

WAKEFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOUNDATION (incl EYFS)

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

1. Overview

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend the learning of all pupils, including an enrichment of their understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be a catalyst for improved personal performance, promote a lifetime interest and in some cases lead to professional fulfilment. Educational visits are to be encouraged.

Educational visits should be available to all pupils and should be organised accordingly, with particular consideration being given where possible to any pupils with a disability, especially when selecting venues and organising transport. It is also important that trips are planned to offer a range of experiences, whilst providing value for money.

This policy on educational visits and trips applies to all schools within the Foundation. This policy has been written with reference to the Department for Education publication, Health and Safety: responsibilities and duties for schools (26 Nov 2018) and the DFE publication Health and Safety on Educational Visits (26 Nov 2018). These publications are supported by the Health and Safety Executive publication, *School trips and outdoor learning activities: Tackling the health and safety myths* (published June 2011).

2. Procedures

Procedures for organising and taking an educational visit are in the individual school's staff handbook and supporting information. (For example, the WGHS visits procedures and guidance on EVOLVE) These are updated as and when required by changes to legislation or where experience on a trip suggests a review is needed.

This policy requires all staff within the Foundation to adhere to the Guidance of Outdoor Education and Off - Site Visits which is to be found on EVOLVE – Resources – General Advice and Guidance. This document provides clarification and interpretation of aspects of the **National Guidance (NG)** (<https://oeapng.info/>) including supervision, minibuses, approval procedures etc.

The individual school procedures will cover:

- responsibilities for visits including pupil behaviour
- planning, completion of risk assessments and first aid
- supervision
- preparation for pupils, including any special / medical needs
- communication with parents
- transport
- insurance cover
- different types of visit including visits abroad if appropriate
- emergency procedures including contact details and permission for emergency medical treatment if parents cannot be contacted (*see also the schools' Critical Incident Policies*)
- Financial viability

Supervision

On all visits there must be effective supervision the levels of which have been approved by the EVC and Head Teacher in line with this policy.

Guidance on staff pupil ratios is as follows:

- Nursery / Reception = 1 adult for every 4 pupils
- Years 1-3 = 1 adult for every 6 pupils
- Years 4-6 = 1 adult for every 10-15 pupils
- Years 7 and above = 1 adult for every 15-20 pupils

Other factors that may be considered are:

- the sex, age and ability of the group
- the nature of the activities
- the experience of the teachers / leaders or competence on specific activities
- the duration of the journey / visit and the type of accommodation
- first aid cover available

Occasionally adults known to the school (ex-members of staff or spouses of members of staff) may be asked to provide supplementary staff supervision. This must be approved by the Head in advance and all such individuals will have had Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks if the visit involves an overnight stay.

Staff taking their own children on a visit should not be included in the calculation of the overall staff ratio i.e. there must be sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced staff to safely manage the group without them if necessary.

The Head/Manager must specifically ensure if insurance cover is in place for the child/children of the staff concerned. (The administrative Bursar may advise on this.)

All visits will have a clear, recorded educational, cultural or pastoral purpose and will be planned sufficiently well in advance in accordance with good practice and effective planning procedures and must be financially viable. All appropriate risk assessments must be completed and signed off in advance of a trip taking place.

A trained Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) has been appointed to support the Head in all Foundation schools. It is the responsibility of the EVC to ensure that all educational visits and trips take place within a controlled, secure and legal framework and that individual and group safety remains the primary focus.

The Foundation uses the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the robust planning, management, approval and evaluation of visits. All staff that lead or accompany visits can access their own EVOLVE account, which is managed by their school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). As well as being an efficient tool for planning and approving visits, EVOLVE also contains a variety of features including: search and report facilities, downloadable resources and information, staff records and visit history etc. Approvals for visits runs on two levels

Lower risk/ routine visits

e.g. Local park, local shops, towns, theatre, theme parks within normal school / service hours and part of the normal curriculum.

The approval lies with the Head Teacher

Higher Risk Visits

e.g. Residential , adventurous activities, as defined in the Guidance For Outdoor Education and Adventurous Activities (EVOLVE - Resources – General Advice and Guidance), or any activity close to natural water (sea, rivers, lakes, reservoirs).

Approval lies with the Head Teacher, but the form is passed on to the independent technical advisor for final checking and approval.

The Head will be responsible for the approval of educational visits as defined above. Governors will be informed of all trips which exceed the cost of £1000 per student, via the General Purposes Committee meetings, whilst any such trips are in the initial planning stage.

The costs of the majority of compulsory trips are covered by the school fees but, in the few cases where there is a small cost to parents for a trip which forms a part of the curriculum, e.g. A' level Biology fieldwork residential, financial assistance can be provided for those pupils receiving a Foundation Award. In these cases, a request must be made by the parent, in writing, to the Head. Financial contribution from the school can be provided according to the level of Award, such that a pupil receiving a 75% Award will receive 75% of costs covered, etc. A decision to offer financial assistance at a higher rate would be at the discretion of the Head.

