



Denefield School

Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy

Approved by Standards on	5 March 2025
Date of next review	March 2028
Review cycle	Triennial
Policy control sheet updated	Yes
Type of policy	Non statutory
Policy owner	Member of SLT (DAV)
Location of policy	Website



Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities Policy

Status: Recommended

Purpose

The Trustees of Denefield recognise the significant educational value of visits and activities which take place away from the school site and consider that all students should have access to this range of experiences as an entitlement. This work can support, enrich and extend the curriculum as well as develop students' self-confidence, self-esteem and their problem-solving and teamwork skills. This is true of both day visits and residential opportunities.

Denefield prides itself on the care it takes of students, and this extends to all educational experiences that students have away from the school site. The management of visits and off-site activities involves particular responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of all participants: students and staff as well as members of the public and third parties.

This policy covers all off-site activities organised through Denefield and for which the Headteacher and Trustees have responsibility.

Who/what was consulted

- National Guidance, Outdoor Education Advisors Panel (OEAP), February 2025;
- 'Offsite Activities and Educational Visits: Supplementary Information', Hampshire County Council, January 2025. Denefield uses the offsite visits service of Hampshire County Council which provides access to support and guidance as well as access to the EVOLVE online system for the recording and approval of school visits;
- 'DofE Expedition Guidance' 2024
- 'Guidance: Health & Safety on Educational Visits', DfE, November 2018.

This policy takes into account the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010; updated in 2023. This means that public bodies must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work including those with protected characteristics. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Role of Trustees

The Trustees will:

- be responsible for producing and endorsing a policy for visits and off-site activities;
- ensure that all visits have clear and stated educational objectives;
- ensure that the Headteacher and Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) have taken all reasonable and practicable measures to include students with special educational needs or medical needs on a visit;
- be required to approve those school visits deemed appropriate by the Headteacher in addition to all foreign and residential visits as well as those visits which include adventurous activities;
- receive appropriate feedback on school visits and activities from either the Headteacher or the EVC; and
- ensure that this policy is implemented with due regard to the duties contained in the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010; updated in 2023.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- identify appropriate staff to assist with carrying out specific tasks related to this policy;
- be responsible for approving the appropriateness to the curriculum of school visits and activities;
- inform all staff of the school policy and current procedures on visits and off-site activities;
- ensure that adequate safeguarding/child protection and accident/incident procedures are in place and are reviewed as necessary;
- ensure that the Hampshire manual has been followed and that the web-based 'Evolve' paperwork has been completed;
- ensure all visits and off-site activities are based on a suitable risk assessment and adequate controls have been identified;
- seek additional guidance where there is uncertainty about safe practice and of any individual visit or activity;
- seek to ensure that all visits and activities comply with the school Health & Safety Policy, Hampshire guidance, and recognised good practice;
- appoint a suitable Educational Visits Co-ordinator;
- appoint a suitably experienced visit leader and deputy visit leader for all visits and off-site activities;

- identify and prioritise associated training needs for staff, including 'trip leader' training and induction training in risk assessment;
- ensure that the ratio of supervisors to participants is appropriate to the numbers, ages and abilities of the participants concerned;
- ensure that Trustee approval, where appropriate, has been sought and gained; and
- ensure that parental consent has been gained in writing.
- ensure the Educational Visits Co-Ordinator (EVC) is aware of their role, tasks and duties.

Role of the Educational Visits Co-ordinator

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will:

- carry out tasks delegated by the Headteacher and support them and Trustees with approval and other decisions;
- ensure that only competent persons lead or supervise a visit and ensure that visit leaders and deputy visit leaders are aware of their role, tasks and duties.
- organise training and induction for those leading or accompanying a visit, as required;
- ensure that emergency procedures and emergency contacts are in place; and
- liaise with Hampshire County Council's Outdoor Education, PE & Sport Service (Hampshire Outdoors).
- ensure that all Evolve paperwork is completed and approved

Role of the visit leader

The visit leader will:

- gain approval for the visit or off-site activity from the Headteacher following stated procedure;
- have overall responsibility for the planning, supervision and conduct of the visit or off-site activity;
- identify a suitably experienced deputy visit leader to support the planning, supervision and conduct of the visit or off-site activity;
- consider if the timing and/or destination of visits or activities will have implications for students or staff with particular Protected Characteristics;
- undertake a risk assessment in order to assess the suitability of the visit or off-site activity, including undertaking a site visit where appropriate and possible;
- check that all staff, including those leading adventurous activities are appropriately qualified;
- ensure parents/carers have signed consent forms, including medical and emergency information;
- inform all the relevant staff about the organisational and logistical aspects of the visit or off-site activity;

