



DINGLE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL OFF-SITE VISITS POLICY

The school aims to promote equality in all aspects of school life and with regard to all matters embraced by this policy will comply with the provisions of the **Equality Act 2010** and the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2002**.

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Reviewed by:	Governing Body
Signed:	 (Headteacher)
Signed:	 (Chair of Safeguarding Committee)
Date:	23 rd May 2024

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
 - 1.1. Legislative background
 - 1.2. Purpose of Educational Off-Site Visits
 - 1.3. Statement of Intent
2. Organisation
 - 2.1. Accountability
 - 2.2. Roles and Responsibilities
 - 2.3. The role of the Governing Board
 - 2.4. The role of the Headteacher
 - 2.5. The role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator
 - 2.6. The role of the Group Leader
 - 2.7. The role of Other Teachers and Accompanying Adults
3. Arrangements
 - 3.1. Monitoring and Authorisation
 - 3.2. Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination
 - 3.3. Equal Opportunities
 - 3.4. Transport
 - 3.5. Medical Needs and First Aid
 - 3.6. Child Protection
 - 3.7. Emergency Procedures

Appendix A: Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE 2022

Appendix B: Dingle Community Primary School Local Area Visits Policy

Appendix C: Risk Assessment proforma for individual pupils, with example

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Legislative background

School's practice will be in line with the legislation summarised in Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE 2022.

1.2. Purpose of Educational Off-Site Visits

At Dingle Community Primary School we believe that Educational Off-Site Visits:

- raise achievement by boosting self-esteem and motivation;
- develop key skills, social education and citizenship;
- promote education for sustainable development and health and fitness.

The experiences provided by Educational Off-Site Visits:

- build on pupils' strengths, interests and experiences and develop confidence to learn and work independently and collaboratively;
- give pupils the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership;
- develop their physical skills and encourage pupils to recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and keeping themselves and others safe;
- develop pupils integrity and autonomy;
- develop pupils' awareness and understanding of the environments in which they live;
- help pupils form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships;
- enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and cope with change and adversity.

1.3. Statement of Intent

The Governing Board accepts that it has a responsibility to take all reasonably practicable steps to secure the health and safety of pupils, staff and others participating in school-sponsored Educational Off-Site Visits. It is the aim of the Governing Board to ensure, through this policy, that the school complies with relevant stated legislation and guidance in respect of Educational Off-Site Visits.

2. ORGANISATION

2.1. Accountability

The key responsibility of the school in relation to Educational Off-Site Visits is to take all reasonable steps to ensure that pupils have a safe, appropriate and worthwhile experience. There is a line of accountability, which includes the Headteacher and Governing Board of the school and the L.A. The accountability systems should principally support, not encumber, the staff who are planning and conducting the activities. These systems must also recognise the need to provide an audit trail for those who are accountable for any stages of approving the visit. Visits organised and advertised in school are school visits and as such are governed by the conditions and procedures in this policy. When an external agency is being used to provide part, or all, of the organisation of the visit, a written contract must be held by the school with that agency. All finances must be paid through the school accounts so that the school retains financial control of the contract.

2.2. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board states in the school Health and Safety Policy that it believes that only the adoption of safe methods of work and good practice by every individual can ensure everyone's personal health and safety. The Governing Board will take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce hazards to a minimum, but all staff and pupils must appreciate that their own safety and that of others also depends on their individual conduct and vigilance.

The following agencies and individuals have key roles and responsibilities to ensure all visits comply with the required safety legislation:

- Employer (L.A.)
- Outdoor Education Adviser (OEA)

- Governing Board
- Headteacher
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- Group Leader
- Deputy Group Leader
- Teacher or assistant
- Parent or carer
- Pupil/young person

2.3. The Role of the Governing Board

To fulfil its responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils on Educational Off-Site Visits the Governing Board will:

- comply with the guidance listed at 1.1 of this policy;
- determine and keep under review the school's policy on Educational Off-Site Visits which will detail the scope and range of visits normally conducted by the school;
- ensure that the school's policy enables, whenever reasonable and appropriate, the inclusion of pupils with disabilities, special educational or medical needs;
- ensure that it is clear about its role in the event of an emergency.

2.4. The Role of the Headteacher

Responsibility within the school for the approval of visits remains with the Headteacher and governors, but, with the approval of the Governing Board, the Headteacher may delegate certain of these tasks to an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will normally be a senior member of staff.

