



## Whinstone Primary School School Visits Policy January 2021

### 1. Introduction

- a) The aim of policy is for children benefit from direct first-hand experience to enrich their learning in school. One way to achieve this is by visits and journeys out of school. This will be provided by planned visits, with clear objectives which can provide excellent learning opportunities.
- b) As a Rights and Respecting School the UN Convention Rights of the Child are fundamental to effective school practice. Implementation of this policy supports Articles 28 and 29:

Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

### 2. Scope of Policy and Objectives

- a) This policy covers all visits outside the school buildings.

### 3. Responsibilities

- a) **Whinstone's Local Governing Body** has overall responsibility to ensure that policies and procedures are in place for the processes associated with the Whinstone Primary School.
- b) **Head Teacher:** The Head Teacher has responsibility to ensure that operational services are suitably established to provide the processes associated with the school to ensure that all staff and volunteers understand and comply with the service provision.
- c) **Senior Leadership Team:** Each Team Leader is responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are adhered to within their area of accountability.
- d) **Teachers:** Each Teacher is responsible for ensuring that the policies and procedures are adhered to within their area of accountability.
- e) **All Staff and volunteer helpers:** All staff and volunteer helpers within the scope of the policies and procedures are responsible for the implementation of the policy within their own area of accountability



### 4. Key Themes- roles and responsibilities

#### 4.1 Education Visits Coordinator (EVC)

- a) The academy has a named Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), who is involved in the planning and management of off-site visits. Whinstone's EVC is Mike Poppitt.
- b) The EVC will:
  - a. assign competent staff to lead and help with trips (being competent means that the Leader has demonstrated the ability to operate to recognised standards of good practice, and has sufficient relevant experience and knowledge of the group, the activity and the venue);
  - b. Check that Visit Leaders are competent and record details of necessary training and qualifications and/or reviewing verified evidence of relevant experience;
  - c. ensure that risk assessments are completed by competent trained staff;
  - d. check visit plans and sign-off risk assessments;
  - e. organise related staff training;
  - f. verify that all private car drivers, have had satisfactory DBS checks, and that the letter/email from the coach company assures us their drivers too have had satisfactory DBS checks;
  - g. ensure that regular volunteers and those assisting with overnight/residential stays have had satisfactory DBS checks carried out.

- h. Volunteers used for one off activities, who are not left alone at any time (out of sight/ear shot of a member of staff) to supervise pupils, do not necessarily need DBS checks completing. The Headteacher's discretion under these circumstances is used;
- i. ensure that risk assessments for frequent/regular visits are routinely reviewed and update where necessary



#### 4.2 Visit Leaders

- a) The Visit Leader is the member of staff who is responsible for the operation of the planned educational visit.
- b) The Visit Leader will:
  1. make sure that all necessary consent and medical forms are obtained;
  2. ensure all off-site activities take place in accordance with school procedures;
  3. check to ensure sufficient staff and helpers of the right experience are DBS checked (as detailed above) and briefed throughout the visit;
  4. conduct/review risk assessments and ensure management to reduce risks including site specific, general and dynamic risk assessments are undertaken and recorded;
  5. ensure a named person, emergency procedures and systems for recording and sharing information on accidents and near misses are in place before briefing pupils and parents;
  6. Where appropriate and when considered necessary undertake exploratory visits or seek references from other schools if using new venues; and reassess from time to time;
  7. ensure any accidents / incidents are reported;
  8. Feedback any learning points from visits to the EVC.

#### 4.3 Planning a Visit or Journey

- a) The EVC will be informed at an early stage, when plans are being made. The following information will be included:
  1. The purpose of the visit/journey. To include the estimated times, the arrangements for lunch, and the type of clothing needed.
  2. The Visit Leader is responsible for liaising with the school administrators to book activities, transport and arranging parental consent on ParentMail.
  3. Written risk assessments must be made by the Visit Leader in consultation with staff who are accompanying the children. These must be given to the EVC prior to the visit.
  4. Informal visits involving walking within the local community will not normally require parental consent as each child will have local walking consent form. However it is good practice to inform parents that the children are to be taken on such visits. It is crucial that visits are carefully planned and adult supervision is matched to the risk assessment that has been carried out.
  5. Visits must be financially viable. There may be opportunity to use school funds, including donations from Friends of Whinstone to pay towards visits. The Visit Leader is responsible for liaising with the EVC and school administrators to ensure the appropriate budget is used and acknowledged.
  6. Costing should include transport, entry fees for the children and parent helpers.
  7. The Visit Leader will inform the school kitchen that the year group or class will either need a packed lunch (EYFS and KS1 or FSM) or that they will not be needing lunch that day at least two weeks in advance of the visit.
  8. Parents should complete the medical form before their children are taken on residential visits. Children with infectious illness must not be taken at all.
  9. Visits involving a high degree of risk will not be considered. The Head Teacher will decide on the level of risk.
  10. Where tour operators are used they should be members of ABTA or SAETA. The Head Teacher will determine which coach operators are to be used. Only those who are considered reputable and reliable will be considered.



