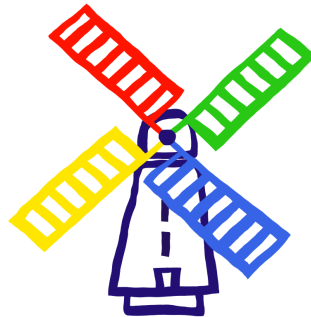# Educational Visits Policy

Unity
Trust
Courage
Curiosity
Respect
Kindness

A community for learning. Raising expectations. Fulfilling high standards.

Policy Revised: **February 2024**

Policy Review Date: **June 2026**

Headteacher: **Mrs Gemma Hillier**

Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School

Educational Visits Policy

Contents

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Educational Visits Policy

1.   Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and a balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in
- us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active
- participants not passive consumers, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social
- and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit
- decisions in a range of contexts. I.e. encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as
- opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety
- of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

2.   Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Bucks Requirements and Guidance' in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE.)
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
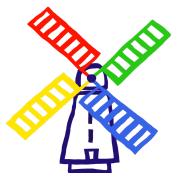
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

3.   Types of Visit & Approval

There are three 'types' of visit:
1. Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment). These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity. As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

4.   Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head or EVC prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

The Educational Visits Coordinators (EVC) are Mrs Weaver & Mrs Lenton who will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.
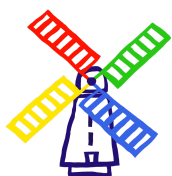
The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governor permission is sought for residential visits in Years 5 and 6. Individual governors may request 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity. (For academies, approval by the LA is acknowledgment that the plans attached to Evolve are sound but responsibility sits with the academy.)

5. Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced
- visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is ready to be a visit leader, the Head will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
- Previous relevant training.
- The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take
- charge in the event of an emergency.
- Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken.

6. Emergency procedures

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority.

7.   Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

The school obtains blanket consent via ParentPay/Arbor for certain other routine activities, e.g. after school fixtures. Parents have the option of consenting online, or through a traditional paper consent form. Specific (i.e.one-off) parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents have the option of consenting online or through a traditional paper consent form.

8.   Inclusion

As a school we comply with the Equality Act 2010. All possible measures are considered to ensure that all children are included within school trips and residentials. Discussions are held prior to visits with parents / carers to ensure equity with regards to opportunities are offered.

9.   Transport

We follow Bucks Requirements and Guidance for School Transport using local companies for coach hire.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Refer to the Bucks Requirements and Guidance document.

10.   Insurance

We always take out LA's insurance for visits - See Bucks Requirements and Guidance for further information.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take
place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.
These visits/activities:

- Do not require parental consent.
- Do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- You choose to record on EVOLVE e.g. Forest School.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently
used venues: e.g.

- The village green.
- The local allotments.
- The shopping parade 'Cosy Corner'.
- Widmer Fields.
- The triangle of Brimmers Hill, Georges Hill and Windmill Lane.
- Our local Church, Church of the Good Shepherd.
- Where pupils take part in a running club off-site this may be slightly further away but parents will need to consent to this when signing their child up.

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).

These are managed by a combination of the following:
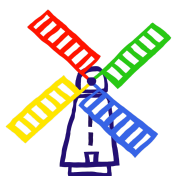
- The Head must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- A current list of staff approved to lead in this setting is maintained by the EVC and office.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practised appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group through our Footsteps programme.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs as a minimum.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.
- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return. The office has a note of the lead staff member's mobile number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (e.g. gloves, goggles).

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedures

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours this is the office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry an Emergency Card
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desktop exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.
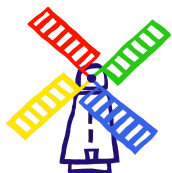
Parent Form to return for local area visits consent:

I consent/decline *(delete as appropriate)* for my child to attend local area visits.

I accept child to adult ratios will always be adhered to.

Signed……………………………………………………………………………

Print……………………………………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………………