

Educational Visits Policy

“A life without adventure is likely to be unsatisfactory. A life without limits on adventure is likely to be short” Bertrand Russell “Social Cohesion and Human Nature”

Introduction

All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of life. At Westleigh High School we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender, disability, difference in ability or protected characteristic.

To enrich the curriculum for our children we offer a range of educational visits and learning opportunities outside the classroom. It has long been recognised that first hand experiential learning is vital to the learning process and therefore the value of educational visits, including outdoor activities, in supporting the work undertaken within school is recognised of significant importance.

The National Curriculum defines what we teach children in school and this is the basis for agreed programmes of learning for the school year. In addition to this however, teachers plan educational visits and activities that support pupil learning and understanding and also enriches their educational experience.

Organisation

At Westleigh High School, we have adopted Wigan LA procedures for planning and managing educational visits. All staff involved in running or helping with visits have log-ins giving them access to the on line Evolve system for managing visits.

The Governing Body has adopted Wigan LA's "Guidance for Off Site Visits and Related Activities. This document together with our EVC Policy gives local arrangements and variations where necessary to complement "National Guidance for the Management of Outdoor Learning, Off Site visits and Learning Outside the Classroom". Together these documents summarise the arrangements for educational visits at Westleigh High School and are available to all staff via the Evolve website.

Roles

The Governing Body

The governors will periodically review this policy, as required and ensure there is a competent Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who has completed the LA (EVC) training programme and any updates as required.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher will appoint a competent Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) who has completed the LA (EVC) training programme and any updates as required. The Headteacher will "sign off" all visits via the Evolve management system confirming the competencies of staff as required for the planned visit.

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is responsible for ensuring that all visits are properly organised, prepared and approved in advance. The EVC must have undertaken appropriate training provided by the LA. At Westleigh High School the EVC is Mr P Lamoury.

The EVC must ensure that:

- The visit has a clear purpose
- The Group leader is sufficiently experienced
- There are appropriate staffing ratios
- An adequate risk assessment has been carried out and recorded
- Emergency procedures are in place
- All requirements have been met
- Approval has been obtained as required (especially category "2" visits)

The Group leader

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity both on the day and before the visit. The Group Leader operates in "loco parentis" and must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group. The Group leader should:

- Ensure that the visit is planned and recorded on the Evolve management system and must be approved
- Obtain the approval of the EVC/Headteacher for the visit
- Ensure all requirements have been met
- Follow the planning checklist
- Assess the risks involved
- Gain parental consent
- Take action as conditions change
- Take overall responsibility for supervision and conduct of the visit to ensure accountability and to avoid potential confusion

Teachers/Teaching Assistants/Support Staff

All employees of the school who are not the Group Leader also operate in "loco parentis" and must take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group and follow the guidance of the Group Leader, adhere to the risk assessment agreed, be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in the activity, use their professional judgement and maintain a secure environment through good behaviour control and discipline.

The supervision of students will differ dependent on each individual trip. The details of which will be stipulated on letters to parents regarding the visit which will be checked by the EVC

Staff will be allowed one alcoholic drink with meals, but with the exception of a male and female member of staff who will abstain each day.

Pupils

Pupils taking part in visits need to be made aware of their own responsibilities for their own health and safety and should:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the Group leader and other members of staff
- Behave sensibly and follow agreed codes of conduct
- Dress appropriately
- Inform a member of staff of any significant hazards
- Be sensitive to local circumstances

Parents/Guardians

Parents should inform school of any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit. They should provide emergency contact details and read and sign the consent form. They should also support the school by preparing children for the visit especially with regard to expected behaviour conduct.

Adult volunteers

Adult volunteers should be clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Adult volunteers must:

- Take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of everyone in their group
- Not be left in sole charge of children (unless it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment)
- Follow the instructions of the Group leader and teaching/teaching assistant staff and help with the maintenance of good control and discipline.

Charging for School Activities

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some circumstances when the school can make a charge for certain activities and these are detailed in the Charging and Remissions Policy. A copy of this is available on the school website or from the School Office. The Governing Body has agreed that parents will be invited to make a voluntary contribution towards school visits or activities in school not part of the national curriculum or not wholly subsidised by other funds. Voluntary contributions will be used to cover the costs of travel, materials, admission fees and/or overnight accommodation costs.

