

Name of Policy: <i>Educational Visits Policy</i>	Version/Last Review Date September 2021 (V5)
Statutory documents linked to this policy	Previous Review Date: April 2013 (V1) November 2015 (V2) November 2017 (V3) November 2019 (V4)
Other Policies linked to this policy: Safeguarding Children Forest School Policy and Procedures	Next Review Date: November 2024 (V6)
Governor Committee Responsible	Curriculum

All children will achieve their full potential, with holistic support whilst enjoying and driving their own learning, gaining self-respect, self-esteem and self-belief. Our classroom extends to rich, exiting environments within the forest, the beach, the city and the community as a whole.

Rationale

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice. At West Newcastle Academy (WNA) we will take part in a number of educational visits including regular Outdoor Learning activities (for which there is a separate policy).

- All visits must have an identifiable educational benefit, with clear objectives linked to the schools' vision for outdoor off-site activities
- All visits must be led by a competent Group Leader and accompanying adults
- All those involved in the organisation and running of educational visits will comply with National and the WNA guidelines on the health and safety of participants on educational visits
- The management of all visits will be based on the outcome of suitable and sufficient risk assessments and group leaders will ensure that such risk assessments are carried out as part of the planning process
- It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the risk to health and safety of participants is minimised by a process of continuous vigilance and ongoing risk assessment.

Purposes

Educational Visits provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum.

Guidelines

The headteacher, as trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator, will ensure that the educational visits follow National and the WNA guidelines and that the Group Leader and accompanying adults are suitably competent to run the visit. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will:

- Develop and implement procedures to monitor all educational visits
- Develop and implement a procedure for dealing with emergency situations, including having a named home-based contact for each visit when it is necessary
- Ensure all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins. (This applies even when the headteacher is not going on the visit)
- Ensure that the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit.

The Group Leader

One teacher; the Group Leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, the Group Leader should:

- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment and upload the information onto Evolve
- Have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times
- Know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability and involve them in risk assessment
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below)

Other Teachers and Adults involved in a Visit

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with the Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teacher and other Adults on the Visit Must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would
- Follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of Pupils

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other adults
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it
- Not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits. The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language;

Parents must:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s)
- Sign the consent form
- Give the group leader information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Planning Off-Site Visits

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The headteacher is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the headteacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.

The organiser / group leader must agree all plans with the headteacher.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using a Risk Assessment Evaluation Form. The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks?

- What are the benefits?
- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? (See section on Supervision.)

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger. The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

'Evolve' will be used to collate all information about an educational visit, including risk assessments and evaluations. All staff will be trained to use Evolve and the headteacher will countersign and agree all visits. The School Business Manager (SBM) will populate Evolve with details of staff and pupils.

Exploratory Visit

The group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- Ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit; it is essential to have at least one trained first-aider in the group.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- A suitably stocked first-aid box
- A person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Gender, age and ability of group
- Special needs pupils
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Participation

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Information to Pupils

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity
- Background information about the place to be visited
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- What standard of behaviour is expected from pupils
- Who is responsible for the group
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures
- Rendezvous procedures.

Transport and Pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- Arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives
- Wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport
- Make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic
- Never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs
- Never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- Never distract or disturb the driver
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road
- If you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code
- If you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs

Pupils with special educational or medical needs will not be excluded from educational visits of any kind. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents/Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parentis’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupils’ health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- Dates of the visit
- Times of departure and return
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults
- Visit’s objectives
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
- Insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
- Clothing and equipment to be taken
- Money to be taken
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

Forms and Guidance:

When all the details have been completed on the visits form on Evolve it is then sent to the headteacher for checking and authorisation. It is vital therefore that the form is completed in plenty of time (at least 5 days in advance)

Visits (Information Needed)

Class/Year Group	
Visit Date	
Destination (Name and address)	
Travel Arrangements/Requirements	
Visit Leader	
Additional Adults (Staff) (Names/mobile phone numbers)	
Additional Adults (Volunteers) (Names/mobile phone numbers)	
Number of Children (it is vital that the correct names and numbers are put on the system - if you know in	

advance that a child will be absent please let the office know)	
Educational Aims of Visit	
Main Purpose (Subject)	
Secondary Purpose (Subject)	
Risk Assessment	Once completed this should be e-mailed to the school office: admin@westnewcastleacademy.org
Essential Data Form	Once completed this should be e-mailed/given to the school: admin@westnewcastleacademy.org

