



Blenheim

Educational Visits Policy

Committee: Community

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Blenheim High School believes in offering students a structured and balanced programme of educational visits which supports and enhances the curriculum. As well as to enhance student learning, visits seek to raise students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural awareness and to promote a positive image of the School within the local and international community.

This should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This policy has been formulated with the guidance of Surrey County Council's Site Visits and Related Activities (Including DoFE) with links to OEAP National Guidance & EVOLVE 2018, which should be used as a reference point for issues that arise out of this policy.

In order to reduce disruption to the curriculum, no educational visits are permitted between February Half Term and May Half Term, unless at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Principles

To give all students the opportunity to participate in well organised visits which are of benefit to the students, where the safety and well-being of the students and staff has the highest priority and represents good value for money.

The general aim of the visit will be to achieve one or more of the following:

1. Gather information from primary sources;
2. Observe the practical applications of topics studied in theory;
3. Provide aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, intellectual or athletic experiences;
4. Ensure all students have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

A visit will be approved if the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The experience will be within the competence and understanding of the students involved and have relevance and value to them;
2. The teacher has a clear grasp of his or her objectives and has a well-planned programme not only for the visit but for preparation and for follow up work in school;
3. Other teachers, whose work will be affected by the absence of the students on the visit, have received adequate notice (i.e. the visit is on the calendar) **at least six weeks** before the activity and have raised no objections (2 terms notice for a residential visit). The list of students involved should be circulated to staff and mention made at briefing;
4. For residential visits;
 - a. a visit may be allowed to take place during school time if it is a required part of an exam course.
 - b. For visits that support an aspect of the curriculum only one full school day can be missed.
 - c. All other activities must take place in non-term time or at the Head's discretion.
5. A risk assessment form must be completed and approved by the EVC for each visit; (Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999); forms available on staff share. An activity that is off site but routine, taking place in the locality, can be covered by a generic risk assessment. Activities that are more complex, eg

- involving adventurous activities, residential or foreign travel require a ESRA (event-specific risk assessment). (All Staff/Forms/Educational Visits)
6. Arrangements comply with the regulations set out in Surrey County Council's Site Visits and Related Activities (Including DofE) with links to OEAP National Guidance & EVOLVE 2018.
 7. Appropriate explanations of how parents/carers will be notified and kept informed have been submitted to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC);
 8. That consideration has been given to cost and that it is affordable.
 9. There should always be equality of opportunity to access any visit and HOY should be consulted regarding participants.

Cover for teachers taking part in a visit:

The school budget does not allow for the cost of supply teachers to cover the timetables of teachers absent on visits. Therefore:

1. in choosing the date for a visit (after the calendar has been set) the Party Leader should bear in mind the effects of absence on the effective running of the school and aim to minimise the cover required
2. it is the responsibility of the visit organiser to agree all the cover arrangements with the Deputy Head of Curriculum as soon as possible in order to be granted authorisation. This also applies to timetable arrangements for students not taking part in the visit.
3. a charge of £40 per lesson of cover required must be added to the cost of the trip. The following wording is to be inserted in the letter to parents: for activities taking place wholly or partly in school time:

To cover the cost of the visit a voluntary contribution of £x will be required by xx/xx/xx. This covers the cost of the activity together with a contribution towards the cost of covering lessons for those staff who are supervising the activity. We wish to make it clear that no student will be denied participation on the visit on the grounds that no contribution has been made. However, the school reserves the right to cancel the visit if sufficient funds cannot be raised. Families currently in receipt of income support or family credit should write to the teacher in charge indicating their position as they may be able to have part of the cost of these activities met from the school fund.

For activities taking place outside school time, where the activity is not a requirement of a public examination (eg Biology Field Trip) or of the National Curriculum, only the final sentence 'families currently in receipt of.....' Should be included

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed. All off-site visits that are residential, abroad, or hazardous need to be approved by the Governing Body.

The Headteacher is delegated by the Governing Body to approve all off-site educational visits of a perceived low risk, local, daily or regular nature.

