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# Educational Visits Policy

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## Context

Bentley High Street Primary School believes 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 Bentley High Street 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 creativity, developing learning relationships and practising 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, 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 are 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, Bentley High Street

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: 'Educational Off-site Visits and Adventurous Activities Guidance' with reference to OEAP National Guidance.
2. Uses Exeant Activities Planner, 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 (i.e. this document), DMBC policy and guidance, and National Guidelines. Staff are 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 Statement' (See Appendix A) – Cat. A
2. Day visits within the UK (outside of London) that do not involve an adventurous activity – Cat. B
3. Visit to London, and/or residential, and/or involve an adventurous activity - Cat. C

## Roles and responsibilities

**Visit leaders** are responsible for the planning of their visits, and for entering these on 'Exeant' (where required). They should obtain outline permission for a visit from the Executive Principal, Head of school 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.

**The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)** is Madeleine Davey and Jane Gilbert, who will support 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 and authorise final visit plans on 'Exeant' as delegated by the Executive Principal. The EVC will seek the advice of and report issues to the Executive Principal if the need arises. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on QES.

**The Executive Principal** has delegated the responsibility for authorising all visits to the EVC, and for submitting all overseas, residential or adventurous activity visits to the LA for approval, via Exeant.

**The Governing Body's** role is that of a 'critical friend'. They will follow the guidelines as set out at <http://oeapng.info/governors/> (Requirements and Recommendations for Establishments). They will be made aware, by the Executive Principapl, of visits undertaken by the establishment.

**The Local Authority** is responsible for the final approval (via Exeant) 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 Executive Principal and Head of School 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.

## **Parent helper**

### **We ask all parent helpers to read and follow our trip protocol...**

All adult supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities for the trip. You will be given information about the trip from the teacher. If you require more information, do not hesitate to ask.

- Make sure you know who the lead teacher is.
- You will be part responsible for a group of children/child under the supervision of a member of staff from the school. The class teacher will ensure that you have a complete list of the.
- The lead teacher concerned will have a First Aid Kit in case of minor accidents as well as any medication for individual children.
- The class teacher retains full responsibility for the whole class at all times. Please support them by encouraging the children in your group to follow instructions quickly and sensibly.
- It is vital that children conduct themselves in an orderly disciplined manner in order to get the most out of the learning experience. If necessary, please remind the children that when they are out they are representing Bentley High Street Primary School.
- If you become concerned about the health and safety or behaviour of any pupils at any time, do not hesitate to seek advice from the teacher.
- For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone with pupils unless they have a valid DBS certificate. If a child needs to go to the toilet, they need to be accompanied by a member of school staff.
- For Health and Safety reasons, please do not smoke, use your mobile phone (including taking photographs) or drink hot drinks or alcohol while you are with any children, including your own.
- We do appreciate your help, but anyone acting in a manner that is inappropriate will be asked to leave the trip. This is to protect the children.

- As adult helpers we request you to please keep in confidence any incident or situation of which you may become aware. Any information about a child should only be passed onto the child's parent or guardian through the class teacher or Head teacher.
- Please do not provide children, including your own, with any money, food or gifts during the day.
- Throughout the trip, try to talk to the children about what you are seeing and doing. Try to ask open questions that encourage the children to think and extend their learning. Please support them to complete any tasks they have been given but try not to do the work for them.

## Approval

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

1. Category 'A' - Local visits follow the 'Extending Learning Locality Statement' (Appendix A).
2. Category 'B' - Day visits within the UK that do not involve an adventurous activity. These are entered on Exeant, and must be submitted to the EVC for checking and approving at least 7 days in advance.
3. Category 'C' - 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.

## 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 B). All staff on visits are familiar with this plan and it is tested at least bi-annually and following any major staffing changes.**

**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.**

## Educational Visits Checklist

Bentley High Street Primary School's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities. This has been adapted from the LA's generic checklist. A visit should only go ahead if the answer to all relevant questions is 'YES'.

## **Parental Consent**

The school obtains blanket consent at the start of each year for regular/routine activities that take place wholly within the 'normal' school day. Category A visits are covered by using the 'Extended Learning Locality Statement' (Appendix A) and parents/carers can be informed of visits via electronic means, newsletters or letter. For Category B visits that are less routine, parents/carers must be fully informed of the arrangements and acknowledgement received from parent/carers that they have received the information regarding the visit via a reply slip.

Specific, (ie. one-off), parental consent must be obtained for all visits that take place either partly or wholly outside of 'normal' school hours. For these visits, sufficient information must be made available to parents (letters, meetings, etc), so that consent is given on a 'fully informed' basis.

## **Inclusion**

- Bentley High Street Primary School aims to ensure that all eligible children are included in every visit.
- Where a voluntary payment is required, and has not been received, children will attend the category 'A' visits plus any category 'B' and 'C' visits within school hours.
- For visits which take place out of school hours and require a voluntary payment which has not been received, children will attend the visit at the school's discretion.
- In some cases, the trip might be cancelled due to lack of funds.
- Only in extreme circumstances, when the safety of any participant may be put at risk by the inclusion of said participant, will a child not be invited. In all circumstances Bentley High Street Primary School complies with the Equality Act 2010.

## **Charging / funding for visits**

The Establishment follows the law relating to charging for school activities, as set out in sections 449 to 462 of the Education Act 1996. This is set out in detail in the document 'Charging-for-school-activities'.

## **Transport**

**Use of staff cars to transport pupils** – Staff may use private vehicles to transport participants providing that the school hold a completed VVU (Voluntary Vehicle Use) form. This ensures that the vehicle is road worthy and sufficiently insured to be used for business purposes.

## **Insurance**

Visits are covered by DMBC insurance

## Appendix A - Extended Learning Locality Statement

### Boundaries

The boundaries of the locality are shown on the attached map. This area includes the following frequently used venues:

- *Bentley Park including Bentley My Place*
- *Bentley Library*
- *Adwick Leisure Centre*
- *The High Street, Bentley*
- *St Peter's Church, The Methodist Church, The Baptist Church, Bentley Pentecostal Church, St George's Church*
- *Toll Bar Primary School, Kirkby Avenue Primary School*
- *The Hub at Doncaster College*

We use this extended area on a regular basis for a variety of learning activities, and approved staff are allowed to operate in this area without completing the Exeant visit approval process, provided they follow the below Operating Procedure and not using public transport.

### Operating Procedure for Extended Learning Locality

**The following are potentially significant issues/hazards within our extended locality:**

- Road traffic.
- Other people / members of the public / animals.
- Losing a pupil.
- Uneven surfaces and slips, trips, and falls.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).
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**These are managed by a combination of the following:**

- The Principal or Vice Principal must give verbal approval before a group leaves. (This can be at any point after the group leader has decided to take the visit.)

- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment, are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and can be accessed by the executive head and heads of school.
- The concept and Operating Procedure of the 'Extended Learning Locality' is explained to all new parents when their child joins the school.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults (unless the group is very small, experienced in the activity they are undertaking and contains no 'risk' children).
- Staff are familiar with the area, including any 'no go areas', and have practiced appropriate group management techniques.
- Pupils have been trained and have practiced 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. (*This needs a decision by the group leader and will depend on the area you are in – return to school, wait where they are, go to x and ask for help, etc.*)
- All remotely supervised work in the extended learning locality is done in 'buddy' pairs/fours as a minimum.
- 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 mobile is taken with each group and the office have a note of the number.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is taken when needed (eg gloves, goggles)

## Appendix B – 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 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 and have 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.
  - a) The visit leader will carry an 'Emergency Procedures Contact Card' and 'Phone Crib Card'
6. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.



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