Visits, Trips & Activities Policy

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Statement of Intent

The Headteacher, the senior leadership team (SLT) and governors of the school are committed to ensuring students will experience a wide range of activities. Off-site visits and related activities are a valuable part of their education, and so the school fully supports and encourages those that are well planned and managed. A common-sense approach will be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. We consider that it is important for students to learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life. Health and safety measures will always be proportionate to the risks of an activity. All staff will be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and children safe and manage risks effectively.

Carwarden House school provides many opportunities for its students to enrich and enhance their on-site learning through use of Outdoor Education and Off-site Educational Visits. This encompasses residential activities, environmental studies, sports, physical and cultural activities, adventurous activities. We believe that educational trips and visits play a vital role in bringing learning to life by giving students the opportunity to:

• broaden horizons
• have fun
• build self-esteem
• employ decision-making skills
• build relationships (staff and young people)
• take risks in a controlled environment
• understand risk
• experience new cultures
• raise aspirations • identify a lifelong leisure activity
• experiencing success
• learn to cope with failure
• live and working with others

This document outlines the specific policies and procedures for school. It supplements and follows the advice and guidance contained within the following significant publications:

SCC Guidelines for Educational Visits and Outdoor Education Activities

• The Health and Safety Executive in conjunction with the Department for Education published “Health and Safety Responsibilities and Powers” statutory document.
• The document “Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits” (HASPEV)
• The supplementary guidance published by the Department for Education
• Part 1 - Standards for LA’s in overseeing educational visits
• Part 2 - Standards for Adventure
• Part 3 - a handbook for Group Leaders.

Common Law Duty of Care

In their responsibility for the care, custody and control of the children, schools are expected to take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances.

In fact, the law prescribes a higher, professional standard of care from school staff, to reflect their training and experience. The same duty of care applies to students over 18, when they are engaged on school activities.

Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees - The Board of Trustees satisfies itself that the appropriate procedures, risk assessments, and control measures are in place and that the documented guidance notes are being followed.

EVC - All risk assessments will be monitored and reviewed by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC). The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) ensures that all off-site activities follow the correct procedures. The EVC will approve the group leader for every visit and monitor the written risk assessments to ensure good practice.

Headteacher - The Headteacher will sign off all off-site educational visits, apart from residential trips or visits abroad when these are authorised by the Local Authority. The Headteacher has primary responsibility for assessing and approving visits.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessment is an essential and integral part of the planning for all off-site activities and must commence at an early stage of this process (Sent to the EVC prior; 2 weeks of the planned visit) and underpin all stages of decision making. Significant risks and their control measures will need to be recorded and filed with the EVC. This will take account of generic risks, event Specific Risks as identified from a pre-visit or thorough knowledge or experience of the environment, accommodation, the leader's competence, the group and other factors such as transport. On-going risks identified by the professional staff responding to changing circumstances and the success of planned activity and procedures.

The participants and staff will be fully briefed on the purpose and the risk assessment control measures by the visit leader. Straightforward local activities may require only minimal generic risk assessment (proportionate to the hazards). Whilst it may be sufficient to rely on standard local protocols and generic risk assessments for such activities, this still entails an element of risk assessment to decide if any generic documents are applicable or need to be modified to make them suitable and sufficient for the individual event. The generic risk assessment is only used for general weekly activities such as college, travel training, work placements and duke of Edinburgh. All other visits require an individual rick assessment.

Risk assessments are carried out by the Party Leader. The Headteacher, or appointed EVC, is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place. Risk assessments will need to be reviewed and re-assessed if circumstances change, whether before or during a visit.

Carwarden House uses the web-based system 'EVOLVE' to facilitate the efficient planning, management, approval, and evaluation of visits www.surreyvisits.org.uk . All staff that lead or accompany visits have their own EVOLVE account, which is set up by the school's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

Responsibilities

Staff on educational visits act as employees of Carwarden House whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours. Non-teaching staff on the visit must be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Staff must ensure:

• The health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances
• Follow the instructions of the Party Leader and help with control and discipline
• Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
• Consider stopping the visit or activity and notifying the Party Leader, if they think the risk to health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable
• Non-teaching staff not to be left in sole charge of students except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment. The Party Leader must make clear to the students that they must follow instructions and guidance from all staff leading or supporting on the visit as well as any contracted staff during activities.

Parents

Written consent from parents is not required for students to take part in the majority of generic off-site activities (often known as 'locality visits') organised by a school as most of these activities take place during school hours and are a normal part of a child's education at school. However, it is good practice to inform parents of these activities.

Written consent is needed for activities that need a higher level of risk management or those that take place outside school hours. Parents must be informed of these activities well in advance and given the opportunity to withdraw their child from any particular visit or activity covered by the form.

Parents should also be informed how they can help prepare their child for the visit by:

• Reinforcing behaviour expectations.
• Providing the Party Leader with emergency contact numbers.
• Signing the parental consent and medical forms.
• Giving the Party Leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit.
• Agreeing to any arrangements for sending a student home and any decisions on who will meet the cost.
• Agreeing that during a trip or off-site activity the accompanying staff have a duty to act in loco parentis (to take on functions and responsibilities as if they were a reasonable and prudent parent).

Child Protection

Party Leaders and the Headteacher must ensure that adequate arrangements are in place (particularly when using residential accommodation) with regard to the use of contractors or other organisations, and the use of volunteers to assist with supervision.

Appropriate Activities

The venue and activities should be appropriate to the educational aims, the needs and abilities of the students, and the resources available.