The Educational Visits' Co-ordinator (EVC) ensures that all off-site activities follow the correct procedures. They will approve the Group Leader for every visit and monitor the written risk assessments to ensure good practice. In addition, the following responsibilities and duties are undertaken:

- Support the Group Leader in identifying the purpose for the visit and the selection, training and briefing of appropriate supervising adults and volunteer helpers.
- Ensure that DBS disclosures are in place where necessary and the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy is followed.
- Arrange Emergency Contact Duty officer and draw up proper procedures to be followed in such an event.
- Keep records and make reports of accidents and 'near accidents'.
- Review and regularly monitor procedures;
- Liaise with the LA, Head of Strategic Risk Management, to ensure the proposed visit complies with the LA regulations.

The Group Leader is responsible for identifying the purpose of the visit and following the checklist published in the LA Guidance. A Risk Assessment is necessary for all off-site visits. Significant risks and their control measures will need to be recorded and filed with the EVC.

This will take account of:

- **Generic risks** as published in the LA Regulations and Notes of Guidance for Off-site Activities.
- **Event Specific Risks** as identified from a pre-visit or thorough knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the leader's competence, the group and other facts such as transport.
- **On-going Risks** identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures. The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures.

Practice

Before the visit

1. Once the organiser of the visit has identified a suitable visit, (s) he must obtain an 'Approval in Principle' form from the **EVC** or the school network, complete the form and get approval from a budget holder and the Deputy Head of Curriculum (for any cover implications) in advance of the visit. The form will detail the dates and location, the nature, aims and staffing of the visit together with travel arrangements. (S) He will submit this form to the EVC who will discuss with the organiser any issues arising from the visit. Until 'Approval in Principle' is received, no money that cannot be recovered should be paid.
2. The EVC will ensure that:
 - the proposed activity has significant educational value, academic and/or social, and is consistent with the aims of the school;

- the proposed activity is suitable for the students taking into account their ages, abilities, needs and aptitudes.
3. The EVC will then ask the Party Leader to complete and return the **Application for Approval for School Visits' Form** and submit this to the Headteacher/Governors/LA as appropriate.

The Headteacher must ensure the proper supervision and planning of all activities, including the provision of a competent Party Leader who is a qualified member of the teaching staff with two or more years teaching experience. **First aid kits** must be available to groups taking part in off-site activities and a suitably qualified person must check these regularly. A minimum of six weeks' notice is required for approval of such activities.

The approval of the Governors and the LA must be sought for off-site activities, which take place in a high-risk area, involve a hazardous pursuit, an overnight stay or a journey by sea or air. Governors should be kept informed of continuing planning and progress, including any significant changes, up to the date of the journey itself. A minimum of two terms' notice is required. Where approval from the LA is granted, the leaders and helpers will be indemnified by Surrey County Council against any claims for negligence made against them arising from the activity.

The EVC should consult the relevant LA documentation for guidance on what constitutes hazardous activities and areas of high risk.

Where an activity involves the use of the resources or expertise of an establishment or organisation other than that of the school, the Party Leader must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the agency involved is competent and safe. An outdoor activity centre must provide written information to the school detailing insurance cover, provision of experienced staff, procedures for activities, First Aid provision, equipment safety standards, accident and emergency procedures and suitable accommodation, particularly for SEND students, where applicable. Employees must have had DBS record checks. The outdoor activity centre should be accredited provides to BS8848 and or LOTC QB standard (Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge), N.B. AALA (Adventure Activities Licensing Authority) licence only covers safety management, whereas the LOTC QB covers both quality and safety of all activities offered.

The Party Leader should ensure that they have checked the list of students attending with the following members of staff in order to inform their trip planning: Assistant Headteacher – Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Headteacher – Pupil Premium Lead, Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral Lead and SENCO.

Preliminary visits must be made to museums, farms, industrial establishments and field study centres if the sites are not known to accompanying staff. The Party Leader must make detailed notes of this visit and anything agreed verbally with the site provider should be confirmed in writing; a copy of any notes and written communications must be passed to the School Education Visits Co-

ordinator (EVC). Approval and funding for these preliminary visits must be obtained prior to the event.

The EVC will hold a copy of the School Journey Insurance Policy and Party Leaders will need to be aware of its content.

The Party Leader is to have up to date contact information and a copy is also to be kept in school. The Party Leader must ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of the nature of the visit and activities to be undertaken and that they have given their written consent together with details of any medical information. A standard template is available from the school network. The letter should include a full description of the visit including daily programmes, nature of supervision, insurance arrangements and costs. For residential visits, the Party Leader should arrange an information meeting with parents well in advance of the visit.

