



# **William Torbitt Primary School**

## **Educational Visits Policy**

*January 2017*

*(Review January 2020, or before if necessary)*

## Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes William Torbitt Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. ie. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

## Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, William Torbitt Primary School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**' (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
2. Adopts National Guidance [www.oeapng.info](http://www.oeapng.info) (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with this school policy, Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

## Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:

- 1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day.**  
These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
- 2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.**  
These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
- 3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**  
These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit to the LA for approval.

## Roles and responsibilities

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is Ian Jeffery, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

**The Head Teacher** has responsibility for authorising all visits and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. They have an understanding of how outdoor learning, off-site activities and visits support a wide range of outcomes for children and young people. Their role is to monitor policies and procedures, promote inclusion and ensure that an appropriate EVC is in role. Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE to assist them in these tasks.

**The Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

## Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

## **Emergency procedures**

**A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.**

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

## **Educational Visits Checklist**

William Torbitt Primary School Educational Visits Checklist (See Appendix 4) forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

## **Parental Consent**

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time, however parents will be informed of the nature and purpose of the trip.

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, etc. Parents give their consent through a paper consent form.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via EVOLVE, letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents give their consent via a paper consent form.

Where a consent form is not present on the date of a visit or activity the school office may seek verbal consent for a pupil from parents/carers by phone. Where it is given the following information will be recorded

- Which member to staff obtained the consent
- Who gave the consent
- The date and time at which consent was given.

## **Inclusion**

William Torbitt Primary School is governed by The Equality Act 2010. As such we do not discriminate against, harass or victimise pupils or young people because of one of the protected characteristics (disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) in the way that we provide (or not) a benefit, facility or service.

Activities and visits should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. When a visit or activity is being planned, all reasonably practicable measures will be taken to include all young people. Every reasonable effort will be made to find venues and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable all pupils to participate fully and be actively involved. However, where it is not possible to balance the best outcomes for all pupils with the particular needs of individuals, the impact of this will be given due consideration and suitable alternative provision will be sought.

William Torbitt Primary School may choose to exclude a young person from a visit or activity where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety and welfare of either themselves, other members of the group, or the leaders. If this decision is made it will be communicated to parents / carers at the earliest possible opportunity and consideration given to alternative ways of achieving the same learning outcomes.

## **Charging / funding for visits**

William Torbitt Primary School does not charge parents / carers for educational visits which take place during the school day or form part of the school's curriculum, or for the transport to said visits.

However where a trip or activity does incur a cost to the school a financial donation may be sought. In these cases parent's / carers will be informed of the nature of the proposed activity or visit, the likely value in educational terms and the financial contribution per student which would be required if the activity were to take place. The information will emphasise that there is no obligation to contribute and that no student will be excluded because parents are unwilling or unable to contribute. It will also be made equally clear whether the activity or visit is likely to be cancelled if there are insufficient contributions.

Where an activity falls outside of school time and does not form part of the school's curriculum a decision regarding charging will be made on a case by case basis, however any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the activity or visit, divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

## **Transport**

### **Public Transport**

'Transport for London' offer free travel for establishment parties on London buses, Underground, Tramlink, and Docklands Light Railway, to cultural destinations. At William Torbitt public transport will be used wherever possible for pupils in Key Stage 2.

When travelling on public transport an adult / pupil ratio of 1:6 will be maintained and pupils will be given clear guidance on how to stay safe. This will include...

- Getting on via the same doors as their group leaders.
- What to do if they are left on-board when the group disembarks (get off at the next stop and wait)
- What to do if they are left behind when the group embarks (wait where they are)

Staff and volunteers will also be reminded to carry out regular counts of the pupils in their groups and the party will not set off on a new stage of the journey until all numbers have been checked and confirmed.

### **Coach**

If using Coaches for transport a reputable company will be used where the drivers are vetted. In most cases the school will seek to use Redbridge Transport Services

Suitable companies include (but are not limited to)

- Redbridge Transport
- Swallow Coaches
- Britannia Coaches

### **Taxis**

If using Taxis for transport a reputable company will be used where the drivers are vetted. Pupils will always be escorted by a member of school staff when travelling by taxi.

Suitable companies include (but are not limited to)

- Chigwell Cars

### **Use of staff cars to transport pupils**

If using staff cars to transport pupils staff will have completed and handed in a 'Private Car Form' (available via Evolve) which confirms that they hold a current valid driving licence and that their vehicle is legal and roadworthy in all respects. Seatbelts will be worn at all times when travelling in cars. Staff will never travel 1:1 with a pupil in a car.

