

West Haddon Endowed C of E School

Policy Document

OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Definition

An off-site visit is any visit which leaves the school site.

Aims

We expect everyone at West Haddon School to be able to work and learn within a safe and secure environment at all times. We undertake the following procedures relating to Educational Visits.

Educational Visits Coordinator

Our Educational Visits coordinators are Mr David Rosevear, Mrs Joanne Brinklow and Mrs Nicola Elliott. Working with the Governing Body the EVCs ensure that all procedures are followed to make sure that the visit is safe and risk assessments are in place.

The DfE and Northamptonshire County Council are committed to encourage and support safe and educationally beneficial off-site visits; they value the tremendous work done by staff and very much appreciate the time and effort required to arrange them. At West Haddon School we follow the NCC Policy for the Management of Learning Outside of the Classroom (Guidance to Employees (March 2016) for visits and ensure our procedures match good practice at all times.

POLICY STATEMENT FROM NORTHAMPTONSHIRE CC.

The County Council will fully comply with the D of E best practice on educational trips and visits set out in 'Health and Safety: advice on legal duties and powers' updated February 2014 document and associated supplements. NCC has formally adopted 'OEAP National Guidance' as 'Northamptonshire Employer Guidance'. This guidance can be found at <http://oeapng.info/>

This includes;

- Establishing and maintaining a trained educational visits co-ordinator for each establishment or cluster of establishments
Mr David Rosevear, Mrs Joanne Brinklow and Mrs Nicola Elliott are our EVCs

- Establishing and maintaining an Outdoor Education Advisor
Mr Tony Kidd from Plumsun tel 07734954938 or 07885909761
www.plumsun.com

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- ❑ Adopting and following the best practice in the “Health and safety: advice on legal duties and powers’ document.

All Educational Visits Co-ordinators must undertake a DfE approved training course and ensure that they attend refresher training at least every three years.

The County Council recognises three categories of trip / visit

- ❑ **Category A** – These visits are close to the school, done on a regular basis involving environments known to the staff. It would include activity that is “normal in daily life”. Examples include walks and exploring the area near to the school site, visits to the local church, library, school sporting fixtures and other regular non-complex activity. It can also include transport if needed.
- ❑ **Category B** – These visits are to areas beyond the local area involving more complex environments and activity and will be a one off or irregular activity in the school year. The leaders will be approved to lead the visit by the EVC. There may be some specialist training attached to some activities in this area. Examples include visits further afield, farm visits, local parks, museum visits, swimming lessons in offsite pools, zoo visits, sporting festivals and larger tournaments and some basic outdoor education activity
- ❑ **Category C** – The majority of educational visits are approved at school level. However, visits including the components below are Category C visits:
 - Residential visits
 - Overseas visits
 - An activity involving water
 - Adventure activities

Higher risk activities which need approval by the County Council and Outdoor Education Advisor

A list of activities in each category is given in the appendix of this policy

Category A and B visits are approved at school level by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator. The Governing Body are notified of all visits. Category C visits are approved by the Outdoor Education Advisor and Northamptonshire County Council. The following are needed for approval for any off site visit:

- full planning details of the visit
- the itinerary
- risk assessment (including a Plan B),
- emergency plans
- competent visit leader.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The **County Council** is responsible for reviewing and revising their policy on a regular basis and ensuring the provision of an Outdoor Education Advisor.

Governing Bodies are responsible for monitoring that their school or centre follows this policy.

Headteachers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed by their establishment including ensuring that they have, or have access to, an appropriate Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

The **Outdoor Education Advisor** is responsible for: providing advice on trips and visits to educational establishments, ensuring the provision of adequate training for Educational Visits Co-ordinators, approving Category C visits; monitoring and implementation of this policy.

Responsibility for off-site visits

The activity leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including prior agreement for the activity to take place, following guidance laid down and ensuring that all participants are aware of their roles.

Teachers, volunteers, students and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating.

Teachers have a common law duty to act 'in loco parentis' (as a reasonable parent), as indeed would any other employee involved in an off-site activity.