Financial assistance may also be considered for those pupils wishing to attend optional trips that are receiving a Foundation Award. Any financial support agreed will be at the discretion of the Head. It is the responsibility of parents to approach the Head to request financial support to enable attendance on an optional trip and these will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

3. Key principles

3.1 For Staff

- All staff organising a journey or education visit must follow the Foundation and schools' agreed policy and procedures at all times
- There will be a named and approved Trip Leader (and, where possible, a named Deputy) on all educational visits. This Trip Leader will be specifically competent for the role. Working with the EVC as necessary, the Trip Leader will be responsible for all aspects of the planning, risk assessment and organisation of the visit. The Trip Leader will assume full responsibility during the visit, including ongoing risk assessment. All trip leaders may secure further technical advice from the WGHS Technical Consultant.
- The standard of care required of a teacher is that which from an objective point of view can reasonably be expected from teachers generally applying skills and awareness of children's problems, needs and susceptibilities.
- The law expects that a teacher will do that which a parent with care and concern for the safety and welfare of his or her own child would do (see Appendix 1).
- The law demands that each teacher will maintain a standard which a caring teaching profession would expect of itself.
- A teacher must ensure supervision of the pupils throughout the journey or visit as professional standards and common sense demand.
- Reasonable steps must be taken to avoid exposing pupils to dangers which are foreseeable and beyond those with which the pupils can reasonably be expected to cope.
- The need for direct supervision has to be judged by reference to the risks involved in the activity being undertaken. Instructions given to pupils are not always enough. The possibility that they may disobey has to be taken into account together with the risk they may encounter if they disobey.

- The EVC must check all preparations are in place and ensure that the Trip Leader and other accompanying staff have the ability, experience, training and health to undertake the responsibility of the care and welfare of pupils in a different environment.
- Where the school visits a residential or outdoor activity centre, the Trip Leader can reasonably allow children to be supervised by the centre's own staff, provided that he / she is satisfied that they are able to do so safely. To assist with this process the activity centre's Safety Management Plan and Risk Assessment should be carefully analysed. Where an LOTC quality badge has been awarded, this is not required. Similarly, if teachers have taken reasonable steps to ensure that the premises where children stay are safe, then, in normal circumstances, no more needs to be done.
- Teachers should not participate in a journey or visit which they believe is not being adequately prepared and organised.
- It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure that all visits are financially viable and that all costs are covered and budgeted for from the outset.
- Liability goes with fault. In the case of a pure accident no-one bears liability and this is covered by 'no fault' insurance.
- Employers have 'vicarious liability' for the negligence of their employees at work. This means generally that the employer takes responsibility if employees do not fulfil their safety obligations at work properly. Where a claim is made following an accident and there is a suggestion of negligence on the part of the teacher, the claim will most likely be made against the governors. If, however, a teacher is guilty of gross negligence (through drunkenness for example) a right of recourse exists for the governors against the teacher.

3.2 For Parents

- Informed parental consent is required for all educational visits for all pupils/students whilst they are on the school roll. If no parental response is received (despite attempts to make contact) then the final decision will rest with the Head.
- Parents will be given sufficient written and supplementary information about an educational visit to enable them to make an informed decision and give written consent together with medical and emergency contact details. Whenever appropriate for higher risk, residential and foreign visits a briefing meeting with parents will be arranged.
- Expectations with regard to behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents. This information will include the necessity of meeting additional costs and making collection arrangements in certain circumstances.

3.3 For Pupils

Wherever appropriate, pupils should be involved with the planning of an educational visit, establishing codes of conduct, assessing and managing risk and evaluating their own learning, development, attitudes and behaviour.

Pupils should be adequately briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all educational visits. Ongoing briefings are an important element of learning and safety.

4. Other Foundation Policies to be read in conjunction with the Educational Visits Policy:

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- School Transport Policy
- Minibus Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Retention Storage and Disposal Policy

Addendum - October 2020.

In light of the ongoing pandemic surrounding Covid 19 an additional set of measures have been agreed by the EVCs of all schools within the Foundation in conjunction with the Foundations Technical Advisor. These will be in place until further notice.

- WGSF will follow guidance laid down by DfE and PHE and will take into account local restrictions which may or may not be brought by the Government and/or local authority
- No **residential visits** will take place until further notice. This will be reviewed during the second half of the autumn term and probably during the first half of the spring term as well. (if no change has been made in the autumn). Any changes to the DfE guidance will be considered alongside other relevant advice and guidance
- No visits will take place before the end of the autumn term 2020, including **sporting fixtures and day trips**. This will be reviewed by FLaG during the second half of the autumn term and again in the early spring term if no changes have been made in the autumn)

Appendix I

HEALTH & SAFETY: RESPONSIBILITIES AND POWERS

These regulations are contained in the *Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)* and set out the legal framework, under health and safety law, in which employers and employees work and the powers, under education law, which help employers and employees to ensure compliance. They apply to all educational visits. The employer retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare. In other words, the Foundation is legally responsible for the health and safety of educational visits. Employees also have significant responsibilities as follows:

- Take reasonable care of their own and others health and safety.
- Cooperate with their employers.
- Carry out activities in accordance with training and instructions.
- Inform the employer of any serious risks.

A teacher has a Common Law Duty of Care. This means that:

- A teacher has a duty of care for young people under their supervision.
- A higher duty is expected of teachers as a result of their specialised knowledge.
- The age of the young person and the nature and location of the activity help to determine the degree of supervision required.

With reference to any civil claims of negligence made against a teacher, an injury or damage that may not be reasonably foreseeable is deemed to be an accident. Foreseeable is defined as something that has happened in the past of which the supervisor has knowledge or something that one can visualise happening. Negligence may arise from the lack of due care.

The questions likely to be asked in a court of law are:

- Was there a duty of care?
- Was there a breach of that duty?
- Did harm result directly from the failure to exercise reasonable care?

Should the answer to all three questions be "Yes," then most probably negligence did occur.

Review History

Policy written December 2008 L Perry

Reviewed April 2011 L Perry

Updated August 2011 L Perry

Updated August 2014 L Perry

Updated August 2015 L Perry

Updated August 2017 N Gunson

Approved by Governors 12 October 2017

Updated June 2018 EVCs with Ian Kirby (Technical Advisor and Consultant to WGSF)

Updated February 2020 EVCs with Ian Kirby (Technical Advisor and Consultant to WGSF)

Updated October 2020 - EVCs, L Perry & Ian Kirby (Technical Advisor & Consultant to WGSF)