

Windmill Hill School  
Draft Education Visits Policy



**ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:**

Purpose: This policy outlines how Windmill Hill School aims to ensure all students can access learning outside of the classroom safely.

Compiled by Kevin Latham March 2021

Agreed by Directors

SIGNED

DATE

Review Date    March 2023

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## Draft Education Visits Policy

### Wellbeing in our Trust

We are all affected by poor physical and mental health at times during our lives and it is important the appropriate support is available in a timely manner.

Health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility and we encourage an open and honest culture whereby anyone can discuss any issues they may have.

The Trustees of Creating Tomorrow take the health and wellbeing of all employees seriously and are committed to supporting our staff. The Trustees ensure that support for staff is available through:

- Effective line management
- Commitment to reducing workload
- Supportive and professional working environments
- Employee support programs
  - CIC (confidential counselling support available through Perkbox account).
  - The Teacher Support Line telephone number 08000 562561 or website [www.teachersupport.info](http://www.teachersupport.info)

### Introduction

Students can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with the school. In particular they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom. Visits help develop a student's investigative skills and longer visits in particular encourage greater independence.

This guide is designed to help ensure that the students and staff stay safe and healthy on school visits.

**Headteacher – Michele Lentes**

**Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) – Andrew Chaplin**

**IF THE PROCEDURES ARE NOT FOLLOWED THEN THE VISIT WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED AND WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PLACE.** Failure to follow procedures could also lead to disciplinary procedures.

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### Offsite Visits, Field Studies and Outdoor Education Guidelines

#### Educational Visits Policy

This policy is written to help you complete the process so that we can identify hazards and minimise risks. It is important to identify which of the following visits/activities it is and ensure the appropriate planning and preparation is undertaken.

#### There are 3 Zones of visits - A, B, C

**'A' VISITS** - Include, journeys and environmental studies for which the element of risk is similar to those encountered in daily life.

- Environmental and country walks-local (E)
- Field studies – non technical (E)
- Historic sites-local (E)
- Local sports visits (E)
- Sites of commercial interest (E)
- Everyday type of visit/ activities in local area/ - corner shop, Tesco, Town Centre, Garden Centre, Bowling, walking to Wicksteed Park/picnic

**'B' VISITS**- Higher risk activities which require that the leader has undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction, specific to the visit and / or location. The leader will be approved as competent by the LA or by the EVC following LA guidance. Where appropriate a National Governing Body Award (such as Basic Expedition Leadership Award or NVQ in Activity Leadership) will be a measure of competence. (Permission **needed from EVC in advance of trip**).

- Camping – not in remote locations –D of E
- Cycling – on roads or off road terrain not in remote locations
- Farm visits
- Low level initiative challenges
- Orienteering
- Swimming lessons in off-site swimming pools
- Zoo visits
- Visits to cities- e.g. Milton Keynes, B'ham, London
- Visits to theme parks e.g. Drayton Manor Park

**'C VISITS'**- Potentially hazardous activities.

It includes Over-seas visits which includes the Isle of Wight.

**Approval needed from Outdoor Education Advisor Cambridgeshire via EVC**

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### Planning and Preparation

This is crucial to safety and educational effectiveness. On the few occasions when things do go wrong the cause can almost always be traced back, to at least some extent, to faults in planning.

**It is essential that formal planning takes place before setting off on ANY visit.** This involves considering the dangers and difficulties that may arise and making plans to reduce them.

The **Headteacher – whose agreement must be obtained** and who is **responsible** for planning visits – **will often delegate the detailed planning to the organiser of the visit or the group leader.**

### **PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN PLANNING ANY OFF-SITE TRIP**

You should be aware that the school policy and procedures should be adhered to

#### **Zone 1- local everyday visits/activities:**

- Check with EVC if Risk Assessment for activity is in place for those visits marked (E)
- Complete Evolve form online- Google-Evolve Cambridgeshire. This includes attaching letters to parents/carers, risk assessments and an itinerary of the visit.
- Follow RULES and PROCEDURE

#### **Zone 2 – planned visits further afield:**

- Complete Evolve form online- Google-Evolve Cambridgeshire. This includes attaching letters to parents/carers, risk assessments and an itinerary of the visit.
- Follow RULES and PROCEDURE

#### **Zone 3 - planned higher risk visits/activities:**

Check with EVC if your trip meets this status. If so it requires LA Approval which is done through the Evolve process by the EVC.

