

# THE WESTGATE SCHOOL

Hampshire's First 4-16 'All Through' School

*"The Westgate School is a community of learners where partnerships inspire success for all:  
learning together – achieving excellence"*

Headteacher: Mrs F A Dean, MA (Ed)

Initial Policy date	June 2018	Next scheduled review	May 2023
Governor approved	May 2022	Key person/people	DHT/AHT - Evolve
Model Policy		Model localised	Yes
Pupil leadership team review		<del>Y</del> / <del>N</del> /	N/A

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS

### Principle:

At The Westgate, we believe that pupils derive considerable educational benefit from taking part in visits, including opportunities to experience learning beyond the classroom – these develop a learner's investigative skills, encourage greater independence, enhance personal and social development, and provide knowledge and awareness of the world beyond school.

Every young person will have the opportunity to experience trips and educational visits while they are at The Westgate. Within the risk assessment the school will identify children with disabilities, special educational or medical needs, and address how their needs will be catered for to ensure that there are no barriers to inclusion. The School is committed to ensuring that all children and young people can safely participate in the extra-curricular event. We will contact parents/carers to discuss any specific risks we have identified for their child and the reasonable adjustments we can make to ensure their safe participation which may include inviting a parent/carer to support the activity.

In deciding on a child's suitability to participate in an activity that is not essential to the curriculum, the School will take into account the individual's participation to date as reflected through their record of codes and stamps and any other aspects of their behaviour that may affect their suitability for participation in the event. Any specific criteria will be established when the event is launched.

The School's policy and procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by Hampshire Outdoor Education, PE and the DofE Service.

### Practice:

#### 1. Initial Approval

Every visit will have a Visit Leader, who will plan and risk assess the visit, supported by the school's EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator). Every visit or event which takes a person out of their normal lessons or which takes a person outside of the school grounds must first be approved using the School's published process which is available upon request from the EVC. Visit Leaders will in the main be experienced members of staff who have a range of experience in supporting the planning of previous visits. The experience required will vary according to the nature of the visit.

Prior to the launch of the trip/visit, the trip leader will liaise with their linked Senior Leader to discuss any potential challenges or requirements for pupils wanting to participate. If the trip is integral to the specified curriculum, trip leaders will make best endeavours to enable all pupils to attend except in very extenuating circumstances where this may not be possible. In this case, the participation of individuals will be discussed with senior colleagues in school, the SENCo (in the case of a child with additional needs), Designated Safeguarding Lead (where appropriate) and parents. If it is agreed that a child may not be able to attend, the trip leader will ensure that a suitable alternative is available.

In the case of extra-curricular activities that are not part of the specified curriculum, prior to the launch of the trip/activity, the trip leader will agree with their linked Senior Leader the initial criteria upon which selection for a trip is made. This may include:

- Number of stamps, codes and merits achieved according to the School's Behaviour Policy
- Information about a child's participation in The Westgate Community Challenge and other activities
- Information on a child's school report to indicate engagement with the School's expectations of attendance, participation and standards.

In all cases where numbers are limited, the agreed criteria will be shared with parents/carers and pupils when the trip is launched. If a pupil meets the criteria set out, they will be entered into the school's electronic name selection software to allocate children to the trip/activity. Those who are not selected will be placed on a waiting list in accordance with their place following the outcomes of the electronic name selection process. If/when places become available, pupils will be offered the chance to attend in accordance with this priority and with payment having been made within 3 days of the offer being made. If a pupil does not gain a place on the trip/activity, a record will be kept and they will be afforded top priority for any future trips/activities, providing they meet the initial criteria set out at the point of launch.

Priority for pupils to attend trips/activities will be given to:

- those who have additional needs for which the activity would be particularly beneficial;
- Pupils in receipt of Free School Meals (for which a subsidy may be available);
- Pupils who have previously been on a waiting list and not secured a place.

Any criteria set out in the initial launch of the trip will not disadvantage any pupil with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and the School will work in partnership with parents (and other agencies where applicable) to make all reasonable adjustments to enable all children to participate in the activity. Where such adjustments are needed, these will be included in the risk assessment for the activity.

In cases where there may be mitigating circumstances that mean a pupil has not been able to meet the criteria set out when the trip/activity is launched, the Headteacher reserves the right to make the decision regarding participation.

## **2. Costings and communication with parents/carers**

Once the approval process has been completed, the visit leader will work closely with the School's finance team to calculate accurate costings for the visit, which will then be shared

with parents via a letter. More costly visits (such as residential or foreign visits) may involve a letter of interest being sent to parents first, to establish whether there is enough interest in the visit to make it viable, which may involve a deposit being requested. Parents and carers will be asked to provide consent for their child to attend the visit. We will ask for a voluntary contribution for all visits during the school day in order to cover costs. The school reserves the right to cancel visits if insufficient financial contributions are received. Visits which take place at least 60% of the time during school holidays or weekends will require a full financial contribution from parents/carers. Pupil Premium funding may be available to support with this. For visits abroad, the insurance synopsis for parents can be found on the school website.

