

Educational Visits Policy 2026

Introduction

As part of the broad and balanced curriculum of Wellstead Primary School, opportunity is frequently taken to enrich and enhance the learning of all children through outdoor learning, outdoor education and educational visits and ventures. These guidelines outline our operational procedures in these contexts.

This policy is formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by the Hampshire Outdoor Education, PE and DofE Service and their documentation and guidance.

Aims of Educational Visits

Learning outside the classroom is about raising young people's achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance.

This is not only about *what* we learn, but most importantly, *how* and *where* we learn. It is about improving young people's understanding, skills, values, personal and social development and can act as a vehicle to develop young people's capacity and motivation to learn.

Real-world learning brings the benefits of formal and informal education together and reinforces what good educationalists have always known: that the most meaningful learning occurs through acquiring knowledge and skills through real-life, practical or hands-on activities.

There is a wealth of evidence which clearly demonstrates the benefits for young people's learning and personal development outside the classroom. In summary, learning outside the classroom:

- **tackles social mobility**, giving children new and exciting experiences that inspire them to **reach their true potential**. These real world experiences **raise aspirations, equipping young people with the skills they need to become active and responsible citizens** and shape a fit and motivated workforce.
- **addresses educational inequality, re-motivating children** who do not thrive in the traditional classroom environment, such as those from **disadvantaged backgrounds** or with Special Educational Needs. Young people who experience learning outside the classroom as a regular part of their school life benefit from increased self esteem, and become more engaged in their education both inside and outside the classroom walls.
- **supports improved standards back INSIDE the classroom, raising attainment**, reducing truancy and **improving discipline**. Learning outside the classroom is known to **contribute significantly to raising standards** & improving pupils' personal, social & emotional development.

(<https://www.lotc.org.uk/why/>)

Types of visits planned

All year groups are encouraged to take their learning out-of-classroom and into the **school grounds**. This could be any year group for any curriculum area.

All year groups are encouraged to utilise the **local area** for appropriate parts of the curriculum. When we refer to 'local area', we mean within a short walking distance dependent on the child's age and ability. These local area visits are likely to be part of the morning or afternoon and must link to an aspect of the curriculum.

All year groups are encouraged to arrange visits **further away** from the school base. These visits may be part of a day, a whole day or occasionally longer than the normal school day. For these visits, year groups will decide on the most appropriate mode of transport (minibus, coach, train)

Wellstead Primary School has two **residential** visits: in Y4 to Minstead Study Centre in the New Forest, and in Y6 to PGL Little Canada on the Isle of Wight.

We ask year groups to evaluate these visits on a regular basis and to make changes where appropriate.

For an overview of visits, please refer to

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Wu31-bY6b4VsU-WPty-fQOFZvLMM_PbgYPONw9s7xpA/edit

This information is published to parents annually.

Organisation and Management

Off-site visits and educational visits are fully integrated into the ethos and culture of the school and all key policies are considered for their relevance and adaptations or agreements made as required, in particular:

- ☐ Teaching and Learning policy - outlining challenge and expectations
- ☐ Behaviour Policy - rights, respect and responsibility issues, the core of agreed codes of conduct and management strategies.
- ☐ Safeguarding Policy
- ☐ Emergency and Critical Incident planning
- ☐ Charging and remissions Policy
- ☐ Missing Child Policy

Understanding Our Responsibilities

At **Wellstead Primary**, the health, safety, and well-being of our pupils and staff are at the heart of every educational visit. We believe that ensuring a safe environment is a shared responsibility. This policy forms part of our robust safety management system, ensuring that all off-site and adventurous activities are thoroughly planned and managed. By effectively addressing potential risks, we create a secure environment where children and group leaders can confidently enjoy, explore, and learn. *(Please refer to our Safeguarding Policy for further guidance).*

Head Teacher: The Headteacher has ultimate management responsibility within the school / establishment. This person will approve all visits taking place (or delegate as appropriate)

Educational Visit Coordinator (EVC): The person(s) appointed by the Head Teacher within school to oversee and advise with regard to all visits from the establishment. The EVC will

not Approve visits (see Head Teacher), but will provide support to the Head Teacher and staff involved with visits. The EVC will have attended an appropriate EVC Initial Training course upon appointment, and a Refresher course at least every 5 years. An Educational Visits Coordinator is always in post and keeps up to date with the Outdoor Education Service. The current EVC is Mr Steve Cook.