- Complete Evolve form online- Google-Evolve Cambridgeshire. This includes attaching letters to parents/carers, risk assessments and an itinerary of the visit.
- Follow RULES PROCEDURE

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU HAVE PERMISSION FOR AN OFF-SITE VISIT BEFORE YOU SEND A LETTER HOME. THIS INCLUDES COST IMPLICATIONS. SLT TO APPROVE LETTER.**

Off-site educational residential visits require the approval of the Headteacher, governors and the Local Authority (LA) and therefore at least a terms notice is required.

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The aims of all visits should be clearly established from the outset –

- Why are we doing this?
- What will it achieve?
- Who will benefit from it?
- Will it be worth doing – do the expected outcomes justify the means?

You should discuss the outlines of proposed trips with one or more colleagues and with the Phase leader. This will enable ideas to be shared and supplemented.

### **Risk Assessment**

The language of risk assessment requires an understanding and use of two essential definitions:

- **“Hazard”** means anything that can cause harm.
- **“Risk”** is the possibility that someone will be harmed by the hazard.
- **“Control”** is how to manage the risk and/or hazard.

**Risk assessments are carried out by the Visit leader.** Assessments should be completed well before the visit and **should be approved by the EVC and then signed-off by the Headteacher/delegated SLT member.**

A formal assessment of the risks that might be met on a visit should have the aim of preventing the risks or reducing them. Pupils and staff must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. **Safety must always be the prime consideration. NB. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.**

The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?

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- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

At Windmill Hill School the risk assessment findings are recorded in written form using the class risk assessment pro-forma. All staff who may be group leaders (**EVL**) of off-site visits **MUST** be familiar with the forms.

The Visit Leader **MUST** share copies of the risk assessments with all staff going and get them to read and sign a copy stating that they have read and understood.

### **PRE-VISIT**

A pre-visit **must** be made by the Visit Leader who is to lead a group on a visit, (including residential) to the location even if the location is familiar to them.

#### **The Visit Lead must:**

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
- Ascertain if it has the LOtC mark or other quality marks which might suggest the venue is appropriate
- Obtain advice from the manager regarding evacuation policy/first aid, etc.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk and have a copy if parents wish to scrutinise.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the students and staff in the group and ensure they are fully aware of the levels of need of our students.
- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of students there.

#### **If using a provider, research them appropriately:**

- Do the values and ethos of the provider match your expectations?
- Is there a clear understanding about the responsibility for supervision at all times during the visit?

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- What are the respective roles of provider staff and your staff?
- What provision will be made for our students' special needs?
- How flexible is the programme to meet changing circumstances?

**YOU HAVE A DUTY OF CARE TO ENSURE THAT ANY PROVIDER YOU USE MEETS ACCEPTABLE STANDARDS.**

When using external providers and facilities ensure you have read National Guidance from OEAP (<https://oeapng.info>).

### First Aid

**First Aid should form part of the risk assessment.** Before undertaking any off-site activities, the Visit Leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed.

On any kind of visit there must be one member of school staff or place of visits staff with an up to date first aid qualification or if within walking distance from school a designated member of school staff.

**For residential visits at least one of the group's staff to be a fully-trained first- aider.** The person given designated responsibility for administering any regular medication will hold a copy of **medication details** for all students involved with the visit.

All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services. The **minimum** first aid provision for a visit is:

- A suitably stocked first aid box or pack.
- A person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements.

Other considerations when considering first aid should include:

- The number in the group and the nature of the activity.
- The likely injuries and how effective first aid would be.
- The distance of the nearest hospital.
- First aid should be available and accessible at all times.

