Hedgewood School

Educational Visits and School Trips Policy

Date policy last reviewed: _____

Signed by:

_____	Headteacher	Date:	_____
_____	Chair of governors	Date:	_____

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Statement of intent

Hedgewood that visits and trips can be effective ways of motivating pupils, and they can often offer unique educational experiences. The school aims to ensure that pupils are engaged in their learning and are given opportunities to explore this in a more practical setting.

The school takes the health and wellbeing of our staff and pupils very seriously. This policy has been designed in line with DfE and HSE guidance and details our responsibilities for pupils and staff members while out on educational visits and school trips.

1 Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- DfE 'Charging for school activities'
- DfE 'Health and safety on educational visits'
- HSE 'School trips and outdoor learning activities'
- DfE 'Driving school minibuses'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Business Continuity Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Charging and Remissions Policy
- Minibus Policy
- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- DBS Policy

2 Definitions

'In loco parentis' means that the group leader of any school trip or educational visit has a duty of care over the pupils in place of a parent.

'School trip' means any educational visit, foreign exchange trip, away-day or residential holiday organised by the school which takes pupils and staff members off-site.

'Residential' means any school trip which includes an overnight stay.

Activities of an '**adventurous nature**' include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Trekking
- Caving
- Skiing
- Water sports
- Climbing

3 Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that this policy complies with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring educational trips and visits positively impact on pupils' lives, teaching them life skills and providing new experiences.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy.
- Appointing an educational visits coordinator, liaising with the Local Authority as necessary.
- Liaising with the educational visits coordinator and communicating information regarding any planned trips to parents.
- Liaising with the governing board regarding the organisation of extra-curricular trips and activities, including settling any disputes.
- Being part of the approval process for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring the educational visits coordinator is competent to oversee the coordination of off-site education and arranging for training to be undertaken, as necessary.
- Completing relevant paperwork, including risk assessments, for extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring suitable safety measures are in place prior to each trip or activity.
- Overseeing the work of the educational visits coordinator, ensuring a whole-school approach is adopted when planning and coordinating extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring there are contingency plans in place in the event of a member of staff being absent on the day of the trip or activity.

The educational visits coordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing all issues and controls regarding extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Liaising between all appropriate parties, including the local outdoor education adviser, during the planning and organising of extra-curricular activities and trips.
- Ensuring the systems and procedures for dealing with educational visits adhere to the requirements of this policy.
- Partaking in relevant additional training to ensure they remain up-to-date with relevant educational trip information and health and safety guidance.
- Overseeing the planning of the educational trips, by ensuring all essential documentation, including risk assessments, is up to date and appropriate for completion by the designated trip leader.
- Appointing an appropriate and competent member of staff to be the designated trip leader for each trip.
- Ensuring the competency of the designated trip leader, in consultation with the headteacher, by organising training for staff and volunteers.

The designated trip leader selected to be in charge on an individual trip is 'in loco parentis' and has a duty of care to all pupils on the trip. They are also responsible for:

- Identifying the educational purpose of the extra-curricular trip or activity and presenting its benefits to the headteacher.
- Undertaking any relevant training or courses which are arranged by the educational visits coordinator.
- Completing all essential documentation for the trip and ensuring it has been approved by the educational visits coordinator.
- Conducting a risk assessment prior to school trips and educational visits to ensure pupil and staff safety.
- Creating an itinerary prior to an educational visit or school trip and distributing it to pupils, parents and staff to ensure the day is well organised and safe.
- Informing parents of the proposed extra-curricular trip or activity six weeks in advance and distributing permission slips to parents.
- Implementing safeguarding measures throughout the planning, organisation and delivery of the extra-curricular trip or activity.
- Ensuring all adults on the trip are aware of their responsibilities and that the necessary checks have been carried out on volunteers in line with the DBS Policy.

The designated deputy leader supports the designated trip leader and will assume the designated trip leader's responsibilities if the designated trip leader is no longer fit to lead the trip, e.g., is unwell at short notice. They are also responsible for supporting the designated trip leader in completing all their relevant responsibilities by assuming any delegated tasks.

Staff are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Ensuring they are competent and comfortable with their delegated responsibilities, undertaking training where necessary.
- Ensuring the safety of the pupils is maximised throughout any educational visit or activity.

Volunteers on the trip are responsible for:

- Adhering to this policy and applying its principles when participating in extra-curricular trips and activities.
- Supervising and ensuring the safety of pupils by following the procedures outlined by the designated trip leader.

4 Planning school trips

Prior to planning a school trip, the following guidance will be read by the organisers:

- DfE (2018) 'Health and safety on educational visits'

- HSE (2011) ‘School trips and outdoor learning activities’

A thorough risk assessment will be conducted by the designated trip leader during the planning of the trip, to ensure pupil and staff safety.

When partaking in adventure trips, activities will always be identified at the planning stage and never added during the trip. When planning water sport activities, the need for instructors and lifeguards will be taken into account, particularly when using facilities which may not have a trained lifeguard present.

