

Whitnash Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

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Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every child 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 Whitnash Primary School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits of children taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include (but are not limited to):

- 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. Students 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 giving them the tools and experience necessary to assess their own risks in a range of contexts.
- 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.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit, for each of which the approval process is slightly different:

1. staff using the local area to deliver lessons
2. other visits within the UK excluding adventurous activities
3. Any visit involving adventure activities and / or involving travel abroad

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of visits but should involve both accompanying colleagues and the children in this process. Staff must make appropriate checks of any third party providers. Staff are advised to obtain outline permission for a visit, from the head teacher / EVC before beginning to plan and certainly before making any commitments.

The EVC is David Hitchins (AHT) who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom. They are the first point of call for advice on visit related matters. The EVC will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the head.

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The Head teacher has responsibility for monitoring and final approval of all visits.

Staff Competence

We realise that staff competence is the single most important aspect of safe trip management and so we support staff in developing this competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced trip leaders before taking on a leadership role
- Supervision by Senior staff of some educational visits

In deciding whether any member of staff is competent to be a visit leader the head teacher will take into account the following factors:

- Level of relevant experience
- Any relevant training undertaken
- The emotional and leadership ability of any prospective visit leader to make dynamic risk management judgements and take charge of any emergencies that may arise.
- Knowledge of the children, the venue and the activities to be undertaken

Visit Planning and approval

The internal school approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local area visits will be covered by inside Leamington Spa forms that are sent out to parents at the beginning of every academic year.
2. Visits within the UK excluding adventure activities – these are put on EVOLVE and approved internally by the Head Teacher. Visits should be submitted to the EVC via EVOLVE at least **7** days in advance.
3. Visits involving adventure activities must be put on EVOLVE and submitted to the EVC at least **30** days in advance. The school is required to submit these for Local Authority Approval 28 days in advance. Visit leaders must check if an activity provider holds either an AALA licence (http://www.aals.org.uk/aals/provider_search.php) or an LOTC quality badge (<http://www.lotcqualitybadge.org.uk/search>). If they don't then they must complete a Provider Questionnaire (National Guidance document 8p)
4. Visits Abroad require detailed planning to commence well in advance and the head must be kept up to date with progress. Checks must be made on any third party providers and permission from the head teacher to use them be obtained before any deposits are paid. Third party providers who hold the LOTC quality badge (see above) do not require further checks. Those who do not hold this accreditation should complete and return a Provider Questionnaire (National Guidance document 8p), which visit leaders should scrutinise. The head will need to submit final plans to the Local Authority 28 days before the departure date.

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 1). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability; 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.

The Visit Leaders job list

The visit leader will ensure all the following steps are completed for any type 2 or 3 visit:

- Gain outline approval from the head to begin planning the visit and agree funding mechanism / charging policy.
- Ensure the visit:
 - has clear learning outcomes
 - has activities appropriate to the group
 - is planned to maximise benefits to the children while managing significant risks
 - is appropriately staffed
 - complies with the school's safeguarding policy
- Involve children in the planning of the visit, and how it will be managed, wherever possible.
- Ensure the LA procedures are followed and that the visit plan is recorded on EVOLVE.
- Ensure all other staff, accompanying adults and children are:
 - fully briefed about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
 - know what to do in the event of an emergency
 - are given information they need about individual pupil needs.

Emergency procedures must include what would happen in the event of illness or injury affecting the party leader.
- Ensure the base contact back at school is fully briefed and has copies of all relevant information.

Parental Consent

At the beginning of the school year, parents are asked to sign a form giving consent for their child to take part in activities within 20 miles of Leamington Spa. For any visits further afield, a separate form seeking consent is issued. Parents are always informed when their child will be leaving the school premises. For residential visits, visits extending beyond the school day or

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visits out of the Area specific consent should be requested using *the appropriate EDVIS forms*.

Inclusion

All children are to be included on all visits; where additional needs exist, these are to be discussed with the EVC and leader for Inclusion. An additional Risk Assessment will be put into place if necessary to support the child during the visit. If the child has medical needs which need to be catered for during a residential visit, this will be discussed with parents prior to the visit, but if it's a local visit then the normal health plan will remain in place. Staff will need to include the medical information on risk assessment.

Charging / funding for trips

Refer to Whitnash charging and remissions policy for further detail and exemplification

Transport

- Parents will always be informed as to the type of transport being provided for an educational visit.
- The school will only use hired transport with appropriate insurance and experience of school trips. Seat belts must be provided on all seats and it is school policy that each child will wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on a school visit. The visit organiser is responsible for the conduct and behaviour of the children whilst they are travelling. The school must ensure that there is sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children whilst travelling.
- Public transport will only be used in exceptional circumstances. An increased adult/pupil ratio must be considered and close supervision of the children must be ensured.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils - Staff cars may only be used to transport pupils when the driver has business insurance and a clean driving license (a record of both of these being checked will be kept by the EVC).

Private cars will only be used in exceptional circumstances. When it is used, the school will ensure that each driver has:

- Valid driving license
- Vehicle road fund license and MOT certificate
- Vehicle insurance valid for carrying passengers on a school off-site visit.
- Volunteers will be asked to sign a declaration that all these requirements are in place.
- Where teachers offer to use their own vehicles for transporting children, they must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties.
- The school will not reimburse parents or teachers for the use of their vehicles as this will invalidate insurance cover unless the vehicle is specifically insured as a taxi.

Insurance

Whitnash Primary School will always take out Warwickshire CC insurance

Signed: ____ Donna Ellison _____ Date: __October 2017

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Appendix 1 Emergency procedure

Refer to school incident management plan.

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.
3. The visit leadership team and the emergency base contact will both have relevant medical and emergency contact information on all the trip participants (including staff).
4. Both the visit leader(s) and the base contact 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.
5. The National Guidance role specific emergency action cards are carried by:
 - a. The visit leader
 - b. The first point of contact (eg the office receptionist)
 - c. The designated base contact senior manager
6. This procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.