Leaders: This term includes all those employees with a recognised professional qualification and / or evidenced competence and experience for working with young people:

- Teachers and lecturers
- Nationally qualified youth workers
- Other leaders who have an NVQ Level 3 or equivalent and above
- Other school employees (e.g. TAs) deemed to be experienced and appropriate by the Head of Establishment to lead local, low risk and short off-site visits

N.B. Leaders cannot be volunteers or other non-employees.

Leaders should ideally have completed the HCC Outdoor Leader course (required for Open Country Visits, recommended for all other visits). At Wellstead, we ensure that Year Leaders receive HCC training and aim to provide training to all other teachers.

Volunteers and other responsible adults: A volunteer is someone known to the educational establishment who is considered to be a responsible adult, capable of assisting the qualified leaders with supervision and care of their children or young people.

Governors are kept informed of the overall policy and programme, as well as being given feedback on specific events and successful ventures.

Communicating with Parents

Parents are informed at the start of the school year of the intended programme of activities. If these activities are close to the start of the school year, parents will be informed at the end of the previous school year. On entry to the school, parents are asked to complete a consent form for all local area visits. Where possible, parents are informed of an educational visit 'further away from base' at least half a term in advance.

Off-site visit communication with parents will detail timings, costs and transport and seek parental consent.

Wellstead Primary's residential ventures require specific LA consent forms to be completed (via Google forms)

When charging for educational visits we adhere to the Charging and Remissions Policy. In summary, Wellstead Primary is permitted to make a request for contributions to supplement school funds as long as it is made clear that such contributions are voluntary and that the children of parents who do not contribute will not be treated any differently. Particular attention is required for residential visits: parents can be charged for 'board and lodgings' and asked for a voluntary contribution for 'transport and activities'

Monetary contributions and consent are collected via our online parent portal – Arbor. The funding collected will represent the overall cost of the trip. Wellstead Primary will not profit from any educational visit. As such, any educational visit must represent good value for money and be educationally beneficial.

Off-site insurance details are available through the school office and parents may request a synopsis of these. There will be particular reference to these details in communication with parents in relation to long distance and/or residential ventures.

A variety of transport is used following Local Authority guidance. However, it is most likely to be coaches (through recognised providers) or minibus (this includes our own school minibus and private hire through recognised providers).

Supervision

Supervision strategies are taken from the HCC Supplementary Employer Guidance.

Ratios

Year R - 1:6

KS1 - 1:8

KS2 - 1:20 (in the local area, close to support base) 1:12 (more than 60 miles or one hour from base)

These ratios also include residential visits.

Notes:

A minimum of one qualified leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults.

These are minimum ratios and are not recommended. Small working groups of 6-12 children remain the target.

Leaders should reflect the gender of the group.

It is recommended that any off-site visit should include at least one certificated Outdoor Leader trained member of staff.

A minimum of two leaders is required at all times.

Supervision strategies are taken from HCC Hampshire Outdoors - Supplementary Guidance document (page 44). There are three types of supervision described in this document: close or direct supervision; distant or more remote supervision; and remote supervision with self-reliant groups.

At Wellstead Primary, on our educational visits, we will be using close or direct supervision at all times, with the following exceptions. Distant or more remote supervision may be used during 'down time' in between activities on our residential visit (Y6), or when completing activities within the school grounds. Both of these occasions are dependent on the success of the participating children when under direct supervision.

Main features of direct supervision (p44-46)

The leader and numbers of children and young people in each group or cell are agreed and known.

The overall grouping management and communication routes are agreed and known (e.g. class groups, bus groups...)

Head-count procedures and reporting-in procedures are agreed and known (small groups or cells, signals, mobiles...)

