

# Highwood Primary School



*Promoting Resilience - Achieving Potential*

## Educational Visits Policy

**Approved by: School Development Committee**

**Prepared and reviewed: May 2026**

**Next review due by: May 2028**

This policy has been impact assessed against protected characteristics (race, gender and disability) and no adverse impact has been identified.

### **Introduction**

Trips, visits and learning off-site comprise an essential part of the school curriculum at Highwood Primary School. Successful trips provide memorable learning experiences and enhance the children's education in ways that are not possible in the classroom. The school is committed to providing school visits as a positive tool to develop pupils' independent, investigative learning and to build their experience of the local and wider world. Within school, responsibility for educational visits rests with the Headteacher and the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), however all school employees have a responsibility to:

- take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
- co-operate with their employer
- carry out activities in accordance with training and instruction
- inform the employer of any serious risk

This policy has been produced to offer school staff advice and support in the planning and organising of all offsite activities in order to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

### **Definition**

For the purposes of this policy, an 'educational visit' means any educational, cultural or sporting activity that requires the pupils to leave the school premises having been authorised to do so by the Headteacher. This includes the following:

- Visits to places of interest in the local area
- Day visits to museums, galleries and places of educational interest
- Sporting activities including swimming sessions
- Outward bound and adventurous activities
- Residential visits in the UK or abroad

### **Aims and expectations**

Each class in school will have at least two educational visits per academic year. These trips are planned to support and broaden the children's understanding of a current topic. Class teachers may arrange additional visits throughout the year following authorisation from senior leaders, providing the costs for the school year are not excessive. In addition to this, there will be supplementary trips arranged throughout the year, such as sports, citizenship or music. All activities are available to all children irrespective of needs, ethnicity, gender or religion.

### **The Educational Visits Coordinator**

The school ensures it has staff trained as Educational Visits Co-ordinators (EVCs) whose role it is to coordinate the planning and management of these activities. Other responsibilities are as follows:

- Ensure DBS checks are in place when required and provide sufficient guidance to visit leaders regarding information for parents and parental consent.
- Ensure there is a 24/7 emergency contact(s) for each visit and that emergency arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that medical and first aid issues are addressed.

- Ensure that emergency arrangements and paperwork include emergency medical information, and emergency contact information for the next of kin for all members of the party, including staff.
- Ensure that visits are reviewed and evaluated; this process will require the reporting of accidents and incidents.
- Ensure that visit policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis and immediately following any serious incident or systems failure.
- Keep up to date via EVC training events and employer information updates.

All off-site activities are to be approved by the headteacher at least a term prior to the proposed date of the trip (unless the trip has been planned in response to an educational opportunity that has arisen, e.g. a last-minute invitation to a significant event or re-arranged sporting fixture). The EVC should approve all aspects of the planned trip prior to the visit. Where possible, dates for educational visits will be set at the beginning of the calendar year to enable office staff to book tickets and transport as required.

### School Trips Procedures

When organising a school trip, it is important that the correct procedures are followed. Below is a list of tasks that must be completed to ensure a trip is organised as per HCC guidelines and that all necessary paperwork has been completed (including risk assessments). **All trips must be costed first and agreed by the Headteacher.**

- A member of staff from the office will be able to arrange quotes for coaches (if required) for trips/events. Please confirm the location, date and time of the trip at least **6 weeks in advance** to the office so that they have enough time to organise this.
- Coach companies are excessively busy in the summer, so trips in the summer term should ideally be booked before the **end of the autumn term** to help secure a competitive price for the coach.
- It is the responsibility of the class teacher organising the trip to contact the venue and make enquiries regarding costs and bookings. Once these have been received, along with the coach prices, the trip must be agreed by the Headteacher before final bookings can be made using the Trips/Events form (see Appendix 1).
- Letters for pupils should be prepared once all costs have been recorded and the Headteacher has signed the Trip/Event form. Templates of letters from previous years are kept in the office; if the relevant information is provided, they can draft the letter ready to be sent home on request. All letters must be sent out at least **4 weeks before** the trip/event is due to take place to ensure donations from parents are collected before payment of any invoice.
- Risk assessments must be completed by the class teacher for every trip/event and should be submitted on Evolve **at least 3 weeks before** the trip. These will be monitored by the EVC. If staff have not attended the venue before, then a pre-visit should be carried out before the risk assessment can be completed.
- It is the responsibility of the class teachers to ensure they liaise with the office team to ensure they have enough parent helpers, if required (see ratios table below).
- A week before the trip, the office team can provide a list of pupils with confirmed permission. Class teachers must chase up individuals who have not yet given permission. Permissions and

payments should not be agreed on the morning of the trip. In this instance, please refer to the Headteacher. Pupils who do not have permission to attend the trip will need to stay in another class. It is the class teacher's responsibility to provide work for the pupil.