The Headteacher must:

- be aware of relevant regulations and guidelines including health and safety responsibilities, this Educational Off-Site Visits Policy and guidance, the DfE guidance, other relevant school policies and related documents, ensuring that such documents are available and accessible to anyone involved in Educational Off-Site Visits;
- ensure that the educational objectives for visits are clearly defined and commensurate with the age, maturity and capability of the pupils;
- ensure that the objectives are inclusive, stated in the pre-visit documentation, and made known to all relevant parties, including the Governing Board, Headteacher, teachers and accompanying adults, parents/carers and pupils;
- ensure that the Governing Board has considered and supports the nature and objectives of planned educational visits and is provided with appropriate levels of information sufficiently in advance to enable governors to fulfil their responsibilities;
- be satisfied that all aspects of any visits, including the granting of approval, will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and guidance and the school's own policy and procedures;
- ensure that an assessment of the safety management systems of external providers has been undertaken prior to booking;
- ensure risk assessments are reviewed periodically and changes are made in the operating procedures and/or control measures where identified;
- ensure that visits are evaluated to inform the planning and operation of future visits;
- be satisfied of the competence of group leaders to lead, manage and control pupils in the proposed setting, giving consideration to experience, qualification, organisational skills, personal qualities, fitness, medical condition, knowledge of the group and environment, prior experience of leading or assisting in leading the activity;
- be satisfied that staff roles and responsibilities (including those of accompanying adults) are commensurate with their experience and competence to undertake them;
- ensure all staff are aware of their continuous pastoral care responsibilities (even when using a technical leader with their group) and are familiar with the school's child protection policy;
- be satisfied that the arrangements for supervision are appropriate, agreed and known by all concerned, ensuring that staff involved have a clear understanding of the different strategies required for direct supervision and when the circumstances are right, for indirect or more remote supervision;
- secure the allocation of sufficient resources to meet identified training needs for staff;

- record accidents and incidents where appropriate, and report them to the Governing Board, L.A., or HSE where required, ensuring that a clear reporting system for accidents and incidents is in place and that staff are made aware of the procedures;
- ensure that the school adopts a clear and effective system for recording risk assessments which is understood by those involved in visits;
- be aware of the contractual arrangements to be put in place with third party providers and the central role of the school in making external contracts, giving consideration to best value, financial management, choice of contractors, and contractual relationships;
- ensure that written contracts are made with the school and any school travel agent/tour operator on behalf of the pupils involved in the visit;
- ensure that all finances for the visit are controlled through the school's financial systems so that should any contract fail the school is able to withhold further payments.

2.5. The Role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

Although not a statutory requirement, the school will have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who may be the Headteacher or other member of school staff, appointed by, and to act on behalf of, the Headteacher. The general functions of the EVC will be as specified in the document 'Standards for LEAs in Overseeing Educational Visits, 2002'. This person:

- must have experience in leading and managing a range of off-site educational visits similar to those typically run by the school;
- must be able to support colleagues in the formulation of Risk Assessments and the development of Risk Management procedures;
- will be involved in the planning and management of off-site educational visits led by school staff;
- will support visit leaders, the Headteacher and school governors by ensuring that relevant legislation and guidance, the LA and school's policies and guidance are followed.

The EVC will:

- work with group leaders to ensure that the objectives of the off-site educational visit are achievable and meet the employer's and school's requirements;
- support the Headteacher and governors in their decision-making;
- be the principal contact with the LA over visits planned by the school;
- ensure that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and check staff qualifications and experience, including accompanying teachers and adults;
- ensure that consideration has been given to the group concerned and the location (group/site risk assessment);
- organise the induction and training of group leaders, teachers and other adults taking pupils on off-site educational visits;
- ensure that emergency procedures are in place for each visit and that group leaders and school contacts are conversant with procedures to be followed should an emergency occur;
- establish suitable record-keeping practices for use during off-site educational visits, e.g. medical matters, accidents and significant management decisions;
- ensure that the school has a code of conduct applied consistently to all Educational Off-Site Visits;
- monitor and review the school's programme of Educational Off-Site Visits, establishing a clear picture of current practice and reporting on successes and targets for improvement.

