ST LUKE'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND OUTDOOR LEARNING

April 2025

The provision and development of this Educational Visits Policy is the responsibility of the Governors of St Luke's School.

Aims

- To provide a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enabling them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience.

- To provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum.

- To ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised and that learning is memorable. To provide learning outside the classroom that can help make subjects more vivid, interesting, enhance children's understanding and contribute to their personal, social and emotional development. This policy sets out expectations for organising a trip or learning outside the classroom.

- To ensure clear organisation and control of visits which in turn leads to successful experiences and those that provide a rich, learning experience for pupils.

Visit types

Local Area Visits

- Described as low risk or routine visits, with no more than an everyday level of risk, covered by school current policies and procedures. These can be recorded using EVOLVE's Local Area Visit module, which enables a visit to be recorded for approved local activities, where completing a full EVOLVE Visit Form would be overly bureaucratic.

- A visit is considered to be local if it is within Sway Village. In addition venues visited for sporting activities, twenty miles or less from the school and have a risk assessment in place, can also be recorded using EVOLVE's Local Area Visit module.

Visits requiring additional and more detailed planning

- A visit moves into this category because one or more aspects cannot be managed adequately by existing procedures and policy. This may be due to the distance from the school, the nature of the activities, the environment or venue, the nature of the particular group, the need for specialist leader competencies, or any combination of these. For some visits this will involve detailed planning over an extended period of time. The additional steps needed to manage these aspects should be identified and recorded in Evolve.

Roles and Responsibilities

Hampshire County Council

Hampshire County Council will, through the Outdoor Education Service, support schools in leading trips and outdoor learning by

- providing access to advice on all aspects of visits, from ratios to adventure activities and risk assessments, in addition to written guidance and information about legal responsibilities and powers.
- managing a successful approval system – Evolve - www.**hampshire**outdoors.com All open country, residential and adventurous activities/visits must be authorised by HCC.
- providing Educational Visits training, for example, Outdoor Leader training for Group Leaders and Educational Visits Leader training.
- supporting in the event of an emergency.
- sharing details of applicable insurance cover. (**See Appendix 4 / 4B Travel Insurance)**

The Headteacher will

- ensure that the management of trips and outdoor learning meets the regulations and guidance offered by Hampshire County Council, DFE and others as well as conforming to the Health and Safety policy
- ensure that all staff are provided with a copy of the Policy for Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning and are aware of the school's expectations.
- ensure that there is a clear record of staff qualifications and DBS checks in relation to Outdoor Learning.
- ensure that the establishment has robust emergency procedures in place and liaises with the Council's team should an emergency occur.
- following submission by the Group Leader and Educational Visits Leader, approve all trips and Outdoor Learning before they take place.
- Ensure that the school seeks authorisation from HCC through EVOLVE for all open country, residential and adventurous activities/visits

The Educational Visits Coordinators (Mark Gannaway and Charlotte Brown)

- will be experienced in leading and managing a range of educational visits
- will have completed certified Educational Visits Coordinator training.
- ensure that an annual plan of visits is recorded on curriculum maps, ensuring an agreed rationale for 'when and how they occur'.
- be involved in educational visit management in order to ensure that the guidance and regulations are followed
- monitor and evaluate trips and outdoor learning to ensure that the learning benefits are clear;
- ensure that there is always an appointed and appropriate group leader for all trips and outdoor learning;
- work with group leaders to ensure that the aims of the educational visit are appropriate and achievable

- liaise with the Outdoor Education Service
- confirm that the leadership of all visits is appropriate, checking staff qualifications, and adequate completion of risk assessments before submitting to the Headteacher for approval.
- Recommend and organise training of group leaders and help organise the induction of new staff new to the school and leading of trips
- Ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining of consent is effective.

The Group Leader is the person with overall responsibility for the administration, programme, supervision, and conduct of a venture, trip or outdoor learning activity.

They will

- have completed certified Outdoor Leader training, provided by Hampshire Outdoor Education and gained an Outdoor Leader Award (valid for 5 years)
- have experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit, organise the group effectively and put into action a suitable behaviour management system and / or code of rules which may mean adapting that of the school's behaviour policy to the outdoor context.
- provide information and guidance to pupils as an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. Lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety. Wherever possible, it is good practice to involve pupils in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but in addition to sharing the aims and objectives of the visit / activity and background information about the place to be visited; they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information.

    - how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
    - why safety precautions are in place;
    - why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
    - what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils;
    - who is responsible for the group;
    - what to do if approached by a stranger;
    - what to do if separated from the group
    - emergency procedures
    - rendezvous procedures.
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability; pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be forced into activities they fear.
- undertake a comprehensive review of the needs of the venture.

- wherever possible undertake an exploratory visit to and must in the case of an open country visit:
    - ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
    - assess potential areas and levels of risk;
    - ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
    - ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

  If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from the Tourist Boards.

- ensure effective supervision, **(See Appendix 2 – Supervision ratios and Qualifications Guidance**) by having a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit, taking into consideration:

    - sex, age and ability of group;
    - special needs pupils;
    - the nature of activities;
    - the experience of adults in off site supervision;
    - the duration and nature of the journey;
    - the type of any accommodation;
    - the competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

  Where there is more than one adult supervisor, one group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

  Where a high adult / pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school.

