

West Lodge School

Educational Visits Policy

This policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and before and after school activities.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The Governing Board and teaching staff encourage off-site activities to supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that identifiable risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the health and safety of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.
- 1.3 The contents of this policy also relates to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The aims of our off-site visits are to:
 - enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
 - provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than can be provided on the school site alone;
 - promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in different learning environments.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2.

3 Curriculum links

- 3.1 For each subject in the curriculum, there is a corresponding programme of activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists).
 - **English** – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
 - **Science** – use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens;
 - **Mathematics** – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
 - **History** – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
 - **Geography** – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
 - **Art & Design** – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
 - **PE** – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;

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- **Music** – a variety of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, concerts to parents;
- **Design and Technology** – visits to local factories or design centres;
- **ICT** – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools, etc;
- **RE** – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.
- **PSCHE** – visit to a fire station or a senior citizens' residential home, visits by local Police officers, health workers and TFL.

4 Residential activities

- 4.1 Children in Years 5 & 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in term time and linked to the National Curriculum.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in cultural, outdoor and adventure activities. The School Journey Company provides qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

5 How visits may be authorised

- 5.1 The Head Teacher will appoint a Teacher in charge to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.
- 5.2 The school's Educational Visits Co-ordinator, who may be the Head Teacher, will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed;
 - support the Head Teacher and Governing Board in their decisions on approval;
 - assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
 - organise related staff training;
 - verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory Police checks.
 - make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained prior to departure;
 - keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks, (e.g. road-crossing), where there are frequent visits to local venues (e.g. a swimming facility, sports' field).
- 5.3 Where a member of staff is proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Head Teacher before any commitment or booking confirmation is made on behalf of the school. A Risk Assessment Form SCJ1 should be completed by the member of staff in charge of the visit before the visit can take place.
- 5.4 Where the activity involves a period away of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Head Teacher will seek the approval of the Governing Board before permitting the activity to take place.

A – Z Handbook

- 5.5 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that no pupil is excluded. We may seek guidance from parents to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be detailed on the Risk Assessment Form SCJ1.

6 Risk assessment

- 6.1 A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the Teacher in charge before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
- What are the hazards?
 - Who might be affected by them?
 - What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
 - Can the Teacher in charge put the safety measures in place?
 - What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- 6.2 Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the Teacher in charge should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. Staff should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. Staff should also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the Teacher in charge to experience the activity beforehand, or if they lack the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve.
- 6.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, the extent of any risks involved and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of these preliminary visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.
- 6.4 An activity will have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:
- 1 adult to 10 pupils in Years 3 to 6. Depending upon the trip this may be increased to a ratio of up to 1:15 for Years 5 and 6 based upon an evaluation of risk.
 - 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 2;
 - 1 adult to 4 pupils in Foundation Stage.

Foundation Stage - Normal school ratios with the addition of the Sport Coach apply when the Nursery and Reception classes are taking part in sport activities at Sidcup Rugby Club. For trips involving public

A – Z Handbook

transport, the ratio increases to 1:2/3. A member of staff qualified in Paediatric First Aid is always included in the adult ratio.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

- 6.5 The Risk Assessment Form SCJ1 must also include details of proposed transport to and from the venue.
- 6.6 The Teacher in charge will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to Police checks (see 5.2 above).
- 6.7 A copy of the completed Risk Assessment Form SCJ1 will be given to the Head Teacher

7 Transport

- 7.1 The costing of off-site activities should include all of the following that apply:
 - transport;
 - entrance fees;
 - insurance;
 - provision of any special resources or equipment;
 - costs related to adult helpers;
 - any refreshments that the school has opted to pay for.
- 7.2 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.
- 7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal Police checks (see 5.2).

8 Communication with parents

- 8.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission in writing prior to departure before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.
- 8.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions.
- 8.3 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head Teacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity.

9 Further Health and Safety considerations

- 9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the Teacher in charge, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will include the school number, the mobile telephone of the Teacher in charge and where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the School Mobile number and the telephone number of a designated emergency contact will be provided.

A – Z Handbook

- 9.2 Before a party leaves school, the School Office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the Teacher in charge must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and the any authorised prescribed medicines are taken on the trip, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 9.4 Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the Teacher in charge should discuss with the Head Teacher the possibility of excluding that child from the activity.

