

Hamsterley Primary School



School Specific Educational Visits Policy

Article 3 of the UNCRC says that adults should think about the best interests of children and young people when making choices that affect them.

Article 29

Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

Date written: (September 2020)

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: (October 2020)

Date of next review: (September 2021)

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Hamsterley Primary 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.
- Opportunities for meaning, making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- 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. ie. 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.

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, Hamsterley Primary:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Durham County Council Educational Visits, Off-Site Activities and On-Site Adventures Policy and Guidance' September 2019** (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 execute visits in line with school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

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.**
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. Note that there are a number of venues which have been given delegated approval so the Head can approve – see Evolve for the most up to date list.

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 Teacher 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 Coordinator (EVC) is Jane Stephens, who will support 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 Sarah Kitching or deputy headteacher Damian Hassan in her absence, 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'. There is no requirement for governors to approve visits but they will be informed at regular governor meetings what visits have taken place and what is planned. 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.

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 competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher 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.

Emergency Procedures

Every visit will have nominated emergency contacts. If the visit is off site for only the duration of the school day the school telephone number is sufficient to give as an emergency contact. However, if the visit is of a residential nature **two** 24hr contact numbers will be identified (i.e. mobile and/or home phone number). The emergency contacts will have a copy of the Emergency Card (EV8) with the relevant emergency contact details on. They will also have access to all the relevant medical and next of kin information. The visit leader will have a completed Emergency Card (EV7) with them at all times (this will detail the contact details for the emergency contacts).

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.

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.

Educational Visits Checklist

Hamsterley Primary's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'. Hamsterley Primary's Educational Visits Checklist may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources.

Parental Consent

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time. However, parents will always be informed of the detail when their child is undertaking an educational visit.

Written consent is only requested for activities which need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside of school hours. A 'one off' consent will be signed by parents when their child enrolls at school. This will cover a child's participation in any of these types of activities throughout their time at the school.

However, specific parental consent will be obtained for visits of a residential, overseas or adventurous nature. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

Hamsterley Primary will make reasonable adjustments to avoid disabled participants being placed at a substantial disadvantage. However, the Equality Act 2010 does not require us to place employees or participants at risk of injury or ill health in order to make reasonable adjustments.

If appropriate, we may ask the parent/carer of a particular pupil to accompany them on the visit. If there are any concerns about whether school can provide for a pupil's safety or the safety of others on a visit due to the specific needs of a pupil we will seek advice from the DCC Health & Safety Team.

Charging / funding for visits

Hamsterley Primary will arrange payment for visits on an individual visit basis. Visits such as residential trips, which will be more expensive, will have arrangements in place for payment to be made gradually over a period of time leading up to the visit.

Those pupils who receive specific benefits may be entitled to attend the visit with no charge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis. There may be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in visits for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity the Governing Body will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission will be made by the Head Teacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors. (See charging policy)

Transport

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Hamsterley Primary follows the Local Authority advice.

Use of Parents and Volunteers Cars – Hamsterley Primary follows the guidance in the DCC Educational Visits Policy. The Parent and Volunteer Drivers Agreement form (EV5) will be completed and retained in school. This will be done on an annual basis. Hamsterley Primary will ensure supervision arrangements are considered and the relevant DBS checks are undertaken. We will also complete the Driving at Work Risk Assessment. (this will also be done where employees are using their own vehicle to transport pupils.)

When transporting pupils in private vehicles Hamsterley Primary will ensure the relevant car seats are used as required by law and that the appropriate insurance is in place.

Insurance

Hamsterley Primary is covered by DCC Employers Liability and Public Liability insurance for activities when away from the school site, home base or when employees are working in the community within the UK. We are not covered for personal accident benefits or loss of personal property while on educational visits. If necessary we can arrange this insurance for individual visits.

For overseas visits separate insurance will be taken out.

Swimming Lessons

Children attend swimming lessons at Wolsingham School. Approved transport is used. Headcount is taken when leaving school and entering the transport. Class teacher ensures all children have fastened their seatbelts.

A teacher and additional adult accompany the children. The class teacher has overall supervision of the class and other adults are made aware of procedures for supervision. There are girls and boys changing rooms. One adult to supervise each area. The swimming teacher is present in the foyer outside the changing rooms and the external door to the area is locked.

Boys changing area – female staff supervise inside the doorway within the changing area.