- be aware of child protection/safeguarding issues and consider these when planning the visit;
- organise the financing of the visit, e.g. regarding appropriate costs/funding and collection of money where relevant; publicising the availability of financial support for FSM students;
- ensure specialist equipment is managed in a responsible manner and report defects;
- consider First Aid provision and ensure necessary first aid equipment is available, including during travel;
- ensure suitable additional staffing has been agreed;
- ensure students receive appropriate information and guidance before and during the visit or off-site activity;
- ensure that the visit and the school have contact details for inside and outside of normal school hours;
- arrange staff and student feedback on the visit outcomes and
- organise a parents' information evening or other communication with parents as appropriate and
- take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all visit members including following national safeguarding guidance, particularly part 1 of KCSIE.

Role of additional staff

Additional staff will:

- follow agreed practice and procedure;
- take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all visit members including following national safeguarding guidance, particularly part 1 of KCSIE; and
- report to the visit leader any incident which may compromise the health, safety and welfare of visit members.

Role of students

Students will:

- follow the Behaviour and Discipline (B&D) Policy whilst on a school visit, 'including peer on peer abuse addendum';
- follow the instructions of the visit leader and other staff. These may include instructions on time keeping, behaviour, dress code or attitude to other members of the public, including being sensitive to local codes and customs;
- follow agreed codes of conduct;
- report to a member of staff any incident which may compromise the health, safety and welfare of visit members;
- represent Denefield in a positive and appropriate manner and
- follow agreed process for the use of mobile phones

Role of parents/carers

Parents/carers should:

- make an informed decision on whether their child should participate in the visit based on the information provided: this may be in writing and via a briefing session;
- prepare their child sufficiently, including reinforcing the appropriate code of conduct;
- provide the visit leader with emergency contact details and sign the consent form(s); and
- provide the visit leader with any extra information, e.g. medical requirements, which may affect their child's participation in the visit or activity.

Organisation and planning

The visit leader should be familiar with the guidance outlined in this document and Hampshire County Council's document 'Offsite Activities and Educational Visits: Supplementary Information'. Leaders must follow the guidance outlined in the planning pack on the Evolve website, hard copies of which are held by the EVC and available upon request, and refer to school model risk assessments as appropriate.

Risk assessment

Risk assessments should be completed for all types of visit and off-site activity. These include programmes of work, travel arrangements and venues. They focus on significant hazards and associated risks and will be subject to review and amendment as necessary. There is a need to assess risk before, during and after every visit or activity.

Staff: student ratios

The standard ratio, in normal circumstances, is at least one member of staff accompanying every 15 students, with a minimum of two, one of whom must be a teacher. For adventurous or remote activities, residential visits and visits abroad, the ratio should increase to one member of staff to every 10 students with a minimum of two staff, both of whom should be teachers. Best practice is that at least one male and one female member of staff should accompany mixed visits.

Exceptions to the above may include sports fixtures and local ventures, depending on the risk assessment carried out. The Headteacher must agree all exceptions.

Students who are considered a risk to the safety of themselves or others may be prohibited from participating in the visit or activity. The visit leader must inform parents of

the reason(s). For these students, wherever possible, the curricular aims of the visit or activity should be fulfilled in other ways.

Finance

Compulsory visits, as stipulated by examination syllabuses, which involve a cost, must be financed by the school. The School abides by very specific regulations for residential educational visits and the School cannot charge for:

- education provided on any visit that takes place during school hours
- education provided on any visit that takes place outside school hours if it is part of the national curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the student is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education
- supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying the residential visit.

The school is able to ask for voluntary contributions for any school activity including those that take place during school hours. No child will be excluded from an educational activity within school hours for which a voluntary contribution has been requested because their parents / carers are unable or unwilling to pay the contribution. If insufficient contributions are made to cover the cost of the activity, the school will try to source the funds from elsewhere but, if this is not possible, can decide to cancel the trip due to insufficient funds.

Where part-time staff are needed on a trip for supervision purposes, they may be paid full-time school hours, at their normal hourly rate, for any school days which the trip includes. No payment is available for weekends/holidays or hours outside the normal school day (currently 8.30am ~ 3.00pm). Any extra staffing costs must be built into the trip budget, and thus into the price advertised to the students.

