



Off site visits Policy

Name of School:	Hiltingbury Infant School
Name of Responsible Headteacher:	Mrs Phillippa Longman
Date approved by Governing Body:	26.11.2024
Date of review by Governing Body:	November 2026

Rationale

At Hiltingbury Infant School we believe that safely managed educational visits and off-site activities with a clear purpose are an indispensable part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils derive considerable educational benefit from taking part in visits, including opportunities to experience learning beyond the classroom – these develop a learner's investigative skills, encourage greater independence, enhance personal and social development, and provide knowledge and awareness of the world beyond school. It is a priority of the school that all visits and off-site activities are safe, well-managed and educationally beneficial and it is to this end that we must assess and manage the risks involved. Every young person will have the opportunity to experience trips and educational visits while they are at Hiltingbury Infants. Within the risk assessment the school will identify children with disabilities, special educational or medical needs, and address how their needs will be catered for to ensure that there are no barriers to inclusion, where necessary a separate risk assessment will be written. The School is committed to ensuring that all children and young people can safely participate in the extra-curricular event. We will contact parents/carers to discuss any specific risks we have identified for their child and the reasonable adjustments we can make to ensure their safe participation which may include inviting a parent/carer to support the activity. The School's policy and procedures are formulated in conjunction with the advice, guidance and training provided by Hampshire Outdoor Education.

Aims

1. To provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone.
2. To promote the independence of our pupils as learners and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.
3. To create memorable experiences for our pupils that will stay with them and enhance their learning back in class.
4. To ensure all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of the pupils.

County Regulations and Guidance

The Off-site Activities and Educational Visits: Regulations and Guidance published by The Outdoor Education Unit of Hampshire County Council is available for staff reference. A summary of the key points from this document is provided here with page references. For more detailed explanations on any of the points covered or further guidance on planning educational visits, staff should refer directly to HCC documents. Furthermore Hampshire also has a website 'Evolve' dedicated to planning off-site visits.

Practice:

1. Initial Approval

Every visit will have a Visit Leader, who will plan and risk assess the visit, supported by the school's EVC (Educational Visits Coordinator). Every visit or event which takes a person out of their normal lessons or which takes a person outside of the school grounds must first be approved using the School's published process which is available upon request from the EVC. Visit Leaders will in the main be experienced members of staff who have a range of experience in supporting the planning of previous visits. The experience required will vary according to the nature of the visit.

Prior to the launch of the trip/visit, the trip leader will liaise with their year group to discuss any potential challenges or requirements for pupils due to participate. If the trip is integral to the specified curriculum, trip leaders will make best endeavours to enable all pupils to attend except in very extenuating circumstances where this may not be possible. In this case, the participation of individuals will be discussed with senior colleagues in school, the SENDCo (in the case of a child with additional needs), Designated Safeguarding Lead (where appropriate) and parents. If it is agreed that a child may not be able to attend, the trip leader will ensure that a suitable alternative is available.

In all cases where numbers are limited, the agreed criteria will be shared with parents/carers and pupils. Those who are not selected will be placed on a waiting list. If/when places become available, pupils will be offered the chance to attend. If a pupil does not gain a place on the trip/activity, a record will be kept and they will be afforded top priority for any future trips/activities, providing they meet the initial criteria set out for the event.

Approval System – LA

Only two types of activity require LA approval. These are:

- Activities which involve children in residence away from home for one or more nights staying at a non-council managed centre.
- Activities deemed as adventurous and hazardous.

Examples of adventurous and hazardous activities include: archery, camping, climbing, cycling, low and high ropes courses, field studies, orienteering, skiing, surfing and swimming in open water.

To gain approval for these two ventures the offsite activities approval information needs to be completed on the Hampshire EVOLVE system and then forwarded to the Outdoor Education Unit and Headteacher at least eight weeks prior to departure.

Approval System - Internal

The Headteacher, supported by the Educational Visits Co-ordinator and in liaison with the governors, can approve the venture, its aims, leaders and management after checking that all the key responsibilities have been met.

2. Costings and communication with parents/carers

Once the approval process has been completed, the visit leaders will work closely with the School's admin team to calculate accurate costings for the visit, which will then be shared with parents via a letter.

Parents and carers will be asked to provide consent for their child to attend the visit. We will ask for a voluntary contribution for all visits during the school day in order to cover costs. The school reserves the right to cancel visits if insufficient financial contributions are received.

For any potentially hazardous or residential visit parents will be invited to a meeting prior to departure to talk through the details of the visit and to answer any concerns or questions. Prior to the approval of any trip, adequate staffing and contingency must be confirmed.

3. Supervision

Supervision strategies are taken from the Hampshire County Council Supplementary Employer Guidance and include agreements on ratios, which are never exceeded. The ratios and supervision strategies used are dependent on typical risk factors of the group or individuals concerned, the site or location, the leaders present and other factors such as transport and weather. These are agreed as part of the planning process and can be adapted to changing circumstances, as appropriate. Supervision can be provided by teaching and support colleagues, volunteers and parents.