2.6. The Role of the Group Leader

A Group Leader must be appointed for each planned visit. Group leaders will be responsible for the safe planning and execution of visits and should:

- have the experience, training and qualifications to control and supervise the group, lead the team of accompanying teachers and other adults, including defining the roles and responsibilities of teachers, other adults and pupils;
- be conversant with good practice in planned activities including those they will not be instructing;
- prepare and brief the pupils, their parents and accompanying teachers and other adults;
- make a comprehensive risk assessment and present it to the EVC/Headteacher;
- have regard for the health and safety of the group (teachers, other adults and pupils) at all times;

- determine the level of first aid that may be required and to nominate a teacher or other adult to have that responsibility;
- assess the initial and on-going suitability of the group in relation to the planned activities;
- ensure that the visit operates in accordance with the school and LA policies and guidance, with EVOLVE being completed for all visits, including those which are within the 'Local Visit' category.

2.7. The Role of Other Teachers and Accompanying Adults

Teachers and other adults accompanying any visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. In particular:

- all must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and follow the instructions of the Group Leader;
- adults should be guided in their role by teachers and must not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment;
- only adults known to teachers should be given pastoral responsibilities;
- instructors or other staff working for contracted organisations can support teachers and adults in their pastoral duties but cannot assume a full pastoral role.

3. ARRANGEMENTS

This policy relates to all visits or journeys undertaken by pupils, under the supervision of the staff of the school, which take them outside the physical boundaries of the school. This does not include visits where a class are taken off site on foot for no more than the normal duration of the lesson. In these instances the teacher must inform the school office of the group they are taking out, the destination and the expected time of arrival back in school. Written consent from parents must be given.

This policy covers the entire period between departing from and returning to the school or into the care of the parents/carers, whichever happens first.

3.1. Monitoring and Authorisation

The EVC will monitor Educational Off-Site Visits, consider completed risk assessments and authorise the visit if, in their opinion, all the criteria are satisfactorily met. Any residential visits will be assessed by the L.A. panel.

3.2. Special Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination

It is unlawful for the Governing Board of a school to discriminate against a disabled pupil with regard to the education or associated services that are provided or offered by the school. There is also a duty not to treat disabled pupils less favourably than pupils who are not disabled without justification and the governing body will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled pupils are not substantially disadvantaged when it comes to the education or associated services provided or offered.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual pupil is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the group leader should discuss with the Headteacher the possibility of excluding the pupil from the activity. (n.b. if poor behaviour of a pupil is related to an identified named disability, e.g. autism, tourettes, dyslexia, the school will make a risk assessment of the visit for that particular pupil and if possible a reasonable adjustment will be made to enable the pupil to participate).

In certain circumstances the Governing Body may be justified in making an additional charge to parents of disabled pupils with regard to optional extras, for example, on health and safety grounds. The individual circumstances of each pupil will be considered and any charges made will be reasonable. In such circumstances, further advice may be sought from the LA.

3.3. Equal Opportunites

The school aims to promote equality in all aspects of school life and with regard to all Educational Off-Site Visits will comply with relevant legislation relating to equal opportunities, race relations, sex discrimination and age discrimination

3.4. Transport

Where transport is used for Educational Off-Site Visits it must be ensured by the group leader that:

- a seat is provided for each member of the party;
- where coaches or minibuses are used seat/lap belts are provided;
- the number of passengers carried on a coach or minibus, whether operated under a minibus permit or not, does not exceed the seating capacity indicated on the vehicle;
- the number of persons seated does not exceed the number of seat belts provided;
- where private cars are used the insurance of each driver covers such journeys.

3.5. Medical Needs and First Aid

The group leader must ensure that:

- medical details of any person participating in the activity who may require some form of medical treatment during the activity is recorded and retained by the group leader, including details of the type and dosage of medication which may be required during the duration of the activity;
- sufficient medication is taken for the visit and is in the custody of the group leader;
- there are adults in the party with a working knowledge of first aid and that sufficient first aid kits are carried.

3.6. Safeguarding

Group leaders must ensure that:

- the planning and organisation of all Educational Off-Site Visits, particularly those of a residential nature, includes precautions to protect pupils from abuses such as racial, sexual or physical harassment from either adults or other young people in the group;
- any voluntary adults who may be assisting are asked to make a declaration disclosing any cautions, bindovers and convictions or pending convictions of a criminal nature and a DBS check is made.

3.7. Emergency Procedures

In the event of a major emergency occurring during an Educational Visit, on receiving notification the school will act in accordance with its Emergency Incident Management Plan.

APPENDIX A: Please see 'Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council Guidance for Off-Site Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE 2022'

APPENDIX B:

Dingle Community Primary School Local Area Visits Policy

General

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

These visits/activities:

- must be recorded on EVOLVE via the 'Local Area Visit' module.
- do not require parental consent.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).