11. At the planning stage consideration must be given to individuals who have Special Educational Needs. Teachers must assess locations for access as part of their Risk Assessment.
12. The school administrators will monitor consent and payments from parents on ParentMail and will advise the Visit Leader as appropriate.

#### 4.4 Preliminary visit

- a) Where necessary, and if possible, staff planning an off-site visit should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment.
- b) Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments should be considered to ascertain if they are of an appropriate standard and can be adopted.
- c) To reduce bureaucracy Visit Leaders are encouraged to take advantage of national schemes that have been established to eliminate the need for questionnaires and forms e.g. LOtC Quality Badge, AALA License, Adventuremark. Holding one of the above is a credible assurance of appropriate Health and Safety management systems, and no further verification should be necessary. The LOtC Quality Badge also covers learning quality.
- d) It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit.
- e) Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the risk assessment must show the extent of any hazards involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate the risks.

#### 4.5 Risk assessments

- a) The Visit Leader must carry out a comprehensive risk assessment, before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks that might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them.
- b) All identified hazards must be reduced to an acceptable level (Medium or Low rating) before the Head Teacher will approve the visit.
- c) The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:
  - d) Look for the hazards;
  - e) Decide who might be harmed and how;
  - f) Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done;
  - g) Implement safety measures needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level;
  - h) Include the SEN/medical needs of the specific pupils participating;
  - i) Plan for emergencies;
  - j) Review assessment and revise it if necessary.



#### 4.6 Ratios

- a) Ratios are a risk management issue, and should be determined through the process of risk assessment.
- b) It is not possible to set down definitive staff/pupil ratios for a particular age group or activity. However, some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may only be appropriate where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements. For example, the DfES publication Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (1998) suggested the following "starting points":
  - c) Nursery 1:3
  - d) Reception 1: 5
  - e) School years 1 - 3, 1:6
  - f) School years 4 - 6, 1:15 Non-residential, 1 : 10 if residential

- g) The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site.
- h) As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.
- i) Staff to child ratios for Foundation Stage can be found in Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- j) A paediatric first aid trained person must accompany EYFS visits.
- k) Normally at least two adults will accompany any off-site visit. The Visit Leader will usually be a teacher but this is not compulsory and the other may be a responsible and competent adult.



#### 4.7 The Day of the Visit.

- a) Children will not be taken out of school unless consent has been given.
- b) A First Aid kit will be taken. The usual procedures for informing parents of accidents or illness will be in place according to our First Aid policy.
- c) A list of telephone numbers for emergency contact will be taken with the group. Alternatively staff may contact the school to have parents informed of any incidents.
- d) Medical information should be collected from the office.
- e) Epipens, if required, should be kept with the adult leading the child's group.
- f) Asthma inhalers must be taken with the asthma plans- to be kept either by the child or by small group leader.
- g) If medicine needs to be administered during the visit the care plan or the administration of medicines form need to be taken.
- h) A bucket, disinfectant, a box of tissues and wipes can be useful for travel sick children. Protective gloves are essential.
- i) When the visit is taking place, the care and safety of the children must be given the highest priority. This particularly includes children's visits to any public toilets.
- j) Children will be expected to behave in an appropriate manner.
- k) The children should be advised not to take valuables, except perhaps a watch and a camera. Sweets are not normally allowed on day visits and advice should be given to parents about pocket money.

#### 5. Residential activities

- a) Throughout their education pupils may benefit from the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. Currently residential visits are offered to Year 4 (Carlton) and Year 6 (Le Portel, Northern France)
- b) These residential visits enable pupils to take part in activities to build life skills, confidence and experience away from their normal environment.
- c) We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.
- d) Residential visits are to be planned and implemented in line with this policy.

#### 6. Implementation

- a) Whinstone Primary School Local Governing Body, Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team and Teachers are responsible for ensuring that this policy is effectively implemented.
- b) This policy will be available on the Whinstone Primary School Website.

#### 7. Audit

- a) This policy will be reviewed on a 2 year cycle or earlier if necessary