

Westgate Primary School
- A Place of Excellence –
Educational Visits Policy
2016-2018



Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn.

Not only does Outdoor Learning happen in the natural environments where participants can see, hear, touch and smell the real thing, it also happens in an arena where actions have real results and consequences. Outdoor Learning can help to bring many school subjects alive while also providing experiential opportunities for fulfilling the National Curriculum aim "to enable pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities, to manage risk and to cope with change and adversity."

Source: DfES & QCA, The National Curriculum, 'Aims for the School Curriculum' 1999

The school has formally adopted, through its Governing Body, the Kent Regulations and Guidance for the Safe Practice of Offsite Visits/Educational Visits. Further school procedures have been agreed with the Governing Body to ensure that this policy is adhered to and can be found on the school staff shared documents file under Educational Visits..

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school

The range of opportunities and activities are outlined in the school prospectus along with the criteria by which pupils are able to access them and the methods by which parents will be notified and asked for their consent.

The Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Out of hours clubs (music, drama, art, science, sport, homework, etc)
- School teams
- Regular nearby visits (village halls, libraries, shops, parks and woodlands, places of worship, farms)
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits

- Overseas visits

These activities are offered by invitation, by class or year group or by other criteria

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Head of School is also the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities to the Head of School as signatories, as necessary, on behalf of the Governing Body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents the Head of School/EVC must approve the initial plan. For residential activities then this must also be approved by the Governing Body. All risk assessments and final documentation needs to be approved by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator a minimum of 1 week before the scheduled trip, otherwise permission will be withdrawn and the trip will not be permitted to go ahead.

Visits that include adventurous activities and/ or a residential element will require approval by the Local Authority via the on-line Visit Notification and Approval system. Evolve Usernames and Passwords will be managed by the EVC or Head of School.

All day visits that do not include adventurous activities will be submitted on the above system and authorised by the EVC. Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the pupils. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts. For out of hours clubs, school teams and nearby visits, parents will be asked to sign a general letter of consent for participation in these activities when their son/daughter enters the school. Parents will be given the timetable for the activities that pupils are involved in and will be informed by letter/phone call/through their son/daughter or by text if an activity has to be cancelled.

For any visit lasting a day or more, parents will be asked to sign a letter, which consents to their son/daughter taking part. This will include a separate medical consent form. The school has a standard model letter, which should be used for this purpose. The school has separate policies for 'Charging and Remissions' and 'Diversity' which apply to all educational visits.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit. Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing pupils' learning in a variety of environments through induction, apprenticeship and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

The school will ensure that ISA/CRB screening is available for volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits. On residential visits the gender of the staff responsible for supervision and pastoral care will reflect the gender of the pupils. The staff: pupil ratios will not exceed those as recommended by the Local Authority.

The school does not support additional people accompanying educational visits who are not pupils at the school or part of the agreed staff complement. This may include family members accompanying visits if the Governing Body is not satisfied that there is an educational benefit for the pupils.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the leader and EVC might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

There will also be a named Deputy Leader to support the Visit Leader whilst on the school visit.

The Expectations of Pupils and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the conditions of booking by the parents, and will include guidance in relation to the potential of withdrawal of a pupil prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school. The school should state the implication for parents e.g. associated costs that will be met by parents, collection of child, as part of the agreement signed from parents

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the SLT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all pupils and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate.

The Visit Leader will take with them a copy of the schools (linked to KCC) Major Incident Procedures, along with the contact details of the appointed emergency school contacts. They will also take copies of medical forms in case of emergency.

All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems. The Outdoor Education Unit should also be advised of any serious incidents or accidents.

The school will have emergency funding available to support the Visit Leader in any emergency that occurs in the UK or abroad. Schools will need to decide the limitations of such a system, but Visit Leaders should be reassured in advance.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Visit Leader with the EVC. A short evaluation report will be made available for the Governing Body.

The EVC will ensure that any risk assessments for the visits or activities are evaluated and/or modified as a result of findings or feedback from the visit. The Visit Leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the school's procedures.

Policy agreed by:

Date:

Review date: September 2017 by: EVC