Boundaries

The boundaries of the Local Learning Area are shown on the attached map. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- *Dingle Woods and Buckpool Nature Reserve*
- *Crestwood Secondary School*
- *Wordsley Secondary School*
- *Kingswinford Secondary School*
- *Local shops in Bromley Lane and Lapwood Avenue*
- *Holy Trinity Church, Wordsley*
- *Area around the watertower*
- *Red House Glass Cone*

'No-go' areas within the Boundaries

- Any visits where children will be studying watercourses of any kind will need specific approval.

Operating Procedure for Local Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our Local Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

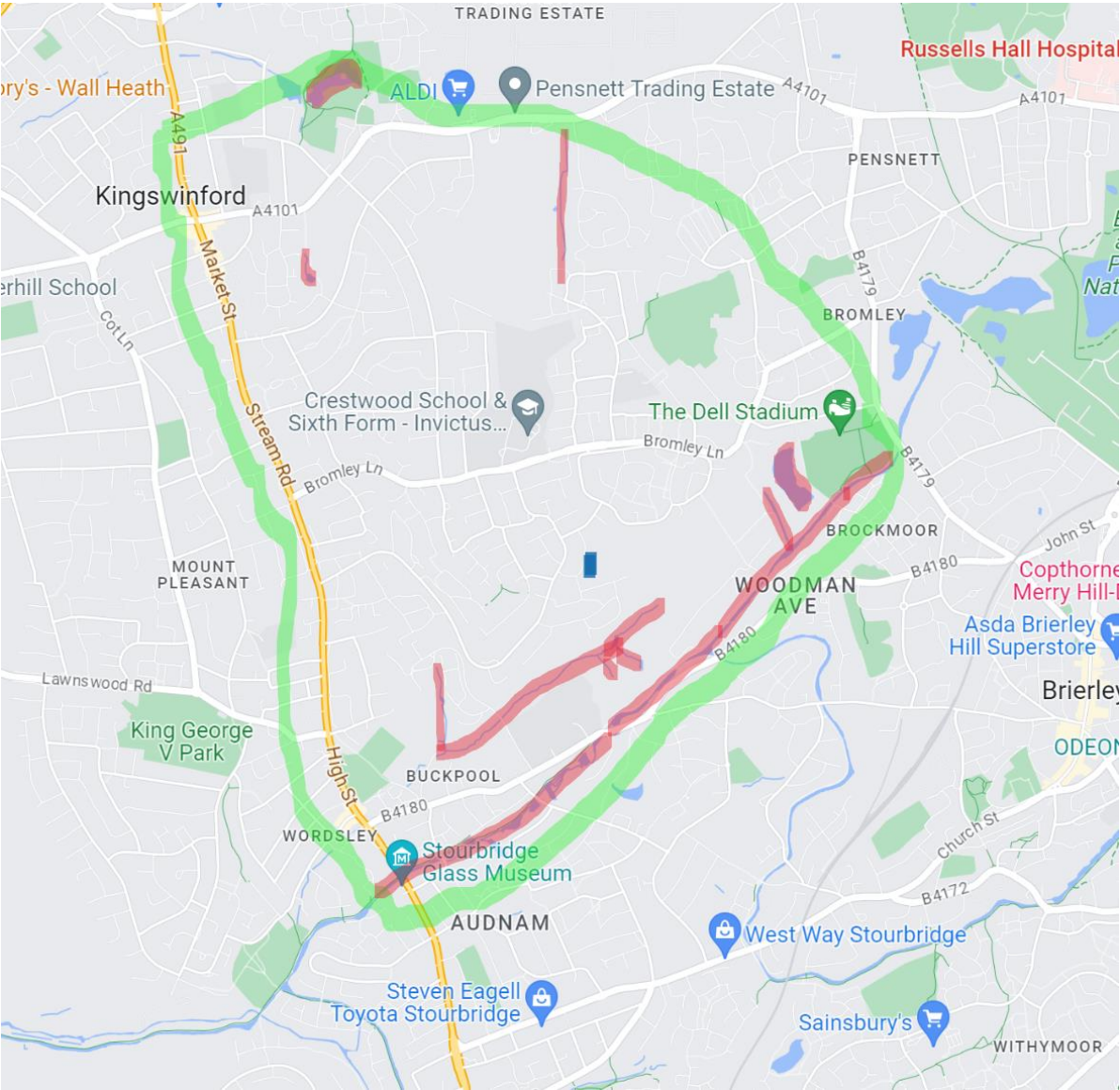
These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head or EVC give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults but adult : child ratios will be adjusted to the needs of the group of children, in consultation with the headteacher / EVC.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no-go' areas, and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the Local Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- The Group Lead must write individual Risk Assessments for individual pupils that may pose risk or have individual needs to be considered in maintaining the safety of the pupil, the staff and the group as a whole. The Inclusion Lead

will support with this. Any such risk assessments must be submitted with the EVOLVE at least 2 weeks prior to the visit, as is normal expectation.