First Aid Kit

First aid should form part of the risk assessment. The Group Leader (or the member of staff identified as the First Aider) must ensure that an appropriate first aid kit is available on all school visits and carried with them at all times. The risk assessment for the activity should identify when a more comprehensive kit is required and/or when more First Aiders are necessary.

Adult/Pupil ratios of supervision

There are many variables governing appropriate staffing ratios however, the following ratios should be seen as minimum figures and should not need to be exceeded unless specified. These figures are based on the Wigan LA recommendations.

A visit must not go ahead where either the visit leader, EVC, or Headteacher is not satisfied that an appropriate level of supervision exists.

Ratios taken from National Guidance;

Year 7 – 11 **1:15/20**
Residential **1:10**

The ratio of adults to pupil should however be based on the risk assessment of the issues involved, including pupil needs (SEN/behaviour/medical), the venue, activity and duration of the visit, transport arrangements and the experience and competence of staff on the visit.

SEN and/or medical needs

Additional attention within the risk assessment should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and safety measures for children with AEN/SEN and/or specific medical needs. All staff supervising visits should be aware of any pupils' SEN or medical needs and any emergency medical procedures associated with any individual children. The Group Leader should ensure that all necessary medication (inhalers etc) is available throughout the duration of the visit.

Inclusion

Visits should be planned with a presumption of entitlement for all protected characteristic groups/pupils to participate, ensuring integration through participation with peers wherever possible. Accessibility should be ensured through direct or realistic adaptation or modification as required.

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment is "the systematic identification of hazards associated with an activity and the evaluation of the risks associated with those hazards" The school follows the guidelines on Risk Assessment in the LA guidance. The risk assessment identifies significant risks and takes measures to control these using the HSE "five steps to risk assessment" model. This includes:

- Look for hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
- Record findings
- Review the assessment and revise if necessary

A risk assessment must be undertaken prior to all educational visits and off site activities. The Headteacher and/or EVC delegate this responsibility to the Group Leader but must approve the risk assessment before the visit/activity is allowed to go ahead. The risk assessment must include the SEN/medical needs of the specific group.

The school has a standard format for risk assessments. Risk assessments should be completed for all educational visits and should be simple, manageable and fit for purpose. A combination of a paper based risk assessment system combined with the Evolve (educational visit planning, notification, monitoring and reporting system) online system is considered proportional, suitable and sufficient.

Pre-visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, a pre-visit is recommended (but not an absolute requirement) with regard to the venue, activity, duration of the visit and transport arrangements. Even where a visit is made regularly it is good practice to re-assess the risks associated with the visit. Where applicable, it is the responsibility of the Group Leader to undertake the pre-visit.

Transport

In order to ensure that the transport used for visits is suitable and conforms with legislative requirements the school will only use hired transport from a reputable and approved company. Seat belts must be provided on all seats and it is school policy that each child will wear a seatbelt whilst travelling on a school visit.

Private cars will only be used in exceptional circumstances and seatbelts must be worn and the legal requirements relating to child restraints and booster seats must be complied with. Parents will be notified of these arrangements. Evidence of appropriate insurance cover for staff whilst carrying pupils whilst at work (business cover use on insurance certificate) is required. Checks will also be made on

MOT certificates and driving licences, which must be clean. Students must sit in the back of vehicles and seat belts worn. Two adults must be present for the duration of the trip.

Voluntary Help

Whilst we endeavour to ensure that visits are fully supported by staff we are aware that some visits could not go ahead without the goodwill of volunteer helpers. Volunteers will normally be people well known to the school as parents, governors or classroom volunteers/students. All volunteers are required to follow the instructions of the Group Leader and the visit organiser will define their role and responsibilities in advance of the visit. Where possible volunteers should be DBS cleared.

Insurance

Westleigh High School currently buys into an annual policy with Wigan LA which provides personal insurance for all educational visits. Residential visits are categorised as "Category 2" visits and are only undertaken with the approval of the Local Authority and the Governing Body and require additional insurance cover prior to approval.

Emergency procedure

The Group Leader must ensure that all members of the group know what action to take if there is a problem and follow the "emergency procedure" guidelines (<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Resident/Education/Schools/Off-site-visits-guidance.pdf>). (Appendices 5 and 6).

The Group leader must ensure that there is a complete list of children together with access to emergency contact details at all times. The Group Leader must be contactable by mobile telephone at all times and maintain regular contact with the Headteacher/EVC/school as required.

Adopted by the Board of Governors and recorded in the Minutes	John Holland 18/01/2016
Review Date:	April 2017
Headteacher	