### **Insurance**

In addition to the standard public liability cover provided by the Borough, the Council has taken out annual 'blanket' personal accident cover / travel insurance for all school trips/visits at home or abroad for all schools who participate in the Borough's annual premium charge. Request of details for participation is sent to all schools in approx March/April each year in preparation of the renewal which takes place 1st July. Full details of the cover and scheme are sent directly to establishments each year following renewal in July. This policy also requires specific paperwork to be completed and submitted for any residential trips.

## **Other topics**

### **Swimming Lessons**

As part of the Year 5 curriculum pupils at William Torbitt Primary School will be taught to swim. These lessons will take place at a Council pool and will be led and overseen by qualified swimming instructors. Transport to and from the pool will be via coach, and classes will be overseen by two members of staff, usually one male and one female. Pupils behaviour in the changing room will be monitored but not directly supervised unless a staff member needs to intervene on the grounds of safety or behaviour.

### **Sailing**

As part of the Year 6 curriculum pupils at William Torbitt Primary School will be offered the opportunity to take part in sailing lessons. These lessons will take place at a Council facility and will be led and overseen by qualified sailing instructors. Because sailing is classified as an 'Adventurous Activity' all risk assessments and procedures will be checked and approved by the Local Authority. Transport to and from the sailing centre will be via foot and groups will be overseen by two members of staff.

### **Dismissal of pupils after evening activities**

Where a visit or activity finishes outside of the school's usual opening hours, and the school has arranged or provided transport back to the premises, pupils will be dismissed by staff into the care of their parents.

## Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

### General

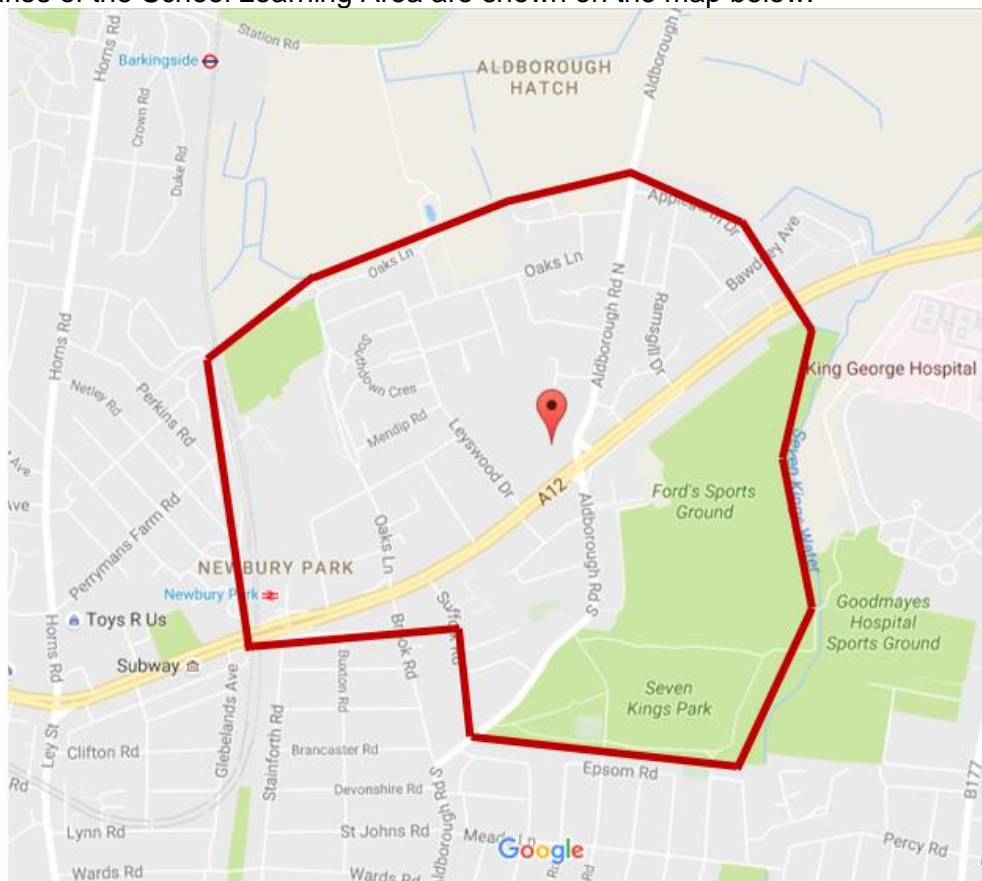
Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- Do not require parental consent, although notice will usually be given to parents / carers (either electronically or by letter)
- Will still have a risk assessment created, submitted and approved via EVOLVE, following the standard practice for all non-residential educational visits conducted by WTPS.

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are shown on the map below.