Risk Assessment

The underlying basis of health and safety care is to control risks. This is effectively achieved through risk assessment. When planning an off-site visit all the potential risks to the students and adults undertaking that visit should be assessed and, where it is 'reasonably practicable', elimination or alleviation of those risks achieved. This should be undertaken before the visit is started. A record must be kept of the risks identified.

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be essential in some cases to undertake a pre-visit. Even where the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- the number of students involved;
- the age of the students, their sex, ability and general behaviour;
- the previous experience of the group in undertaking off-site visits;
- the time of the day and the time of year;
- the travel arrangements;
- the hazards of the environment being visited;
- the numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers;
- the nature of the activity.

Communications

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises. In certain circumstances, parents may wish to exercise their right to refuse to allow their child to take part in a visit. Under such circumstances, the school must make alternative arrangements to ensure that the National Curriculum work that was being developed during the visit is made available in another form to the student in school. The refusal of the parent to allow the child to take part does not offer the opportunity for a day off!

On the trip pupils should not be given the teacher's personal mobile phone numbers. There is a school mobile phone available for trips.

First-aid

In all cases it would be appropriate to ensure a first-aid kit is readily available during the course of an off-site activity. The contents of this first aid kit should be subject to a regular documented check to ensure the kit is replenished after use and the contents are in date. The provision of a formally qualified person to administer first-aid may be more problematic, the legal requirement is for a person with first aid knowledge commensurate with the risks associated with the visit. It is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider on every occasion; however this may not always be possible.

Supervision

There are no legally enforceable ratios of students to adults accompanying a visit. The level of supervision will always depend upon the type of visit being made and the numbers and abilities of the students.

The ratio of participants to staff should be such as to ensure adequate control and safe conduct during all phases of the activity or event. The risk assessment may indicate that a short journey to a nearby venue can be adequately covered by 1 adult when appropriate emergency procedures have been previously arranged.

A minimum of two adults, one of whom should be a member of staff should accompany each event unless a formal risk assessment is carried out and indicates that 1 adult is adequate to provide the appropriate level of supervision and safety cover. The activity leader should always ensure that a group is adequately supervised. It is recognised that the staff/participant ratio will need to be varied according to the age and temperament of participants and the type of visit undertaken.

At the planning stage of an event and after consideration of all relevant factors, the Headteacher must ensure that an appropriate staff/participant ratio is defined and recorded.

For residential visits it is essential that all accompanying adults have been checked by the Police under the procedures for disclosure of criminal backgrounds of those with access to children. There is no doubt that most educational visits or journeys provide the opportunity for 'substantial unsupervised access to children.

Insurance

When a trip is undertaken as a part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off the school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail. All 'day –trips' are covered by the school's insurance.

Where a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance provided must be ascertained.

Discipline

Out of school activities undertaken during school time, or largely during school time, will always be conducted according to the school's disciplinary policy.

Students with Special Medical Needs

If a student requiring specific medical needs is to take part in an off-site activity, the school should ensure that any protocol established between the school, the parents and the student's GP extends to the differing circumstances of that activity. The School have a duty under the Equalities act to ensure that students can access medication and that reasonable adjustments are made to enable this to happen.

When the school is undertaking a residential visit, parents should be asked to give their authorisation to the leader of the party to act for their child should the need arise for emergency medical treatment during the course of the visit. If parents are unable to give this authorisation, head teachers may decide that the resultant risk to that child precludes them from taking part. If a student is included in the party where parents have not given authorisation, a clear unequivocal protocol should be supplied by the parent including appropriate enforceable notification to any medical practitioner that may find themselves looking after the student's medical or surgical needs.

Finances

In circumstances where insufficient money has been contributed collectively to cover the cost of the visit, the school may cancel the visit and return all the contributions made.

Contingency money should be included for emergency situations which is reflected on a Costings Sheet, a school credit/debit card should be available to support visits abroad.

