

School Educational Visits Policy

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every trip made by this school combines the safest possible environment for children and the greatest possible educational benefit, both in terms of the National Curriculum and in personal and social development. This policy has been written in conjunction with the 'Educational Trips and Visits Code of Practice' (Revised 2002) and 'Health and Safety Guidance Notes' by Salford City Council (Revised 2003)

The Code of Practice sets out the policies and guidance for people with responsibility for organizing and managing educational trips and visits within Salford City Council Education and Leisure Directorate.

"The planning and control of visits must be exercised rigorously with commitment and clear management to meet the increased expectations and legal demands now in force."

"Health and Safety is a shared responsibility between the parties involved in managing any programme of work of a specific activity."

(The Legal Framework (p10): 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act)

Rationale

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice. They can provide effective stimulus and enhanced support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised.

As the child moves through the school visits will be arranged to complement the breadth of the curriculum and to emphasise aspects of the programme of study which lend themselves to such an approach. Within the constraints of the various codes of practice, children will be encouraged to be increasingly self-reliant. All trips will, wherever possible, be accessible to all children in the class, enabling them to gain confidence, acquire skills and build positive experiences.

The school's policy is underpinned by the aims and outcomes of 'Every Child Matters' (2003), Keeping Safe, to improve educational outcomes for children.

'When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social, spiritual and emotional development.' (Ofsted 2008)

"Take a fresh look at the curriculum..., and think actively about how to develop and enrich experiences offered to children..., take into account the resources available in the wider community."

(Excellent and Enjoyment 2003)

Aims

The school aims to:

- To enhance and support the school curriculum.
- Develop the child's knowledge, skills and understanding of the wider world outside school and home
- To emphasise links between various areas of the curriculum, and to put into practice skills learnt in the classroom
- To develop the child's confidence in encountering unfamiliar situations
- To develop the child's ability to work with a group, to follow instructions and to complete tasks in co-operation with others
- To ensure that children learn the importance of considering the feelings and needs of others.
- To nurture self-reliance, autonomy and leadership

Roles and Responsibilities

Management

Teaching Staff are responsible for preliminary planning of trips and any plans must be discussed with the Headteacher at an early stage. The EVC checks the planning, giving guidance and support; the Headteacher has overall responsibility for the safety of the pupils and staff therefore giving overall approval for every visit.

Headteacher

The Headteacher must oversee and maintain the policy for educational visits on behalf of the Governing Body. This policy requires all educational visits have a clear and appropriate purpose, and are properly organized. It must also specify those categories of visit which may need to be reported at the planning stage to the Governing Body and/or the LEA. The Headteacher must review operating arrangements at least annually with staff, who directly implement this policy or undertake visits. This review must provide the basis for a report to the Governing Body.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- they have appointed a suitable group leader
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit
- training needs have been met
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance
- the governing body has approved the visit if necessary
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover

Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will ensure that:

- educational visits meet the employers' and school's requirements
- support the Headteacher and Governors with approval and other decisions
- assess competence of prospective leaders and staff – challenge and question the value and purpose of the visit and provide support and guidance to staff
- risk assessments meet requirements
- keep record of visits, accident or incident reports

- review systems and monitor them
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name
- they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

Group Leader

One teacher, the Group Leader, has overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit or activity including direct responsibility for pupils' health, safety and welfare and must be approved by the Headteacher.

The Group Leader will:

- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- be aware and take into account the implications for non-returnable deposits;
- ensure all consent slips have been collected and know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability;
- undertake and complete a risk assessment proportionate to the nature of the visit or read and understand the risk assessment form provided by the establishment to be visited;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities.
- follow the photography and video guidance and all parents have consented to their children having photographs/videos taken
- Complete visit evaluation

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit

Teachers on school-led visits will act in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with the Headteacher if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of groups of children except where risks to health and safety are minimal. All adults must have an up to date CRB check.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

The Group Leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- follow the school code of behaviour, 'behaviour contract'
- not take unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Planning off-site visits Before a the Visit

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them. The Headteacher is responsible for overseeing the planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the Group Leader, but the Headteacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience. The Group Leader must agree all plans with the Headteacher.

All educational visits should now be recorded on the EVOLVE web-based recording, reporting and monitoring system. This system has been designed to help streamline the educational visits planning process. All staff have been given their own log in details to access and organise the off-site visit.

EVOLVE has already installed Salford City Council approved venues / established and companies to use. It is strongly recommended that these be used; however it can not always be possible.

A Checklist has been devised to aid the group leaders in their planning of the off-site visit

All appendices can be found on the staff shared area and filled in electronically. When completed they can be attached to the EVOLVE form. (Move this statement to appear prior to any reference to appendices)

Trip Categorisation

Local Authority approval is required for any educational visit which is adventurous, residential or foreign. An adventurous activity is one which has traditionally been regarded as an outdoor pursuit e.g. climbing; kayaking or mountain biking.

All other educational visits are approved at a local level by the Headteacher.

Educational visits requiring Local Authority approval should be submitted at least four weeks prior to departure date. This is to allow the necessary checks to be made and remedial action taken where required.