- Staff will record the activity on EVOLVE (Local Area Visit module)
- A mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment and first aid kit is taken when needed (eg gloves). In the case of walking near water courses, a buoyancy aid will also be carried.
- When crossing roads, groups should use zebra or pelican crossings if these are available.

Designated area for local visits



Key

	School
	Area within which Local Area Visits policy applies
	Full risk assessment required in these areas if children are engaging in study of watercourses.

Procedures for Offsite Day Visits, Educational Visits and Residential

Before the trip

- Class teacher to complete the Visit Trip Request Form a term in advance to the trip. Residential trips require Visit Trip Request Form to be completed two terms before the trip. Visit Trip Request Form to be given to the Office.
- The Office is responsible for booking the trip and communicating any issues with the class teacher.
- The Office will contact class teachers when trip is booked to allow planning process to continue.
- Organisation of the content of the trip and pupil groupings is the responsibility of the class teacher. This must be shared with SLT and EVC 3 weeks before the trip, along with any staffing implications.
- Teachers may wish to ask parents to go on trips as volunteers- This must be discussed with a member of SLT before parents are asked. EVC is responsible for ensuring that there are enough experienced staff to meet the requirements of the visit.
- All risk assessment and paperwork to be on Evolve 2 weeks prior to the date of the trip. (6 weeks for residentials) This must include staffing for the trip. There must be at least 2 adults attending all visits.
- If the visit falls within the 'Local Visit' category, this option can be used when completing the required EVOLVE documentation.
- If the trip is at a new location, then a visit must take place beforehand in order to do a full risk assessment.
- If the trip is planned to return later than the normal school day and children normally have permission to walk home, permission slips must ensure that consent is given for the child to walk home after the trip.
- Once checked, the EVC needs to send the Evolve form to the Head Teacher to be signed off at least 1 week prior to the trip taking place.
- The class teacher must share and discuss the risk assessment with all adults attending the trip. This includes any parents/volunteers that are going. Parents/volunteers should be asked to come into school early in order to go through the full risk assessment and health and safety procedures.
- A specific folder for the trip will be prepared by the Office staff. This should include all the consent forms signed by parents, the school dinners that school are providing and any email/booking correspondence that may be needed. The EVC is responsible for checking this folder is complete. The class teacher is responsible for collecting the folder before the trip takes place.
- The class teacher must ensure that first aid kits and any specific medication (e.g – inhalers, epi pens) are ready.
- The class teacher must ensure that the school mobile phone is fully charged, prior to the visit so that they are able to use it for the trip. The phone and charger are kept in the office.

During the trip

- Any health and safety/safeguarding issues that occur whilst on the trip, must be reported back to SLT immediately via the visit mobile phone.
- The class teacher must find out about the evacuation procedures straight away and inform all other adults
- If there is a delay in the journey, the trip is over an hours travel away from school or the trip is a residential, the class teacher should contact SLT upon safe arrival.
- All staff must take responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all children.
- Parents and volunteers must not be left alone with children. All children need to be in full view of at least one staff member at all times.

Non-negotiable to go on risk assessment:

- Double head counts (visit leader + 1) must be done throughout the day especially when moving from one area to another.
- Seat belt check must be carried out before any coaches depart.
- Road safety procedures must be followed.
- Children to be told rules and expectations.
- All children must be supervised at ALL times throughout the trip.
- Personal phones are not to be used other than in an emergency where the class teacher is not available.

At the end of the trip

- If children arrive back within the school day time frame, they will be dismissed as normal. If they return to school outside of normal school hours, children are to be brought into the hall. Parents to then come into the hall in order to collect their children.
- If the trip arrives back after the school site has been locked and secured, children to remain seated on the coach and class teacher to dismiss one at a time from the coach door.
- If there is a delay during the journey back to school, the class teacher should contact the office to keep them informed.
- Procedures must be followed for any accidents or injuries. All injuries requiring First Aid of any form must be reported to the parents and a member of SLT.
- An evaluation must be submitted on Evolve within one week.

APPENDIX C: Please see 'Risk Assessment proforma for individual pupils, with example'