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### Ratios

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adults to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of the group.
- Students with special educational or medical needs.
- Nature of activities.
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision.
- Duration and nature of the journey.
- Type of any accommodation.
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited.
- Competence and behaviour of the students.
- First aid cover.

At our school, due to the complex special needs, it is vital that the Visit Leader speaks to the students' class staff and finds out potential risks when going off-site in order to appropriately staff the visit.

### Residential Visits

Other issues for the Visit Leader to consider include the following:

- The leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance.
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for students and adults.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the group's use.
- Ensure there is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation.
- Ensure the whole group are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routine, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security

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arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.

- The manager of the accommodation should be asked for assurances that all staff, including temporary workers, have been checked as suitable for work with students.
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times.
- There should be drying facilities.
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment, etc., and for the safe keeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch.
- There should be provision for students with special needs and those who fall sick.
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure and electrical connections safe.
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the accommodation.
- There should be recreational accommodation/facilities for the group.
- The place of residential should be able to meet any particular cultural or religious needs of the group.
- There should be an appropriate number of group supervisors on standby during the night.

### Farm Visits

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking students to a farm should be carefully planned. The risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

Check that the farm is well-managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare; and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. Always undertake a pre-visit.

There are some basic safety rules. **Never let students:**

- Place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their own mouths after feeding the animals.

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- Eat until they have washed their hands.
- Sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities).
- Ride on tractors or other machines.
- Play in the farm area.

Further advice is contained on the Health and Safety Executive's website – [Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions or Open Farm](#).

### **Clothing**

Specific clothing will be determined by:

- Weather.
- The nature of the activity.
- Where and when the activity takes place.

When using providers, it is important to know what clothing/equipment is required and that it is suitable.

### **Communicating with Parents**

Parents should be informed in writing of any off-site activity unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which parents have already been informed about.

Before residential visits parents should be encouraged to attend a briefing meeting where written details of the proposed visit should be provided. There should be alternative arrangements for parents who cannot attend or who have difficulty with communication in English. This is a legal requirement. Parents need to be aware that the teachers and other staff on the visit will have a 'duty of care'.

The following information on matters that might affect student health and safety should be given to parents:

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- Dates of the visit.
- Visit objectives.
- Times of departure and return – parents must have agreed to meet their child on return.
- The location where the students will be collected and returned.
- Mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company.
- The size of the group and the level of supervision at all times
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site.
- Details of provision for educational or medical needs.
- Procedures for students who become ill.
- Names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Standards of behaviour expected and general group discipline, including prohibited items.  
This information may take the form of a code of conduct which parents should sign.
- What students should not take on the visit or bring back.
- Details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.

The pro-formas '**Information Required from Parents/Guardians Prior to Residential Off-Site Visits**' and '**Consent Form for Off-Site Visits**' will need to be completed and returned for each student in the group.

Medical Consent Forms part of the parental consent form. Parents are asked to agree to the student receiving emergency treatment, including the administration of a general anaesthetic and to surgical operations in the case of an emergency (in accordance with the recommendation of a qualified medical practitioner).

If parents do not agree to this, the Headteacher may decide to withdraw the child from the visit – given the additional responsibility this would entail for the Visit leader.

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### Contact with Parents during a Residential Visit

The Visit Lead should ensure that parents can contact their child via the school contact and the group leader in the event of a home emergency, and that they have a number to ring for information in the event of an incident during the visit or a late arrival home. Parents should therefore:

- Know the destination details.
- Be aware of the emergency contact arrangements at home and at all the venues the group will visit.
- Provide contact numbers for day and night use in an emergency.
- Group leaders should arrange for parents to be told by the school of the group's safe arrival using SMS Service.

### Use of Mobile Telephones

Students will not be permitted to take their mobile phones on visits, including residential visits.

### Students with Specific Special Educational or Medical Needs

Every effort should be made to include students with specific special educational or medical needs in school visits, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group.

**Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios** and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Additional safety measures to those already in place in school may be necessary to support students with medical needs during visits. Arrangements for taking medication and ensuring sufficient supplies for residential visits may be required.

