



Thirsk School


& Sixth Form College

Educational Visits, Outdoor Learning and Adventurous Activities Policy



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Signed	 Emma Lambden Headteacher

North Yorkshire Outdoor Learning

Model School Policy November 2022

Policy for Educational Visits, Outdoor Learning and Adventurous Activities

Introduction

This policy sets out the establishment procedures within which all employees must operate.

Every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development, whatever their age, ability, or circumstances.

Learning beyond the classroom is the use of places other than the classroom for teaching and learning. It is about getting children and young people out and about, providing them with challenging, exciting, and different experiences to help them learn.

It is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and where we learn. It is not an end in itself, but a vehicle to develop the capacity to learn. Good quality learning beyond the classroom adds much value to classroom learning.

1. Scope and responsibilities

This policy applies to all educational visits, outdoor learning and adventurous activities carried out with young people. It does not apply to work-experience placements, work related learning or alternative provision.

The Headteacher will approve staff requests for educational visits, including having final authority to approve any educational visits. They will liaise with the governing body to authorise overseas trips.

The Headteacher has appointed Educational Visits Co-ordinator. They will have the training and experience to enable them to competently discharge their responsibilities as listed in The Employer Policy.

Administrative tasks will be carried out by: The Finance Office and the Sixth Form Administrator.

2. Establishment policy and procedures

The Thirsk School & Sixth Form College Policy for Educational Visits, Outdoor Learning and Adventurous Activities (November 2022) is the employer's policy. Specific local procedures will be in line with, but not duplicate this policy.

Where there is conflict with non-statutory guidance or advice from other sources the employer policy will take precedence with clarification sought from the Headteacher, and if required from North Yorkshire Educational Visits Advisory Service.

Consent

Routine acknowledgement: Whilst it is not a legal requirement to gain parental consent for curriculum activities, written acknowledgement will be gained on enrolment and annually via MCAS, for routine local visits and activities which are a part of our normal educational provision during the school day and information regarding the nature of the types of visits will be included in the appendix. We will always aim to fully inform parents by email and via their child of the nature of each visit, activity, or series of a similar nature, remind parents that they have acknowledged

this, and give opportunity to update information and emergency contact details. On occasions a curriculum opportunity may become available at short notice, and we will always aim to notify parents that their child will be off-site, but this may not be possible.

Non-routine consent: Written consent via ParentPay or MS Forms will be gained on enrolment and annually for those visits which are non-routine visits and activities and those visits which fall outside of normal hours. We will fully inform parents by email of the nature of each visit, activity, or series of a similar nature.

Specific consent: Written consent via ParentPay, email, verbal consent or MS Forms will be gained for every individual visit, activity or series of a similar nature which involve a higher level of risk including but not limited to longer journeys, residential visits, and adventurous activities. We will fully inform parents by email and parent information evening, where appropriate of the nature of each visit, activity, or series of a similar nature.

Medical information: We will use the medical information on record in our Student Management Information System, Bromcom, alongside any updated information which parents will be given the opportunity to provide for most visits and activities. Where visits or activities involve a higher level of risk it may be appropriate for separate medical information and consent forms to be completed.

Staff competence

Records will be kept of induction, training, relevant qualifications and competence using the 'My Details' section of Evolve. To ensure sustainability of important visits deputy leaders will be appointed in order that contingency plans can be put in place should a visit leader be indisposed.

EVC Training

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will attend appropriate training and revalidation as required by the employer.

Visit Leader Training

Visit leaders will be approved by the Headteacher and will have attended appropriate training as required by the employer.

3. Planning and approval procedures

Visit leaders should follow the employer policy, establishment policy, guidance, local procedures, and standard assessments of risk.

Risk management is a vital part of planning and assessing benefits and risk associated with visits and activities. Sensible risk management relates to identifying significant hazards and mitigating against risk through appropriate control measures. It is not a paperwork exercise but a dynamic process before and during a visit or activity in order that young people can be kept safe from harm. At Thirsk School & Sixth Form College we have identified a Local Learning Area which includes all the places that we visit and the activities that we undertake routinely. Details of our Local Learning

Area are contained within the appendix which includes generic risk assessment. Wherever the need arises additional risks and significant findings will be recorded using event specific risk assessment.

