



West Byfleet Junior School

Educational Visits Policy

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 West Byfleet Junior 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 practising 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, West Byfleet:

Policy: Educational Visits Policy
Nominated Staff Lead: Headteacher
Nominated Governor Lead/Committee: C and L

Status: Non Statutory
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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 (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 point 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) 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, with support from administration staff.

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 consult National Guidance www.oeapng.info for support.* Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

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.

Supervising teachers and other adults – to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment

Pupils – to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment

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External provider or tour operator must complete the detailed Form EV4 at the time of the provisional booking.

Staffing

a) 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.

b) Ratio

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult /child ratio may be

- ☐ Age 4 – 1:4
- ☐ 5- 6 - 1:6
- ☐ 7-10 –1:10
- ☐ 11+ - 1:15

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit**, by the Visit leader, EVC and Headteacher, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- ☐ Type, duration and level of activity
- ☐ Needs of individuals within the group – medical, SEN, behaviour
- ☐ Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- ☐ Nature of venue
- ☐ Weather conditions at that time of year
- ☐ Nature of transport involved

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The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

c) Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- ☐ Prior experience of pupils
- ☐ Age of pupils
- ☐ Responsibility of pupils
- ☐ Competence/ experience of staff
- ☐ Environment/ venue

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed Form EV5.

It is essential that staff work closely with external staff (when appropriate) to maintain supervision of the children. On longer visits ie residential, it is acceptable for staff, who it has been agreed are 'off duty', to drink a moderate amount of alcohol, but this should not interfere with responsibilities and supervision on subsequent days activities or when driving the school minibus. An off duty rota could be arranged with the visit leader so that a minimum of 2 adults are on duty at all times.

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) and all lead 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

West Byfleet Junior School Educational Visits Checklist 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'.

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Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all other visits, including after school sports fixtures. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. The letter to parents should therefore give full details of the visit, as appropriate these should include the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements, and ensure that the detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B. Parents are asked to consent to visits through a traditional paper consent form.

For day visits, where written consent has not been received, verbal consent to two members of staff can be accepted (for example teacher and receptionist).

Inclusion

It is the school's aim that all children attend educational visits. We comply with the Equality Act 2010. In some circumstances, after an individualised review, it may not be possible for children with particular needs to attend a specific visit.

Charging / funding for visits

Please refer to our charging policy. The school is only able to run visits if we get sufficient voluntary contributions to cover the costs of the visit. See National Guidance www.oeap.info for more information.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets, etc. If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt.

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the LA's policy may drive the minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed / hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the head teacher or office. Additional checks should be made for longer journeys

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – *Refer to the LA's guidance document*. Staff must ensure that they have insurance to cover use of car for work.

Insurance

We are covered by the Surrey County Council Insurance.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

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First aid kits are available from the medical room. If the visit involves the party splitting up, a kit should be taken for each group.

Swimming Lessons

Children who go swimming travel by public bus and by minibus. Boys and girls change separately at the swimming pool. A member of staff waits outside the changing room and will enter occasionally to ensure children's safety. They will knock before entering.

Dismissal of pupils following after school / evening activities

Following after school clubs held in school children are dismissed from the rear exit doors for indoor activities or handed over directly by club leaders on our playground, or noted by individual clubs in their communication with parents and guardians. Finishing times are made clear to parents on Clubs Letter. Staff who run the clubs maintain a register and contact parents who are late collecting. Support may be given by SMT.

After events such as sports fixtures and music activities, parents will generally collect children from the office, unless advised otherwise by letter.

Booking Procedure

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:

- ☐ Headteacher
- ☐ Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- ☐ Admin Officer

1. Inform the headteacher, check that proposed dates are convenient and entered in the diary.
 2. Complete LA approved form (EV2 & 4) (residential trips and adventurous activities only)
 3. Liaise with the Admin office with regards to booking transport, cost, letter to parents and, if necessary, additional insurance
 4. Inform parents using standard letter from admin officer. (Where own letter is used, email a copy to Admin office)
 5. Complete details of visit on Evolve, attaching Risk Assessment and letter to parents
 6. Carry out pre-visit if possible and necessary
 7. Keep record of contributions made by parents using class list on A4 envelope, ensuring money is checked and then send to office daily for safekeeping
 8. Use the educational visits checklist as an aide memoir before and on the day of the visit
- Unless the headteacher and EVC have agreed to the visit, and the necessary forms are completed, **the visit must not go ahead.**

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, but parents should be informed beforehand, for example if a visit is longer than one hour
- ☐ do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- ☐ do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are within West Byfleet Village.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School 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 environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
- ☐ Playground equipment
- ☐ Basingstoke Canal, Wey Navigation Canal,

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- ☐ The Head, Deputy 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.
- ☐ The concept and Operating Procedure of the ‘School Learning Area’ is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and they sign a generic permission form which covers a short/local visit (e.g. walking to the park). Longer, or more distant trips, require specific permission.
- ☐ There will normally be a minimum of two adults.

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- ☐ 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.
- ☐ 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.
- ☐ Staff will add a list of children attending a visit to their 'Evolve' Visit Form. When appropriate, a list of attendees will be provided to the office for their reference.
- ☐

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 either:
 - a) An LA Emergency 'Card' (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 7. An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card
8. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Visit leaders should read additional information posted on front of Evolve website as this relates to updates and recent risks such as threats of terrorism and recommended practice.