



West Byfleet Infant School  
*We Belong, Inspire, Succeed*

# Educational Visits Policy



Our school vision is 'We Belong, Inspire, Succeed'. This reminds us daily that children need to feel safe and secure within the school community, have opportunities to inspire their interests and have an enthusiasm for learning, as well as achieving success at all levels.

West Byfleet Infant School believes that off-site activities can 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, and there will always be a clear and coherent structure for planning and evaluating all our off-site visits.

Member of staff responsible	Headteacher
Date Policy Produced	Sept 2021
Next review date	Autumn 2026
Other Related Policies	Behaviour Policy Safeguarding Policy
Is it a Statutory Policy?	No
Does it need Governor approval?	Head Teacher

## Educational Visits Policy

### **Introduction**

Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can 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.

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 any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health 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, but on occasions, take place after school.

### **Aims**

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 could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

### **Curriculum links**

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 Wisley Gardens or similar, farm visits, museums, visits by Zootab or similar to look at animals and insects, trips to local allotments and canal
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment, mathematical problem solving workshops
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails
- Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality, local Art competitions
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches
- Music – a variety of assemblies to celebrate cultural diversity, workshops and Surrey Arts sessions
- Design and technology – visits to local area
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries, online platforms

- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by and to the local church
- PSHE and citizenship – visit by the fire station or an old people's residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers, life bus, NSPCC assembly visits

### **How visits may be authorised**

The Head Teacher will appoint a 'party leader' to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

The school's Educational Visits Lead, the Headteacher (or Assistant Headteacher in their absence), will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. They will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips
- organise related staff training
- verify that all accompanying adults have had satisfactory police checks, and that the letter from our coach company assures us their drivers too have had police checks
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained
- keep records of visits, and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues
- Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and school procedures.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive pre-visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made. All relevant paperwork is available on the school system and school format for risk assessment must be used.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits. We will make every effort to ensure that they are included with reasonable adjustments and provision. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme and any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

### **Risk assessment**

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the 'party leader' 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 group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

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 party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will 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 party leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The Headteacher will not give approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, its instructors and their risk assessment procedures.

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, and the Risk Assessment document must state both 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 (if there is a cost incurred).

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the correct ratios (see Appendix 1). Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts and booster seats (if required);
- proper vetting of the driver by the police;
- proper insurance for the driver;
- details of first aid and emergency equipment;
- breakdown procedures.

The party leader will double-check that all adults helping to supervise the trip have been subject to police checks and DBS checks are in place.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be with party leader and all adults supervising or supporting on the trip.

## **Transport**

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance

- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers

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.

Where private cars are used for transport, the party 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.

### **Communication with parents**

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 before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by voluntary parental contributions. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

### **Further health and safety considerations**

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. The party leader on the trip will be given the Operation Duke emergency card which gives the relevant emergency numbers, procedures and contacts to call in the event of a severe accident.

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.

The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

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 party leader should discuss with the Headteacher the possibility of making additional arrangements for that child.

## **Party Leaders' planning**

Party leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for off-site activities:

### **Visit plan**

The visit plan for intended educational visits must include the following:

- risk assessment
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records and other relevant details of all those going on the visit
- travel schedule
- full plan of activities
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures;
- intended arrangements for supervision
- emergency contacts and procedures
- Operation Duke contact card
- general communications information
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher
- first-aid packs
- Any medical equipment required for specific children ie epipens, inhalers etc

### **Monitoring and review**

Party leaders are encouraged to review visits, taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the party leader(s) and the Headteacher regarding the outcome of the visit.

This policy is monitored by the governing body, approved by the Headteacher and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary

Appendix 1:

**STAFFING AND STAFF RATIOS**

General Activities including fieldwork			
Activity	Age of young people	Staff: young person ratios – typical range <b>NB actual ratios must be determined by a process of risk assessment</b>	Party Leader competence
	<b>Reception</b>	1:3-6 ( <i>minimum 2 staff</i> )	
	<b>Years 1-2 (KS1)</b>	1:6-8 ( <i>minimum 2 staff</i> )	
	<b>Years 3-6 (KS2)</b>	1:10-15 ( <i>minimum 2 staff</i> )	