Simple support systems are in place, such as a buddy system (pairs), small group minimum size (usually four), large group maximum size (dependant upon context)

Note: large groups should have a simple communication system and often require overall group leaders to be free of immediate supervision, able to check all is well, intervene where necessary (behaviour, medical issues...) and properly assess and get ready for the next stage of the venture

Simple identification techniques may be used where appropriate (clothing, caps...)

The movement management systems are known, agreed and inducted to the children and young people:

- Getting on and off transport
- Collection points, rendezvous places

- Buffer zones between the group and any hazards - crossing roads
- Walking in urban contexts

The behaviour management systems are known and in place:

- Agreed and understood by all staff
 - Inducted to children and young people
 - Reinforcement, reward strategies
 - Living in a residential context
 - Incident, intervention strategies
 - Particular to the activities
 - Isolation, dealing-with-a-problem strategies
 - This may involve the final sanction of return to base, or return to parents
 - Emergency action strategies, cards or checklists prepared and taken
- The recording of names, lists, contacts and emergency details is agreed

Note: Where an incident has occurred it has been shown to be essential that such lists are immediately to hand. Locked in cases or stored in luggage compartments may not give quick access if an incident or accident occurs

Missing Child

In line with the supervision ratios and procedures in this document, we foresee that losing a child on a visit is unlikely or low risk due to the features of direct supervision (listed above). However, Wellstead Primary School does have a 'Missing Child' policy in order to clearly document procedures to minimise the possibility of losing a child.

The teacher in charge of the visit will have an accurate list of all children on the visit. All children need to be counted frequently throughout the visit, especially after a transition point e.g. after a visit to the toilets or a shop etc. Depending on the nature of the visit, group leaders will also take responsibility for ensuring that their group is accounted for. Children should also be encouraged to take responsibility for each other and notice if someone is missing.

All the children and adults are given an important briefing before an educational visit. All children should be reminded about remaining with their group leader or within a designated area.

In the unlikely event of losing a child on an educational visit, the procedure in the 'Missing Child' policy must be adhered to:

- *Establish where the child was last seen and with whom.*
- *Inform the group leader.*
- *If in groups, check with all the other groups to see if the child has joined a different group.*
- *Ensure that the rest of the children are safe whilst a thorough search is conducted of the area.*
- *Retrace previous steps/areas visited.*
- *Depending on the location of the visit, the group leader should inform any relevant authorities for their assistance in locating the missing child. E.g. An information point, Centre Staff etc.*
- *The group leader should inform local police or other authority e.g. coast guard.*
- *The group leader should contact the Head at the school to inform of the situation and the action taken.*

- *The group leader should liaise with the Head about contacting parents and should inform the Head immediately when the child is found.*

If a child was lost on an educational visit:

The Group Leader will need to prepare a report for the Head on the circumstances regarding the incident. The Head will address any issues arising from this and will liaise with the Educational Visits Coordinator regarding any amendments that may need to be made to the Educational Visits Policy.

Additionally, before the visit, children are taught how to respond if they become separated:

1. Freeze: If you realize you have lost your group, stop walking immediately. Wandering around makes you harder to find.
2. Look for Help: Look for a staff member belonging to the venue (e.g., someone with a specific uniform or name badge) or a police officer.
3. Stay Together: If a small sub-group gets separated from the main party, they must stay together as a unit.

Inclusion

All Educational Visits should be available to all pupils regardless of background or abilities.

Wellstead Primary may provide the following ventures:

- activity provided as part of the National Curriculum or a formal course, a statutory requirement. This should be quite rare (and would normally be funded by the school or course fee - refer to Charging and Remissions Policy). Inclusion of all is required.
- ventures where comprehensive coverage, for example a whole class or group, is desirable but suitable alternatives are available at school. National Curriculum and similar entitlement is not lost as this is an enhancement or enrichment activity. Inclusion of all is desired but not required. Choice or other factors may mean that not all attend
- enhancement or enrichment activity that is a clear choice or extra – optional. Choice and other factors will mean that not all attend.

When considering inclusion issues, this should be the starting point. It is also important to distinguish between these curriculum focused discussions and those of the health and safety of the child or young person concerned and their effect on other children or young people, as well as staff.

