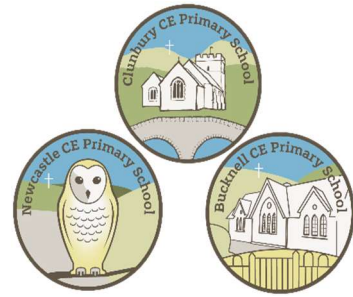




Blue Hills Federation



Residential Visits Policy September 2023

The Blue Hills Federation

The Blue Hills Federation is a collective of three primary schools – Clunbury CE Primary School, Newcastle CE Primary School and St Mary’s Bucknell CE Primary School. All three schools share one Executive Headteacher and one Governing Body. When using the term ‘Blue Hills Federation’ within this policy, it is in reference to all three schools. When policy only applies to one school that school will be named specifically. Newcastle CE Primary School does not have a nursery or a preschool, therefore any references to nursery or pre-school do not apply to Newcastle CE Primary School.

Our Vision

Proverbs 22:6 - Good News Bible

‘Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their lives.’

We are a caring Church Federation bringing together and serving many communities.

We provide nurturing environments that facilitates learning for all. We encourage everybody to become confident, sociable and responsible citizens who achieve to the best of their ability in preparation for a fulfilling future.

Our Values

Trust and Truth; Joy and Happiness; Love and Respect; Thankfulness; Friendship and Family; Perseverance and Resilience

To be reviewed September 2025

RESIDENTIAL EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Safeguarding Statement

At The Blue Hills Federation , we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at The Blue Hills Federation . We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years (as determined by the Governing Body).

Overview

All educational visits provide various opportunities to enable our pupils to fully understand the world around them through direct experience and offer a valuable enhancement to the curriculum. We regard residential educational visits as essential to good teaching practice. We recognise that thorough planning and risk assessments of residential educational visits are crucial to ensure their success and safeguard children, teachers and volunteers. The visit is designed to provide pupils with a rich, learning experience in a safe, managed environment. The following guidelines support the planning and implementing of residential educational visits at The Blue Hills Federation.

Head Teacher/ Senior Leadership Responsibilities

Anna Cook (Head Teacher) and the Senior Leadership Team will endeavour to ensure that:

- A suitable Residential Visit Leader is appointed
- All required actions have been completed before the visit begins
- Risk assessment templates are completed and authorised prior to the residential visit taking place
- Any identified training requirements pertinent to the nature of the residential educational visit have been met

- A named Residential Visit Leader will be assigned with overall responsibility for the organisation and monitoring of the visit together with liaising with school staff
- The Residential Visit Leader has experience in managing, supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and has the skills to organise the group effectively
- The Residential Visit Leader and/or other supporting adults have the relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor
- The Residential Visit Leader and other supporting adults are aware of school's policies and protocols for off-site emergencies (e.g. pupil missing/ absconded)
- All supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise pupils and have appropriate vetting clearance. All supervisors and supporting volunteers accompanying pupils on residential visits will have DBS (formerly CRB) vetting check clearance
- Mrs Di Cosgrove (Chair of Governors) has approved the visit (in their absence Mr. Nigel Hartin Vice Chair of Governors will approve the visit)
- Signed parental consent forms are completed for all pupils
- Agreed arrangements have been made for all known medical and special educational needs
- The mode of travel is appropriate, safe and risk assessed
- Expected travel times, both departure and return, are known and monitored
- There is adequate and relevant insurance coverage
- Full details of the visit venue, including the address, phone number and a contact name, will be retained by the school
- There is a register of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group with the contact details of parents/guardians, staff and volunteers' next of kin. The school will retain a copy

The Residential Visit Leader

A nominated qualified teacher will be appointed by Anna Cook (Head Teacher) or a Senior Leadership Team member as Residential Visit Leader. They will have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit. The Residential Visit Leader will:

- Adhere to the school's Residential Educational Visit planning process, ensuring vetting requirements are met where appropriate
- Appoint a deputy leader who will be fully briefed on all aspects of the visit
- Be able and experienced in working with pupils of the relevant age range
- Be conversant in the good practice for all activities
- Be suitably qualified if instructing an activity
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit, including the briefing of supporting adults and parents/guardians
- Undertake and complete comprehensive risk assessments
- