



Educational Visits Policy

Related documents: What we do & How we do it Policy

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OUR VISION

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave the school with a 'new day, new opportunity' ethos and are capable of becoming positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

- Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another

Policy owner	WhiteTrees School	Last review	February 2026
Date Created	July 2019	Next review	February 2027

Introduction

White Trees Independent School places a high value on off-site trips, excursions, visits and residential trips. Such outings are of enormous benefit to pupil development. It is a central part of the ethos of the school to provide the opportunity for educational visits and school excursions. We regularly take pupils on day trips to museums, natural features, sports centres, outdoor centres and country parks. We run a handful of residential trips including Duke of Edinburgh throughout the year.

Pupils' physical and moral safety is of paramount concern. The School accepts that trips, visits and outdoor activities cannot be completely without risk, but it requires that those staff in charge take all reasonable precautions to protect the health, safety and welfare of pupils and staff, and minimise the risk of untoward or dangerous situations (in accordance with DCFS Guidance Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits). This policy (along with the procedures and Risk Assessments) is supported by, and works in conjunction with the School's Behaviour and Discipline policy, Child Protection (Safeguarding), Recruitment and Appointment Procedures. All lead supervisors of educational visits must be aware of the procedures of the WhiteTrees School.

The Executive Headteacher and Governors must be satisfied of the competence (training, assessment and experience) of staff to undertake and supervise the various activities. The lead member of staff will brief all accompanying staff about all aspects relating to the health and safety of pupils accompanying the educational visit or outing. This may include designating staff with specific tasks e.g. care of medication. All staff supervising a trip will have undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and be as well informed about the proposed visit as the leader. They will need preparation before the visit.

The main purpose of this policy is to ensure, as far as is possible, the safety of all those who are involved on school visits and trips, and to safeguard the position of members of staff who are taking the trips. It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life; visits are very much part of the programme of enrichment at White Trees and should be seen to be encouraged by this policy.

Any visit made by one or more pupils, beyond the confines of the school buildings or grounds are defined as off site. All visits must take into account pupils' disabilities and special educational needs. The school follows the SEN Code of Practice, which has been adapted to meet our particular circumstances, and staff should refer to the Equal Opportunities policy and the school's Disability and Access Plan. These

ensure that no pupil will be discriminated against when planning a visit. On occasion, a pupil will not be able to take part in a trip should the inherent risk, after a detailed risk assessment has been made, deem that it would be unsafe for the pupil to travel. Such a decision is made by the Deputies and Assistants alongside the Head of Vocational Studies. Risk assessments for all new trips, locations and visits should be created in advance for all pupils making full reference to their SEMH needs and clear strategies to mitigate the risk to themselves, staff and members of the public.

If staff are unsure about any aspect of this policy they should consult the Head of Vocational Studies or Deputy Heads at each site. The Head of Vocational Studies and Deputy Head's coordinate all educational visits.

Equal Opportunities

Pupils with learning difficulties & disabilities, special educational & medical needs

Wherever it is feasible, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities should be included, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Any problems/limitations should be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessment. Special attention is made to supervision ratios. Each leader, for information, should hold summary sheets containing details of the pupil/pupil's special needs. The group leader should discuss the visit with parents/carers of those children with special needs to ensure sufficient support is in place for each child and the teacher.

This policy & procedure is informed by:

- a. The Schools' Health and Safety Policy
- b. The Schools' Behaviour Policy
- c. First Aid Policy, Medical Records, Pupil risk assessments
- d. School trips and outdoor learning activities
www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf
- e. Health and Safety advice on legal duties and powers, 2014 (DfE)
- f. Standards for local Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV)
- g. National Guidance May 2019, <http://oeapng.info/downloads/all-documents>
- h. Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations (2004) (for England, Scotland and Wales)
- i. National Minimum Standard for Boarding Schools, April 2015
- j. Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2024
- k. Individual activities and visits comply with Employer requirements and Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

- I. Any planned activity that involves caving, climbing, trekking, skiing or water sports must involve a check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004 for England, Scotland and Wales.

