless the welfare of the student would otherwise be compromised. **If a student has to be taken in a staff car with a ratio of 1:1 then the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed and the student should be sat in the rear of the car.**

19. Planning

Planning should reflect the consideration of Legal and good practice requirements, ensuring:

- The plan is based on Gosfield School procedures and national guidance
- All staff (including any adult volunteer helpers) and the young people to be involved, have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, including their role in the risk management process.
- Those in a position of parental authority have been fully informed and, where appropriate, formal consents have been obtained
- Proportionate assurances have been obtained from any providers (making full use of national schemes that accredit that assurances have already been obtained by credible inspection regimes)
- Designated emergency contact(s) have been identified that will work on a 24/7 basis where required
- All details of the activity provision are accessible to the emergency contact throughout the period of the activity

It is strongly recommended that at a very early stage of the planning process, the provisional staffing team carry out a brainstorming exercise to identify the benefits and learning outcomes that the activity (or range of activities) might achieve. If the outcomes are to be evaluated with any rigor, then it will be essential that these outcomes are prioritised, and appropriately targeted. A record of these outcomes will help keep the plan focussed and also be a vital part of the risk management process in providing some objectivity in a "Risk Benefit Analysis". Once the targeted outcomes have been recorded, it will then be possible to identify appropriate on-going review and evaluation strategies, including indicators.

This supports the move towards developing activity-specific policies at establishment level for regular or routine activities. Such policies should be robust and equate to "operational guidance" that makes it clear how the activity should be planned and delivered, meeting all necessary recommendations and requirements, as well as assuring educational quality.

The degree of complexity of a particular plan or policy (along with its supporting procedures) will need to reflect the nature and complexity of several variables that can impact on any given activity. These variables can be remembered as "STAGED" as explained below:

- Staffing requirements – trained; experienced; competent; ratios
- Transport arrangements – reliable, supervision, close to school
- Activity characteristics – specialist; insurance issues; licensable
- Group characteristics – prior experience; ability; behaviour; special and medical needs
- Environmental conditions – like last time; impact of weather; water levels
- Distance from support mechanisms in place at the home base – transport; residential

20. Consent

Written consent from parents/carers will not be required for pupils to take part in the majority of off-site activities organised by the school as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a

normal part of a child's education at school i.e. swimming/sports fixtures. However, parents/carers will be able to be told where their child will be at all times and of any extra information or measures required.

Written consent will be requested for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. As part of the parent/carer consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements for the visit. For most residential visits parents/carers will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit. This is a requirement of all overseas residential visits.

When an activity is part of a planned curriculum in normal curriculum time and no parental contributions are requested, then additional formal consent is not necessary. Payment of the visit fee will normally indicate consent being given.

21. Behaviour

Gosfield School has a clear code of conduct in the Behaviour Policy and this applies to visits. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents/carers. Pupils whose behaviour is such that the Visit Leader is concerned for their safety, or for that of others, can be withdrawn from the activity. Parents may be required to arrange transport for pupils at their own expense should they be withdrawn during the activity.

Visit leaders may have to exercise professional judgement on visits where behaviour strategies used on the school site may not be appropriate for the visit venue. For assistance and guidance, they can contact the Educational Visits Coordinator or the emergency SLT contact.

Visit leaders will also have to consider the use of pupils' mobile phones on visits and decide where this may be appropriate e.g. for journeys with a long travelling component or where pupils may have remotely supervised free time, such as in a town centre or museum etc. Visit leaders also have the authority to restrict the use of or remove mobile phones from students in the event of inappropriate usage.