For any potentially hazardous, foreign or residential visit parents will be invited to a meeting prior to departure to talk through the details of the visit and to answer any concerns or questions.

### **3. Supervision**

Supervision strategies are taken from the Hampshire County Council Supplementary Employer Guidance and include agreements on ratios, which are never exceeded. The ratios and supervision strategies used are dependent on typical risk factors of the group or individuals concerned, the site or location, the leaders present and other factors such as transport and weather. These are agreed as part of the planning process and can be adapted to changing circumstances, as appropriate.

Supervision can be provided by teaching and support colleagues, volunteers and parents. All adults attending the visit are acting as a member of staff and therefore must abide by the School's Code of Conduct. The Visit Leader must ensure that every adult attending is well informed about the visit, including the risk assessment, and that any group leaders have been given copies of contact and medical details for their group. Every group leader must be able to contact the Visit Leader in the event of an emergency.

All volunteers supporting with visits must obtain a DBS. Volunteers working within school or attending residential visits must obtain a full DBS (including a barring check) and complete an application form, along with a short interview.

### **4. Transport**

A variety of transport methods may be used, following local guidance. These may include: public buses, coaches (through recognised suppliers only), trains, mini-buses, and aeroplanes/ferries for foreign visits. Transport costs will be included in the request for a voluntary contribution from parents/carers. All transport will be booked through the main school office and evidence of relevant insurance will be expected as part of the planning process.

### **5. Risk assessments**

The visit leader will complete two risk assessments, in line with Hampshire Outdoor Education guidelines, which will be shared with all adults attending the visit (including volunteers). These will be added to Hampshire Evolve, along with other planning details, at least 8 weeks prior to the visit taking place. The school's Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policies apply to all

education visits. With all visits and activities, an analysis of the benefits of the activity to children's learning is weighed up against the possible disbenefits of the trip and followed by putting clear control measures in place so that potential risks can be satisfactorily managed. A pre-visit by a member of staff, wherever possible, is considered a key part of risk assessing and allows the member of staff to review the location and assess any potential risks.

Medical information will be taken from the school's central database (SIMS) to ensure that children's medical needs are catered for on an external visit – it is therefore vital that parents let the school know about any changes to medical needs on an on-going basis.

During a visit, the visit leader will communicate with the base contact to make the school aware that they have arrived safely, and the time of departure. Residential visit leaders will communicate with the base contact at least once each day. Visit Leaders may also choose to update Twitter to keep parents informed, particularly for residential or foreign visits.

## **6. Incidents and emergencies**

The Visit Leader is in charge of pupils during a visit and they have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty of care to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation. The priorities are:

1. to assess the situation and establish the nature and extent of the emergency;
2. to safeguard the uninjured members of the group;
3. to attend to the casualty and seek support from emergency services;
4. to inform everyone who needs to know about the incident.

For all visits there will be two 'base-contacts' – these colleagues will have a full list of contact and medical details for the children on the visit, as well as details the risk assessment, planning, itinerary and guidance from the Hampshire Outdoor Education team, who will provide support in the event of an emergency on a school visit. Any concerns or 'near misses' are reported by the school to the Outdoor Education Service where necessary. No one in the group is permitted to speak to the media as this may cause distress to families and the School's critical incident plan will be actioned. If a child needs to go to hospital, a member of staff will accompany them. Once pupils have safely returned to school, the visit leader should complete an accident/incident form with details of what happened – this should then be saved retrospectively on the Evolve system, as well as passed to the school's Health and Safety Manager.

During an educational visit, if a pupil's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, they may be sent back to school or home. Parents will be contacted and will be responsible for the collection of their child, including any costs incurred.

## **7. Evaluation of educational visits and events**

Following any visit, colleagues should consider whether the original intended learning outcomes were achieved and make a note (via Evolve) of any adjustments or changes that might be needed to improve the visit, should it be repeated in the future. This may involve

asking pupils to evaluate the visit, and might involve follow up work in lessons. The teacher will ensure that any follow-up work is differentiated to allow pupils who did not attend the visit to participate and learn equally.

#### Temporary addendum due to Covid 19

The School will follow national guidelines around local and international educational visits at all times. Given the uncertainty of the current situation, as a School we will carefully weigh up the intended learning benefits of any off-site visit, with the potential risk to pupils' and colleagues' safety, as well as the possible financial risks for parents/carers and the School. It may be necessary to cancel or postpone some of our pre-planned foreign visits, dependent upon government advice about inter-nation travel and quarantine. We recognise the impact that a last-minute cancellation may have on families, and so we will endeavour to make any decisions sooner rather than later. Some visits (such as those required for GCSE courses) will still take place this year, but where the intended learning benefits of a visit can be achieved without taking children out of school, we will look to do this instead. When visits do take place, a full risk assessment will be completed as normal, factoring in the up-to-date social distancing guidelines and control measures.