

# 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 2025
Governor approved	May 2024	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 School. We will make best endeavours to forward plan with the aim of arranging trips in which all pupils can safely participate. We will offer a range of different trips and activities across a pupil's time at the School to ensure that no pupil is excluded. Our aim will always be to offer your child a place on the trip of their choice, although this may not always be possible, for instance due to limited capacity or, if reasonable adjustments can't be achieved.

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 adjustments that can be reasonably made to ensure their safe participation which may occasionally include inviting a parent/carer to support the activity.

We consider our obligations under both section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (supporting children with medical conditions at school) and the Equality Act 2010 (avoiding disability discrimination) at the very earliest stages of planning our trips. We plan a variety of trips to try to ensure that every child can participate. Where a child with additional needs has a preference for a particular trip, we must assess the risk as described above and we must consider every possible option to try to allow safe participation. The 2015 guidance on supporting children with medical conditions does indeed prevent us from creating unnecessary barriers, for instance by requiring parents to accompany, if accompaniment is not needed. However, a parent accompanying the child can certainly be a reasonable adjustment to allow safe participation where it is indeed necessary. Many schools have used this measure on a case by case basis where the risk assessment identifies it as a practical option to allow participation.

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 and will take proper account of our obligations under equality legislation.

The School's policy and procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by Hampshire Outdoor Education, the Department for Education, the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel (OEAP), PE, the DofE Service and the EHRC technical guidance for schools in relation to our obligations under equality legislation.

## **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 Visit 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, the Visit Leader 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 SENDCo (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 Visit Leader will ensure that a suitable alternative is available.

In the case of enrichment activities that are not part of the specified curriculum, prior to the launch of the trip/activity, the Visit 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 relevant activities
- Information on a child's school report to indicate engagement with the School's expectations of attendance, participation and standards.

The Visit Leader and linked Senior Leader will ensure the above criteria are adjusted for particular pupils where appropriate to take account of challenges arising from a protected characteristic, as required by equality legislation.

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 random 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) or who are on the PPG register;
- Pupils who have previously been on a waiting list and not secured a place;
- Pupils who opt to take the subject in Year 9, 10, or 11 as a curriculum choice or GCSE option if the trip is launched after this information is available.

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 enable all children to participate in the activity. Where appropriate, we will carry out an individual risk assessment for the pupil's participation, to identify practical measures to cater for their specific needs.

In the case of residential trips, the arrangements for rooming will be discussed prior to departure making best endeavours to take into account the needs of the individual and within the scope of what is reasonably possible based on the judgement of the Visit Leader (and in consultation with the EVOLVE Leader) who takes responsibility for 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 (or Deputy 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 but is not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. 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. Prior to the approval of any trip, adequate staffing and contingency must be confirmed.

### **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 and have the contact number for the base contact person at school.

In the case of a pupil who would ordinarily have additional support in school as part of provision funded by the Local Authority (EHCP), we will speak to you early in the planning process about how support can be offered to your child on the trip. This will be an important aspect of the individual risk assessment which will be needed. We cannot usually confirm the attendance of specific staff members on any school trip until near departure time because their attendance is voluntary. Any last-minute changes to staffing or unexpected events may necessitate a change or removal of a space offered.

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 and undergo safeguarding training.

In the case where the children of employees who are in school are attending the trip, the parent/employee cannot be the Visit Leader. In the case where the children of employees are attending as volunteers and in a supervisory role and are therefore 18 years of age or older, they must fulfil the requirements of all other volunteers/employees and undergo full safeguarding training with the Senior DSL prior to the trip departure. A full risk assessment of the trip must be conducted by the SLT Link/SLT Evolve Lead to include contingency planning, safeguarding and actions in the event of an emergency paying due regard to potential conflict of interest resulting from the child of an employee attending the trip.

### **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 and the EHRC Technical Guidance, 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 6 weeks prior to the visit taking place. These are dynamic documents and will be reviewed regularly and may be adjusted at any point up to the end of the trip.

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.

Where an individual risk assessment is required for a pupil, this will be initiated as early as possible in the planning stage of the trip, reviewed regularly and adjusted as necessary before and during the trip. The risk assessment will take account of the views of all parties and professionals, to inform the School's decision on whether reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure safe participation. The aim will always be that there are no barriers to inclusion. Each case will be taken on an individual basis and will not set precedence for future trips/visits. Health and safety on trips is paramount in the decision making process: "The Act does not override Health and Safety legislation. If making a particular adjustment would increase the risks to the health and safety of any person (including the disabled pupil in question), then this is a relevant factor in deciding whether it is reasonable to make that adjustment." (EHRC, 'Technical Guidance for Schools in England', 2014, p:6.43).

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. Additional risk assessments are needed in the case of trips where a child of an employee is attending either as a participant or in a volunteer/supervisory role. Where the child is of school age, the parent cannot be the Visit Leader.

## **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 of 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.

### Reference

Equality and Human Rights Commission – Technical Guidance for Schools 2014.