

Educational Visits Policy

May 2016

The policy was adopted by the governing body of Highbury Grove School on 5 July 2016

Review date: Summer 2019

Context

We believe that educational visits are an integral part of the entitlement of every pupil to an effective and balanced curriculum. Appropriately planned visits are known to enhance learning and improve attainment, and so form a key part of what makes Highbury Grove School a supportive and effective learning environment. The benefits to pupils of taking part in visits and learning outside the classroom include, but are not limited to:

- Improvements in their ability to cope with change.
- Increased critical curiosity and resilience.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing strategic awareness.
- Increased levels of trust and opportunities to examine the concept of trust (us in them, them in us, them in themselves, them in each other).
- Improved achievement and attainment across a range of curricular subjects. Pupils are active participants not passive consumers.
- Enhanced opportunities for 'real world' 'learning in context' and the development of the social and emotional aspects of intelligence.
- Increased risk management skills through opportunities for involvement in practical risk-benefit decisions in a range of contexts. I.e., encouraging pupils to become more risk aware as opposed to risk averse.
- Greater sense of personal responsibility.
- Possibilities for genuine team working including enhanced communication skills.
- Improved environmental appreciation, knowledge, awareness and understanding of a variety of environments.
- Improved awareness and knowledge of the importance and practices of sustainability.
- Physical skill acquisition and the development of a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Application

Any visit that leaves the school grounds is covered by this policy, whether as part of the curriculum, during school time, or outside the normal school day.

In addition to this Educational Visits Policy, Highbury Grove School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: '**Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE**'.
2. Adopts National Guidance www.oeapng.info, (as recommended by the LA).
3. Uses EVOLVE, the web-based planning, notification, approval, monitoring and communication system for off-site activities.

All staff are required to plan and execute visits in line with school policy (ie this document), Local Authority policy, and National Guidelines. Staff are particularly directed to be familiar with the roles and responsibilities outlined within the guidance.

Types of visit

There are three types of visit:

1. Routine local visits in the 'Extended learning locality'.
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.
3. Visit that are overseas, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, these are then entered by the visit leader onto EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator) prior to planning, and certainly before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements.

- The visit leaders must notify the EVC of all staff and any volunteers who will be involved in the trip.
- The visit leaders should check that all the relevant DBS checks have been undertaken for any staff involved in the trip.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Aimee Lyall, who will support and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom activities. The EVC is the first point of contact for advice on visit related matters, and will check final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC manages the staff entries on EVOLVE, including any uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via EVOLVE.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Approval will be sought from the Chair of Governors, or another identified governor if the CoG is not available, for all adventure, residential and overseas visits.

The Local Authority is responsible for the final approval (via EVOLVE) of all visits that are either overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity.

Staff Competence

We recognise that staff competence is the single most important factor in the safe management of visits, and so we support staff in developing their competence in the following ways:

- An apprenticeship system, where staff new to visits assist and work alongside experienced visit leaders before taking on a leadership role.
- Supervision by senior staff on some educational visits.
- Support for staff to attend training courses relevant to their role, where necessary.

In deciding whether a member of staff is competent to be a visit leader, the EVC will take into account the following factors:

- Relevant experience.
 - Previous relevant training.
 - The prospective leader's ability to make dynamic risk management judgements, and take charge in the event of an emergency.
 - Knowledge of the pupils, the venue, and the activities to be undertaken
-
- **Approval**

The approval process is as follows for each type of visit:

1. Local visits – The trip form is to be completed by the visit leader.
2. Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on EVOLVE, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 21 days in advance, and then forwarded to the Head and Chair of Governors (or other identified governor) for approval.
3. Visits that are overseas, residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity (see LA guidance for definition of 'adventurous') are then submitted by the EVC to the LA for approval and must be submitted to the EVC for checking at least 14 days in advance.

Risk Management

Risk Management is a vital part of planning and assessing benefits and risks associated with visits and activities.