External providers: Wherever possible visit leaders will gain credible assurances of health & safety management systems and quality provision through a Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge. Alternatively, assurances will be gained through a Provider Statement as detailed in the employer policy

4. Visit Planning and Management System

Evolve is Thirsk School & Sixth Form College's web-based system used to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own account which is set up by the Educational Visits Coordinator.

The default option is a day visit within the United Kingdom. Visits can be further categorised as follows:

- On-site or local learning area
- Joint visit
- Overseas
- Residential
- Adventurous (provider led)
- Adventurous (self-led)

Visits will be recorded as detailed in the summary table below.

Approval of visits will be made as detailed below. Initial approval in principle will also be gained as required in the employer policy.

Governing Body:

The governing body has a strategic role to set the vision and direction of the school and has responsibility for its educational and financial performance. To enable this, it will hold the Headteacher to account by oversight of learning beyond the classroom opportunities to ensure that the educational experiences are of high quality, that best value is obtained, and financial regulations are adhered to. The Governing Body are asked to approve all overseas trips.

Adviser: Visits abroad, residential and all adventurous activities regardless of leadership or location.

Headteacher: All visits and activities.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator: Local learning area visits and local sports fixtures.

Visit planning approval summary table.

	Planning/Recording Process	Risk Management	Final Approval
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On-site/Local Learning Area/Local Area Visits	Recorded on Evolve	LLA risk management supplemented by specific documentation where necessary	EVC/Head
Day Visit outside Local Learning Area	Recorded on Evolve	School risk manages journey and non-provider led activities using LLA risk management supplemented by specific documentation where necessary	EVC/Head
Overseas	Recorded on Evolve	LLA risk management and supplemented by specific documentation necessary	Adviser/Governing Body
Residential	Recorded on Evolve	LLA risk management and supplemented by specific documentation necessary	Headteacher/Adviser
Adventure, provider led	Recorded on Evolve	Provider risk manages activities School risk manages journey and non-provider led activities using LLA risk management supplemented by specific documentation where necessary	Headteacher/Adviser
Adventure, self-led	Recorded on Evolve	Local Learning Policy/Specific Risk Management	Headteacher/Adviser

5. Risk assessment

We will carry out a full risk assessment at least 2 weeks before the start of all trips. This will be completed using the school's risk assessment template in the appendix and approved by EVC. Existing pre-approved templates for specific risk assessments are written by county. These are the modified for the specific trips taking place.

The risk assessment will include any specific medical issues and allergies (for staff and pupils), the role of additional support on the visit, specified activities to be carried out, as well as risks associated with transport to and from the destination.

Where practical, staff may make a preliminary visit to the trip destination as part of the planning and risk assessment process, but this is not mandatory.

Trip leads will raise any concerns or questions about potential risks and safety measures with the headteacher and, where appropriate, third-party vendors.

Every risk assessment will be approved by the headteacher or EVC, and a copy taken on the visit, one with a senior member of staff and one with the EVC.

These risk assessments will be amended to enable access for all our students wherever possible, this includes behaviour, medical and SEND.

5.1 Staff ratios and first aid

Risk assessments for each visit will ascertain the safe level of supervision required. On all educational visits, we will make sure:

- At least 1 male and 1 female supervising adult is present (for mixed pupil groups)
- At least 1 supervising adult able to administer first aid is present on all trips
- Appropriate first aid equipment will be taken on all trips, in accordance with the school's first aid and health and safety policies. These can be found in the site manager's office.
- All supervising adults will be made aware of any medical issues or allergies at the start of the trip
- Adults without a DBS check will not be left alone with pupils at any time
- The trip lead will take regular headcounts and/or rollcalls

5.2 Transport

Transportation for trips will be organised by the finance office. We will make sure pupils, staff and volunteers are transported safely and efficiently, with the required first aid provision.