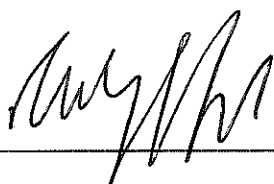
Ratified by the Governing Council of Gosfield School

Signed  (Chair of Governors)

Date: 20/01/25

Date of next review: January 2027

Signed _____
Principal



Date: _____

20/1/25

Appendix A

Below is a list of 'Adventurous Activities' as agreed by Local Authority outdoor education advisors:

- All activities in 'open country' such as D of E Expeditions.
- Swimming (all forms, excluding publicly life guarded pools)
- Camping where participants/leaders erect tents and/or self-cater.
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Sailing/windsurfing/kite surfing
- Rafting or improvised rafting
- Use of powered safety/rescue craft
- All other forms of boating (excluding commercial transport)
- Water skiing
- Paintball (including 'Laser Quest')
- Snorkel and aqualung activities
- Hill walking and Mountaineering
- Mountain biking
- Rock climbing (including indoor climbing walls)
- Abseiling
- River/gorge walking or scrambling
- Coasteering/coastal scrambling/sea level traversing
- Underground exploration (except designated 'Show' caves)
- Shooting and archery
- Skiing, snowboarding, and related activities (including dry slope)
- Air activities (excluding commercial flights)
- Horse riding
- Motor sport – all forms
- High level ropes courses
- 'Extreme' sports (Parkour, Bungee, Zorbing, Mountain or ATB Boarding etc.)
- Other activities (e.g. initiative exercises) involving skills/risks inherent in any of the above

Before our pupils take part in any of these we need to be sure that the relevant National Governing Body qualifications are held by the person/organisation running the activity, a technical advisor has provided a statement of competence, or a suitable level of experience and competence can be demonstrated.

GOSFIELD SCHOOL

CRITICAL INCIDENT CHECKLIST

Emergency contact	Role	Landline	Mobile
Rod Jackson	Principal	01787 474040	07926 347646
Mick Pitts	EVC	01787 474040	07719 130269
Heather Bougeard	Head of Prep/EYFS	01787 474040	07802 329355
John Cooper	Vice Principal	01787 474040	07711 332364

School landline: 01787 474040

Important contact details – insert as appropriate for the trip	
Trip name and dates:	
Group leader:	
Supervising staff's mobile numbers:	
Tour company:	
Tour rep:	
Coach company/airline:	
Hotel:	
Insurance contact details – if not school policy:	
British Consulate/Embassy:	
School Travel Insurance	
Insurance policy number:	
Medical emergency overseas Contact number:	
Claims – report to police and obtain a crime reference number:	

Emergency procedures to be carried by Gosfield trip leaders

General Principles

- Ensure that all staff are briefed for a medical or missing person emergency
- Ensure that location of student medical details and trip insurance details are known to all staff
- Manage communication effectively and write things down

Medical Emergency/Accident

1. Take steps to prevent injury to others in your charge or in the vicinity. Enlist others to help you and give first aid
2. Contact the emergency services and tour operator
3. Arrange documentation required – EHIC, insurance, student medical details
4. Arrange transport and staff supervision
5. Contact school base-contact (see checklist below) – who will inform parents.
6. Notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
 - i. <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations>
7. Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you will not allow students to phone home. Do not name the casualty or give other than brief factual information to local media after liaising with the base contact
8. Record in writing – nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
9. No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the School

Missing Person

1. Make a plan with all supervising staff – have specific times to meet and review. Do not rely on mobile phones
2. Manage and brief the rest of the group
3. Ensure a system for communication between staff and base
4. Contact local emergency services and tour operator; notify the British Embassy or Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad
 - i. <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations>
5. Contact school base-contact (see checklist below) – who will inform parents.
6. Manage communication by rest of group; explain why you will not allow students to phone home. Do not name the missing person or give other than brief factual information to local media after liaising with the base contact
7. Record in writing – nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of missing persons; names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
8. No-one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties, nor sign anything relating to accident liability without clear advice from the Governing Body

Media

- Remember
 - All media should be directed to the Principal in the first instance
 - Pity – sympathy for those involved and their families
 - Praise – for those helping in the recovery
 - Promise – to participate in any inquiry, get to the bottom of what happened and use your best efforts to put in place systems so that it cannot happen again

Do not

- Do not reply to 'why' and 'how' questions
- Do not name individuals – explain that names will not be released until next of kin have been informed
- Don't say 'no comment' – explain why you cannot comment and state when an update will be provided and by whom

Notes:

When informing your base contact they will require the following info; remember to agree a time and means of further contact