This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- *St Peters Church*
- *Oaks Park High School*
- *Seven Kings Park*
- *The School Grounds and Boundary*

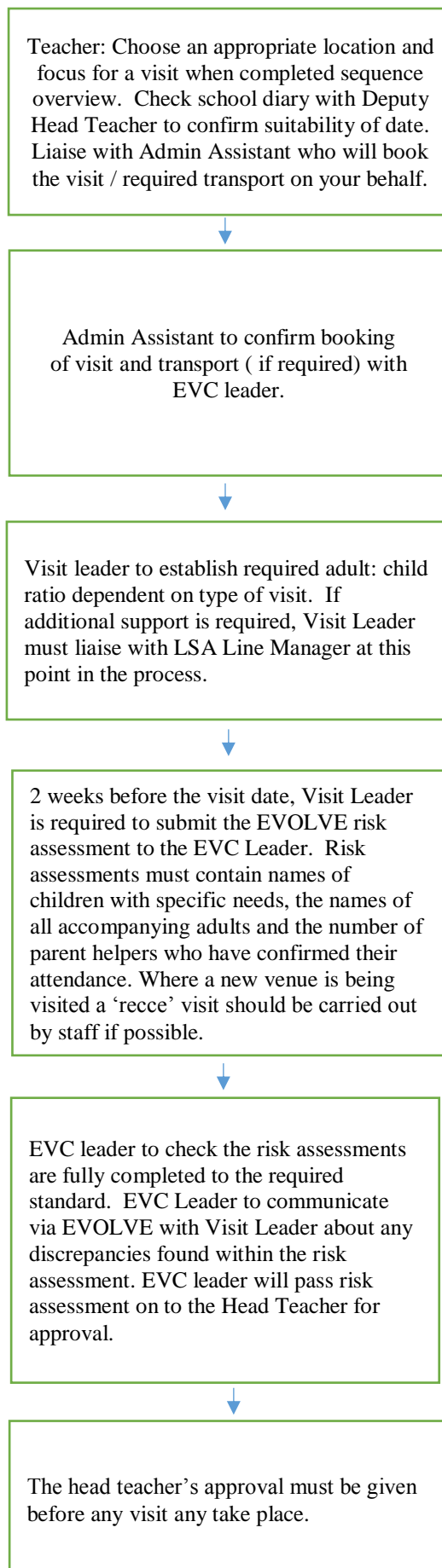


## **Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure**

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry a LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources).
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

## Appendix 3 – Planning an Educational Visit



## Appendix 4 - William Torbitt Educational Visits Checklist

The questions below form part of the risk management process for educational visits. Any visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. This checklist can be used as a tool or aide-memoire to assist the EVC/visit leader in the planning process, although alternative approaches to considering the relevant issues are equally as valid.

### **In advance of the visit:**

1. Have the intended outcomes of the visit been clearly identified? (see Section 4)  yes
2. Is the visit appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the group?  yes
3. Has there been suitable progression/preparation for participants prior to the visit?  yes
4. Does the visit comply with any guidelines specific to your Establishment?  yes
5. Does the visit comply with any specific LA guidelines? (see relevant sections)  yes
6. If a member of staff is going to lead an adventurous activity, have they been 'approved' by the LA? (see Section 28)  yes  n/a
7. If using an external provider or tour operator, does the provider hold an LOtC Quality Badge (see [www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk](http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk)) or have they satisfactorily completed and returned a 'Provider Form'? (see Section 29)  yes  n/a
8. Are transport arrangements suitable and satisfactory? (see Section 14)  yes  n/a
9. If residential, have appropriate measure been taken to ensure the suitability of accommodation? (see Section 17)  yes  n/a
10. If the visit is overseas, have appropriate additional measures been taken to ensure the suitability of activity and safety of participants? (see Section 18)  yes  n/a
11. Has a pre-visit taken place? (normal procedure for most visits within the UK).  
If not, have appropriate additional checks been made?  yes
12. Do the adults in the party have the appropriate skills for the visit? (Check this carefully and arrange suitable training and/or briefing to clarify your expectations).  yes
13. Have any adult helpers (non LA employees) been approved by the Head of Establishment as to their suitability?  yes  n/a
14. Is the level of staffing sufficient for there to be an appropriate level of supervision at all times?  yes
15. Does the Visit Leader possess the necessary competence to lead the visit, and is he/she comfortable with their role?  yes
16. Are all support staff aware of and comfortable with their roles?  yes
17. Are all helpers aware of and comfortable with their roles?  yes
18. If appropriate, have Event Specific Notes (ESN) been made and will these be shared with all relevant parties? (see Section 7 and ESN Form)  yes
19. Is insurance cover adequate? (see Section 13)  yes
20. Does at least one member of staff know the participants that are being taken away, including any behavioural traits?  yes

