

East Meon Church of England (Controlled) Primary School

Educational Visits and Trips Policy



Learning inspired by love, hope and courage.

Approved by Full Governors

Date: 6th November 2024

Reviewed by: Catherine Olver (Headteacher)

Next review due by: November 2025

Our Aim

At East Meon Church of England Primary School, we offer children a wide range of opportunities to take part in activities which enrich the curriculum in highly motivating and exciting environments. These activities take place both on and off our school site. They not only help children to learn, but also provide them with memorable life experiences on which to build future learning. Opportunities are well planned and structured to ensure that they help to raise achievement and engagement.

This policy has been put in place to ensure that educational visits and trips are carried out in a safe and diligent manner.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a school we understand our responsibilities as set out in both Hampshire and National guidance and use the approval system and guidance provided for planning and managing visits. We closely follow the guidance of Hampshire Outdoors which is based on OEAP National guidance.

Governors

The role of the governing body is to ensure that:

- There is an educational visits and trips policy and appropriate procedures in place, including emergency procedures and other related policies such as child protection and safeguarding policies and charging policy;
- There are formal notification and approval procedures for visits;
- Reference is made to the appropriate guidance documents provided both by Hampshire and nationally.

Headteacher

The role of the headteacher is to ensure that:

- The policies and procedures for outdoor learning and visits conform with their employer's guidance.
- Establishment staff are competent in carrying out the roles allocated to them, and that there is a robust system in place for approving leaders and approving plans for activities and visits.
- Reference is made to the appropriate guidance documents provided both by Hampshire and nationally.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

At East Meon Church of England Primary School, the role of EVC is held by the headteacher. The EVC is the establishment's focal point for planning and monitoring visits and outdoor learning.

The EVC should be an experienced Visit Leader with sufficient status within the establishment to guide the working practice of colleagues leading outdoor learning and visits. The EVC must have completed the appropriate training to carry out this role.

Visit Leader

A Visit Leader has overall responsibility for managing a visit, including for the health and safety of participants and staff, and the supervision, welfare, learning and development of the participants. They work closely with the EVC when planning a visit, and are responsible for deploying the Activity Leaders during a visit.

Activity Leader

An Activity Leader is responsible for the management of a group (or subgroup) taking part in a specific activity within a visit, including for their supervision, health, safety, welfare, learning and development. They are responsible to the Visit Leader.

Helpers

A helper (normally an adult) has an agreed role during a visit, but is not a Visit Leader, Activity Leader or participant. For example, a Helper might be: an inexperienced member of staff; a parent; an apprentice, student or trainee; a carer. Any child or young person acting as a Helper should be regarded as a participant for the purposes of supervision, safeguarding and parental consent.

Volunteers

A Volunteer may take any role in a visit, including Visit Leader, Activity Leader and Helper. Whichever role they take, they must meet the requirements for that role.

Approval of Leaders and Visits

The school has a clear approach to approving people to lead visits or activities. This ensures that leaders are accountable, confident and competent to lead the specific visits or activities for which they are approved. The headteacher will assess whether the leader is confident and able to take charge of a situation with an awareness of their own abilities and limitations.

Accountability is ensured through an appropriate recruitment process, including vetting and induction regardless of role. Regardless of employment status, the leader should have a good understanding of the chain of accountability, what is expected of them and the school's policy.

Competence is determined by the headteacher on a case by case basis based on their assessment of the suitability of that person to lead that group on that visit/activity in that environment.

Evidence used to establish determination may include:

- Observations of their group management and supervision skills within their day-to-day work in the establishment;
- Evidence of relevant experience – e.g. assisting on visits or leading visits in a previous establishment;
- Their personal interests and experience relevant to the proposed activities and environments;
- Evidence of having undertaken appropriate training;
- Evidence of relevant qualifications, including any specific qualification required by the law.

They will also take into account their judgment of how an individual may react in a crisis and to what extent they are likely to remain calm and in control.

All visits which are residential, overseas, 'open country' or include adventure activity must be approved internally and confirmed by Evolve. The request for approval needs to be submitted via Evolve to the Outdoor Education service, ideally at least four weeks prior to departure for visits within Europe and much longer for visits beyond.

Parental Communication and Consent

Parents are kept informed about all off-site and educational visits at East Meon Church of England Primary School. Parents are asked to give their permission for local visits at the beginning of each year and are informed as to the nature of these visits, which include visits to the local church and walks within the village or local area. Parents are informed separately in writing about regular trips to local venues such as weekly swimming at Taro Leisure Centre and other visits such as class and whole school trips where transport is needed. In these cases, consent from parents is requested for each visit or series of visits. Parents are also kept informed of any changes to the planned arrangements.

All letters to parents must be approved by the headteacher and then sent to parents at least a week before the visit is due to take place. Letters to parents should include the following:

- The date of the visit
- The time of departure and estimated time of return
- The purpose of the visit and activities planned
- The venue including address and telephone number where appropriate
- The method of travel
- The name of the group leader
- The cost of the visit and the voluntary contribution
- The details of special clothing or equipment requirements
- The date by which the consent slip and contributions must be returned to school (approximately two days before visit)
- The details about packed lunch, if required
- A consent slip

Monitoring

The quality of educational visits is monitored by the headteacher and governors through review of risk assessments, planning for activities, feedback from children and through field observation where appropriate. Field observation monitoring is carried out for all ECTs on their first visit and then subsequent visits if required.

Induction and Training

As part of their induction and training, new staff are expected to read this policy and are supported in planning and organising their first offsite visit. Staff identified as requiring practical training and experience as assistant leaders are given the opportunity to work with a more experienced leader. EVC training is renewed every three years.

