



BEECHWOOD
Primary School

**EDUCATIONAL VISITS
POLICY**

SEPTEMBER 2021

Approved by: **Leadership & Management Committee**

Date:

Last reviewed on: **September 2021**

Next review due by: **September 2023**

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

1. Rationale:

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff at Beechwood believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences that would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose; enriching the children's learning experiences and providing them with a passport of opportunity.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum for the safety and health of all pupils and staff. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils. Visits will usually take place within the school day.

2. 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.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area in the Early Years, and progress to residential experiences in Key Stages 1 and 2.

3. Curriculum Links:

The curriculum is themed by term/half-term within each year group. Educational visits and visitors into school are built into the planning for the theme by the class teacher as an initial stimulus to engage the children with the learning or to embed all learning at the end of a period of study. All visits will have curricular links.

4. Residential Activities

Children in Years 2, 3 and 5 have the opportunity to take part in residential visits. These activities take place in school time and beyond and are closely linked to the National Curriculum. We make a charge for board and lodging, travel, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. We undertake these visits only with the agreement of the Local Authority. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

5. Authorising Visits:

The headteacher will appoint a leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school. The designated person will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed and submitted to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (Helen Crowther) and the headteacher;
- assign competent staff to accompany visits;
- organise related staff training;
- ensure medical forms/contact details to be kept by the visit leader and copies left with the headteacher;
- verify that all accompanying adults, including private car drivers, have had satisfactory DBS checks and that the coach company assures the school their drivers have had police checks;
- ensure that all necessary permission 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 (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the Local Authority.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator 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.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the headteacher will seek the approval of the governing body and the Local Authority before permitting the activity to take place.

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 visit, we will make every effort to ensure that they are included. We may seek guidance from parents to help us adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a child with disabilities. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

6. Health and Safety - Risk Assessment:

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group 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. A decision will also be made whether to renew or revise an existing risk assessment. 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 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 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 group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if they lack the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve. The Local Authority will not have given its approval for the visit unless it is satisfied with the venue, the 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. The Risk Assessment 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 pre-visits will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself. Activities will have sufficient adults taking part to provide at least the minimum ratios:

- 1 adult to 10 - 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6 depending on the activities involved;
- 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3 depending on the activities involved;
- 1 adult to 2 - 4 pupils in Early Years depending on the activities involved.

Any visit will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are *minimum* requirements, and may *not* provide adequate supervision in all cases. The headteacher will make the final decision on appropriate ratios.

A risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company must have the following health and safety measures in place:

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

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be sent to and approved by EVOLVE. Paper copies will also be given to the headteacher and all adults supervising the trip in advance of departure.

All adults accompanying a visit must be made aware, by the visit leader, of the emergency procedures that will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number (normally the school mobile number) and the mobile numbers of the SLT and the other adults accompanying the visit. Where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home telephone number(s) of a designated emergency contact should be provided (usually the headteacher).

Before a party leaves school, the office should be provided with a list of all children and adults travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

First aid boxes/bumbags should be taken, one for each group led by an adult. Parents are also responsible for informing the school of any allergies on the medical forms.

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 visit leader should discuss this with the headteacher who will consider extra support for the child and/or whether it is in the child's best interest to be involved in the visit.

7. Transport:

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

- transport;
- pre-visit expenses;
- entrance fees;
- insurance;
- provision of any special resources or equipment;
- costs related to adult helpers;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

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 they are worn by all.

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. Booster seats should be used for children under 135cm in height when riding in private cars. No adult should be alone in a car with a single child.

8. Communication with Parents:

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with full 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 parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). 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. 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.

9. Visit Plan:

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

- risk assessment;
- report on preliminary visit;
- applications for approval of visit;
- general information;
- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, permission to photograph forms, medical details and other relevant details of all children involved;
- travel schedule;
- accommodation plan (if applicable);
- full plan of activities;
- intended arrangements for supervision;
- emergency contacts and procedures;
- general communications information;
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher;
- first-aid supplies information;
- insurance cover.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Leadership and Management Governor sub-committee, held on _____

Date to be reviewed: **September 2023**

Signed:

Name of signatory :

S. Harper

J. Cargill

Role of signatory:

Headteacher

Chair of Governors