All accounts will be kept accurately by the Bursar.

Non-Curriculum trips need to be paid in full by all pupils. There is a hardship fund available for pupils on Curriculum trips. They need to apply, in writing, to the Headteacher, with evidence supporting their claim.

Transport

Hired Transport. Only reputable companies should be used. Seat belts should be provided on all seats. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the conduct and behaviour of the students on the transport. The school must provide sufficient supervisory staff to ensure the health and safety of the students.

School mini-bus. Where the school mini-bus is being used the requirements of the school policy should be closely adhered to.

Public transport. When public transport is to be used, close supervision of the students must be ensured. Students should be prepared in advance concerning expectations of their behaviour. Where it is considered inappropriate to include a particular student because there is serious doubt about their ability to behave, it is appropriate to find a suitable alternative occupation for that student on the occasion of the visit. (If behaviour issues manifest themselves because of an underlying SEN then appropriate adjustments should be made to accommodate that student, e.g. hiring a private coach as an alternative to public transport even if greater expense is involved).

Private use of cars. Extreme caution should be exercised over the use of private cars, both of parents and staff. Where such transport is to be used Activity Leaders should be confident that vehicles and drivers are legal.

Appendix

CATEGORIES OF TRIPS / VISITS RECOGNISED BY NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Within this document the term “remote” locations means:

- ❑ Any moorland (open uncultivated land at any height above sea level)
- ❑ Any mountain, woodland and cultivated land above 600m from which it would take more than 30 minutes travelling time to walk back to an accessible road or refuge

Accessible road is a road accessible to an ordinary road going ambulance

Refuge is a building, either occupied or with means for summoning help, which can offer shelter for the party in an emergency

CATEGORY A VISITS

Includes visits, journeys and environmental studies for which the element of risk is similar to those encountered in daily life.

- Environmental and country walks
- Field studies – non technical
- Historic sites
- Local sports tours
- Sites of commercial interest
- Walking – not in remote locations (see definition above)

CATEGORY B VISITS

Higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and / or location. The leader will be approved as competent by the Local Authority (LA) or by the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC) following LA guidance. Where appropriate a National Governing Body Award (such as Award of Basic Expedition Leadership or NVQ in Activity Leadership) will be a measure of competence.

- Camping – not in remote locations (see definition above)
- Cycling – on roads or off road terrain not in remote locations
- Farm visits
- Low level initiative challenges
- Orienteering
- Swimming lessons in off site swimming pools
- Zoo visits

CATEGORY C VISITS

Category C approval is required from the Outdoor Education Advisor and Northamptonshire County Council for employer approval when schools are taking

- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Visits involving the use of water

- Other visits which include a hazardous activity. Northamptonshire County Council have provided the following examples of potentially hazardous activities which will require approval but the Outdoor Education Advisor. This list is not exhaustive
- Abseiling
- Adventure courses using ropes
- Archery
- Ballooning
- Bivoucking (camping in an un-sheltered area often with make shift materials)
- Boating
- Building sites
- Camping in remote locations
- Canoeing
- Caving / Potholing
- Coaststeering
- Field studies in high hazardous environments (e.g. glacial, streams, beaches)
- Flying
- Gliding
- Gorge or ghyll scrambling and river walking
- Hang gliding
- High ropes courses
- Horse riding / pony trekking
- Kayaking
- Mine exploration
- Motor sports
- Mountain biking in remote locations (see definition above)
- Mountain walking / scrambling
- Night activities or activities in poor / reduced visibility
- Overseas trips
- Paintballing
- Parachuting
- Parascending
- Power boating
- Quad biking
- Rafting (white-water)
- Rock climbing including sea level traversing
- High Ropes courses / adventure playgrounds (including commercial establishments)
- Sailing
- Shooting activities
- Skiing and snow boarding (including commercially organised trips)
- Sub-aqua and snorkelling
- Tobogganing
- Unsupervised activities including unaccompanied expeditions
- Water based activities
- Water skiing
- Windsurfing
- Winter mountaineering