Responsibilities

Governors

The governors have legal duties to ensure as far as is reasonably possible, health and safety as outlined in the Health & Safety policy.

Executive Head Teacher

Responsibility for visits is delegated to the Executive Head by the governors. Their agreement or the agreement of a Deputy Head/Head of Vocational Studies must be obtained before a visit takes place. They will ensure that the visit leader is competent and that the off-site visit policy is complied with. If the Head a Deputy Head or the Head of Vocational Studies are taking part in the visit, then she/he should follow the instructions of the visit leader; this applies to all members of the LT.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

This role is undertaken by the Deputy Heads and the Head of Vocational Studies in consultation with the Executive Headteacher. He/she will:

- Support and advise the visit leader
- Support and advise the Executive Head and Governors in their responsibilities regarding off site visits
- Check and confirm the trip forms and risk assessment with the visits leader
- Assess the competence of the leader and other supervisors in conjunction with the Head
- Confirm the emergency contact procedures with the visit leader
- Assist in induction training for off-site visit leaders and supervisors
- Keep records, monitor and review the school's Educational Visits Policy and off-site visits

Trip Leader

- One adult must have overall responsibility for the visit which includes the Health and Safety of the participants on the trip. The trip leader is confirmed by the Deputy Head/Head of Vocational Studies. A nominated deputy trip leader is required for most trips.
- The Trip leader should ensure that all aspects of the planning & checklist process are followed. The trip leader has responsibility for ensuring each stage is carried out effectively and completely, keeping the Deputy Head up to date on progress.
- Additionally, the trip leader should ensure that:
 - i. the school's educational visits policy is followed
 - ii. all accompanying members of staff are employed and safer recruitment cleared
 - iii. all staff are aware of their role and tasks, pupil supervision, and that they are fully aware of what the visit entails
 - iv. they are able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range
 - v. that they understand all staff have responsibility for pupils' behaviour, according to the Behaviour Policy and the pupil code of conduct
 - vi. they are competent to instruct/supervise pupils in the activities
 - vii. they are familiar with the location where the visit is taking place
 - viii. they are aware of safeguarding and child protection issues
 - ix. there is adequate first aid provision for the activities taking place
 - x. the suitability of the participants has been assessed through the Head of Vocational Studies, Deputy Heads and Executive Head Teacher
 - xi. the correct supervision ratio is applied
 - xii. that external providers have been verified for insurance, qualifications particular to the activity, their own internal risk assessments, and DBS checks to ensure they are cleared to work with children
 - xiii. an accurate register of all participants is provided
 - xiv. that full consideration has been given to cover any additional special or medical needs of a participant and guidance sought to enable the child to access the activities, a separate risk assessment may be required in some cases
 - xv. an up-to-date risk assessment approved and signed by the Deputy Heads or the Head of Vocational Studies
 - xvi. accompanying staff have been made aware of the risk assessments and emergency procedures
 - xvii. the appropriate level of insurance cover is provided - check with the Head Office
 - xviii. all paperwork is fully complete and authorised by the Executive Head Teacher & Deputy Heads/Head of Vocational Studies before the trip departs
 - xix. they are prepared to stop any activity or visit if it is deemed unsafe

- xx. if a pupil becomes ill or has a minor accident, medical help should be sought as appropriate. The leader should contact the pupils' parents/ carers if medical intervention is required.
- xxi. All illness, near misses, & accidents should be reported

Accompanying Staff

- Staff who are accompanying a visit have the responsibility to act as any reasonable, prudent parent would in the same circumstances.

They should also

- i. be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit
 - ii. be aware of and follow the school Educational Visits Policy
 - iii. follow the instructions of the visit leader
 - iv. speak to the visit leader immediately if they become concerned about Health and Safety at any time during the visit
 - v. take care of their own and others' Health & Safety
- The use of parents or other adults who are not employees of the school, as supervisors on trips, is not allowed.
 - Staff welfare is important and accompanying teachers/trip leader will follow 'good practice'. This is defined by the school to include taking appropriate action in the event of an emergency or illness affecting an accompanying member of staff.
 - Accompanying staff are adults and therefore it is assumed that the individual will make their own particular dietary or medical issues known to the trip leader/third party provider for insurance purposes. It is also assumed that, where required or appropriate, an accompanying teacher, will make the necessary arrangements to manage their own health/wellbeing. When the trip leader is affected during a trip, responsibility for a trip will lie with the assigned deputy trip leader. For residential trips, as far as possible ratio calculation takes into account the reality of an accompanying teacher withdrawing from 'loco parentis' responsibility due to accident or illness. Accompanying teachers are covered by the school's insurance policy.