  All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

  For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil, where possible. The group leader will check that all adults and helpers on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;

- complete a risk benefit assessment **(See Appendix 1 : Risk Benefit Assessment**) Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making

plans to avoid them. The risk benefit assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks? (Lack of boundaries, open water, tides, the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken; the location; the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff; the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament; pupils with special educational or medical needs; the quality and suitability of available equipment; seasonal conditions, weather and timing.
- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level? (E.g. charged mobile phone with signal, throw rope, tide timetable)
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency? **(See Appendix 3 – Offsite Emergency procedures.)** There must always be an emergency base contact number which is available for the duration of the trip (24/7 in the case of residentials).
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? The risk assessment will highlight the adult:child ratio for each visit. **(See Appendix 2 - HCC Supervision ratios and qualifications guidance**

Once all the control measures are in place, the risks should be assessed as low. The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

- aim to provide parents /guardians with at least 4 weeks' notice of any trip via a Trip Letter, **(See Appendix 5 – Trip Letter/ Email and Google Form)** Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters affecting pupils' health and safety is useful to parents and should be included in a letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit

  - Dates of the visit;
  - Times of departure and return;
  - Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
  - Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
  - Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;
  - Visit's objectives;
  - Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
  - On longer trips, insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested;
  - Clothing and equipment to be taken;
  - Money to be taken or not;
  - The information to be given by parents, for example contact details and what they will be asked to consent to.

- ensure that all documentation relating to the trip is saved on the School Network in *Curriculum/ Trips and Outdoor Education/ Year Group / Trip Folder.*
- upload the completed risk benefit assessment and other relevant documentation (letter, trip programme etc) to Evolve (www.**hampshire**outdoors.com) for checking by the Educational Visits Leader and approval by the Headteacher, Note: Approval must be sought by the Headteacher before confirming any details with providers or parents.
- ensure that parents have provided informed consent via a Googleform or response to letter; (Please note that/ technically, consent is not required for non adventurous / open country activities as long as they are part of the curriculum. The Headteacher should always in situations where consent is not given make a decision about whether a child will take part.)
- ensure that arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- ensure that the mode of travel is appropriate;
- ensure that the Trip Programme includes the address and phone number of the visit's venue and a contact name; the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group **(See Appendix 6 – Trip Programme)**
- ensure that they have the contact details of next of kin of parents, staff and volunteer helping on the day of the trip and that they have checked this information on the day before the trip.
- be suitably qualified if instructing a specific activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity,
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- ensure that appropriate first-aid provision is available. First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, visits abroad or open country visits must have at least one trained first-aider in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services. The minimum first-aid provision is:
    - a suitably stocked first-aid box;
    - a qualified 'first aider' is to be present at all times.
    - Inhalers for asthmatic pupils (see asthma policy)
    - Epi-pen for pupils who require one
    - First-aid must be available and accessible at all times. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below)
- put in place any special arrangements necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable. It is imperative that the Group Leader is able to observe what is going on and base any decisions on the evidence of their own eyes.

- ensure that whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.
- understand and manage incident and emergency procedures.**(See Appendix 3 – Offsite Emergency Procedures)**

Other adults on a visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;

- The responsibility for delivering the aims in this policy rests with the Headteacher, the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) and all staff.

Responsibilities of pupils

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group will be asked to be accompanied by a parent or as a last resort may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils will be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents

Parents are responsible for

- reading the information provided by the group leader about the purpose and details of the visit attending any briefing sessions for longer visits.
- preparing children for a trip in line with guidance received in the trip letter and in line with the school policy, for example by reinforcing the visit's code of conduct
- signing the consent form
- giving the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.
- giving permission for medical treatment including the use of anaesthetics in an emergency
- Providing the group leader with emergency contact number(s);

Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including the need to:

- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- not rush towards the transport when it arrives;
- wear a seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure bags do not block aisles on the transport
- never attempt to get on or off moving transport;
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows;
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic;
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs;
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- never distract or disturb the driver;
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- always use the Green Cross Code when crossing the road.
- tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group, if feeling unwell while travelling,
- where appropriate cross roads using the 'wave approach', with maximum groups of 12.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits. Instead, every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures will be addressed at the planning stage. On some occasions, for safety reasons, parents may be required to attend a trip in order for a child to participate.

Parents transporting pupils in private vehicles

The trip organiser must ensure that any parent volunteers who offer to transport pupils, have completed the **Agreement to Drive Record of Details Form** and provided the required documents.

Volunteer drivers must provide a copy of their insurance certificate/confirmation including:

- Written evidence that they have advised their insurer that they will be carrying children in their vehicles
- Insurers response kept with the relevant paperwork and insurance documents.

Teachers and volunteer who drive pupils in their own car must ensure their passengers' safety, that the vehicle is roadworthy, and that they have appropriate licence and

insurance cover for carrying the pupils. Volunteers should be carefully vetted by the school before they are permitted to drive pupils in their car. If necessary, assurances should be requested by the head teacher.

The driver is responsible for making sure that pupils have a seat belt and use it at all times. Vehicles without seat belts should not be used.

Head teachers or group leaders who wish to use parents, volunteers or other pupils to help transport pupils in their own cars, must ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibility for the safety of the pupils in their cars. Parents’ agreement should be sought (on the consent form) for their children to be carried in other parents’ cars. It is advisable that parents driving pupils are not put in a position where they are alone with a pupil. The group leader should arrange a central dropping point for all pupils rather than individual home drops.

Teachers, other adults or pupils using their own cars to carry pupils on school visits should ensure that their vehicle is properly licensed and that the insurance covers its use on school business.