

West Lodge School

Early Years Foundation Stage

Educational Visits Policy

PART ONE: INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

INTRODUCTION

West Lodge School places great value on educational visits for all of its pupils, including the very youngest, recognising that they provide a unique opportunity to enhance the curriculum and to extend and support class based work. They provide opportunities which cannot be provided on site and can extend the knowledge and understanding of our youngest pupils.

OUR VISITS

SUPERVISION

Generous staffing levels, close supervision and proper protective clothing are essential for even the shortest of excursions. For all walks within the enclosed school grounds, the children are supervised by their Teacher or a Teaching Assistant who holds a level 3 statutory qualification (as defined by the Children's Workforce Development Council). The children are always briefed in advance about the visit and of the standards of behaviour which we expect.

STAFF RATIOS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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 visits to Sidcup library, the adult ratio is 1:3/4. For all other offsite visits, we operate an adult ratio of 1:3. There is always at least one Teacher, who will have been designated in charge of the visit. A member of staff is qualified in paediatric first aid. We frequently invite parents to volunteer to help with off-site visits. Volunteers are thoroughly briefed about their roles beforehand.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

All parents of children in the Foundation Stage classes are invited to an annual curriculum meeting at the start of the autumn term, when the aims of the year's curriculum, the topics that will be studied and the methods of delivering the curriculum through play, structured activities and outdoor activities will be briefly explained. Your son's or daughter's school calendar lists the visits that are due to take place over the coming academic year. We will send you a letter well in advance, telling you about every visit and, if appropriate, its cost and whether it involves an extension to the normal length of the school day.

All Foundation Stage visits, apart from the Church Services and Sports Day, return your child to the school at their conclusion. You take your child home from the Church at the end of the Church Services and from Sidcup Rugby Club at the end of Sports Day. All visits are optional.

A – Z Handbook

CONSENT

We require your written consent every time that we take your son or daughter off-site. Please note that we are unable to take your son or daughter without a completed and signed consent form. A consent form will be sent to you well in advance and must reach the school at least 3 working days before the visit. For visits to the local library, a consent form is signed at the beginning of the year; you will be advised when your child will be off-site at the library.

PART TWO: INFORMATION FOR STAFF

SAFETY: ADVANCE PLANNING

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Safety is our top priority. Even the shortest of visits needs to be thoroughly planned, and requires its own risk assessment, which must be reviewed thoroughly before a repeat visit is made. (See the model policy for conducting risk assessments for Early Years outings).

HEAD COUNTS

The Teacher in charge conducts, or arranges for another Teacher or Teaching Assistant to conduct a head count of the children (recording the fact that we have done so):

- Before leaving school
- (If applicable) On sitting down in the coach
- On arrival at the destination
- On leaving the destination
- On arrival back at the school

Where we walk, the children walk in pairs, with one adult at the front, one in the middle and one at the back. Children are reminded about basic road safety and of the expected standards of behaviour. When we travel by coach, a member of staff will check that all the pupils are sitting properly and wearing their seat belts.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

Our procedures are structured to ensure that this does not happen; but in the event that a child is missing – either from school, or on a visit, we follow the procedures set out in the Guidelines if a student goes missing (Appendix C) contained in our Child Protection Policy.

FIRST AID KIT etc

The Teacher in charge takes a first aid kit, list of emergency contact numbers and a mobile phone with [him/her] on every outing. We carry bottled water on all of our longer visits.

A – Z Handbook

DELAY

The Teacher in Charge will ring the school if there is any delay, for example, because of heavy traffic. The School Office has copies of all permission slips and will phone the parents to warn them of a delay.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN CHARGE OF AN EYFS VISIT

Every visit, however local, or short, must be planned in advance by the member of staff who is in charge of it. The Teacher in Charge either holds a valid Paediatric First Aid Certificate him/herself, or ensures that another member of staff accompanying the visit holds one.

ROLE OF THE EDUCATION VISITS COORDINATOR (EVC)

If the EVC is the Head of the School, s/he is responsible for approving all requests for visits. Otherwise, s/he works closely with the Head in checking that the paperwork is correct, gives guidance on carrying out risk assessments, budgeting for visits and on permission slips, and keeps a "library" of reports on previous visits.

PERSONAL LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

Staff in charge of pupils have a common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent would do in the same circumstances. The DfE Guidance "The Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits: A Good Practice Guide," is required reading for all Teachers in Charge of an EYFS visit as part of their training in the responsibilities of the role. It explains that their responsibility is to "act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances." Staff who take part in visits and activities outside school may feel concerned about the possibility of being held personally liable if an accident should occur. However, they can be assured that West Lodge School, as their employer will always stand behind them in the unlikely event of an accident occurring, provided they have exercised reasonable care and followed the school's guidelines.

West Lodge School has £5m of Employers' Liability Insurance and £ 5 M of public liability insurance, as well as a group travel policy that covers any visit made by the Early Years Department. Cover includes cancellation or delay, medical expenses, replacement of personal possessions and money.

USE OF PRIVATE CARS

It is school policy not to transport Early Years pupils in private cars belonging to staff.

USE OF HIRED TRANSPORT

The school has a long-standing relationship with a local company that understands that we require all Drivers to come from our list of named drivers, to have current DBS disclosures, and to carry mobile phones.