Pupils

The visit leader must make it clear to pupils that they must not take unnecessary risks, must follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors at all times during the visit. They should behave according to the school rules and follow the Pupil Code of Conduct for the trip where applicable.

Parents/Carers

- Parents/Carers should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. They should read all the written information. For residential trips, parents/carers must sign a consent form and provide up to date information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health and provide emergency contact numbers for the duration of the trip.
- If there is a serious infringement of the school rules or the Code of Conduct, a pupil may be required to return home. Staff must make clear to parents/carers the reasons for which a participant may be sent home, the travel plans for that and the cost implications. Parents/carers must agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and covering the associated costs.

Trip Proposals

- A discussion with the Executive Headteacher, Head of Vocational Studies or Deputy Heads should take place about potential trips. Staff requesting trips should understand that permission to run a trip is not automatically given and the Head/SLT reserves the right to not give permission.
- The overriding factors applied by the Head/SLT for considering a trip are:
 - i. The specific benefits to the pupil including enrichment opportunities
 - ii. A balance between these benefits and the required time off school
 - iii. Curriculum requirements
- Day trips should ideally be proposed several weeks in advance. A request is made directly to the Executive Head, Head of Vocational Studies or Deputy Heads. If approved the trip will be entered into the calendar and the trip leader may begin to plan the trip.
- Residential trips should be planned further in advance. If approved by LT the trip will be entered into the calendar and the trip leader may begin to plan the trip.

Supervision Ratios for Educational Trips & Visits

- All of our pupils are supervised 1:1 or 2:1 on trips and visits.
- The priority for trips is the safety of all members of the party. If a member of staff or other trip supervisor is concerned that an individual will not take due care of themselves or others, then the individual must be prevented from joining in that activity.

All Trips

- The visit leader should make sure that parents/carers are able to contact their child via the school contact telephone number in case of an emergency at home.
- A school mobile phone is available and this number may be disclosed to parents and pupils. Staff should not disclose their personal mobile numbers in line with Child Protection recommendations.
- Procedures should be in place to advise parents/carers if the visit is late returning and of safe arrival, where appropriate.
- All paperwork relating to visits must be retained for 7 years.

Additional Issues That Must be Considered

- **Competence of Visit Leaders and Supervisors**

The Head of Vocational Studies & Deputies should ensure that the Leader is competent to lead the visit by assessing the Leader's experience, knowledge and appropriate qualifications relating to the visit. Signing off the trips' form gives documentary evidence of this process.

- **Duty of Care**

Negligence arises through failure to conform to the school's Educational Visits Policy and not following best practice guidelines.

- **Transport**

Generic risk assessments are available for all school cars used by White Trees.

- **Media**

In the event of media contact then liaison must be made with the Executive Head. In

the event of an emergency all media enquiries must be made through the Executive

Head at school. No comment should be made to the media by any of the trip leaders, supervisor and pupils. The name of any casualty must not be given to the

media. The best response is to politely direct all enquiries to the Executive Head and

pass on the school's telephone number.

- **Insurance**

The trip leader must confirm with Head Office that the school's insurance policy

covers the visit and its activities; in the unlikely event that it does not then alternative

arrangements must be made. Without appropriate insurance no activity or visit can take place.

- **Finance**

The trip leader must ensure that the visit is financially viable and that the budgeting includes all foreseeable costs including entrance fees for pupils and staff, transport, food and drink.