Time and date:	
Time at incident site if overseas:	
Contact name:	
Contact number:	
Contact mobile number:	
Contact e-mail:	
Contact location:	
Nature of incident:	
Time and date of incident:	
Brief description of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Names of individuals involved:	
Current situation:	
Survivors:	
Fatalities:	
Hospitalised:	
Missing:	
Authorities involved: Police, Embassy if overseas:	
Agree time and means of further contact:	
Consult a copy of the School Critical Incident Policy for further guidance	

Gosfield School Trips and Visits General Risk Assessment

Trip Name:		Date from:	
Destination:		Date to:	
Group Leader:		Contact Number:	
Other Staff:			
Destination contact:		Contact Number:	

Tick if relevant	Hazard	Potential harm	Severity of risk	Risk minimisation	Action if harm occurs
	Road accident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depends on severity 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seat belts must be worn. All sitting, well supervised. Count on and off - check against names list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor injuries dealt with by staff Contact emergency services Contact school
	Travel sickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disrupts travel 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medication may have been taken Seat in most suitable place on coach etc Sick bags carried 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispose of bags a.s.a.p.
	Walk from vehicle to venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hit by car Minor injuries e.g. cuts & grazes Lost child Abduction Assault Food Allergies 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions at each travel stop and venue Limit area open to children Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list Medic alert awareness for all children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact emergency services Initiate search if necessary Minor injuries dealt with by staff Contact school Contact relevant medics – treat with ‘epi-pen’ if authorised
	Flying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crash Hijack 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions before leaving Aircraft should be airworthy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal in the event of a crash
	Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost in airport 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children stay in groups at airport and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list Security arrangements by relevant forces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate search Alert authorities Contact school

Tick if relevant	Hazard	Potential harm	Severity of risk	Risk minimisation	Action if harm occurs
	Ferry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall overboard Sinking Assault 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions before leaving Boat should be seaworthy Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert authorities Phone school
	Rail travel Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crash Missed train Abduction 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions before leaving Train should be rail worthy Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alert authorities Phone emergency services Phone school
	Abduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lost child 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following all risk minimisation strategies for above occasions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact police Initiate search Contact school
	Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major Injury/Death 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing to students before trips – covered in tutor time Check with H+S Officer if safe to travel on day Have predefined meeting point at venue Minimise waiting time in busy areas such as foyers/transition etc. Be aware of emergency exits in venue. Make sure group are aware of them as well Be aware of alternative travel options to get home or consider option of having to stop overnight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to account for the whole group as soon as possible Take advice of emergency services on scene Contact H+S officer/SLT as soon as possible Follow the police advice of “hide, run, tell”. Note “hide” is listed first as you can run into danger.
	Cafes/car parks Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hit by car Minor injuries e.g. cuts & grazes Lost child Abduction Assault Food Allergies 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions at each travel stop and venue Limit area open to children Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list Medic alert awareness for all children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact emergency services Initiate search if necessary Minor injuries dealt with by staff Contact school Contact relevant medics – treat with ‘epi-pen’ if authorised
	Theatres Museums Concerts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Allergies Abduction Lost child 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medic alert awareness for all children Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact relevant medics – treat with ‘epi-pen’ if authorised

	Exhibitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assault 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Count on and off – check against names list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact emergency services Initiate search if necessary Contact school
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Tick if relevant	Hazard	Potential harm	Severity of risk	Risk minimisation	Action if harm occurs
	Contact with animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bites, allergies, stings 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warn children not to touch animals and be aware of surroundings Medic alert awareness for all children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat if possible or seek medical advice
	Shopping expeditions Pedestrian activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic dangers - RTA Cuts and grazes Abduction Assault Lost child 	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructions before any exposure to traffic/ release into shops, regarding behaviour required Children stay in groups at all times and have regular contact Count on and off – check against names list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat any minor injuries if possible Initiate search for lost child Contact emergency services if necessary Contact school

Alternative plans in the event of cancellation etc:

Gosfield School Trips and Visits Specific Risk Assessment

Tick if relevant	Hazard	Potential harm	Severity of risk	Risk minimisation	Action if harm occurs