<b>Step 1</b>	<p><b>Trips should be arranged at least 6 weeks in advance.</b></p> <p>Contact the venue and make enquiries regarding costs and bookings. Ask the office team to enquire about coach prices and availability.</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	<p>Complete the trips/events form with costings - including the coach price. Give the completed form to AHT/HT to be agreed before final bookings can be made.</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	<p>Prepare the trip letter once all costs have been recorded (templates from previous trips can be provided by the office team). Notify the office team whether parent helpers will be required (they collect this data on a Microsoft form). Email letter to AHT/HT to check. Parents will give consent for trip when making payment. Those who cannot pay will be asked to provide consent by sending a text. Office team can add costings to the letter on request.</p> <p><b>All letters must be sent out at least 4 weeks before the trip/event is due to take place.</b></p>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p>Class teachers to liaise with office team to ensure enough adults are able to attend the trip.</p>
<b>Step 5</b>	<p><b>A week before the trip</b>, the office will provide a list of pupils confirming permission received; class teachers should liaise with office regarding pupils who have not been given permission.</p>
<b>Step 6</b>	<p>Before leaving school on the day of the trip, the school office and adults assisting with the trip should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.</p> <p>Medical needs should be highlighted.</p>

### Suggested ratios for offsite educational trips

Nursery	1:4
Reception	1:4
Years 1 & 2	1:6
Years 3 and 4	1:6
Years 5 and 6	1:8
Residential	1:10

### Risk Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment must be carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

Staff planning an off-site activity should make a preliminary visit to the venue to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. They should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. They will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group Leader to experience the activity.

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the Visit Plan must state both the extent of any risks involved and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them.

An activity should normally have enough adults taking part to provide the correct suggested ratios (see ratio section). Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. **However, these are minimum requirements and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.**

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. If travelling by coach it is important to take the following points in to consideration when carrying out the risk assessment:

- the provision and required use of seat belts and booster seats (if required)
- proper vetting of the driver by the police
- proper insurance for the driver
- details of first aid and emergency equipment
- breakdown procedures

The group leader will check that all adults helping to supervise the children separately from the group leaders have been subject to DBS checks. **A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the EVC and all adults supervising the trip.**

### **Further health and safety considerations**

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day the home/mobile telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.

Before a class leaves school, the school office and adults assisting on the trip should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity. The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical requirements and ensuring that children are always both safe and well looked after.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of others or the good name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of making additional arrangements for that child. More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File.

## Swimming

Highwood Primary School acknowledges the immense educational benefits that swimming activities can potentially bring to young people and fully supports and encourages swimming activities that are correctly planned, managed, and conducted.

In addition to considering the benefits of the activity, staff should also ensure that reasonably practicable safety precautions are taken.

All swimming activities and venues must be included within the visit plan, and life-guarding arrangements checked in advance.

### ***Swimming pools (life-guarded)***

LA notification is not required

UK Swimming Pool safety is guided by various Health and Safety at Work Acts and Regulations. Pool operators have a duty to take all reasonable and practicable measures to ensure that teaching and coaching activities are conducted safely.

Unless suitably qualified, Highwood Primary School's staff do not have responsibility for lifeguarding. However, they do retain a pastoral role for participants at all times either through direct or 'remote' supervision.

For swimming lessons, the LA establishment should ensure the swimming teacher in charge or other pool employees/responsible adults supervising the participants are qualified according to current guidelines.

## First Aid

It is not always necessary that a qualified First Aider accompanies an offsite visit. First aid issues for any visit should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the activity:

- know how to access qualified first aid support.
- have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

## Transport

The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy that coaches used must be fitted with seat or lap belts and we insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit. Our minibus meets LA guidelines and each seat has a belt. We instruct all children, whether travelling by car, minibus or coach, to attach their seat belts. It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

### **Communication with parents**

The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents must give their permission before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution, however the trip may be cancelled if not enough contributions are received. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow the Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

### **Consent**

Annual consent is appropriate for regular routine activities that take place during normal school hours e.g. walks to the local nature reserve or church. For all other visits, consent should be obtained on an individual visit basis. Information provided to parents prior to granting consent should include full details of the activities and any other significant information.

### **Monitoring and review**

Visit leaders are encouraged to review visits, taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and considering ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or Headteacher regarding the outcome of the visit. This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.

## Appendix

### Highwood Primary School Trips/Events Form



<b>Year Group</b> <b>Number of children</b>	
<b>Date and Time of Trip/Event</b>	
<b>Number of adults required</b> <b>Parent helpers required</b>	
<b>Venue and purpose of the trip</b> <b>Curriculum link</b>	
<b>Required timings for coach pick up and return to Highwood.</b>	
<b>Cost</b> <b>Payment due to venue</b>	
<b>Risk Assessment Complete once trip/event has been approved by HT.</b> <b>Liaise with EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator).</b>	
<b>APPROVED/DECLINED (Delete as appropriate):</b>  <b>Signed:</b>  <b>Date:</b>	