The minimum level of supervision required is as follows:

	Pupil ages	Group size	Minimum Supervision
Day visits in the UK	11-16	1-30	2 adults, one of whom must be a teacher.
	11-16	31+	1 adult for each additional 10-15 students.
	16+		At Headteacher's discretion.
Residential Visits and Day Visits including travel by sea or air	11-16	Up to 20	2 adults, one of whom must be a teacher (gender match)
	11-16	20+	1 teacher/adult for each additional 10 students.
	16+	1-10	1 teacher
	16+	11+	2 adults (include one teacher)

Exchange visits as above, except where responsibility for supervision is confined to the journey in which case consult the LA guidance document. All mixed residential parties must be accompanied by both a male and a female member of staff.

During the visit

1. Care: teachers must take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances; teachers must consider whether they would be able to justify their actions to professional colleagues whose judgement they respect and ultimately to a court of law; if in doubt, teachers should not go ahead with a course of action until they have sufficient further information and advice to remove the doubt.

Alcohol

Students

No students under the age of 18 will be served alcohol. For those who are legally old enough to drink, they will be allowed to consume alcohol at the discretion of the member of the Leadership Team who is the school's EVC. In all cases, teachers must ensure that drinking is in **moderation**.

Adults

When staff are supervising students, eg. on a ski slope, they must not drink alcohol – this includes lunchtime. In the evenings, the party leader will identify which staff are on/off duty. On duty staff are not allowed to consume alcohol. All off duty staff and students over 18 are expected to be extremely sensible regarding drinking.

At all times the School's Substance Misuse Policy is to be followed.

Guidance Notes for dealing with Emergencies will have been distributed to Party Leaders by the EVC.

2. When moving from one area to another, head counts or register checks should take place. In buses or coaches the emergency exits should be pointed out to students and staff/adults, prior to boarding. Staff should position themselves throughout the bus or coach, and not sit all together at the front. Seatbelts must be worn at all times.
3. Travel by minibus: minibuses should be operated within the guidelines laid down by the School. All drivers of the minibus should have been awarded a Certificate of Competence (Surrey mini bus/people carrier drivers' assessment scheme) by South –East Minibus consultancy, Epsom or a similar suitable certificated authority. Passenger tolerance, the driver's concentration, the type of journey, traffic and weather conditions must be taken account in the planning of the journey. The driver must check minibus safety prior to use. When abroad, Green Card and Breakdown Recovery Insurance is necessary and drivers must not exceed permitted driving hours. Minibus drivers must take regular breaks on long journeys (see Health and Safety handbook). There should be two drivers per minibus if either:
 - The journey is likely to exceed two hours; or
 - The journey happens at the end of the day unless the journey is local only.
4. Travel by ferry: consideration must be given to the likely danger areas on board, including on deck. A group meeting point should be identified. The group must be briefed about what to do in an emergency, the location of muster stations, feeling unwell, losing their way on board.
5. For all other forms of transport including rail, coach, shuttle, air, bus or car the safety procedures must be clearly explained prior to departure.
6. In terms of activities including walks, adventure holidays, sporting etc, they too must have the safety instructions explained prior to commencement.
7. The school, or a personal, mobile phone must be carried by the party leader.
8. When unaccompanied students are to be put into groups.

9. The Party Leader must have a list of the groups.
10. Party leader to carry 'quick check' card with details of the LA-operated 'Operation Duke'.
11. When visiting urban areas, particularly tourist attractions, the Party Leader should identify a non-iconic building in the vicinity where the party would muster in the event of a terrorist attack. The building could be a hotel, where a landline could be used to contact School in the event of the mobile network being taken down.

Health and Safety

The Governors, staff and Headteacher of the school need to be satisfied that all participants in a visit will comply with Health and Safety Policy. All parties need to feel confident that participants will follow instructions and behave in a manner, which is appropriate. If it is felt that a student's behaviour will cause problems to other students, staff or helpers on a visit then permission for them to attend may be withheld.

When travelling abroad the school will always contact the Foreign Office and act upon advice given.

After the visit

Following any residential and/or foreign trip, the Party Leader should make a brief report to the EVC of any matters of concern arising from the trip.