All teachers supervising visits should be aware of a students' medical needs and any medical emergency procedures.

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Summary sheets held by all teachers, containing details of each student's needs (within their assigned responsibility group), and any other relevant information provided by parents/carers, is one way of achieving this.

The Visit leader should discuss the student's individual needs with the parents.

The Visit leader should check that the insurance policy covers staff and students with pre-existing medical needs.

Any limitations or problems that a student with specific special educational needs may have, should be taken into account at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment.

Off-site visits may pose additional difficulties for our students due to their SEND and the behaviour of some students may prove challenging. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Are the students capable of taking part in and benefiting from the activity?
- Can the activity be adapted to enable the students to participate at a suitable level?
- Will additional/different resources be necessary?
- Are the students able to understand and follow instructions?

It is always beneficial that at least one of the staff knows the student well and appreciates their needs fully. The group leader should discuss the visit with the parents of students with particularly complex SEND to ensure that suitable arrangements have been put in place to ensure their safety.

### **Scope of Educational Visits**

Visits should be arranged that will support and enhance the planned curriculum. This may also be used as either a spring board to learning or as a summing up of learning. As an open-minded special school, we will likely include visits to all places of worship. These visits will both underpin the differing values and beliefs of other cultures and faiths and allow the students opportunities to explore different cultures and beliefs.

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**Procedure on the Day of a Planned Visit**

On the day of a planned visit, staff must complete one of the following forms: **Student Risk Assessment (Weekly/Regular)** or **Student Risk Assessment (Single Visit)**. These forms confirm the details of the visit (class name, day, location, time out, time in, staff involved with the visit and staff emergency contact details), the names of all students involved, the students' medical information, permission and that they are actually present on the day so that the school office know who is off-site if there is a fire alarm or evacuation.

On residential /out of hours trips, staff should also ensure that they take a copy of the **Visit Emergency Procedures Crib-card** with them on the day of any visits will be given out by the school EVC.

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## Accessibility Policy

### *(Learning Outside the Classroom)*

#### Tick list of things we need:

- **Staff** - To wear identification badges.
- **Parental consent:**
  - Forms need to be completed and **CHECKED** before the day of the trip. (Not for all trips, but polite to inform parents if off-site trip taking place)
- Complete **Safety Check List** for your own information.
- **Register** - How the class will be grouped with allocated adult. You do not need to take student addresses/contact details with you.
- **Transport** - Minibus/MPV seating plan-staff to be sat amongst students.  
**If more than one form of transport is being used it should be clearly stated WHO is in which vehicle.**
- **Appropriate** - Ratio staff to students
- **First aid:**
  - Kit-medication
  - Check medical and other needs of students/staff (diet) and ensure you have this list and medication with you. **See first aider on meds rota**
- **Mobile phone** - Charged and Switched ON! –Staff members or school mobile
- **Food** - Cancel dinners/pre book sandwiches. Tell school office at least 1 week before your planned trip.
- **Spending money** - Set a limit?
- **Cost of trip:**
  - Finance form to be completed **at least 2 weeks in advance** and handed into EVC-once this has been approved it will be passed to school finance officer.
  - **SCHOOL FINANCE OFFICER WILL NOT RELEASE ANY MONEY UNLESS THEY RECEIVE A FORM SIGNED BY EVC**
- **Sign Out:**
  - Leave list of all students/staff on trip with office.
  - Accompanying adults need a copy too. (if a small group signing out on Entry Sign is adequate)

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES ACTION PLAN AND HAVE DISCUSSED THEM WITH ACCOMPANYING STAFF AND STUDENTS.**

- **Should an emergency incident occur, it is important that you concentrate on supporting students and staff. Once you have phoned school, we will inform parents/carers /next of kin.**
- **Please do not try to contact any of the above yourself, as it is critical that the incident is managed sensitively and effectively.**
- **If it is out of hours SLT/EVC should be contacted to deal with the situation.**
- **Please try to prevent students from using their mobile phone to contact family/friends.**