Licensed Activities

The Activity Centres (Young Persons Safety) Act 1995 and the associated Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations (1996) require certain activities to be licensed when commercial companies sell them or where Local Authorities provide them with or without charge. The activities that require a license are:

- caving (including exploration of disused mines, cave diving and potholing);
- climbing, which includes abseiling, but does not include activities undertaken on a purpose built wall or tower
- trekking, including mountain biking, off-piste skiing and horseback riding when this is undertaken in a remote area (*more than 30 minutes* from the nearest road or refuge) of moor land or mountain country;
- Watersports such as canoeing, rafting and sailing undertaken on the sea, in tidal waters or where water is more than 100 meters across or is known to be turbulent.

A license holder has demonstrated that the Licensing Authority is satisfied that appropriate safety measures have been taken for the provision of the activity licensed. The presence of a license does not indicate any standard of accommodation or catering. Before undertaking an activity that falls into the licensing category, the head teacher will ensure that the provider is licensed. The school staff (and designated volunteers) accompanying the activity retain overall responsibility for the pupils throughout the visit even when the pupils are being instructed by a member of the provider's staff.

The Licensing Authority is only required to license those activities that come under the auspices of the Act. Not holding a license does not mean the activities offered by a provider are unsafe. However, where a provider is being used that does not require a license, the school should be satisfied that the safety standards are appropriate and that where specialist staff are used they have appropriate experience and qualifications. In these circumstances, it is vital that a pre-visit is made to ensure that the safety standards are appropriate.

Checklist for Staff

Checklists to help the headteacher and Group Leader to ensure:

- The safety of the children, volunteer helpers and staff
- The maximum educational benefit
- Effective organisation and administration
- Issues relating to conservation and access are addressed

Visit Details: Visit to

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Date of Visit Class / Classes

Number of Children Number of Adults

1. Group Leader (normally the Class teacher) Name.....

2. Purpose

Have the purposes and objectives of the visit been clearly identified and are they appropriate to the age and ability of the children?

3. Location

Is the location of the activity appropriate to the activity?

4. Advice and Approval

Have you discussed the plans with the headteacher?

5. Staff

Are the members of staff leading the activities suitably qualified and experienced for the activities proposed?

6. Staff / Pupil Ratio

Have you followed recommended pupil/adult ratios?

7. Preliminary Visit

Has the Group Leader made a preliminary visit to the site to assess, check for potential risks and arrangements?

8. Risk Assessment

Have the risks involved in the proposed activities been considered and a RISK assessment Form completed?

9. Parental Consent

Have parents received details of the visit? Has the consent of parents/guardians/carers been obtained?
(Signed permission slips been returned including emergency contact number)

10. The Programme

Have you written a programme for the day and are copies available for all helpers?

11. Organisation

Have you considered appropriate clothing and equipment for the activities?

Have you made arrangements for insurance cover with the Bursar?

What travel arrangements have been made?

Car - Insurance documents checked

12. Finance

Have adequate arrangements been made to finance the trip?

Have parents been asked for voluntary contributions?

13. Travel

14. First Aid

Named First Aider Susan Percy /

First Aid Kit

Medical Needs - inhalers, epi-pens etc

Mobile phone / Walkie Talkies

Off-site Activity Procedures

The following procedures are to be adhered to when arranging a school trip or visit:

- A risk assessment should be undertaken of the venue to be visited
- Permission should be sought from the Headteacher for the trip to go ahead
- Information about the visit should be given to the office to allow the staff to book the venue and coaches
- The SBM should be informed of trip details so costs including: travel, entrance fees and insurance can be calculated
- A letter should be sent to parents, in good time, informing them of the trip and the costs involved.
- If a mini bus is required any driver must hold a valid Minibus Driver Permit
- If private cars are to be used to transport pupils, claims would have to be met through the driver's own insurance. All drivers are to produce their current insurance documents to the office (they must have fully comprehensive insurance), also a valid road tax certificate, an MOT certificate and a full driving licence, as described in the Driving Policy.
- A use of private vehicles to transport pupils form is to be completed by each driver and signed by the office staff
- All monies are to be collected by teachers and given to the SBM
- All forms are to be completed by each class teacher at least 5 days before the visit
- If a cheque is required on the day of the trip to pay for entrance, this is to be collected from the SBM on the morning of the trip and a receipt obtained.

