

Educational Visits Policy

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance, promote a life-long interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment. Educational visits are to be encouraged.

The school recognizes its duty of care and statutory responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of pupils, staff, volunteers, providers and members of the public in connection with educational visits for which it is accountable.

Objectives:

- To ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from educational visits
- To ensure that all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of all pupils taking part
- To enable the school to identify appropriate functions, responsibilities, training, support and monitoring for governors, staff, volunteer assistants, pupils and providers involved in educational visits
- To ensure that whenever appropriate, further advice is sought from the Local Authority and from other technically competent sources.

Strategies for implementation 1. Staff

- All visits will have a clear, recorded educational purpose and will be planned sufficiently well in advance in accordance with good practice and Hampshire County Council Off-site Activities Manual.
- The Governing Body will include in its role the support of school policy and procedures for educational visits, including the reporting of visits.
- The Head Teacher will be responsible for the approval of all visits, or may delegate this responsibility to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- A named and trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will be appointed to support the Governing Body and Head Teacher. In the absence of a suitably trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator, the Head Teacher automatically assumes this role.
- There will be a named and approved Group Leader (and where appropriate, deputy) on all educational visits. This Group Leader will be specifically competent for the role as detailed in the off-site Activities Manual. If in any doubt,

confirmation will be sought From Hampshire County Council Outdoor Education Service.

- Working with the EVC as necessary, the Group Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organization of the visit. The Group Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment.
- The Group Leader will ensure when purchasing goods and services that appropriate checks are made and that insurance and financial procedures have been followed.
- **Details of any residential visits at home or abroad, or day visits involving activities of a hazardous nature will be submitted to the Local Authority for endorsement at least 6 weeks before the date of departure.**
- Staff will complete trip application forms using the EVOLVE online system.
- Staff will use standard documents prepared by the EC, amending where relevant. These documents are saved on the school network and contained within the EVOLVE website. All relevant staff have a log-on account to access this information.

2. Parents / Carers

- Informed parental consent is required for all educational visits by young people up to the age of eighteen years, unless a specific recorded decision to the contrary has been made by the Educational Visits coordinator.
- The school will provide parents and carers with information about policy and procedures relating to the safe management of educational visits.
- Parents and carers will be given sufficient written and supplementary information about educational visits to enable them to make informed decisions and give written consent together with medical and emergency contact details.
- Whenever appropriate for high risk, residential and foreign visits, a briefing meeting with parents / guardians will be arranged.
- Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents / guardians.
- The information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.
- Parents will be informed about the school's policy in relation to refunds for extracurricular trips.

3. Students

- Wherever possible, pupils should be involved with the planning of an educational visit, establishing codes of conduct, assessing and managing risk and evaluating their own learning, development, attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils should be adequately briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all educational visits. Ongoing briefings are an important element of learning and safety.

Implications for Whole School Development

Although the policy focuses on the management of health, safety and welfare, educational visits are an integral part of the strategies for learning and teaching and for the curriculum. The policy should therefore be linked to complementary policies concerned with such issues as equality of opportunities, special educational needs, social inclusion and staff development.

Transport

A variety of transport is used following Council guidance. Transport used may include:

- parents' cars (parents transporting other parents' children are asked to ensure they have adequate insurance and parental consent)
- buses (local, non-motorway travel)
- coaches (through recognised suppliers)
- trains (where appropriate or part of the learning in the venture)
- minibus (for small group transport, eg PE and sports teams)

Supervision

Supervision strategies are taken from *Off-site activities and Educational Visits* and include agreements on ratios, which are never exceeded and frequently improved. Strategies include:

- Direct – children are closely supervised by adults and staff in small groups
- Indirect – for instance during free time on residential. Children will be given strict parameters and will know where an adult will be should they need one.

The strategies to be used are dependent on typical risk factors of the group or individuals concerned, the site or location, the leaders present (including ratios) and other factors such as transport or weather etc. These are agreed as part of the planning process and can be adapted to changing circumstances, for example 'Plan B' where clear alternatives are planned when it is necessary or prudent to do so.

Inclusion

This is an inclusive school and we believe that all children and young people have the right to participate in agreed opportunities or statutory activities, or have suitable alternatives provided for them, whenever this is possible.

It is important that all children and young people participate alongside their peers whenever possible.

Incidents and Emergencies

Guidance from the Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service is used to prepare leader and base-contact checklists and contact details. The incident management checklist is also used by visit leaders.

The Children's Services Incident and Emergency 'Establishment Plan' will be used as the basis for all incident and emergency response.

Any concerns or 'near-misses' are discussed to consider changing strategies and reported to the Outdoor Education, PE and Sport Service where necessary or if the information is useful.

Review and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed every two years and its success evaluated annually through: •

- Percentage of pupils who accessed at least one educational/extra-curricular visit
- Percentage of FSM pupils who accessed at least one educational/extra-curricular visit
- Number and type (curriculum or extra-curricular) of visits taken