Girls changing area – female staff supervise inside the changing room.

Male staff if present supervise the boys changing area.

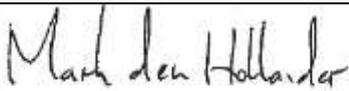
Class teacher and additional adult supervise children leaving the area to go to the toilet in the changing rooms.

Headcount is taken when leaving the swimming baths and entering the transport. Class teacher ensures all children have fastened their seatbelts. Lost child procedures are followed.

Dismissal of pupils following after school club sessions

Children with written permission to walk home alone will be allowed to do so. All other children must be collected by the parent/carer/notified agreed adult. Children will not be allowed to leave with other parents or adults unless the parent of the child notifies school beforehand. Late notification will require e mail notification and a password which the person collecting must give. Uncollected child procedures are followed for any child not collect at the end of the after school session.

Signed by:

Headteacher/ Principal		Date: 13.10.20
Chair of Governors		Date: 13.10.20
EVC		Date:

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 (e.g. areas around school and Hamsterley village) follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- do not require parental consent however as a matter of courtesy parents will be informed where possible of planned activities through newsletters or/and school website.
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below).
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE

Boundaries

This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues:

- *Local Churches in village*
- *Village hall*
- *Village Green*
- *Adder wood*

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, Deputy or EVC must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff 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. If one adult with older children the children will be made aware of what to do if, for example, the adult collapsed.
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group. Return to group if visible, wait where they are until adult returns.
- 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.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure

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 (EV7).
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.

Staff Guidelines

Preparation for Educational Visits

Thorough preparation for a visit must be undertaken. The visit should be logged on the EVOLVE site and all of the relevant documentation attached. The EVC and the Headteacher should be consulted regarding the arrangements, nature and purpose of the visit and should approve the visit on the EVOLVE website. Mrs Walker must be made aware of any letters/information to be sent to parents.

EVERY EDUCATIONAL VISIT SHOULD HAVE A CLEAR AIM

The following must be addressed in further planning visits outside the School Learning Area :

- Matters of supervision, content of the day(s), first aid and transport must be organised in advance.
- Transport drop off and collection places must be checked and agreed upon.
- Parents must be advised of the details of the visit. Any cost of the visit must take into account the School Charging Policy.
- All necessary permission slips must be obtained.
- A written Emergency Contact List of everyone going on the visit should be carried by the lead adult of the trip. This must include: names, addresses and telephone numbers of each child and adult; any special medical requirements; any negative consents to medical treatment; any special dietary requirements; helpers and the groups that the children will be in.
- A charged mobile phone should be taken on all trips. Ensure that mobile phone coverage is in the area that you are visiting.
- An Emergency Contingency Plan needs to be in place, detailing alternative arrangements due to inclement weather, transport breakdown etc.

How to undertake a risk assessment and who to submit it to:

In addition to the above planning, a Risk Assessment must be made for any proposed visit which involves taking pupils off-site outside the School Learning Area. It should:

- Identify any possible risks which pupils, staff and helpers may be exposed to and outline any control measures that will be put in place;
- Be uploaded to the EVOLVE website to be passed on to the EVC and Headteacher for consultation.
- During the visit, be kept with the Emergency Contact List and other planning documentation.
- Check if the venue have their own risk assessment.

The six main considerations in undertaking risk assessments are:

- Knowledge of Group
- Travel
- Venue
- Activities
- Communications (including Emergency Procedures)
- Environmental Factors

More detailed prompts under each consideration, to help in undertaking risk assessments, can be obtained from the EVC.

Risk Assessments must be logged on to the EVOLVE website to be passed on to the EVC/Headteacher as follows:

- Off-site visits outside the School Learning Area – One week prior to the visit.

During the visit

In addition to measures documented on the Risk Assessment staff should –

- Take regular head counts. For example, start of the trip, change of activities, before returning to school and at return to school.
- Carry a class list/register, this is to be called before starting a trip and departing from any visit. This should ensure that all children are present. This is a more reliable safety measure than head counting.

Ensure children are always in their group with their group leader.

After the visit

A post visit evaluation report may be completed. This form will always be completed where any unusual circumstances, 'near miss' incidents or accidents occurred and brought to the attention of the headteacher.

Where possible encourage children and adult helpers to contribute to this report.

The report must include any critical incident details.