Unless previously agreed with parents, transport for visits will leave from, and return to, the school site. Careful thought must be given to planning transport to support off-site activities and visits. Statistics demonstrate that it is more hazardous to travel to an activity than to engage in it and staff must follow any specialist guidance provided by your employer. Parents will be informed of the mode of transport via the initial trip letter sent home.

5.3 Use of external organisations

As part of the risk assessment process, we will check that any external organisations providing an activity have appropriate safety standards and liability insurance.

This includes checking that organisations hold the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Quality Badge. Where an organisation does not, we will check additional details as outlined in the DfE's guidance on [health and safety on educational visits](#) to make sure it's an appropriate organisation to use.

We will have a written agreement in place with each external organisation outlining what everyone is responsible for during the activity.

6. Monitoring of visits and procedures

Governors will monitor the implementation of this policy by acting as a critical friend in monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

The Educational Visits Coordinator will ensure that there is a system in place for appropriate monitoring of visits and activities.

7. Charges for Off-site Activities and Visits

Charges for educational off-site visits and adventurous activities, including charges for visits and transport, requests for voluntary contributions and remission of charges are made in line with DfE guidance. Reference should also be made to the school's charging and remissions policy.

8. Inclusion & SEND

We endorse the principles for young people of a presumption of entitlement to participate, accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification and integration through participation with peers.

We acknowledge that it is unlawful to treat a young person with a protected characteristic less favourably or fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that young people with protected characteristics are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

We also acknowledge that expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a young person) is within their competence and is reasonable. Reference should also be made to school's SEND policy.

9. Safeguarding

Safeguarding procedures should be considered as part of the planning process with additional consideration for residential visits. Visit Leadership Teams should:

- As part of planning, liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and other staff to identify any relevant safeguarding issues
- Have access during a visit to the DSLs (or trained deputy) either directly or through the Base Contact.

Any volunteers who accompany any visit or activity will be vetted and be directly supervised by a member of staff. If they are to have significant unsupervised access to young people, then an enhanced DBS disclosure will be obtained, and they will undergo induction and training in their role and responsibilities as detailed in employer and school policies and local procedures. Reference should also be made to the school's safeguarding policy.

10. Insurance Risk Protection Arrangement

Students participating in visits and activities are insured by the risk protection arrangement. Additionally, where the school uses a trip supplier, students are also covered by the supplier's insurance. Any differences to this will be notified to parents/carers as appropriate before any consent or payment is made.

11. Communication and consent

We will contact the parents and carers of pupils invited to take part in an educational visit well in advance of the proposed date of the trip. Communication will be via email and MS Forms, and information provided will include the date, travel times, destination, purpose of the visit, and the size of the group attending.

We will also communicate:

- Times and details of travel, including drop-off and pick-up times and location

- Pupil-to-staff ratios and staff qualifications, where relevant
- Clothing and equipment required, and whether this is provided by the school
- Expected behaviour and consequences of pupils' failure to meet these standards

Where required, parents/carers will be asked to provide written consent for educational visits by signing and dating a form to be returned to the school.

Because most visits during the school day will be part of the curriculum, we will not always need written consent. However, we will always inform parents/carers as above about any off-site visits and give an opportunity for them to withdraw their child.

Parents/carers will also be asked to provide current and relevant medical information and dietary requirements, as well as emergency contact numbers where they can be reached.

In the case of overseas trips, they will be asked to provide passport information and European Health Insurance Card or UK Global Health Insurance Card information, if available.

12. Trips involving students who have come off roll in Y11 and Y13.

It is normal for some trips and expeditions, such as World Challenge, to sit post-exams in the school timetable with a focus on Y11 & Y13 students.

Where the school is the "organiser" of a visit, then the Duty of Care sits with the organiser whether the participants are still on-roll or not. Contracts will be between the school & the trip provider, rather than families & provider.

Appendix

Fixtures

Consents for the following visits will be gained via MCAS the parent App for the school's Management Information System:

- Educational visits during the school day which are part of the normal curriculum
- Educational visits beyond the school day or which are not a part of the normal curriculum
- Educational visits during the school day which are part of the normal curriculum
- Educational visits beyond the school day or which are not a part of the normal curriculum
- Sports fixtures that are away from home and beyond the school day
- Medical information and contact details to be accessed by staff
- Medication required on local learning area and sports fixtures

Additional detail of the consent being requested and given is below.

