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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 Hawthorn Tree 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.
- Opportunities for meaning making, creativity, developing learning relationships and practicing 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 participant's 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. ie. 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, Hawthorn Tree School:

1. Adopts the Local Authority's (LA) document: **'Guidance for Educational Visits and Related Activities with National Guidance & EVOLVE'** (All staff have access to this via EVOLVE).
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 execute visits in line with this school policy, 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

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.

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. Eg. visits to museums, farms, theme parks, theatres, etc.

These are entered on EVOLVE by the visit leader and submitted to the EVC for checking. The EVC, who is also the Head teacher, will approve or not.

3. Visits that are overseas, residential, or involve an adventurous activity.

These follow 2. above, but the Head then submits the visit 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 Teacher or EVC prior to planning, and before making any commitments. Visit leaders have responsibility for ensuring that their visits will comply with all relevant guidance and requirements, and should seek advice from the EVC where necessary.

The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mr James Kelwick, 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 final visit plans on EVOLVE before submitting them to the Head. The EVC sets up and manages the staff accounts on EVOLVE, and uploads generic school documents, etc.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for authorising all visits, and for submitting those that are overseas, residential or adventurous to the LA for approval.

The Governing Body's role is that of a 'critical friend'. Governing Bodies should make sure that:

- If the management board/governing body is the direct Employer of Establishment staff you are fully aware of the Employer's responsibilities under health and safety law.
- There is an Establishment Visits/outdoor learning policy and procedures – including emergency procedures.
- There are formal notification and approval procedures for Visits, and you are clear about your role in these.

Individual governors may be given 'read-only' access to EVOLVE.

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 competent to be a visit leader, the Head Teacher 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

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 2). 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

Hawthorn Tree School's Educational Visits Checklist forms part of the risk management process for visits and off-site activities, and may be downloaded from EVOLVE Resources. 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

Consent is not required for activities within the School Learning Area that are part of the normal curriculum during normal school time.

Hawthorn Tree will obtain blanket consent on entry to the school for certain other routine activities, eg. after school fixtures, etc. Parents will be able to consent through a traditional paper consent form.

Inclusion

The Equality Act 2010 states that the responsible body of a school or, for other provision, the service provider, must not discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or young person because of one of the protected characteristics (disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation) in the way that it provides (or not) a benefit, facility or service. There is a duty to make reasonable adjustments. Activities should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics.

Hawthorn Tree School undertakes, when a visit or activity is being planned, to take all reasonably practicable measures which must be taken to include all young people. Every reasonable effort is made to find a venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

Charging / funding for visits

In accordance with our Charging and Remissions Policy (November 2018), the following states;

Voluntary Contributions

Parents will be invited to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of an activity which takes place during school hours but there is no obligation to contribute and pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have agreed to make a voluntary contribution. For those in receipt of Pupil Premium funding, a 50% contribution will be suggested. (A list of prescribed benefits linked to Pupil Premium funding are found under 'Remissions')

School visits (non-curriculum)

Charges made to parents will not exceed the actual cost of the activity in order, for example, to raise additional funds to cover any shortfall caused by parents opting not to contribute, although there is nothing to prevent other parents making a voluntary contribution over and above that cost. Children who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding will receive a 50% reduction to any charges. (A list of prescribed benefits linked to Pupil Premium funding are found under 'Remissions')

Remissions:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Where the school does not receive sufficient voluntary contributions and there is no way to make up the shortfall then the visit may be cancelled. In these instances parents will receive a full refund – unless a non returnable deposit has previously been paid either by the parents or the school.

Board and lodging on residential visits

A charge will be made for the above. Children who are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding will receive a 50% reduction to any charges. (other costs such as transport may be financed by voluntary contribution or from other sources)

School Clubs (before/after school, lunchtime)

Charges will be made for all school clubs including, but not limited to: Multiskills, Cheerleading, Netball, Archery, Football, Golf. Charges for these activities will be determined by the external provider or school staff costs. Any transport costs due to attendance at tournaments or special events will be financed by the school

Transport

Coach - The School will normally use a Lincolnshire County Council approved operator of PCVs for visits. LEV 13 should be used to gain written assurances, particularly when not using an LCC approved company. This form should be adapted by the EVC/Visit Leader to meet any specific requirements. This is completed on an annual basis for 'commonly used companies' in order to reduce workload and bureaucracy.

Minibus - If Hawthorn Tree Primary School intends to use a minibus, it will consult with the Educational Visits Team to ensure all requirements will be met. The Educational Visits Team might put the School in contact with the Transport Services Group (TSG) (for expert advice and guidance.

Use of private vehicles - Unless such prior arrangements have been made, LCC does not insure the driving of private motor vehicles by members of staff on school/setting business.

Public transport - Coaches will normally be used. The Governing Body however approves the use of public transport where appropriate (e.g. to reduce costs, to support specific educational outcomes). The EVC, Head teacher and Governing Body must approve the use of public transport and safety must not be compromised.

Insurance

The Governing Body will ensure adequate insurance is in place for educational visits. Hawthorn Tree School buys into the Lincolnshire County Council scheme. This covers a comprehensive range of visits. The Governing Body, Head teacher and EVC should understand any exclusions.

UNICEF

As a UNICEF Rights respecting school, this Hawthorn Tree Policy recognises the following articles: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 39, 42. Please visit <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf> for more detail.

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,
- do not normally need additional risk assessments / notes (other than following the Operating Procedure below),
- should be recorded on EVOLVE if regular, eg swimming lessons,
- do not need to be recorded on EVOLVE if these are ad-hoc activities.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the School Learning Area are shown on the attached map. This area includes, but is not limited to, the following frequently used venues: e.g.

- Local area, Skirbeck
- Church visit
- Farm visit
- Boston Town walk
- Theatre visit
- Boston Bowl

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.
- Weather conditions.
- Activity specific issues when doing environmental fieldwork (nettles, brambles, rubbish, etc).

These are managed by a combination of the following:

- Only staff judged competent to supervise groups in this environment are approved. A current list of approved staff is maintained by the EVC and office.
- 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.
- There will normally be a minimum of two adults.
- 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.
- All remotely supervised work in the School Learning Area is done in 'buddy' pairs 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 school 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 2 – 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 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 either:
 - a) An LA Emergency ‘Card’ (see EVOLVE Resources), or
 - b) An OEAP National Guidance Emergency action card (Available via www.oeap.info)
7. This Emergency Procedure is tested through both desk top exercises and periodic scenario calls from visit leaders.