The school will do everything in its power to ensure that all pupils are given an opportunity to participate in school trips, for example, organising two trips with a smaller group size or finding a venue which can cater for all pupils. Where there is a maximum capacity of pupils for a trip, places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. This will be clearly communicated to parents.

Risk assessment process

Our risk assessment process is designed to manage risks when planning trips, while ensuring that learning opportunities are experienced to the fullest extent. The individual carrying out the risk assessment process will have the skills, status and competence needed for the role, understand the risks involved, and be familiar with the activity.

The process is as follows:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record findings and implement them
- Review assessment and update if necessary

A risk assessment will be conducted for each school trip before it is undertaken to identify hazards and control measures specific to the trip.

5 Vetting providers

When considering external providers for activities, the educational visits coordinator will check whether they hold the ‘Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge’ to indicate they meet nationally recognised standards.

If a provider does not hold the badge, the educational visits coordinator will check the following to ensure they are a suitable organisation to work with:

- Their insurance arrangements
- Their adherence to legal requirements
- Their control measures

- Their use of vehicles
- Staff competency levels
- Safeguarding policies
- The suitability of their accommodation
- Any sub-contracting arrangements in place
- The presence of necessary licences

If it is deemed appropriate to engage with an external provider, a written agreement will be created outlining what each party is responsible for. If an organisation does not meet the school's standards, they will not be considered.

6 Equal opportunities

The school is committed to providing all pupils with equal opportunities to participate in educational visits and off-site activities. Planning for visits will consider the individual needs of pupils, including their autism, communication needs, learning needs, medical needs, physical needs, and behavioural support requirements. Reasonable adjustments and appropriate support will be considered to maximise participation, inclusion, and access wherever possible.

The school promotes values of equality and does not discriminate against any individual or group of pupils when organising a trip. The extra-curricular trips and activities offered to pupils will provide new experiences and develop life skills.

In exceptional circumstances, a pupil's individual risk assessment may identify that participation in a specific off-site activity cannot be undertaken safely, even with additional support and reasonable adjustments in place. In such cases, decisions will be based on a thorough assessment of risk, the health, safety, and wellbeing of the pupil and others, and in consultation with parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate. Where a pupil is unable to attend a visit, the school will seek to provide a suitable alternative educational experience wherever practicable.

For school trips that require additional payment, the fee will be reasonable and help will be provided where possible for pupils who cannot afford the initial fee.

7 Transport

The School Business Manager is responsible for arranging the annual maintenance of the minibuses, including MOTs and road tax. The use of minibuses will be organised in accordance with the Minibus Policy.

The driver will have a current driving licence, be aged 25 years or over and hold a full licence in at least a category D PCV in order to drive on a domestic school trip. Category B PCVs may be acceptable in certain circumstances, as outlined in the Minibus Policy. Before driving abroad, the educational visits coordinator will contact the LA for guidance on which licence is required. Drivers will complete the relevant form from the school office and supply a photocopy of their driving licence.

If passengers are paying a charge, the minibus permit must be clearly displayed in the vehicle. Internal damage to the minibus is the responsibility of the individual or organisation using the minibus. The school will decide who is responsible for covering the cost of any repairs. The minibus will carry strictly one person per seat and seatbelts must be worn at all times. Fines incurred will be paid by whoever was driving the minibus at the time the offence was committed.

Start and finish mileage, along with any potential risks, defects or damage identified, will be reported upon return to the school. The following staff members hold the required licence and have completed specific training which allows them to drive the school minibus:

Staff member's name	Staff member's role
Pascal Asanga (MIDAS)	Assistant Premises Manager
Bryony Smith (MIDAS)	Co Headteacher
Tara Shikalislami (MIDAS)	Assistant Headteacher
Pearl Greenwald (MIDAS)	Co Headteacher
Natalie Noel (MIDAS)	Teaching Assistant
Paul Welch (MIDAS)	Teaching Assistant
Andrew Catt	Premises Manager

8 Parental consent

Parental consent is not generally required for off-site activities that take place during school hours.

Written consent is required for:

- Activities of an adventurous nature.
- Residential trips.
- Trips outside of school hours.

If preferable and appropriate, parents may complete an annual consent form at the start of any academic year which gives consent for their child to be involved in any and all activities, both on and off-site, that take place at any time, including the school holidays. Separate consent will be sought for trips which require payment. Parents will be informed of activities by letter & Parentmail and will have the opportunity to withdraw their child from taking part.

9 Staffing ratios

There will be sufficient staff to cope in an emergency and generally. All educational visits will be subject to a robust and individualised risk assessment process. Risk assessments will take

into account the specific needs of pupils attending, including their autism, communication needs, learning needs, medical requirements, sensory needs, behaviour support plans, mobility needs, and any identified risks. Appropriate staffing ratios will be determined for each visit to ensure the safety, wellbeing, participation, and successful inclusion of all pupils. Where necessary, enhanced staffing levels, specialist support, or additional reasonable adjustments will be provided to enable pupils to access educational visits safely and meaningfully. Risk assessments will be reviewed and approved prior to the visit and will be proportionate to the needs of the pupils and the nature of the activity.