Pre – visits

Time can be allocated for pre-visits if a potential establishment has not been visited by the school before. A pre visit is advisable, however, where appropriate it is acceptable to gather the necessary information by other means. For example through: personal recommendation; LA Educational Visits Adviser; direct contact with visit destination or Internet research. The purpose of this exploratory visit or research is to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- assess potential areas and levels of risk
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group

- ensure that the Group Leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

Educational visits should fulfil the needs of all children; therefore the Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage. Children with IEPs may need additional supervision or support whilst on a visit.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the Group Leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Risk Assessment

As part of the visit planning, completing the risk assessment process for any activity that will be led by school staff is the responsibility of the group leader and the staff team. Where an activity is led by staff from the establishment to be visited, it is their responsibility to assess any risks. It is the Visit Leaders responsibility to ensure that the risk management process has taken place by the establishment and it is reasonable to request copies of the risk assessment. This process can be completed using the Salford City Council Assessment Form (appendix 2).

A questionnaire by Salford City Council should be sent if no risk assessment is given (appendix 3)

The risk assessment will decide the adult:child ratio for each visit (See Guidance under 'Supervision'). The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- the activities and associated risks
- the level of risk
- the control measures that need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level

The Group Leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The Group Leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- the location
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- pupils with special educational or medical needs
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group;
- special needs pupils;

- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of any accommodation;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Where possible it is recommended that the party leader is not in charge of a group of children, to ensure the safety and supervision of the whole group of children and adults.

As general guidelines, the following ratio of adults to children should be used:

Nursery: 1:2
 Reception: 1:4
 Year 1 to 2: 1:6
 Year 3 to 4: 1:8
 Year 5 to 6: 1:10 / 1:15

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually.

Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, such as canoeing, the LEA or Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Group Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

First Aid

Group Leaders are in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. It is common law duty to act as reasonably prudent parent would.

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider in the group. The Group Leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid bag
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first-aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Headteacher should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

First aid / Medical Kit for full day trips should include:

First aid kit	Medical kit
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a guidance card • six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressing • one large sterile un-medicated dressing • two triangular bandages • two safety pins • individually wrapped moist cleaning wipes • disposable gloves • sterile water or sterile normal saline in sealed disposable containers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 antiseptic wipes • 1 antihistamine cream • 1 sun protection cream • 1 after sun cream • 1 wasp-eze aerosol or equivalent • 1 bottle/packet of laxatives • 1 junior aspirin • 1 packet of paracetamol • 1 packet of sanitary towels where girls are in the party. <p>Parents must be informed of these contents (including brand names) and sign a form to give permission to use these items in an emergency.</p>
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Communication with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parentis’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer / residential visits. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

The following information on matters that might affect pupil’s health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in a letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- dates of the visit
- times of departure and return
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
- visit’s objectives
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
- voluntary contribution details
- insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident,
- cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
- clothing and equipment to be taken
- money to be taken
- the informative reply slip to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Where monies are required, it must clearly be stated on the letter. If it supports the National Curriculum a voluntary contribution must be asked for. It can, however, state that if insufficient funds are collected than the trip can not go ahead.

Parental consent

n.b. It is NOT a legal requirement to gain parental consent for any educational visit occurring wholly within the school day, however, it is good practice to gain consent.

If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent the Headteacher will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. A parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

Parents must be informed to:

- provide emergency contact number(s)
- sign the consent form
- give the group leader relevant information about their child’s health which might be relevant to the visit

Legal Position with parents

The law is quite clear and states that a child should not be prevented from taking part in an activity or visit because the parents are unable or unwilling to pay. We can only request contributions towards the costs, and are not allowed to charge for the cost of those children who do not pay or for those adults who are going.

Letters home should make clear that we are requesting contributions towards the cost but that the trip cannot take place unless there are sufficient contributions. It should be made clear that we have no wish to place unacceptable burden on parents who have financial difficulties but that we hope they will make some contribution, however small, and that this will be appreciated and accepted.

Parental permission is needed before a child can be taken on an educational visit. This can be done in several ways

- A parent / carer's signature on a return slip. This is the preferred way because it implies an understanding and acceptance for a specific trip.
- A general permission slip signed at enrolment is acceptable as a 'catch all' in the event of there being no other evidence of acceptance for a specific trip. Although it was originally devised as a cover for non-paying local trips it will suffice where costs are being incurred as well, and providing you are sure that the parent will not object as a matter of principle. It is sensible to try and make telephone contact as well.
- Any action that implies that the parent/ carer understands that a trip is planned and are willing for their child to go. This would normally include sending the child with a packed lunch when they normally have school dinners, or sending the entrance fee or fare money.
- If none of these is forthcoming it is acceptable to phone the parent / carer, or other responsible adult relative (if they have been nominated as an emergency contact) and seek permission verbally from them. Other emergency contact numbers such as a neighbour or family friend are, **not** able to give permission.

Preparing Pupils / Information to given pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

It is for the Group Leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information.

Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit / activity
- background information about the place to be visited
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- why safety precautions are in place
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- who is responsible for the group
- what to do if approached by a stranger
- what to do if separated from the group
- emergency procedures
- rendezvous points

Transport

Salford City Council approved travel companies are listed on the EVOLVE visit approval system, it is strongly recommended to use these.

Teachers and others who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have an appropriate license and insurance cover for carrying the pupils. Volunteer drivers should be carefully vetted by the school before they are permitted to drive pupils in their cars. If necessary, assurances should be requested by the Headteacher.

Headteachers / Group Leaders, who wish to use parents/volunteers to help transport pupils in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the pupils in their cars.

Parents' agreements should be sought for their children to be carried in other parents' cars. If pupils are going to be transported to venues in parents' cars, parental consent is required.

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- do not rush towards the transport when it arrives
- wear seatbelts and stay seated while travelling on transport
- make sure bags do not block aisles on the transport
- never attempt to get on or off the moving transport
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- never distract or disturb the driver
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road
- if you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code
- if you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

After school matches and sporting fixtures:

- There should be a minimum of 2 adults on any off-site visit, at least one of whom should be a qualified teacher.
- The driver of a minibus is responsible for driving the vehicle and should not be responsible for the supervision of pupils on board.
- If members of staff are transporting pupils in their own vehicles, it must be stated on their insurance documents. Copies of the insurance document should be kept on file at the school.
- In the event of parents offering to transport pupils in addition to their own, a form must be completed (appendix 5)

Specific requirements for visits.

Residential visits

The school will bear in mind the following:

- the Group Leader should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to the children's
- the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group
- access by staff to children's rooms must be available at all times
- separate male and female sleeping areas for children and adults

- ensure that the whole party are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel
- security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors
- ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group
- storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables
- adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch
- provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs
- safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies)
- recreational accommodation / facilities for the group

Coastal / river visits

The Group Leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal / river activity:

- tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked
- ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags
- establish a base on the main land to which members of the group may return if separated
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc
- some of a group's time on a beach / river banks may be recreational. Group Leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight
- the group should keep to the path at all times. Group leaders should consider whether it is safe for pupils to ride mountain bikes on coastal paths

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group.

Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, should be thoroughly risk assessed and approved by the LA Educational Visits Adviser. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

Farm visits

Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with food poisoning and other infections. The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. The basis rules for a farm visit will be:

Never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them
- eat until they have washed their hands
- sample any animal foodstuffs
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities)
- ride on tractors or other machines
- play in the farm area

During the visit

Medical ministrations

The Group Leader must ensure all medical equipment is clearly labelled and guidance is given to the time it is to be ministered, by the first aider or nominated adult supervisor.

Head counts

Regular head counts must take place. All staff accompanying the group must carry a list of all pupils and adults at all times.

Pupils must not wear name badges

The group leader must establish a rendezvous point and tell all pupils what to do if they become separated from the group.

Missing Children

If an individual child is lost then the Group Leader should immediately notify the responsible authority in the place being visited. When this has been done and all reasonable precautions have been taken then telephone the school to let us know. The Headteacher will make helpful suggestions about meeting up, and if appropriate will take responsibility for the next action and for passing the messages to all concerned.

If you are in a place where this is impossible, make a quick initial search, collect the other children together, leave them with an adult, find a telephone, ring the police and then school. Remember your position so that you can take officers there if necessary.

Generally if the adults in charge are confident and the children are not frightened then there is no reason why the rest of the day should not be enjoyed. It may be necessary for the school to send out another adult to meet the group. Under other circumstances it may be necessary for the adult concerned to bring back the group to school.

Emergency Procedures

Group leaders/teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation or to stop an activity they feel unsafe or dangerous.

If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- assess the situation
 - safeguard the uninjured members of the group
 - attend the casualty
- inform emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

Serious Incidents must be reported immediately to the school emergency contact (usually the Headteacher) by the Group Leader. It is then the responsibility of the school to notify the Director of Education and Leisure as soon as possible.

In the event of a serious injury / emergency, the main factors to include:

- establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them
- ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- Inform school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit. Include name, date and time of incident, location, names of others involved, actions so far and actions yet to be taken.
- Write down accurately all events, times and contacts as soon as possible.
- Notify the police / British Embassy if necessary
- Notify Salford City Council's Educational visits advisor

If a child falls ill, but not seriously enough that an ambulance is needed, then telephone the school and explain the situation. The advice will be to send an adult back with the child.

After visit

Evaluation

A report/evaluation must be completed and submitted by the Group Leader to the Headteacher/EVC (appendix 6)

In the event of a serious incident an accident form must be complete (appendix 6) as soon as possible. (No one must speak to the media or other parties for legal reasons.)

Monies

Return all unspent money, receipts and break down costs needs to go to the office.

EVOLVE

Ensure the completion of any additions or changes made to adult volunteers.

Monitoring and Reviewing

Monitoring and reviews will be carried out by the co-ordinator and the Headteacher. This will be done on the entry on the EVOLVE form forwarded to the EVC and approved by the Head teacher.

Date:

Approved by:

Review date: