



SHEERHATCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL VISITS & JOURNEYS POLICY

Introduction

Off-site visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise be impossible. All off-site activities serve the purpose of enhancing and enriching our pupils' learning experiences.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

Aims and objectives

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- Enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils.
- Provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone
- Promote the independence of our pupils as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

The planning and authorisation process

When an off-site activity is proposed, either by a member of staff or an outside agency, the approval of the Headteacher must be sought and obtained before any commitment is made.

The Headteacher will appoint a leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will be a teacher or other member of staff employed at the school.

Staff arranging or otherwise involved in off-site activities must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures published by the LA (and available from the Headteacher's office). All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the LA's instructions.

The school's Educational Visits Coordinator will oversee and check the planning and management of off-site visits.

We will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are completed.
- Assign competent staff to lead and help with trips.
- Make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained.
- Keep records of visits, and ensure that there are regular generic assessments of the risks (e.g. road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (e.g. a swimming facility).

All local visits, such as to sports or performance venues, as well as whole day visits or enrichment opportunities will be entered onto 'EVOLVE' an online system by the leader. This will then be forwarded to the Education Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and then the Head teacher for checking and authorisation.

Any activity involving an overnight stay or adventurous activity will be automatically submitted through the EVOLVE system to the Local Authority for authorisation.

Risk assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is 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?

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Head teacher.

An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios: (in line with LA Guidance)

- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Year 4 and above.
- 1 adult to between 6 and 8 pupils in Years 1 to 3.
- 1 adult to 3 pupils in Foundation (children under 5).

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

All adults helping to supervise the trip will need to have had DBS checks, including volunteers. Where parents/carers (without DBS clearance) support on a trip they must be supervised and cannot take pupils to the toilets or be left alone with any pupil.

It is our policy that all pupils should be able to participate in educational visits. Where a pupil with SEND is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included. We may seek guidance from parents/carers to help us to adapt our programme, and we will make any reasonable adjustments to our itinerary to include a pupil with SEND. Any such adjustments will be included in the risk assessment.

Transport

Transport to and from the venue will be part of the risk assessment.

Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.

If the school minibus is used, the driver will be a qualified member of school staff and will always be accompanied by an additional member of staff.

Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks.

Communication with parents/carers

The parents/carers of pupils taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents/carers must give their permission in writing before a pupil can be involved in any off-site activities. Permission for local visits will be covered by generic forms completed when the pupil starts school.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental/carer contributions (voluntary), sometimes with a limited subsidy from the school budget or Friends of Sheerhatch. This must be made clear to parents/carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

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

- Transport.
- Entrance fees.
- Provision of any special resources or equipment.
- Costs related to adult helpers.
- Any refreshments that the school has opted to pay for.

No pupil may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent/carer to make a contribution.

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

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.

Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party. If it is a whole school activity, a Governor or nominated parent/carer serves as a point of contact for emergencies.

The safety of the party, and especially the pupils, 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 questionnaire returns, and ensuring that pupils are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual pupil 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 excluding that pupil from the activity. (See above).

More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Educational Visits and Journeys file in the Head teacher's office.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years. The Policy was approved by the Governing Body at its meeting on: **29th April 2026**

Signed by Head Teacher

Signed by Chair of Governors