Insurance and licensing

When planning activities of an adventurous nature in the UK, the educational visits coordinator will check that the provider of the activity holds a current licence. Insurance will be organised for every trip, no matter how short, to ensure adequate protection and medical cover is in place. Parents will be informed of the limits of any insurance cover.

Where a crime is committed against a member of the party, it will be reported to local police as soon as possible.

Medical expenses will be recorded and stored in the school office.

10 Accidents and incidents

In the case of accidents and injuries while on a school trip in the UK, the school's accident reporting process will begin, as detailed in the Health and Safety Policy.

The Co-Headteachers will keep written records of any incidents, accidents and near misses.

Staff will use guidance as set out in the Business Continuity Plan, in particular the 'initial response' section, to ensure the safety of pupils and staff should anything happen, e.g. a terrorist attack. Staff will be briefed on how to react and respond should an emergency situation occur. Relevant risk assessments will be undertaken before the trip. Pupils and staff are informed of an evacuation plan before entering trip venues; this should include an agreed rendezvous point, to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

To ensure pupils are easily identifiable, they must wear School uniform or a Hedgewood school wristband with the school logo on, which must be worn at all times.

11 Missing person procedure

The school places pupil and staff safety as its top priority when participating on school trips.

Before embarking on the trip, extensive risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with this policy. The educational visits coordinator will communicate with the venues of the school trips to ensure the correct group sizes are planned for each setting.

Everyone on the trip will be provided with a contact sheet for all members of staff, in the event they are unable to locate their group. All staff members will be required to carry mobile phones with them at all times.

Registers will be taken at the start and end of each day, as well as before, during, and after events, and at regular intervals whilst on days out to ensure the whereabouts of pupils are known at all times.

Upon arriving at every venue, the designated trip leader will identify a rendezvous point where pupils and adults should go if they become separated from the rest of the group. Pupils and staff will wear school wrist bands, in order to make them easily identifiable.

Regular head counts of all pupils and staff will take place throughout the day to ensure all persons are present at all times.

In the event someone goes missing whilst on a school trip:

- The designated trip leader will ensure the safety of the remaining pupils and staff by taking a register to identify who is missing.
- The designated trip leader will immediately identify at least one adult to start looking for the person and another adult to contact them via phone, these people will look for the person until, where necessary, the police arrive.
- Where possible, the venue will be notified of the missing person to help ensure the person is found quickly.
- If the person cannot be contacted or located within 10 minutes, the local police or relevant authorities, e.g. the British Embassy, will be contacted.
- If the police are called, the trip leader will contact the Co-Headteachers, or other available person, back at the school and inform them of what has happened.

If the police, or another authority, is called to an incident where someone is missing, they will oversee locating the person and will advise on factors including, but not limited to, when to contact next of kin.

If the missing person cannot be found, the group will return to school. If this is not possible, the educational visits coordinator will make arrangements to ensure the group's safety, e.g. by changing venues or cancelling visits.

If a member of the party has gone missing and is subsequently found, the trip leader will:

- Review the group sizes and staffing ratios to ensure no one becomes separated from their group.
- Review whether more registers should be conducted throughout the day.
- Assess which venues they attend to ensure they are suitable for the group.
- Make recommendations to the educational visits coordinator to ensure similar incidents can be avoided in the future.

12 Finance

The financial procedures outlined in the school's Charging and Remissions Policy will always be followed when arranging trips.

The school will act in accordance with the DfE's guidance document 'Charging for school activities' (2018) and, therefore, will only charge for trips which are classed as an 'optional extra'. This is education provided outside of school time which is not:

- Part of the national curriculum.
- Part of a syllabus for an examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school.
- Part of religious education.

Money for school trips will always be paid directly to the school. Under no circumstances should school trip money be processed through personal accounts.

All letters to parents regarding school trips will include a clause explaining what will happen in the event that the trip is cancelled or a pupil cancels their place on the trip.

In the event that the trip is cancelled due to unforeseeable circumstances, it is at the Co-Headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Co-Headteacher's will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the cost to the school, including alternative provision costs.

In the event that a pupil cancels their place on a trip, it is at the Co-Headteacher's discretion as to whether a refund is given to parents. The Co-Headteacher's will consult the governing board on the matter, taking into account the pupil's reasons for cancelling their place, whether the school will be reimbursed for the pupil's place on the trip, and whether the space on the trip can be offered to someone else. Where a pupil has previously cancelled a space on a school trip and received a full refund, the school has the right to refuse to allow the pupil to attend future trips and visits.

The school will take a common-sense approach to refunds and cancellations, ensuring that all pupils are treated equally. Any charge made in respect of pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the trip divided equally by the number of pupils participating.

Once trip arrangements are booked and confirmed, if contributions to a trip exceed the total cost of the trip, a refund will be given where the excess is greater than £1 per pupil. Any excess of expenditure will be subsidised by the school fund.

13 Evaluating trips and visits

Following an educational trip and/or visit, the educational visit coordinator will meet with any staff members present on the trip to assess the success of the trip in respect of both educational value and safeguarding effectiveness.

Based on this assessment, recommendations will be made to improve future trips and visits.

14 Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the headteacher. The governing board will review this policy annually. The scheduled review date for this policy is July 2027