Any decision on inclusion when such factors are included must, as normal, take 'every reasonable step' to include that young person. However, if those reasonable steps cannot ensure their safety and/or that of others, then that may be the reason they cannot attend that particular venture.

To support an inclusive approach to visits, teachers are encouraged to write individual plans and use strategies to encourage all children to attend and be successful.

Safeguarding

The school's Safeguarding Policy follows and includes offsite activity, including residential activity. In particular:

- guidance on acceptable behaviour and avoiding unnecessary contact is included

- suitable 'employment' checks are made on volunteers and other responsible adults who support these ventures in line with guidance (e.g. the degree of monitoring, frequency and intensity of contact...), including DBS requirements
- external providers or outdoor centres are drawn from the Outdoor Education, PE and DofE Service's checked providers list, which confirms that safety management checks are in place

Note: Should any other instructor or provider be recommended or found, reference would first be made to the Outdoor Education, PE and DofE Service to ensure that suitable steps are taken

All internal forms are stored on Google Drive.

Risk-benefit assessment (previously known as 'risk assessment')

As part of planning an offsite activity, the following process is followed:

- an analysis of the benefits of the activity translated into clear objectives and expectations
- an assessment of the risk of harm and its likelihood is made, followed by putting clear control measures in place so that they can be satisfactorily managed
- a pre-visit by key staff is considered an essential part of reviewing the location and its ability to realise the benefits and be managed. Very well known and used sites may be checked by contacting key personnel prior to revisiting and accessing web-based information
- All visit information (including risk assessments and supporting paperwork) is uploaded to and stored on Hampshire Evolve. Group leaders are expected to complete the online forms and upload documentation at least 4 weeks prior to any visit.

Incidents and emergencies

Hampshire County Council (HCC) has an online system for reporting and recording all accidents, near misses, road traffic incidents, dangerous occurrences, occupational ill health, incidents of violent behaviour and near misses. This system can be located via links from our H&S web pages or by using the link: Corporate online reporting system

Note: If there is an incident on an educational visit or an off-site activity then staff will need to report this on the incident reporting system, even if the site/location/host records the incident on their own system.

- guidance from the Hampshire Outdoor Education, PE and DofE Service is used to prepare leader and base contact checklists and contact details.
- In the event of an accident or incident occurring the 'Offsite Emergency Procedures' cards should be used by base contact and group leader. The base contact should record details of the conversation on the 'Telephone Record' sheet.
- When reporting an accident or incident the Incident Reporting System Educational Visits/Off-site Activities flowchart should be used to support decision making.

- the Children's Services Incident and Emergency 'Establishment Plan' has been used as the basis for all incident and emergency response - named 'Emergency Response Plan'
- any concerns or 'near misses' are discussed to consider changing strategies and reported to the Outdoor Education, PE and DofE Service if necessary.

Staff Mobile Phone use

(Link to Mobile Phone policy to include use of mobile phone on trips)

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities therefore staff may take a personal mobile phone on all trips.

However staff should ensure that:

- Mobile phone used on these occasions is appropriate and professional
- The school office should be contacted in an emergency
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant
- communications should be made via the school office. (unless where parents/volunteers are accompanying trips)
- Parents/carers and volunteers are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text,email or social networking during the trip
- Parents/carers and volunteers should not use their phone to take photographs of children.

Monitoring and review

The school's monitoring policy has been approved by the senior leadership team and governing body, and is reviewed according to agreed procedures. This includes outdoor learning/offsite and educational visits...

- individual staff reviews contribute to the feedback on the quality of ventures and recommendations for the future
- the Head reports to Governors on an annual basis as to the effectiveness of the overall programme
- any good practice is celebrated by internal mail, parental newsletters and social media feeds and complaints reviewed through the appropriate channels (according to the Complaints policy)
- the policy is reviewed every two years or as required if regulations, guidance or circumstances change.

Revision Number	Date issued	Prepared by	Approved by	Comments
1	Nov 2020	SC		New policy
2	Nov 2022	SC		Minor amendments to the main body. Changes to appendices
3	Feb 24	SC		Minor amendments to the main body. Appendix A

				updated.
4	5.6.26	SC		Minor amendments to the main body. Appendices removed.
5				

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