Risk Management and Risk-Benefit Assessment

National and Hampshire Guidance provides advice about risk management and risk-benefit assessment. Risk assessments are carried out for each off-site visit or series of visits using the Hampshire risk assessment form and guidance. The provision of generic risk assessments and standard operating guidelines are used where appropriate, to avoid the need for writing event-specific risk assessments for every visit.

Risk assessments are carried out prior to each trip following the Hampshire guidance with reference to the supervision and equal opportunities strategies as set out in the documentation. Preparatory visits to all sites are carried out by staff prior to the school visit in order to assess risks. Risk assessments are signed off by the headteacher prior to each visit and shared with all children and adults involved. Children are involved in the planning and preparation for visits including risk management and recording of the risk/benefit assessments where appropriate. For further information about travel, see Appendix A - Procedures for Travelling by Coach or Minibus.

Hampshire guidance for staff ratios contained within 'Off-site activities and educational visits' is used when determining the number and experience of adults required for each visit.

Assessing Venues and Providers

In order to reduce bureaucracy for both leaders and providers, the establishment takes advantage of national approval schemes and guidance on Hampshire's EVOLVE system. Where providers are not accredited and where a visit takes place at a new venue, staff carry out a pre-visit which assists them in gaining information to help them make an approval decision.

Volunteers

All volunteers on educational visits:

- Have an enhanced DBS check unless supervision throughout the visit by a member of staff can be guaranteed;
- Have their role and responsibilities and the risk assessment shared with them by the Visit Leader prior to the visit taking place;
- Volunteers who are qualified teachers or who are employed by the school in another capacity and have completed a full vetting, recruitment and induction procedure may act as Visit Leaders or their assistants;
- Have been assessed by the headteacher to be competent to carry out their assigned role (see the section regarding the role of the headteacher);
- Will be supervised at all times unless they a DBS check has been completed.

Behaviour

The school's Behaviour Policy sets out the expectations for behaviour and the way behaviour is managed. Pupils are reminded of behaviour expectations before all visits and parents are made aware of the expectations, and in certain circumstances, may support the school's expectations of behaviour by agreeing to accompany children or to collect them from visits.

Inclusion

Further information about inclusion is contained within the school's Equality Policy and incorporates these principles:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate;
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification;
- Integration through participation with peers.

It is unlawful to:

- Treat a disabled young person less favourably;
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

Expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a given young person) is within their competence and is reasonable.

Insurance

Insurance for visits is provided through Hampshire LEA.

Finance

For information on charging please refer to the school's Charging and Remissions Policy. Information about financial management is available from the Hampshire Manual of Financial Practice.

Data Protection

Information about staff and participants, including recognisable photographs, is subject to data protection law.

For the health and safety of those involved in visits, relevant personal data for visits is available to leaders and external providers for planning activities, and in the event of an emergency. During school hours, contact details are available via the school office and before and after school hours, copies are made available to leaders. These are then destroyed or stored securely once the activity is completed.

Appendix A

Guidance for Travelling by Coach Or Minibus

Travelling by coach as a whole class can offer a valuable experience for our children in support of classroom work and their own personal social development. As a staff, we have drawn up the following guidelines which we will all adhere to in an attempt to provide a safe and valuable experience for our children.

Bookings

Bookings will be made as far in advance as possible after obtaining quotations from companies with adequate insurance cover for the loss of personal effects and breakdown back up. Bookings will be confirmed in writing with the time of the coach's arrival at the pick-up point clearly specified.

Seating Arrangements

Two children will share a double seat on any journey. No child will be allowed to sit :

- in the middle of the back seat (i.e. facing the walk way)
- in the front seats
- beside the emergency exit door.

Supervision

The middle of the back seat of the bus or coach will be reserved by a member of staff before the children board. This is in order that good overall management of behaviour is maintained from a position with a suitable field or view. Additionally, this will ensure that an adult is in close proximity to the emergency exit. Another adult will sit close to the driver. The "First Aider" will be responsible for carrying tissues, sick bags and litter sacks.

Behaviour

All children must remain seated with their seat belts fastened until the teacher in charge says otherwise. The children will not be allowed to stand or kneel on the seats while the bus or coach is moving.

Activities

The children might be asked to complete an activity on the journey at the discretion of the teacher in charge.

Planned Rest Stop

In consultation with the driver, the teacher in charge will plan toilet and refreshment stops as appropriate.

Contingency Arrangements

We will ensure that sufficient funds are taken to cover the cost of alternative transport home in case a child requires medical treatment. In such a case, one adult will stay with the child. The parent will be informed (details will be on child's personal record card) as well as the school.

Litter

A litter clearance of the coach must be undertaken on returning, along with a check for lost property.

Food and Drink

No food or drink will be consumed on the coach or whilst it is moving unless the children are specifically asked to do so by the teacher in charge.

Appendix B

Off Site Visits – What to bring

During each off-site and educational visit, staff take the following:

- Contact information for the school, transport company and venue
- Medical information for each child along with medication
- First aid kit / kits
- Sickness bucket
- A mobile phone
- Contact information for each child if the visit extends beyond the school day

Each group leader takes the following:

- Refuse sacks
- Tissues
- A copy of the risk assessment
- Group lists – including travel arrangements
- A timetable of the day

The School office retains a copy of:

- The risk assessment
- Group lists
- A timetable of the day
- Contact information for each child
- Medical information for each child
- Contact information for the group leader, transport company and venue