- **Use of external providers**

- I. The trip leader must ensure that external providers follow best practice and in the case of adventurous activities (defined as caving, climbing, trekking and water sports) that they are legally licensed and record the AALA no on the Trip Template. Reputable travel agents specialising in school trips should be used wherever possible.
- II. Copies of external providers risk assessments, licences and public liability insurance must be obtained together with evidence that their staff have valid DBS clearances.
- III. If an excursion is overseas and it is not practical for the trip leader to visit the location in advance, then references should be obtained from other schools who have used the provider paying particular attention to Health and Safety issues wherever possible.
- IV. The use of an external provider does not absolve the trip leader and supervisors from responsibility; they have the final decision over any aspect of the visit, not the external provider. The trip leader must be prepared to step in at any time to stop an activity.

- **Water**

- I. Activities based on or near water are the cause of a high percentage of the accidents on off site visits, extra vigilance and supervision is required. This is classed as an adventurous activity and must be appropriately assessed and insured.
- II. Swimming in a pool, sea or other body of water must not take place unless the appropriate risk assessment has been completed prior to the visit, appropriately qualified lifeguard(s) is/are present and that at least one lifeguard has the appropriate local knowledge. There must be no sudden change of plan on the visit no matter how tempting.

- **Duty Rota**

The trip leader should organise a duty rota for a residential visit, ensuring that there is always minimum staffing on duty at any time, specifically pupils should know who to contact. No member of staff may consume alcohol while on duty, nor prior to duty in

such quantity as to impair judgement or exceed allowable levels for driving whilst on

duty, whether driving or not.

- **Mobile phones**

Trip leaders are advised to formulate a visit specific policy for the use of mobile phones by pupils on the visit. This should include their use in an emergency.

- **First Aid/Medical**

- I. The degree of First Aid cover depends on the nature of the visit and the participants; the trip leader should assess this and ensure that appropriate cover is provided. Pupils' medical needs must be checked before a risk assessment can be completed. First aid kits are available from the school nurse and should be booked in advance as required.
- II. All members of White Trees staff are first aid trained (If staff are new then they will not be left on their own with students until training has taken place.
- III. All members of staff must be made aware of the medical needs of pupils by the trip leader.
- IV. Pupils may need to take medication (prescribed or non-prescribed) whilst on a school trip. A consent letter is required, giving permission and the dosage. The letter and the medication must be handed in to the designated member of staff before the trip departs. Pupils should never self-medicate.
- V. GDPR: the consent form gives the school permission to disclose medical information to third parties using the wording 'I agree that White Trees may share my child's data with third parties for administration, legal and safeguarding purposes'

- **Travel Abroad**

The trip leader should be aware of:

- I. Visa and passport regulations – are all participants UK citizens?
- II. Emergency medical facilities and required documentation
- III. Emergency services phone numbers
- IV. Vaccinations required and procedures for checking participants are all covered
- V. Insurance cover for abroad
- VI. Driving regulations
- VII. Foreign customs and regulations regarding children
- VIII. Travel update guidance issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
- IX. Is a Travellers' List required
- X. It is advised that for any overseas visit the trip leader holds copies of all visas & passports, & a second copy should be held back at school with the school contact. The copies should be destroyed appropriately after the visit has concluded.
- XI. Is Declaration of School Group letter required

- **Parental Permission**

Care should be taken to ensure that all parents with official parental obligations

provide permission for the visit – be aware of care orders and wards of court.

- **In Case of an Accident**

The trip leader should take a copy of the school's procedures which are attached at

Appendix A and included at the end of each Trip Form.

- I. Normal School Hours**

The Head must be informed immediately of any serious incident away from the school involving pupils or staff. If the Head is not immediately available then the Executive Head or Deputy Heads must be informed and the Head advised as soon as is reasonably practical thereafter.

- II. Out of School Hours**

The trip leader must contact in the first instance the pre-arranged Emergency SLT Contact who will contact the Head of Vocational Studies or the Executive Headteacher.

Recording & Reviewing

It is the responsibility of the lead supervisor of each trip to report accidents and 'near accidents', sometimes known as near misses.

Training

The EVC will undertake regular update training. Ideally, this should be on an annual basis. It is good practice for others who are regularly involved in trip administration to also receive regular update training. A training course is provided by Educare.

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