



Beechwood Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

"A life without adventure is likely to be unsatisfying, but a life in which adventure is allowed to take whatever form it will is sure to be short."

(Bertrand Russell)

Introduction

Beechwood School has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises. Each year the school will arrange a number of off-site visits and activities which enhance the curriculum and learning for our children.

The following types of activities are arranged to support of the educational aims of the school:

- School teams
- Regular nearby visits
- Day visits
- Residential visits

The Wokingham Borough Council policy and procedures for Educational Visits is followed. In addition, all educational visits must follow the appropriate procedures identified in the Educational Visits Policy Guidelines.

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Head Teacher has nominated a teacher as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC).

Each educational visit has a Party Leader who is responsible for following the school procedures and completing appropriate paperwork, in addition to taking responsibility for the safety of all children on the visit.

The EVC works with the Party Leader to plan and approve the visit.

Before a visit is advertised to parents, the School Business Manager and the EVC, in consultation with the Head Teacher, must approve the plan. Specific risk assessments are then written by the Party Leader and these are then considered by the EVC and Head Teacher (and Wokingham Borough Council, where appropriate) at a later date.

For regular nearby visits and day visits, parents are asked to sign a letter of consent for participation when their child joins the school. This stays on file for the duration of their child's education at Beechwood School.

If visits last for more than one day (i.e. residential visits) then parents will be asked to complete and sign a consent form (EV2).

As part of the parents' consent they will be fully informed of the activities and arrangements of each visit by letter, e-mail or text message. For all residential visits parents will be invited to a briefing meeting where they can ask for clarification of any aspect of the itinerary and organisation of the visit.

Inclusion

All pupils who wish to participate in a visit will be considered subject to the over-riding factor of the safety of ALL pupils participating in the activity / visit. Each individual case will be considered upon its own merit.

The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the condition of booking by the parents, and includes the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to, and during, the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school, or where behaviour may affect the safety of other pupils within the group.

Emergency Procedures

For each visit, at least one member of the Senior Leadership Team will be appointed by the school as the emergency contact. All major incidents should be immediately relayed to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Party Leader will leave details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact. For residential visits this will include the home contact details of parents/carers and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Party Leader in an emergency.

The role of the LA

The LA will designate an Outdoor Education Advisor and other key people who can support and advise schools in their planning.

To undertake its responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils and employees on educational visits the LA has:

- Defined three types of educational visit – local, distant and residential – that may additionally be defined through being overseas and/or involving adventurous activities.
- A clear system of delegating tasks for approving the planning and risk management of these different types of visits.
- A procedure to ensure that notification of approval takes place at early and appropriate stages in the planning cycle (Evolve).

- A training programme for school staff and governors in the management of educational visits.
- Emergency procedures in place, including 24 hour access, to support schools in cases of extreme difficulty or grave emergency.

The role of the Governing Body

The section summarises the key points of the role of Governing Bodies. This gives a clear outline of the scope and extent of their role in supporting the Head Teacher and school staff in the safe management of educational visits.

To fulfil its responsibilities for the health and safety of pupils on educational visits the Governing Body shall:

- Formally adopt the LEA Policy and Guidance on Educational Visits.
- Keep under review the school's policy on educational visits which will detail the internal procedures by which visits are proposed and approved.
- Ensure that the school's policy enables, whenever reasonable and appropriate, the inclusion of pupils with disabilities, special educational or medical needs.
- Ensure that it is clear about its role in the event of an emergency

The Role of the Head Teacher

Responsibilities within the school for the approval of visits remains with the Head Teacher and Governors, but, with the approval of the Governing Body, the Head Teacher may delegate certain of these tasks to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will normally be a senior member of staff.

The Head Teacher must:

- Ensure that the educational objectives for visits are clearly defined and commensurate with the age, maturity and capability of the pupils
- Be satisfied that all aspects of any visits, including the granting of approval, will be dealt with in accordance with this policy and guidance and the school's own policy and procedures
- Ensure risk assessments are reviewed periodically and changes are made in operating procedures and/or control measures where identified
- Ensure that visits are evaluated to inform the planning and operation of future visits
- Be satisfied of the competence of party leaders to lead, manage and control pupils in the proposed setting.
- Be satisfied that staff roles and responsibilities (including those of accompanying adults) are commensurate with their experience and competence to undertake them
- Ensure all staff are aware of their continuous pastoral care responsibilities (even when using a technical leader with their group) and are familiar with the school's child protection policy.
- Be satisfied that the arrangements for supervision are appropriate, agreed and known by all concerned (Staff involved will be required to have a clear understanding of the different strategies required for direct supervision and when circumstances are right, for indirect or more remote supervision)
- Record accidents and incidents where appropriate, and report them to the Governing Body, LA, or HSE where required.
- Ensure all involved in visits are made aware of and understand the LA's emergency procedures

- Ensure the school has emergency procedures in place of a major incident on a school visit
- Ensure that the school adopts a clear and effective system for recording risk assessments which is understood by those involved in visits.

The Role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

Each school should nominate a member of staff as the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC). This person must:

- Have experience in leading and managing a range of educational visits similar to those typically run by the school
- Have sufficient credibility to be able to influence colleagues
- Be able to support colleagues in the formulation of Risk Assessments and the development of Risk Management procedures

The EVC will be involved in the planning and management of educational visits led by the school staff. They will support visit leaders, the Head Teacher and school Governors by ensuring that the LA and school's policies and guidance are followed. In particular the EVC will:

- Work with party leaders to ensure that the objectives of the educational visit are achievable
- Be the principal contact with the LEA over visits planned by the school
- Be able to confirm that the leadership of the visit is appropriate and to check staff qualifications and experience including accompanying teachers and adults
- Confirm that consideration has been given to the group concerned and the location (group/site risk assessment)
- Ensure that emergency procedures are in place for each visit and that Group Leaders and school contacts know how to liaise with the LA should an emergency occur
- Take the lead for any review of the school's policy for educational visits

The Role of the Party Leader

A party leader must be appointed for each planned visit.

Party leaders are responsible for the safe planning and execution of visits and should:

- Have the experience, training and qualifications to control the group and lead the team of accompanying teachers and adults
- Be conversant with good practice in planned activities including those he/she will not be instructing
- Prepare and brief the pupils, their parents and accompanying teachers and adults
- Make a comprehensive risk assessment and management plan and present it to the EVC / Head Teacher
- Have regard for the health and safety of the whole group at all times
- Determine the level of first aid that may be required and to nominate a teacher to have that responsibility
- Assess the initial and on-going suitability of the group in relation to the planned activities
- Ensure that the visit operates in accordance with the school in relation to the planned activities
- Ensure that the visit operates in accordance with the school and LA policies and guidance

The Role of Other Teachers and Accompanying Adults

- Teachers and adults accompanying any visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities. All must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group and follow the instructions of the Party Leader.
- Adults should be guided in their roles by teachers and must not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment.
- Only adults known to teachers should be given pastoral responsibilities. Instructors or other staff working for contracted organisations can support teachers and adults in their pastoral duties but cannot assume a full pastoral role.

Educational Visits Policy

Reviewed: December 2015

Next review: December 2017

Signed by Head Teacher _____

Signed by Governors Chair of Curriculum & Welfare _____