PREPARATORY ARRANGEMENTS

Dates for visits made by the Early Years Dept need to be agreed with the EVC. Parents will be told about upcoming visits at the annual curriculum meeting at the beginning of the autumn term. Details of visits planned for later in the school year will be advised to parents nearer the proposed dates.

A – Z Handbook

ACTIONS FOR THE TEACHER IN CHARGE

Any visit should be organised a term in advance that:

- Involves additional cost for parents
- Needs to be booked in advance
- Needs transport to be arranged.
- [Hired transport should be booked in accordance with the school's conditions for using hired transport]

AT THAT STAGE:

- Parents should be invited to express an interest and be given an idea of cost.
- Advice should be obtained on any arrangements that may be required for a pupil's individual special and medical needs
- The School Business Manager will need to be informed if tickets and transport need to be reserved.
- The School Business Manager should be asked to arrange DBS checks and take up the necessary references for volunteers.

ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE:

- The Parental consent forms should be sent out with a return date specified.
- Bookings should be finalised
- Check all required details about the coach have been received
- The Risk Assessment should be finalised and approved by the EVC
- Parents should be advised if special clothing (sun hats, waterproof clothing, wellington boots, sun cream) is needed/advisable

TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE:

- Parents should be chased to return their consent forms. They should be reminded that their child cannot participate in the visit without a completed form being received within 3 days of departure
- Theatre tickets should be checked and stored in the school safe
- Meeting with other members of staff participating in the visit to discuss risk assessment, the respective roles of the Teacher in Charge, other staff and volunteers and emergency procedures
- Prepare packs for the accompanying staff, EVC, the School Secretary:
 - The itinerary (*including address, phone numbers etc of all location to be visited*)
 - The Teacher in Charge's mobile number
 - A list of pupils, together with copies of their parental contact forms (which includes details of each pupils' medical conditions)
 - Emergency contact numbers for the Head of the School
 - A copy of the risk assessment.

A – Z Handbook

THE DAY PRIOR TO DEPARTURE / THE DAY OF DEPARTURE

- Remind the children of the aim of the visit and of the expected standards of behaviour
- Give information packs to recipients
- Collect first aid pack. Check contents

DURING THE VISIT

Primary responsibility for the safe conduct of the visit rests with Teacher in Charge. He or she has sole responsibility for amending the itinerary or canceling the visit in the event of unforeseen delay or sudden deterioration in weather conditions. S/He may delegate part or all of the responsibility for the following to one or more of the accompanying staff:

- Carrying out (and recording) head counts of the children on leaving school, on getting on and off each form of transport, entering or leaving a theatre, museum, centre, etc
- Checking that all pupils wear their seat belts
- Enforcing expected standards of behaviour
- Keeping account of all expenditure
- Recording any accidents or near misses

ILLNESS OR MINOR ACCIDENTS

If a Pupil has a minor accident or becomes ill, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff will phone his or her parent's emergency contact number at once and arrange for him/her to be collected. If contact cannot be made, the Teacher in Charge, or another member of staff, will take him/her to the local hospital. A member of staff will remain with the child at the hospital until a parent or carer arrives.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious accident resulting in the death or injury of one or more of the pupils and staff, the Teacher in Charge's first priority would be to summon the emergency services, and to arrange for medical attention for the injured. One of the accompanying members of staff should accompany the injured pupil(s) to hospital and would remain with the child/children until their parents arrived. Ensuring that the rest of the group were safe and looked after, and informing the Head of the School of what had happened would be the next task for the Teacher in Charge, who would need to give as full, calm and factual account as the circumstances permitted. Where the full facts had not yet emerged, he or she should say so, and ensure that follow-up communications with the Head of the School are maintained. He/she would also need to arrange (perhaps using one of the other members of staff, or the School Office) for the parents of the uninjured children to be contacted on their emergency contact numbers and asked to collect their children from either the venue or the school, depending upon the circumstances. The School Office would notify the insurers as quickly as possible. A full record should be kept of the incident, the injuries and of the actions taken.

At West Lodge School, depending on the nature of the incident, we may implement our own model communications plan for informing both the families of the injured, and the families of those who are unhurt as swiftly as possible. We recognise that in an era of instant communications, it may not be possible for us to be the first to break the news. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that we have an important duty to speak personally to the parents of any pupil who has suffered some injury or mishap. We will use mass communication methods (SMS, email, messages on

A – Z Handbook

our web, local radio) for communicating with those whose children are not affected.

Where possible, communication with the media should be left to the Head of the School/School Business Manager. The Teacher in Charge should refer the media to the school. If comment is unavoidable, it should be factual, calm and no attempt made to cover gaps in knowledge.

ON RETURN

Each Teacher in Charge is asked to provide the EVC with a report on the visit, reports of accidents and near misses on his/her return. Personal observations and lessons learned are always valuable. The Group leader should return all school property, [together with a report of any lost or damaged property.]

EXPENDITURE

The Teacher in charge is responsible for producing a schedule of all expenditure on the trip.

REPORT FOR GOVERNORS

The Head of the School's termly report to the Governors always contains a synopsis of all the school trips and visits that have taken place since the last meeting.

Reviewed Date: September 2016

Next Review Date: September 2018

Reviewer: Foundation Co-ordinator