21. Have participants been advised in advance about expectations for their behaviour?  yes
22. If appropriate, are participants aware of any 'rules', and have sanctions to curb unacceptable behaviour been identified and agreed with participants and staff?  yes
23. Are participants aware of the nature and purpose of the visit?  yes
24. Are parents fully aware of the nature (including contingency plans), and purpose of the visit, and has consent been obtained? (see Section 9)  yes
25. Have all relevant details been issued? (eg. itinerary, kit lists, etc?)  yes  n/a
26. Are staff aware of any medical needs and/or other relevant details of participants?  yes
27. Has parental consent been gained for staff to administer specific drugs/injections, and if necessary have named staff received appropriate training?  yes  n/a
28. Are staff aware of any relevant medical conditions of other staff/helpers within the group?  yes  n/a
29. Does at least one responsible adult have a 'good working knowledge' of First Aid appropriate to the environment? (see Section 12)  yes
30. Is a first aid kit (appropriate to the visit) available? (see Section 12)  yes
31. Is there flexibility within the programme? Are there contingency plans that would be suitable in the event of changed or changing conditions, staff illness, etc. eg. 'Plan B', and have these plans been risk assessed and parental consent been obtained?  yes
32. For journeys taking place outside the establishment's 'normal' hours, will an Emergency Card (Visit Leader) be with the leader, and an Emergency Card (Home Contacts) be with the designated home contacts?  yes  n/a
33. Are full details of the visit at the LA establishment, or recorded on EVOLVE, and if appropriate with the establishment's Emergency Contact(s)?  yes
34. Are staff aware of the appropriate action to be taken in the event of accident, incident or emergency? (see Section 27)  yes
35. Is a weather forecast and/or other local information necessary, and are staff able to access this information and act upon it appropriately if necessary? (see Section 19)  yes  n/a
36. If undertaking water-margin activities, has a copy of 'Group Safety at Water-Margins' been made available to all supervising staff in advance of the visit? (see Section 16)  yes  n/a
37. A mobile phone is recommended for all visits. Are you aware of the reception in the area you are visiting?  yes  n/a
38. Will the group need waterproof clothing, boots or other equipment? If so, are procedures in place for checking the suitability of equipment?  yes  n/a
39. Does any specialist equipment conform to the standards recommended by responsible agencies?  yes  n/a
40. Have all financial matters been dealt with appropriately?  yes
41. Has the visit been approved by the Head of Establishment and EVC, and in line with Governing Body policy (where appropriate)? (see Section 3)  yes
42. If residential, overseas or involving adventurous activities, has the visit been approved by the LA ? (see Section 3)  yes  n/a

**During the visit**

43. Do all staff have a list of participants/groups? + emergency contact details and an Emergency Card (Visit Leader) if out of the establishment's normal hours?  yes
44. Does the establishment office have a list of the names of all participants, including adults? and if out of hours, does the home contact have these details and an Emergency Card (Home Contact)?  yes
45. Do staff have sufficient funds to allow for any contingencies?  yes  n/a
46. Do staff have any relevant literature, work sheets, clipboards, etc?  yes  n/a
47. Do staff have other items, eg. first aid kit, + sick bags, litter sack, etc., if needed?  yes
48. Are participant numbers being checked at appropriate times?  yes
49. Has the group been warned of potential hazards in advance? If necessary, have specific arrangements been made to supervise these areas particularly carefully?  yes  n/a
50. Are participants aware of the procedure in areas where there is traffic? (eg. if walking, is it pairs, crocodile, groups? - may participants run? - are participants aware of the procedure at road crossings? etc.)  yes  n/a
51. Has a clear recall system been arranged if the group is working away from you? Do participants understand this and will they be able to respond effectively?  yes  n/a
52. If a rendezvous for the group has been arranged after a period of time, does each participant and member of staff know exactly where and when to meet?  yes  n/a
53. Do participants know what action they should take if they become separated from the group?  yes
- Is on-going risk assessment being conducted, and if necessary the programme adapted to suit changed or changing circumstances (Plan B)?  yes
54. **At the end of the visit**
55. Are appropriate arrangements in force for the dismissal of participants?  yes
56. Has the Visit Leader reported back to the Educational Visits Coordinator?  yes  n/a
57. Has the group been debriefed and any relevant follow-up work completed?  yes  n/a
58. Have all loose ends been tied up, eg. paperwork, finance, thank you letters, etc?  yes
56. Has the visit been evaluated, and if appropriate have notes been made of points to be considered for future visits?  yes
57. Have all staff and helpers involved in the visit been thanked for their input?  yes