Holmer Green First School and Pre-School
Educational Visits Policy

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 Holmer Green First School and Pre-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.
- 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, and a wide range of learning styles can flourish.
- 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, Holmer Green First School and Pre-school:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Bucks Requirements and Guidance for Off-site Visits and Related Activities'** in Evolve resources (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE and in Teacher's Only: Educational Visits folder.)
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 carry out visits in line with school policy (i.e. 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 & Approval

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.

There are three 'types' of visit:

1. **Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day. (Enrichment)**
   These follow the 'School Learning Area' Operating Procedure (Appendix 1).
2. **Other non-residential visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity.**
   These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC then submits to the Head for approval.
3. **Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.**
   As above, but the Head authorises and then submits to the LA for approval.

Roles and responsibilities

Visit leaders are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on EVOLVE (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Head or EVC 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. They will ensure a pre-visit has taken place to 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?

Following this, the visit leader will then complete a detailed risk assessment. All documentation should be entered onto Evolve **four weeks before** the visit takes place. Following the visit, an Evolve evaluation must be completed.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is **Jayne Richardson (Deputy Headteacher)**, who will support, mentor and challenge colleagues over visits and learning outside the classroom (LOtC) 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 sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, uploads generic school documents and checks that evaluations have been completed 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'. The Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of educational visits and other offsite activities plus the approval of the completed plan and risk assessments at a later date to the Head teacher.

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 ready to be a visit leader, the Head 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.

Emergency procedures

The school has an emergency plan in place to deal with a serious incident during a visit (see Appendix 2). All staff on visits are 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

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for School Learning Area and certain routine activities, e.g. village walks. Parents consent with a paper consent form.

Specific (i.e.one-off) parental consent must be obtained for all other visits. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents, so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis. As above, parents consent with a detailed paper consent form. This includes: medical information including allergies and doctor's details, dietary requirements and two separate contact details.

Due to GDPR regulations, any personal and medical details held for the visit will be photocopied and kept securely in the visit back pack. This will not be left unattended at any time and may only be viewed by staff members. When the trip is over and staff have returned to the school premises, all copies will be shredded and disposed of.

Inclusion

Holmer Green First School and Pre-School complies with the Equality Act 2010. Any activities will be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. When planning a visit or activity all reasonably practicable measures will be taken to include all young people.

Charging / funding for visits

When planning educational visits, class teachers will always consider the cost implications for parents. Excessively expensive trips will be avoided wherever possible. 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;
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

All payment by parents for school trips is made in the form of a voluntary contribution. However, in the event that the school is unable to cover the costs of a planned visit, the trip may have to be cancelled. All payments are made online via Magic Booking. Parents are notified of the trips and costs in the following way:

- The prices for trips/visitors are provided at Meet the Teacher evening in September and then uploaded to Magic Booking to allow for whole payment or payment by instalments.

- A letter detailing all information regarding the trip/visitor is sent out at least two weeks before the company deadline for receiving payment. This allows sufficient time to cancel if not enough payments are received, without any cost to the school.

- The day before the payment due date, an email will be sent to all parents including information about how much we are looking forward to the trip/visitor and the percentage of payments that are still outstanding. There will also be a gentle reminder to make a payment. A jungle book note drop will take place for all children on the same day**.**

- After the trip/visitor, an email detailing how much the children enjoyed the day and a final reminder to make a payment if it has not yet been done will be sent to all children.

Transport

Holmer Green First School and Pre-School follow Bucks Requirements and Guidance which reflects National Guidance - including 3 point seat belts in coaches.

Use of staff cars to transport pupils – Refer to the Bucks Requirements and Guidance document.

Insurance

Holmer Green First School and Pre-School take out Buckinghamshire Council's Annual Trip Insurance which covers all off site visits.

Other topics

Ratio

- On every trip the ratio of adults to children will be at least 1:6 with 1 extra adult. For example, in a class of 30 children there will be 6 adults accompanying the class. When a child requires 1:1 support, an extra adult will be added to the ratio.

Parents

- Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help with their child's class trip, however, they are made aware that they will be supervising a group that does **not** includes their own child.
- Parents are informed that if their child demonstrates poor behaviour on a school visit, they will be expected to collect the child from the venue.
- Reasonable adjustments may include asking parents (or other family members where appropriate) to accompany their children during an educational visit if the school deems that the child's behaviour is unsafe.
- Parents are informed about Holmer Green First School and Pre-School's safeguarding procedures and are not permitted to use mobile phones during a school visit. Photographs will not be taken by parents on a trip. Posting details and photos on social media is prohibited.
- Parents are not permitted to supervise children during toilet visits. This will be done by the staff members.

Behaviour

- Children will be made aware of behaviour expectations before the visit. They are expected to follow good behaviour guidelines and do nothing to compromise the safety of any other children or the good name of the school.
- Children are informed that if they demonstrate poor behaviour on a school visit, they will be collected from the venue by their parents.

Appendix 1 – School Learning Area

General

Visits/activities within the 'School Learning Area' that are part of the normal curriculum and take place during the normal school day follow the Operating Procedure below.

These visits/activities:

- Do not require parental consent although parents will usually be notified in advance.
- Do not normally need additional risk assessment /notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below). These risks are included in a Local Area Walk Risk Assessment that can be found on Teacher's Only: Educational Visits folder.
- Do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are planned activities.
- Do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area is Holmer Green Village. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: *e.g.*

- Holmer Green Junior School
- Holmer Green Senior School
- Turner's Place Shops
- The Common
- Christchurch
- Cosy Corner Shops (Hazlemere)

Operating Procedure for School Learning Area

The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our School Learning Area:

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Narrow paths.
- Cars parked on the pavement.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc.).
- Holmer Green Pond.

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- The Head must give verbal approval before a group leaves.
- A current list of staff approved to lead in this setting is maintained by the EVC.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'School Learning Area' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school, and a synopsis is in the School Prospectus.
- Staff are familiar with the area.
- Pupils have been trained and have practised standard techniques for road crossings in a group.
- Where appropriate, pupils are fully briefed on what to do if they become separated from the group.
- All work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs.
- Pupils' clothing and footwear is checked for appropriateness prior to leaving school.
- Staff are aware of any relevant pupil medical information and ensure that any required medication is available.

- Staff will deposit in the office a list of all pupils and staff, a proposed route, and an estimated time of return.
- A school mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.

Appendix 2 – Emergency Procedure during a school visit

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 office).
2. The nominated base contact will contact an experienced senior manager.
3. For activities that take place during normal school hours, the visit leader 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 leader 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 School Learning Area, the visit leader will carry emergency details in a plastic red wallet.