Hipsburn Primary School Policy for the Management of Educational Visits

March 2020

1. Introduction

This policy covers all off-site visits and activities organised through the school and for which the Governing Body and Headteacher are responsible.

As the basis for the school's policy for the management of visits and off-site activities, The Governing Body has adopted two key documents, namely:

- Northumberland County Council's (NCC's): 'Educational Off-site Visits Code of Practice'; and
- the Outdoor Education Advisers Panel's (OEAP's) 'National Guidance'

The Governing Body seeks to ensure that every pupil has access to a wide range of educational experiences as an entitlement. As part of this entitlement the Governing Body recognises the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the immediate school environment.

This Governing Body aims to provide an educational environment in which all members of the school community can thrive, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender or individual need. We intend to apply this aim to the planning and management of all visits and off-site activities.

Visits and off-site activities support, enrich and extend the curriculum in many subject areas. They also encourage co-operation, promote team work and help with the application of problem solving skills and the development of independence and self-confidence.

Residential opportunities, physical challenge and adventure can have a particular part to play in the development of personal and social qualities for all young people. Outdoor education helps them to be physically active and to understand how to assess and manage risk.

The management of visits and off-site activities places particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants on the Governing Body, headteacher, the visit leader, members of staff, volunteers, pupils and parents. The school also has responsibilities to other members of the public and to third parties. This guidance on visits and off-site activities therefore complements the wider school health and safety policy.

It is the aim of this school to ensure that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial.

2. *Roles and Responsibilities*

The roles and responsibilities of the various interested parties are dealt with individually below.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all visits and off-site activities have specific and appropriate educational objectives
- approve all visits and activities in line with County Council's current Code of Practice
- ensure off-site programmes are led by competent staff who are appropriately experienced to assess the risks, manage the activity and manage the specific group
- verify that the staffing ratio is suitable for each visit
- ensure visit leaders have access to a planning checklist, based on the OEAP National Guidance, and adapted as necessary to meet the particular needs of the school
- ensure that risks have been assessed, significant risks recorded and any appropriate safety measures are in place
- bring significant issues to the attention of the Governors at meetings or via a formal report

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

An EVC is required to facilitate the transference of visit forms via the EVOLVE system from visit leaders to the Headteacher for approval or authorisation.

To undertake the role of EVC, the Headteacher may delegate the task to a suitably experienced and competent member of staff. However, the Headteacher will be considered the EVC (and will need to be identified as such on EVOLVE) where no member of staff has been chosen.

In order to carry out the specific tasks required of the EVC the person chosen must attend an initial training course and refresher training on a three yearly basis.

Visit Leader

The visit leader will:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit or activity
- obtain the Headteacher's approval before any off-site visit or activity takes place
- follow policy and procedures of the Council and the school

- assess the risks involved and amend, as appropriate, any previously recorded risk assessment
- use the ‘visit planning checklist’ to ensure all procedures have been followed
- ensure that the correct checks on the external ‘Provider’ have been made
- inform parents fully about the visit and gain their consent, where appropriate
- reassess risks while the visit or activity takes place
- ensure there is a contingency plan (Plan B) should a significant change to the programme be necessary due to inclement weather or other adverse events

Other members of staff

Members of staff, volunteers and parent helpers should:

- assist the visit leader to ensure the health, safety and welfare of young people on the visit
- be clear about their roles and responsibilities whilst taking part in a visit or activity
- be DBS checked where required.

Parents

Parents have an important role in deciding whether any visit or off-site activity is suitable for their child. Subject to their agreement to the activity parents should:

- support the application of any agreed code of conduct
- inform the party leader about any medical, psychological or physical condition relevant to the visit
- provide an emergency contact number
- sign the consent form having received a letter outlining the visit proposals which gives the parent sufficient information to give informed consent

Pupils

Pupils should:

- avoid unnecessary risks
- follow instructions of the visit leader and other members of staff
- behave sensibly, keeping to any agreed code of conduct
- inform a member of staff of significant hazards

3. Approval of Off-site Activities

The Headteacher is responsible for approving all off-site activities. This includes approving the competence of the visit leaders to lead each visit or off-site activity.

A fully completed on-line visit form, which includes a visit programme, event specific plan and letter to parents, must be forwarded to the Outdoor Education Adviser via the EVOLVE system for approval for the following visit types:

- hazardous outdoor and adventurous activities
- residential visits in the UK which contain an adventurous activity element
- visits abroad
- activities where there is significant concern about health, safety and welfare such as field studies, beach or forest schools and visits to industrial sites

The Headteacher will monitor off-site visits and activities and will provide a regular report to the Governing Body about the off-site activities which have taken place.

4. Information and Training

A copy of this policy and associated school procedures must be made available to all staff within the school who are responsible for leading off-site visits. Any parent requesting a copy should be furnished with one.

The Headteacher will refer staff to NCC's two aforementioned documents to ensure that the safe management of off-site activities are adhered to when planning visits. In addition, all persons involved with school visits must be provided with their own account to enable them to access EVOLVE.

Appropriate training will be made available to leaders and other adults taking part in off-site activities.

The Headteacher or EVC will maintain or encourage staff to upload copies of their outdoor qualifications (including first aid) to their EVOLVE account. The qualifications of volunteers involved in outdoor activities (including those for first aid, life-saving, minibus driving and undertaking specific hazardous activities) must also be added to their accounts. (However, in order to do this the Volunteer must be added as a member of staff with a '(V)' attached at the end of their surname).

5. Accidents and Incidents

Any accidents and incidents that occur during off-site visits and activities will be reported and recorded in accordance with the NCC's accident reporting procedures.

6. Emergencies

The Headteacher will ensure that emergency arrangements are in place, are known to staff and comply with Northumberland County Council's Code of Practice for Educational Off-site Visits and cover the range of off-site activities undertaken. All staff involved in a visit must be aware of and adhere to their establishment's policy on emergency procedures for local visits and implement the Local Authority's policy for other types of visit.

As part of the planning and preparation for all Category 2 visits, two home based emergency contacts must be identified both on the 'Visit' and 'Serious Incident Guidance' forms. A minimum of two contact telephone numbers for designated senior members of staff or members of the governing body must be included.

Completed 'Serious Incident Guidance' forms must be held by the Visit Leader, supervising staff and the home based emergency contacts at all times. Copies of the blank document can be found in the 'Forms' section on EVOLVE.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Governors will review this policy: February 2022

- every two years
- at such time as there are significant changes to guidance on the management of educational visits and off-site activities

Dated: Ratified by Strategic Governors – February 2020