Educational visits during the school day which are part of the normal curriculum

Schools are not required to obtain consent from parents for pupils to participate in off-site activities that take place during school hours, and which are a normal part of a child's education, such as local studies and visits to a museum or library, swimming lessons etc. While parents do not have the option to withdraw their child from the school curriculum, it remains good practice to inform parents that a visit or activity is to take place.

This school will inform you of any proposed educational visit of this sort by emailing home.

Educational visits beyond the school day or which are not a part of the normal curriculum

Educational visits beyond the school day or which are not part of the normal curriculum require consent. This consent for educational visits is given on enrolment for those visits which are not further afield, residential or include adventurous activities.

This school will inform you of any proposed educational visit of this sort by emailing home a letter, consent form and detailed information about the proposed visit. Students will only be able to go on these visits if they get specific consent from home.

For visits which are further afield, residential or include adventurous activities the school will request individual consent and where appropriate further medical information.

Educational visits during the school day which are part of the normal curriculum

I understand that I am not required to give consent for local educational visits during the school day which are part of the normal curriculum, but that I will be fully informed by the means described above.

Educational visits beyond the school day or which are not a part of the normal curriculum

I give consent for my child to take part in local educational visits beyond the school day or which are not part of the normal curriculum. I understand that I will be fully informed by the means described above. Further afield, residential or adventurous visits will require separate consent.

Sports fixtures that are away from home and beyond the school day

- I give consent for my child to participate in an away sports fixture at a local school. I understand I will be informed by the method described above of both the location and timings of this fixture.
- Any fixture which is much further afield, requires an overnight stay or has additional risks will have specific consent and is therefore not part of this consent.

Locations included are

- Stokesley
- Richmond
- SFX
- Northallerton
- Bedale
- St John Fisher
- St Aidans
- Easingwold
- Malton
- Ryedale
- Risedale
- Queen Ethelburga's
- Northallerton Leisure Centre
- Wensleydale
- York College
- Queen Mary's
- Middlesborough Sports Village
- Thirsk Rugby Club

Medical information and contact details

I understand that it is my responsibility to provide timely updated medical and contact details to the school.

Medication

I understand that the Visit Leader may give the participant prescribed or non-prescribed medication for which I have given separate written consent and that I will be informed.

Thirsk School and Sixth Form – Local Area Visit proposal.

Local Learning Area - Boundaries

The boundaries of the Thirsk School and Sixth Form College local learning area are defined on the map attached. This includes the frequently used areas in and around Thirsk including:-

- Thirsk Marketplace
- Thirsk Cinema
- Thirsk Hall and sculpture park
- Thirsk Library
- Residential care homes
- Thirsk Station
- “Tintac” walk from Sowerby to the station.
- Thirsk racecourse and environs
- Thirsk and Sowerby churches
- Thirsk Pool and Leisure Centre
- Walks along Cod Beck (not including any activity working in or around the beck)
- Thirsk Gateway athletics track
- Local Primary schools including Sowerby, Gateway academy, Thirsk and All Saints

The area is limited as the map suggests by:

South – 30mph sign near Visar garage and 30mph sign at Worlds End

West – Thirsk Station

North – 30mph sign on Newsham Road and 30mph sign in Norby and on South Kilvington Road

East – 30 mph sign on A170 near Hambleton Estate

We use our Local Learning Area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and visit leaders are allowed to operate in this area by inputting visits on EVOLVE+ using the Local Learning Area option, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure.

All trips within the local learning area will be added to evolve using the reduced question entry. All activities will be covered by the risk assessment below. In addition to this, any particular issues that are significant in terms of SEN, behaviour or medical will have an additional risk assessment done for those individuals. Anything that requires additional risk assessment will be entered as an additional activity on evolve.

Operating Procedure for visits to the Local Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:

- 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 environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
- The Cod Beck as a river hazard.