- Visit leaders are responsible for carrying out and recording risk assessments. They can use adopted and modified generic risk assessments where appropriate, and will use recommended templates to ensure consistency.
- For local and regular visits and activities standard generic risk assessments should be coupled with dynamic risk management, which considers staff, activity, group, environment and distance as the key factors in implementing sensible and suitable control measures.

Volunteers

Any volunteers who accompany a visit or activity will be vetted, and be directly supervised by a member of staff. If they are to have significant unsupervised access to young people then an enhanced DBS disclosure will be obtained, and they will undergo induction and training in their role and responsibilities. An enhanced DBS is necessary for any overseas, residential, and/or visits involve an adventurous activity.

Emergency procedures

A critical incident is any incident where events go beyond the normal coping mechanisms and experience of the visit leadership team.

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a critical incident during a visit (see Appendix 1). All staff on visits must be familiar with this plan.

When an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, or where it involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention then assistance will be sought from the local authority

Parental Consent

Parental consent must be obtained for all visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (via letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

Inclusion

Highbury Grove School adheres to the Equality Act 2010. We endorse the following principles for young people:

- A presumption of entitlement to participate
- Accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification.
- Integration through participation with peers

We acknowledge that it is unlawful to:

- Treat a young person with a protected characteristic less favourably
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that young people with protected characteristics are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

We also acknowledge that expectations of staff must be reasonable, so that what is required of them (to include a young person) is within their competence.

Finance

It is School policy that, as far as is possible and affordable, curriculum-related school trips and journeys should form part of each student's Highbury Grove entitlement. For this reason there will be no requirement for any parent/carer to pay for these opportunities.

The School does welcome donations to any trip of up to the full cost of the trip. These donations allow the School to continue to fund school trips and journeys in the future.

The Governing Body does reserve the right to make a charge for residential school trips and journeys organised by the School in circumstances where, for example, the journey is deemed to be not primarily curriculum-based or where the cost of the journey would otherwise be prohibitive. In such circumstances:

- parents/carers will be informed in advance and offered a range of payment options if and when required; and
- parents/carers who qualify for prescribed benefits and allowances may be entitled to a remission of the charges.

The Governing Body reserves the right to ask parents/carers for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of:

- any activity that takes place during school hours;
- school equipment; or
- school funds generally.

Parents/carers may be advised that the continuance of an activity may depend upon voluntary contributions, but once it has been decided to run such an activity, no qualifying child will be excluded on the grounds of voluntary contributions.

Further information can be found in Highbury Grove School's Charging and Remissions Policy, available via the school website.

Insurance

Highbury Grove School will take out the Local Authority insurance for all visits.

Dismissal of pupils after evening activities

Parental consent will always be obtained for students that will need to make their way home after evening activities.

Appendix 1 – Emergency Procedure

The school's emergency response to an incident is based on the following key factors:

1. There is always a nominated emergency base contact for any visit (during school hours, this is the School Office).
2. This nominated base contact will either be an experienced member of the senior management team, or will be able to contact an experienced senior manager at all times.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leadership team will be aware of any relevant medical information for all participants, including staff.
4. For activities that take place outside normal school hours, the visit leadership team and the emergency contact/s will be aware of any relevant medical information and emergency contact information for all participants, including staff.
5. The visit leader/s and the base contact/s know to request support from the local authority in the event that an incident overwhelms the establishment's emergency response capability, involves serious injury or fatality, or where it is likely to attract media attention.
6. For visits that take place outside the 'extended learning locality', the visit leader will carry the local authority emergency contact details as follows:

Islington Council (out of hours) Emergency Contact:

Linkline Supervisor:

0207 527 6336 / 5456 / 8006 24 hrs incl. bank holidays

Be prepared to give: Your name and Establishment/Group
Phone number & back up phone numbers Exact Location Nature of Incident
Number in the Group

The Emergency Contact Centre will contact a chief officer and pass on details.