Transport

The visit leader is responsible for ensuring that the company used for transporting students to, from and during the visit or activity is reputable and subject to the laws governing the carriage of students.

If the school minibus is used, the visit leader must ensure that the driver is suitably qualified, trained and practised in driving the vehicle and is familiar with the location of the first aid kit, fire extinguisher and emergency contact number(s).

The driver should ensure that students are well behaved and wear seat belts at all times. Where a coach company is used, this is the responsibility of all staff present, as instructed by the visit leader.

A member of staff should not use his/her own vehicle for transporting students on a visit or activity unless specific approval has been given. The member of staff's driving licence and insurance would need to be submitted for approval.

Arrangements should be made to avoid driver fatigue and maintain concentration. This applies particularly to visits and activities taking place outside of the normal school day. A minimum of two drivers are needed on continuous journeys over 100 miles.

Where an adult accompanying a visit is also driving, there should be a non-driving assistant to supervise the students unless:

- the driver is entirely confident that they can effectively supervise participants themselves and the journey is of very short duration; or
- the driver carries a means of communication in the event of a breakdown.

Emergency procedures

A mobile phone must be taken on all visits and off-site activities. The school has a mobile phone for this purpose. The number must be recorded on the visit approval forms and/or sports fixtures information sheets and the phone must remain turned on at all times during the visit unless temporarily forbidden by the venue.

A copy of the school's Emergency Procedure should be carried by the visit leader at all times.

In the event of a serious accident or emergency, the visit leader should follow the procedure outlined below:

- make an assessment of the situation;
- safeguard the rest of the party;
- attend to the casualty and alert the emergency services;
- contact the school as per the school's Emergency Procedure, where support will be provided by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, EVC or other member of the senior team;
- contact West Berkshire Council if it is not possible to contact the school;
- provide support to visit members; and
- complete an accident report (this may need to be done upon return to school).

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, EVC or member of SLT, will determine procedures for liaison with parents, the media and Trustees, as outlined in the school's Emergency Procedure.

Staff should not discuss details with others, including parents or the media.

Accidents and incident reporting procedures

All accidents and incidents will be reported as described in the school's Health & Safety Policy.

For all accidents requiring hospitalisation, a verbal report should be given to the Headteacher or responsible member of SLT at the earliest opportunity. Parental contact should be discussed with the Headteacher. A copy of the school Accident Form should be completed and a detailed report forwarded to the Headteacher within 24 hours, if possible.

For all accidents and incidents not requiring hospitalisation, but requiring attention and treatment, an Accident Form should be completed as above. The casualty should be monitored and parents informed as appropriate.

Any incident or potential for incident must be discussed with the EVC so that this risk may be eliminated in the future.

Information and communication

A copy of this policy and the associated practical procedures for planning and implementing a visit or off-site activity will be distributed to Faculty Leaders and other TLR holders. Further copies are available from the EVC.

The school will maintain a record of qualifications held by staff in outdoor activities including first aid, lifesaving, minibus driving and specific activities. Staff are responsible for keeping these qualifications up to date if they are used to support school-based activities. This may involve support from the school's INSET budget.

Additional requirements for overseas visits

The visit leader must ensure that, prior to the visit, a valid passport has been collected for each student and member of staff together with the relevant visas where appropriate. A check should be made on any non-British passport, to determine if entry to the country of destination requires visas which British passports do not.

The visit leader must ensure that, prior to the visit, a valid Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) has been collected from each student and member of staff.

The visit leader must issue guidance to all participants on the currency of the destination country (or countries) and ensure that all participants have sufficient funds (or access to funds) in that currency for the duration of their stay.

The visit leader must ensure that arrangements are in place for access to emergency funds in the relevant currency/currencies.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The school will monitor the implementation of this policy by ensuring that the required approval documentation has been produced to a satisfactory standard.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, EVC or other SLT members may on occasion accompany a visit for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Every visit will be reviewed by the visit leader.

The results of the evaluation and review process will be provided to the EVC/Headteacher. The evaluation and review reports will be maintained in the school's educational visits file for reference.

The EVC will feed back to the Trustee Standards Committee, to ensure the stated educational objectives of the trip/activity have been achieved.

Links to other policies and documents

Health & Safety Policy
Behaviour and Discipline Policy
Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
KCSIE - Annex 5 – host families on exchange visits
KCSIE - Annex F – regulated activity and supervision
Charging and Remissions Policy
Drugs Education Policy
Search and Confiscation Policy
Minibus Policy
First Aid Policy