



Whitecross Nursery School

Offsite Visit Policy

Reviewed by	Claire FitzPatrick
Date of last review	September 2023
Date of next review	September 2024
Ratified by the Governing Body	September 2023

This policy will be reviewed sooner if there is a change to legislation or guidance which may affect it. Any changes will be communicated to all stakeholders.

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Statement of intent

Whitecross Nursery School understands that visits and trips can be effective ways of motivating children, and they can often offer unique educational experiences. The school aims to ensure that children are engaged in their learning and are given opportunities to explore this in a more practical setting.

The school takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and children very seriously. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for children and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- DfE (2018) 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'
- DfE (2013) 'Driving school minibuses'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Child Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- DBS Policy

2. Definitions

'In loco parentis' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over a child in place of a parent.

'School trip' means any educational visit or away-day organised by the school which takes children and staff members off-site.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on children's lives, teaching them life skills and providing new experiences.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing educational visit coordinator, liaising with the Local Authority as necessary.
- Liaising with the educational visits coordinator and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents.
- Liaising with the governing board regarding the organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities, including settling any disputes.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the educational visits coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education and arranging for training to be undertaken, as necessary.
- Completing relevant paperwork, including risk assessments, for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring suitable safety measures are in place prior to each trip or activity.

- Overseeing the work of the educational visits coordinator, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in place in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.

The visit coordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties, including the local outdoor education adviser, during the planning and organising of extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Partaking in relevant additional training to ensure they remain up-to-date with relevant educational trip information and health and safety guidance.
- Overseeing the planning of the educational trips, by ensuring all essential documentation, including risk assessments, is up to date and appropriate for completion by the designated trip leader.
- Appointing an appropriate and competent member of staff to be the designated trip leader for each trip.
- Ensuring the competency of the designated trip leader, in consultation with the Headteacher, by organising training for staff and volunteers.

The designated trip leader selected to be in charge on an individual trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all children on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the Headteacher.
- Undertaking any relevant training or courses which are arranged by the educational visits coordinator.
- Completing all essential documentation for the trip and ensuring it has been approved by the educational visits coordinator.
- Conducting a risk assessment prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure child and staff safety.
- Creating an itinerary prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to parents and staff to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity six weeks in advance and distributing permission slips to parents.
- Implementing safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.
- Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the DBS Policy.

The designated deputy leader supports the designated trip leader and will assume the designated trip leader's responsibilities if the designated trip leader is no longer fit to lead the trip, e.g., is unwell at short notice. They are also responsible for supporting the designated trip leader in completing all their relevant responsibilities by assuming any delegated tasks.

Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring they are competent and comfortable with their delegated responsibilities, undertaking training where necessary.
- Ensuring the safety of the children is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.

Volunteers on the trip are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Supervising and ensuring the safety of children by following the procedures outlined by the designated trip leader.

4. Planning school trips

Prior to planning a school trip, the following guidance will be read by the organisers:

- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE (2011) 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'

A thorough risk assessment will be conducted by the designated trip leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure child and staff safety.

The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all children are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all children.

5. Risk assessment process

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced to the fullest extent. The individual carrying out the risk assessment process will have the skills, status and competence needed for the role, understand the risks involved, and be familiar with the activity.

The process is as follows:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record findings and implement them
- Review assessment and update if necessary

A risk assessment will be conducted for each school trip before it is undertaken to identify hazards and control measures specific to the trip.

6. Vetting providers

When considering external providers for activities, the educational visits coordinator will check whether they hold the 'Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge' to indicate they meet nationally recognised standards.

If a provider does not hold the badge, the educational visits coordinator will check the following to ensure they are a suitable organisation to work with:

- Their insurance arrangements
- Their adherence to legal requirements
- Their control measures
- Their use of vehicles
- Staff competency levels
- Safeguarding policies
- The suitability of their accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements in place
- The presence of necessary licences

If it is deemed appropriate to engage with an external provider, a written agreement will be created outlining what each party is responsible for. If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

7. Equal opportunities

The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of children when organising a trip. The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to children will provide new experiences and develop life skills. Extra-curricular trips and activities are organised, managed and conducted in accordance with the school's Child Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

Due to the popularity of some extra-curricular trips and activities, the school offers places on a first come, first served basis. Any individual, staff or otherwise, shown to be taking preference over one child or a group of children will be subject to formal disciplinary action.

