

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: October 2023

Reviewed by:

Julie Slamaker (Acting Headteacher)

Next review due by:

October 2025

This policy is based on the Hampshire County Council Model Policy for Educational Visits and Trips.

This policy must be read in conjunction with regulations and guidance from Hampshire LEA 'Off-site activities and educational visits regulations and guidance' and National Guidance (searchable documents) from OEAP.

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 visits 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.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a school we understand our responsibilities as set out in the Hampshire and National guidance and use the approval system and guidance for planning and managing visits.

Governors

The role of the governing body is to enable and ensure high quality visits and outdoor learning through support and challenge. They ensure that:

- There is an establishment visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures 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 OEAP documents including 3.3c 'Management Board and Governor Check List', 5.1a 'Establishment self-evaluation form' and 5.1c 'Learning Outside and Off-site visits - self-evaluation using the Ofsted framework'.

Headteacher

The role of the headteacher is to ensure policies and procedures for outdoor learning and visits conform with their employer's guidance. They are responsible for ensuring that establishment staff are competent for the roles allocated to them, and that there is a robust system in place for approving leaders and approving plans for activities and visits. Many of the day-to-day tasks associated with the responsibilities of a headteacher can be delegated to an EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator), depending upon their competence. To support them in their role the headteacher will refer to the OEAP document 3.4g "Head Teacher/Manager" and 5.3b "How to Write an Establishment Visits Policy".

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. To support them in their role the EVC refers to OEAP guidance, including document 3.4j 'Educational Visits Coordinator - EVC's key functions.

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. An Assistant Leader supports the Visit Leader or an Activity Leader, and may be required to take over from them if necessary. They refer to guidance about their responsibilities, and the competence necessary to fulfil them, in OEAP documents 3.4k "Visit or Activity Leader", 3.4l "Assistant Leaders" and 3.2d "Approval of Leaders".

Helpers

A helper (normally an adult) has an agreed role during a visit, but is not a Visit Leader, Assistant 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. Further guidance on the role is available from OEAP document 3.4m "Helper".

Volunteers

A Volunteer may take any role in a visit, including Visit Leader, Activity Leader, Assistant Leader and Helper. Whichever role they take, they must meet the requirements for that role. Further guidance is available in the OEAP document 3.4o "Volunteer".

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, 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. (See Hampshire Guidance on Approval Systems for further details).

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, 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 including the name of the travel company
- The name of the group leader, other staff and accompanying parents
- 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 (healthy lunch with environmentally friendly packaging)
- 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 subsequent visits if required. Further guidance on monitoring is available in OEAP 3.2b “Monitoring”.

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 within an apprenticeship model. EVC training is renewed every three years.

Risk Management and Risk-Benefit Assessment

National LEA 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.

Further guidance is available from OEAP 1b “Foundations” and 4.3c “Risk Management – an overview”.

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. Further guidance on

this can be found in the OEAP guidance document 4.4h 'Using External Providers and Facilities' and 4.4f 'Assessing an Adventure Activity Provider'. Where providers are not accredited, staff use document 8p which contains a pre-visit questionnaire. This assists them in gaining information to help them make an approval decision.

Staff carry out preliminary visits to all venues that they have not visited within the previous year.

Volunteers

All volunteers on educational visits:

- Have an enhanced DBS check unless supervision throughout the visit by a member of staff can be guaranteed;
- Complete an induction including reading through an induction booklet for volunteers;
- 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. Further information and guidance is available in the OEAP document 3.2e "Inclusion".

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. See EOAP document 4.4j "Participant Information and Data Protection".

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
- A copy of the Hampshire 'Serious Incident / Accident' action card for group leaders
- 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
- A copy of the Hampshire 'Serious Incident / Accident' action card for the base contact person
- Contact information for the group leader, transport company and venue

'Hampshire Guidance for Off-Site Activities' is available on Staff Share, Policies and Evolve.