

# OFF-SITE VISITS

## Harrow Way Community School



## **Contents**

Principle

1. Initial approval
2. Costings
3. Communication with parents/carers
4. Supervision
5. Transport
6. Risk Assessments
7. Incidents and emergencies
8. Evaluation of educational visits and events
9. Free School Meal Lunches

### **Principle:**

At Harrow Way Community School, we believe that students 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 student will have the opportunity to experience trips and educational visits while they are at Harrow Way School. Within the risk assessment the school will identify children with disabilities, or special educational or medical needs, and address how these needs will be catered for to ensure that there are no barriers to inclusion.

The School's procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by Hampshire Outdoor Education, PE and the DofE Service.

### **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 by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. 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.

#### **2. Costings**

The Visit Leader will work closely with the School's finance team to calculate accurate costs for the visit.

Any student in receipt of free school meals could be entitled to partial funding. Any parent having difficulty in meeting the payment deadlines should contact the school Finance Office in the first instance.

#### **3. Communication with parents/carers**

All parents/carers will be notified via email of the intention of any day visits.

**For All Off-site Visits which have a cost involved** an "expression of interest" (EOI) email providing the specific visit details will be sent to all parents, which will include a Google Form. This will allow us to establish whether there is enough interest in the visit to make it viable.

A link to this 'Off-site Visits' document will be included in all initial communication. Parents will be required to read and accept the terms and conditions outlined when registering their child on a school offsite visit.

Once the EOI form deadline has passed, students' names will be shared with the Visit Leader and Year Leader. They will determine which students have met the required conditions, such as good attendance and behaviour, to participate in the visit. This is to ensure the enjoyment, wellbeing and/or safety of other participants.

The parent will receive an email confirmation if a place has been offered. At this point a payment will be requested to be paid using the school online payment system, Scopay, within the timescales specified. This in turn will mean the parent has agreed to the terms and conditions set out in the visit letter. Parents will be updated with any updates/changes via Scopay communications.

For visits abroad, the insurance synopsis for parents can be issued on request. For any potentially hazardous, overseas or residential visit, parents will be invited to a meeting prior to departure, to talk through the details of the visit and to have any concerns addressed and questions answered.

**If any off-site visit becomes oversubscribed, students will be selected at random and a subsequent reserve list will be created.**

The school reserves the right to withdraw a student for reasons of behaviour, non-cooperation, poor attendance or non-payment. If a parent withdraws them for any reason other than those covered by insurance, the parent would be liable for the full amount due at that point. In the event of such a withdrawal, even if a student could be found to replace your child on the visit, the parent could be liable for any administration fee.

#### **4. 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.

All volunteers supporting visits must obtain a DBS. Volunteers working within school or attending residential visits must obtain a full DBS (including a barring check).

## **5. Transport**

A variety of transport methods may be used, following local guidance. These may include: public buses, coaches (through recognised suppliers only), trains, minibuses, and aeroplanes/ferries for overseas visits. Transport costs will be included in the overall cost.

## **6. Risk assessments**

The Visit Leader will complete two risk assessments, in line with Hampshire Outdoor Education guidelines, which will be shared with all adults attending the visit (including volunteers). These will be added to EVOLVE, the Hampshire Outdoors website, along with other planning details, prior to the visit taking place. 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 disadvantages of the visit. Clear control measures are then put 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.

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 of their safe arrival and 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 overseas visits.

## **7. Incidents and emergencies**

The Visit Leader is in charge of the students during a visit and they have a duty of care to make sure that the students 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. 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 students have safely returned to school, the Visit Leader should complete an accident/incident online form with details of what happened. This should then be saved retrospectively on EVOLVE as well as passed to the school's Health and Safety Manager.

During an educational visit, if a student'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, as well as for any costs incurred.

All students will be covered by the school's insurance during their visits. A copy of this is available on the school website.

## **8. Evaluation of educational visits and events**

Following any visit, colleagues should consider whether the original intended learning outcomes were achieved and make a note of any adjustments or changes that might be needed to improve similar future visits. This may involve asking students to evaluate the visit, and/or follow-up work in lessons. The teacher will ensure that any follow-up work is differentiated to allow students who did not attend the visit to participate and learn equally.

## **9. Free schools meals: lunches**

Those students who currently receive free school meals will be entitled to request a packed lunch for day visits, for collection in the morning before coach departure. The onus is on the student to liaise with the catering staff (no later than the day before) to allow for choice and dietary requirements. The Visit Leader will remind them of this either at a visit briefing or via email.