For school trips that require additional payment, the fee will be reasonable and help will be provided where possible for children who cannot afford the initial fee.

8. Transport

Children walk to venues in the in the locality, such as local parks, to post letters at the letter box, or to local shops.

We use public transport, buses, to take children into town to the cathedral or museums in the city.

We use local coach companies to take children on trips out of the immediate locality to places such as farms.

9. Parental consent

Parental consent will always be acquired when children are attending school trips.

Parents complete an annual consent form at the start of any academic year which gives consent for their child to be involved in any specific or all activities, both on site and locally off-site, that take place throughout the school year. Whitecross Nursery School will always notify parents if and when they plan to take the children off site before doing so, and parents always have the right to add or withdraw consent at any time.

Separate consent will be sought for trips which require payment. Parents will be informed of activities by letter and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part.

10. Staffing ratios

There will be sufficient staff to cope in an emergency and generally. Our minimum staff to child ratios are as follows:

- Children with additional needs 1:1
- Day trip visits for 3 -4 year olds is 1:4 or lower if possible

11. Insurance and licensing

When planning any activities, the educational visits coordinator will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence. Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place. Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.

Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible.

12. Accidents and incidents

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy.

The Headteacher will keep written records of any incidents, accidents and near misses.

Media enquiries will be referred to the Headteacher or, if they are not available, the deputy Headteacher or the clerk to governors.

Staff will use guidance as set out in the Critical Incident Plan, in particular the 'initial response' section, to ensure the safety of children and staff should anything happen, e.g. a terrorist attack. Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip, including for points of interests such as museums. Staff and volunteers are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

To ensure children are easily identifiable, they must wear nursery high visibility jackets.

13. Missing person procedure

The school places child and staff safety as its top priority when participating in school trips.

Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with this policy. The educational visits coordinator will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

When travelling with a child with SEND, the educational visits coordinator will ensure an adult is with them at all times and that the visit is adequately modified to suit the child's needs in accordance with this policy.

Everyone on the trip will be provided with a contact sheet for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group. All staff members will be required to carry mobile phones with them at all times and have shared numbers in the phones.

Upon arriving at every venue, the designated trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where children and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group.

Children will wear hi-viz jackets and staff where possible will wear school branded clothing where possible, in order to make them easily identifiable.

Regular head counts of all children and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times.

In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip:

- The designated trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining children and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
- The designated trip leader will immediately identify at least **one** adult to start looking for the person and another adult to contact them via phone, these people will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
- Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
- If the person cannot be contacted or located within **10 minutes**, the local police or relevant authorities will be contacted.
- If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the Headteacher, or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.

If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.

If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

14. Children with SEND

Where possible, activities and visits will be adapted to enable children with SEND to take part. The SENCO will liaise with child's parents, where appropriate, to consider what reasonable adjustments may be necessary.

Where this is not possible, an alternative activity of equal educational value will be arranged for all children. Children with SEND will be accompanied by a responsible adult during the extra-curricular trip or visit.

15. Finance

The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.

The school will act in accordance with the DfE's guidance document 'Charging for school activities' (2018) and, therefore, will only charge for trips which are classed as an 'optional extra'.

Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.

All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen in the event that the trip is cancelled or a child cancels their place on the trip.

In the event that the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the Headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Headteacher will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all children are treated equally. Any charge made in respect of children will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip divided equally by the number of children participating.

Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1.00 per child. Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

16. Evaluating trips and visits

Following an educational trip or visit, the educational visit coordinator will meet with any staff members present on the trip to assess the success of the trip in respect of both educational value and safeguarding effectiveness.

Based on this assessment, recommendations will be made to improve future trips and visits.

Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher. The governing board will review this policy annually.