Residential Visits

All visits need to be approved first by the Headteacher and ultimately by the Local Authority. All trips must be planned, and risk assessments submitted at least two months before the proposed date. The Evolve system will automatically identify trips requiring LA approval. The risk assessment for all residential visits needs to cover all hazards (risks) that may potentially cause harm to students and/or staff. This list is not exhaustive Parents

- Safeguarding
- Student behaviour
- Medical needs
- Travel Arrangements
- Venue / Accommodation
- Sleeping arrangements
- Providers emergency procedures
- Emergency services response times
- Activities
- Staff student ratio
- Local customs

If the trip is out of the UK then consideration will be given to the relevant country information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website and the information circulated to the staff.

Research of Venues

The Party Leader must research an off-site activity thoroughly. Schools must take no risks in this regard. Experience over many years indicates that where accidents have occurred the cause can often be traced back to insufficient care at this stage. Pre-trip visits to venues will normally form part of the early planning. Planning and preparation must be done sufficiently far ahead, and trips should not be approved unless this is the case.

Outside Agencies

Carwarden House School has a responsibility to take reasonable steps to ensure that any agency it engages is competent and that any establishment or venue is safe. The Headteacher, Trustees and Local Authority have a responsibility for activities run by any third party on Carwarden House School's behalf. Therefore, due care must be taken in commissioning such activities. Organisations should be approached directly to ascertain that the qualifications and

experience of the staff are in line with the requirements of this document. A good education travel operator will expect Carwarden House staff to request details of staff accreditation, risk assessments, and the company's safety management systems. The EVC must check that the provider holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. These regulations apply to adventure activities that take place in England, Scotland and Wales, but these arrangements may be subject to change in the future.

Swimming/Water Sports

All swimming activities, water sports and venues must be included within the visit plan and lifeguard arrangements checked in advance. Students must be always supervised at all times by a competent adult whilst undertaking swimming activities. Venue qualified staff and at least one Carwarden trained staff member (Reach & Rescue) are to be present at all times during activity.

Hotel and other swimming pools

If lifeguards are not provided, a member of staff must hold a National Rescue Award for swimming teachers and coaches (or similar) and take responsibility for the safety of the swimming. All staff to have a list of the swimming abilities of the students.

Parental Consent

Written parental consent is required for all trips is involving an overnight or longer residential stay and any adventurous activities. For adventurous activities parents must be briefed carefully and thoroughly and asked to sign in advance that they accept such activities.

On residential trips parents should be asked to give their consent for emergency medical treatment.

Staff-Pupil Ratios

The ratio for staff to students should be in line with Carwarden House School guidelines which takes into account the needs of the individual students. There should be sufficient staff to cope effectively with an emergency.

Staffing and Supervision

There must be a designated group leader, and a deputy should also be nominated. The group leader is responsible for: • Planning and preparation, including all risk assessments • Briefing of parents, students and staff • Supervision and conduct of the visit/trip. • Welfare and safety of students and staff. Operating emergency procedures There must be a clearly established line of responsibility. Staff must be suitably experienced, competent (e.g. with the age of the group) and, where relevant to the activity, qualified. Group leaders should be aware of their own levels of competence, take advice from experts if necessary, and identify the skills and experience of other members of staff and plan to accommodate these. Whatever is planned must be within the capability of the students and, where physical activity is involved, training may need to be part of the preparation. Forethought, care, and a prudent concern for the safety and welfare of all involved will ensure both success and peace of mind.

Preparing students

Students should be carefully briefed before a visit, especially in matters of conduct and safety. Students should understand:

- Aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- Background information about the place to be visited.
- How to avoid specific dangers.
- Safety precautions.
- Standards of behaviour expected.
- Rules about ringing home (how to avoid causing concern or confusion at home
- Emergency procedures.
- Items banned from being brought on the trip.

Medical needs of students

The group leader must know all medical conditions of students' and follow up by discussing the child's needs with the parents. These are kept in the student file and updated regularly. Members of staff responsible for leading expeditions in this country, and abroad, which involve an overnight stay of one or more nights, must hold all records and share medical needs of students with all staff. The Group Leader (or identified member of staff) must record the

administration of any medicines, date, time, name of medicine and dose. **Please refer to the school's supporting student's medical needs / administration of medication policy.** For overnight stays and residentials staff will be allocated student groups and they will be responsible for administering medication; staff will sign / counter sign for the administration of all medication in line with our policy and using the approved recording proformas. If staff are not confident with the administering of medications, the group leader will take on this role.

First Aid

At least one member of the group will have a good working knowledge of first aid, have received accredited training (Emergency First Aid) and an adequate /approved first aid box must be taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible if at least one of the adults is a fully-trained first aider. On every trip an adult should be appointed to oversee, (along with a deputy), for first aid and administration of medication arrangements, in most cases this will be the group leader.

Transport – General

When hiring buses and coaches, it is essential that the company is reputable. The vehicle should be provided with seat belts on all seats. If teachers/parents/volunteer's private vehicles are used the vehicles must be road worthy and adequately insured.

Minibus Transport

Drivers of school minibuses above the specified weight limit must hold a D1 license. Drivers without a D1 license can drive a minibus if:

- The minibus weighs no more than 3.5 tonnes

- The minibus has no more than 16 seats
- The driver is over 21 years of age
- The driver has been driving on a full license for more than 2 years

All drivers are required to complete a minibus driving test.

For journeys over 4 hours a second minibus driver must be present to share the driving. Recommended a change of driver every two hours.

The educational visits policy reflects the school's serious intent to accept its responsibilities in all matters relating to the management of educational visits. The clear lines of responsibility and organisation describe the arrangements which are in place to implement this policy.