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head, or EVC must 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 and they must have group leader training in line with NYCC regulations.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Local Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school with a consent letter emailed to all parents at the start of the academic year. This will also be part of the pack of information that new starters get.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults with any group however, due to the closeness of the trip and dependent on the group, one member of staff may suffice. This will be agreed with the EVC and there will be an emergency member of staff on standby if a group leaves in this way.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils always have the procedure for crossing a road outlined to them, with clear points indicated where appropriate. For older students, they may get time independently to cross a road within the Thirsk area.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group and by default this is a return to school. Should students be carrying out fieldwork in the LLA, there may be a meeting point agreed in town.
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school. This is also part of the initial letter that is communicated to parents at the start of the academic year and will be part of new starter packs of information.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available. A first aid kit will always be taken.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return using the established Thirsk School trip form.
- A school mobile or staff mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number as indicated on the established Thirsk School proposal form.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles). Clear guidance on the activity will be given.
- Student behaviour is governed by the behaviour policy and additional staff, or particular staff should be taken if there are concerns.
- Communication will always be available by mobile phone from trip leader to school and to a member of the senior staff

In addition:

- Students crossing Topcliffe Road, which is increasingly fast and busy, will use one of the three established crossing points.
- For crossing points in town that are not "official" but are used frequently, like the one near Bianco's, students are reminded to take extra caution.
- Students will be warned to take care around the marketplace with the "random" movement of cars that take place there.
- Walks along the bank of Cod beck have close supervision and do not have permission to participate in any survey or activity on the banks or in the beck itself
- Crossing Gravel Hole Lane, where there are often parked cars will be monitored

Sports Fixtures as part of the LLA

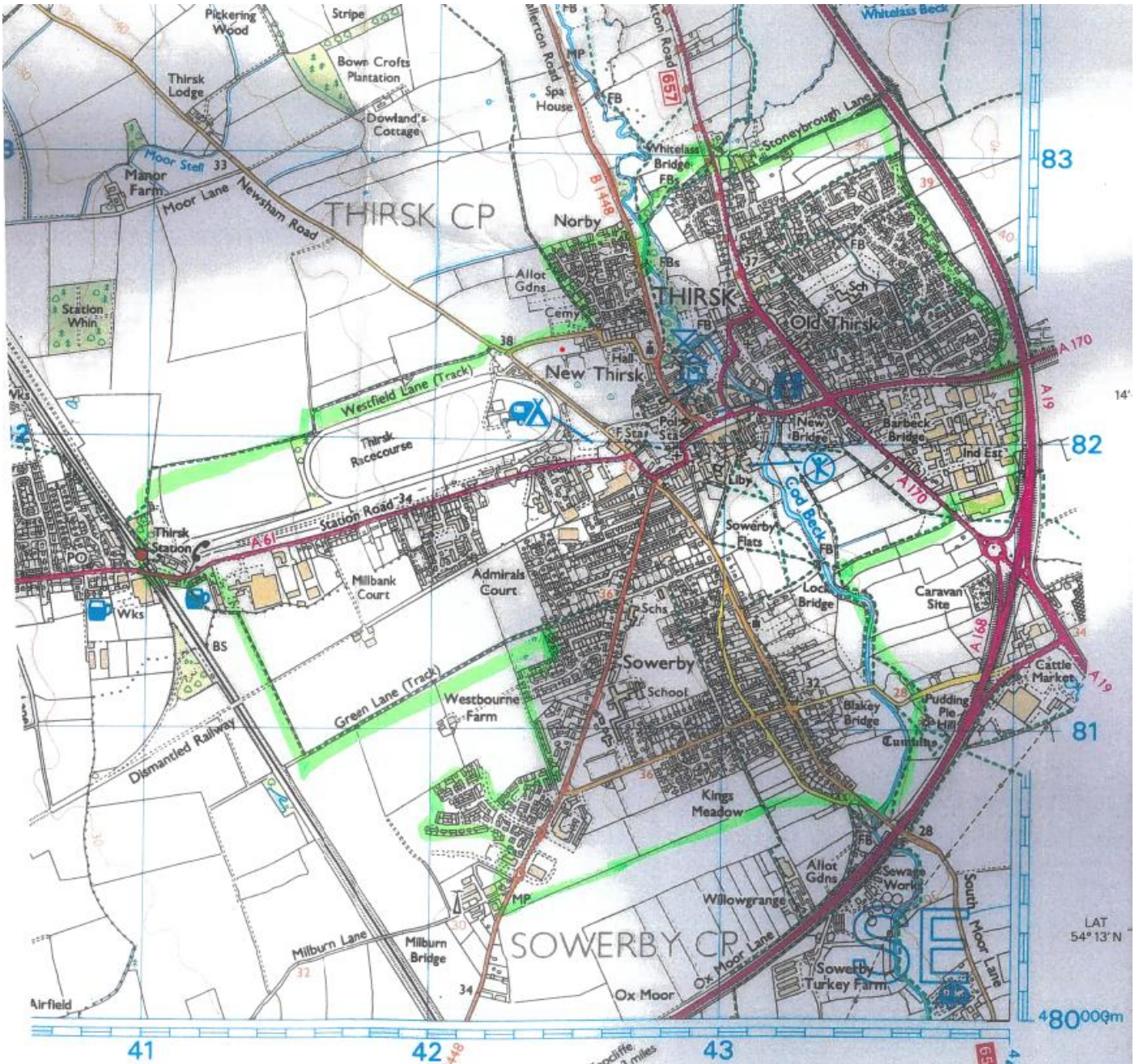
The local learning area also includes local schools where we frequently have sports fixtures and as such allows these trips to go beyond the school day. The local schools, which staff know well include:

- Stokesley
- Richmond
- SFX
- Northallerton
- Bedale
- St John Fisher
- St Aidans
- Easingwold
- Malton
- Ryedale
- Risedale
- Queen Ethelburga's
- Northallerton Leisure Centre
- Wensleydale
- York College
- Queen Mary's
- Middlesborough Sports Village
- Thirsk Rugby Club

Operating Procedure for visits to the Local Learning Area – Sports Fixtures at local schools

- The operating procedure is exactly the same as above with the additional points
- Staff on PE fixtures will instruct students to ring home to inform parents of altered arrival times – use of staff phones should students not have their mobile.
- Staff have first aid kit, are first aid trained and have student contact information available on Bromcom on their phones.
- All students who participate have been checked in terms of medical conditions so the PE member of staff is aware of potential problems.
- Staff may travel to a fixture with their team alone if there is another adult driving the vehicle. At the venue, PE staff of the other school provide the additional adult.
- PE staff taking a trip will be experienced. For new members of staff to the school, first fixtures should not be on their own until competency verified by the curriculum leader.
- The Head or EVC does not need to give consent to an away fixture in normal circumstances. Should there be unusual circumstances (issues with a particular school, significant distance, questionable weather) the trip will need to be checked prior to departure. Curriculum leader of PE has a responsibility to manage this.
- Parents will know the destination of the fixture and the likely timing of the day. Reception will have a copy of this information.

- Parents will have given consent on the initial letter that went home at the start of the year. This will have a specific sports fixture section on it.
- Role of admin to support the PE department in ensuring parents are aware of any given fixture and for inputting information onto Bromcom.



Event Specific Risk Assessment and Management Record

School Thirsk Secondary	Location/Purpose		Date(s)
Group Leader	Other Staff	No. Pupils	Year Group(s)

Identifying significant hazards - assessing the risk	Control measures - suitably managing the risk	Who needs to know
Group		
Transport		
Site and its environment		
Activity Arrangements		

Alternative Plans (Plan B/Plan C)

In event of poor weather the expedition will be cancelled. In the event of a closed campsite etc - minibus will be used to transport students to a more suitable site.

Ongoing risk assessment - the most essential element - NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1. Apply the control measures
adapt, revise as required** **2. Monitor how effective they are** **3. Change,**

Emergency contacts and procedures

Risk
Assessment
Completed:

Date.....

Group Leader.....

Review comments

Reviewed by:

Date.....

Group Leader.....