All adults attending the visit are acting as a member of staff and therefore must abide by the School’s Code of Conduct. The Visit Leaders must ensure that every adult attending is well informed about the visit, including the risk assessment, and that any group leaders have been given copies of contact and medical details for their group.

Every group leader must be able to contact the Visit Leader in the event of an emergency and have the contact number for the base contact person at school.

Supervision Ratios and Qualifications Guidance

Activity	Qualifications/staffing	Maximum ratios
Local visits Close to support base	An experienced group leader (recommended) a qualified leader and other responsible adults (A minimum of 2 leaders is required)	Under 5 years - 1:6 Under 8 years - 1:8 Between 8 & 18 years - 1 per activity or supervision group (Max 1:20)
Day Visits Transport required to travel to support base	An experienced group leader (recommended) a qualified leader and other responsible adults (A minimum of 2 leaders is required)	Under 5 years - 1:6 Under 8 years - 1:8 Between 8 & 18 years - 1 per activity or supervision group 4 (Max 1:12)
Open country Working by water, away from road or building	Open country qualified activity leader, qualified leaders (open country qualified) and other responsible adults. The number of open country qualified leaders will depend on risk assessment.	Under 5 years - 1:6 Under 8 years - 1:8 Between 8 & 18 years - 1 per activity or supervision group (Max 1:12)

In the case where the children of employees who are in school are attending the trip, the parent/employee cannot be the trip leader.

A full risk assessment of the trip must be conducted by the Trip Leaders to include contingency planning, safeguarding and actions in the event of an emergency paying due regard to potential conflict of interest resulting from the child of an employee attending the trip.

4. Transport

A variety of transport methods may be used, following local guidance. These may include: public buses, coaches (through recognised suppliers only), trains or mini-buses. Transport costs will be included in the request for a voluntary contribution from parents/carers. All transport will be booked through the main school office and evidence of relevant insurance will be expected as part of the planning process.

5. Risk assessments

The visit leader will complete two risk assessments, in line with Hampshire Outdoor Education guidelines, which will be shared with all adults attending the visit (including volunteers). These will be added to Hampshire Evolve, along with other planning details, at least 3 weeks prior to the visit taking place.

The school’s Safeguarding and Health and Safety Policies apply to all education visits. With all visits and activities, an analysis of the benefits of the activity to children’s learning is weighed up against the possible disbenefits of the trip and followed by putting clear control measures in place so that potential risks can be satisfactorily managed.

A pre-visit by a member of staff, wherever possible, is considered a key part of risk assessing and allows the member of staff to review the location and assess any potential risks. Medical information will be taken from the school's central database to ensure that children’s medical needs are catered for on an external visit – it is therefore vital that parents let the school know about any changes to medical needs prior to the visit.

During a visit, the visit leaders will communicate with the base contact to make the school aware that they have arrived safely, and the time of departure.

What does the process involve?

- 1) Looking for and at the hazards involved. Hazards are anything with the potential to cause harm. A significant hazard is one that has serious possible consequences.
- 2) Identifying the risk. The chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed.

The probability of occurrence is:

- HIGH (certain or near certain)
- MEDIUM (frequent)
- LOW (seldom)

Identifying the Hazards assessing the risks		Control Measures reducing the risks	
Hazard	Risk rating	Control measure	Outcome
List significant hazards to do with : 1. The site and its environment 2. The group you are taking 3. The leader and activity arrangements 4. Transport	Use a risk rating to decide how likely they are to occur: High – certain or near certain Medium – frequently Low - seldom	What control measures are you going to put into place?	Reassess the risk to see if the control measures are adequate. A low risk is required to continue with the venture.

6. Incidents and emergencies

The Visit Leaders are in charge of pupils during a visit and they have a duty of care to make sure that the pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty of care to act as a

reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

The priorities are:

1. to assess the situation and establish the nature and extent of the emergency;
2. to safeguard the uninjured members of the group;
3. to attend to the casualty and seek support from emergency services;
4. to inform everyone who needs to know about the incident.

For all visits there will be a 'base-contact' – this colleague will have a full list of contact and medical details for the children on the visit, as well as details of the risk assessment, planning, itinerary and guidance from the Hampshire Outdoor Education team, who will provide support in the event of an emergency on a school visit. Any concerns or 'near misses' are reported by the school to the Outdoor Education Service where necessary.

No one in the group is permitted to speak to the media as this may cause distress to families and the School's critical incident plan will be actioned. If a child needs to go to hospital, a member of staff will accompany them.

Once pupils have safely returned to school, the visit leaders should complete an accident/incident form with details of what happened – this should then be saved retrospectively on the Evolve system, as well as passed to the school's Health and Safety Manager.

During an educational visit, if a pupil's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, they may be sent back to school or home. Parents will be contacted and will be responsible for the collection of their child, including any costs incurred.

7. Evaluation of educational visits and events

Following any visit, colleagues should consider whether the original intended learning outcomes were achieved and make a note (via Evolve) of any adjustments or changes that might be needed to improve the visit, should it be repeated in the future.

This may involve asking pupils to evaluate the visit, and might involve follow up work in lessons. The teacher will ensure that any follow-up work is differentiated to allow pupils who did not attend the visit to participate and learn equally.