The New Walk School *Bespoke support. Brighter futures.*

Educational Visits Policy

The New Walk School policy framework

Policy	Educational Visits Policy	**Version**	V1
Issue date	08 May 2026	**Next review**	08 May 2027
Policy owner	Headteacher	**Approved by**	Directors of The New Walk School Ltd

1. About The New Walk School

The New Walk School is an independent specialist day school for pupils aged 7 to 19 who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, autism spectrum conditions, learning difficulties and communication difficulties. The school is located on New Walk in Leicester — a setting with a long-standing association with academic life — and is operated by The New Walk School Ltd, a Company Limited by Guarantee.

The majority of our pupils hold an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and many have experienced previous educational placements that did not meet their needs. Our offer combines a broad academic curriculum with an in-built therapeutic provision rooted in the PACE model — Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy — developed by Dr Dan Hughes. PACE is a relational approach designed to build trust, regulate distress and create the safety from which learning can take place. It informs how every adult in the school speaks to, listens to and works with our pupils.

2. The PACE therapeutic model in practice

Trips beyond the school are formative experiences for our pupils. PACE shapes how we plan, prepare and accompany pupils so that the unfamiliar feels manageable:

- Playfulness — staff use a light, warm tone to reduce shame and de-escalate distress, using humour appropriate to the pupil and the moment.
- Acceptance — pupils' feelings and inner experiences are accepted unconditionally, even where specific behaviours are not. Acceptance is communicated before any limit is set.
- Curiosity — staff seek to understand the meaning behind a pupil's behaviour rather than reacting to its surface, asking 'what is this telling me?'
- Empathy — staff name and stay with the pupil's emotional experience, communicating that the pupil is not alone with what they feel.

PACE is not a behaviour-management tool layered on top of practice; it is the relational foundation from which all other aspects of the school operate.

3. Statutory framework

This policy is in line with the DfE's Health and Safety on Educational Visits guidance, the DfE's Charging for School Activities guidance, the National Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off-Site Visits and Learning Outside the Classroom (OEAP), and KCSIE.

4. Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The Headteacher appoints a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator. The EVC oversees planning, risk management, training and approval of all visits. EVC training is refreshed every three years.

5. Categories of visit

- Local visits within walking distance of the school (e.g. New Walk, the Museum, the city centre).
- Wider day visits requiring transport.
- Adventurous activities.
- Residential visits and overnight stays.

Each category has its own approval pathway, set out in the school's visit procedures handbook.

6. Risk assessment

A visit-specific risk assessment is produced for every trip and approved by the EVC. It addresses: the venue and journey; the activity; staffing ratios; pupil-specific needs (medical, sensory, behaviour, communication); first aid; emergency contacts; and the procedure for serious incidents. Pupil-specific risk assessments and IHCPs travel with the group.

7. Staffing and ratios

Staffing ratios reflect the higher level of need in our pupil population, the nature of the activity, the age of the pupils, and the venue. As a working baseline, the school operates at 1:3 or higher for off-site visits, with a named first-aider in every group and at least one DSL or trained safeguarding lead on every visit.

8. Consent

Specific written parent/carer consent is sought for each visit beyond the routine local area; 'blanket' consent is sought annually for routine local visits within walking distance of the school. Consent forms include emergency medical authorisation.

9. Inclusion and reasonable adjustments

Pupils are not excluded from visits because of their needs. Where a pupil cannot safely access an activity in its standard form, the school adjusts the activity, the supervision, the venue or the pupil's programme during the trip. Where exclusion from a specific element is unavoidable, the pupil is offered a meaningful alternative.

10. Emergencies

Every visit has a named on-call senior leader at the school. Every member of staff on the visit holds the contact details. The procedure for serious incidents — including media handling, family contact and follow-up — is set out in the visit procedures handbook.

11. Approval

Local visits are approved by the EVC. Day visits requiring transport are approved by the EVC and Headteacher. Adventurous activities, residentials and overseas visits are additionally approved by the Directors at least six weeks in advance.

Monitoring and review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Headteacher in consultation with the senior leadership team and the Directors of The New Walk School Ltd. It will be reviewed earlier where there is a material change in legislation, statutory guidance or the operational needs of the school. The most recent version is held on the school's policy register and is made available to parents, carers and staff on request.

Linked policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside the school's wider policy suite, including: Safeguarding and Child Protection; SEND; Behaviour and Relationships; Anti-Bullying; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; Health and Safety; Curriculum; and Complaints.