10 Visit Plan

- 10.1 The Visit Plan for intended educational visits must include the following:
- completed Risk Assessment Form SCJ1;
 - report on preliminary visit;
 - approval of visit;
 - general information;
 - names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit;
 - travel schedule;
 - accommodation plan (if applicable);
 - full itinerary of activities;
 - fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
 - intended arrangements for supervision;
 - insurance arrangements for all members of the group;
 - emergency contacts, telephone numbers and procedures;
 - general communications information;
 - guidance for Teacher in charge;
 - guidance for the emergency contact and Head Teacher;
 - First-aid boxes and authorised prescribed medication.
- 10.2 As a school we have agreed that the school policy encourages the use of excursions for the following reasons: -
- Widens the child's environment / Gives the child direct experience
 - Encourages observation
 - Develops social skills / It is pleasurable
 - Teaches children that learning is not confined to the school environment
 - Training for adulthood
 - Highlights the inter-relation of learning
- 10.3 Years 1 & 2 should go on a planned excursion at least once a year. Years 3 – 6 should experience a planned outing at least twice a year.
- In all cases preliminary visits by teachers are essential.
- 10.4 Matters to consider include:
- Suitability for age group and topic

A – Z Handbook

- Eating arrangements /Toilets
- Educational facilities, i.e. talks, films, workshops, etc.
- Alternatives for wet days

A checklist is provided to help the Teacher in charge to complete the Risk Assessment Form SCJ1.

- 10.5 A charge will be made for each trip where necessary, the balance to be met by the school. Transport should normally be by coach with seat or lap belts fitted and the Head Teacher must agree any exceptions to this transport method.
- 10.6 It is recommended that children have are thoroughly prepared for the visit, e.g. video, slides, worksheets etc. linking their schoolwork with the outing, except where an element of surprise is more valuable.
- 10.7 On all outings, whatever the mode of travel, one member of the teaching staff must accompany each group of twenty or less. Classroom Assistants or parents should make up the ratio of adult helpers, to - one adult to ten children in Key Stage 2, one adult to six children in Key Stage 1 and one adult to four in Foundation.
- 10.8 A letter with full details about the outing is sent to the parents of children attending the trip, (cost, times, etc); this has a slip at the bottom, which the parents must sign and return, giving their consent for their child to be taken off the school premises. The teacher in charge of the outing must take a First Aid Kit designated for outings from the Medical Room and a mobile phone.
For the Year 5 & 6 residential journey, the parents must also complete a medical form and an emergency contact form. Details of the proposed visit should be outlined to parents early on in the autumn term and after the initial deposit parents must settle the balance by the due date.
- 10.9 A Risk Assessment Form SCJ1 must be completed prior to the visit and handed in to the Head Teacher at least a week before the intended trip.
A list of all children and staff present in the party on the day of the trip must be left in the School Office or with the Head Teacher before leaving school. Where possible, all mobile phone numbers of accompanying adults should be provided.
- 10.10 Evaluation sheets SCJ2 should be completed in the week following the outing and handed in to the Head Teacher.

11 Monitoring and review

This policy is monitored by the Governing Board and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

Reviewed Date: April 2016
Next Review Date: March 2018
Reviewer: Deputy Head Teacher

Risk Assessment/Visit Approval

Date of visit

Location of visit

Class Year Group

Number of Pupils in Group=		
Year =	Boys =	Girls =

Name of Party Leader

Contact number for duration
of visit

Times off premises

Leaving school =
Arriving back at school =

Number accompanying adults

Names of accompanying adults

Method of Transport

What hazards are likely to be
encountered travelling to this
location?
How will these hazards be
controlled?

What hazards are likely to be
encountered at this location?
How will these hazards be
controlled?

Any special needs of the pupils on
this visit?
Please note children who require
inhalers and those with nut allergies
etc.

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Additional Information

Date of Pre-Visit

Signed by Party Leader (Date)

Approved by Head Teacher (Date)

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Educational, Adventurous and Recreational Visits Checklist

Planning

	N/A	YES	DATE COMPLETED
Check date with H.T. before confirming date of visit			
Organise Pre-visit			
Have security arrangements at venue been assessed?			
How many pupils on visit?			
How many staff needed to accompany group?			
Have roles and responsibilities of all accompanying staff been clarified?			
Have staff been initially briefed – date, times etc...			
What sort of transport will be used?			
Has transport to be used and times been confirmed with provider?			
Have parents been notified by letter of full details of trip?			
Have emergency contact numbers been noted for all children and members of staff on residential school journey?			

Shortly Before Departure

	N/A	YES	DATE COMPLETED
Have details regarding visit including code of conduct, detailed itinerary, kit list been circulated to parents and accompanying members of staff?			
Have all consent/medical forms been returned?			
Has insurance cover been arranged?			
Has detailed list of group and group leaders going on trip been prepared and a copy given to H.T.			
Has form SCJ1 been completed and signed by H.T.			

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Departure Day

	N/A	YES	DATE COMPLETED
Is all paperwork complete (SCJ1, group list, contact numbers, directions for driver, payment invoice etc...)			
First Aid Kit Mobile Phone – (if party leaders intend to split children up into groups, then each leader should have a mobile phone in order to liaise with other groups.)			
Sick bucket/kitchen roll, 2 carrier bags			
Emergency cash			

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Visit Evaluation

Location of visit

Date of Visit

Class Year Group/Info

Yr =	Number of pupils in Group =
	Number of adult leaders =

Name of Party Leader

Contact at venue

Method of transport

Time left venue

Length of journey back

Any problems encountered

with transport

Brief evaluation of visit

Was it a worthwhile trip?

Value for money?

What could be improved?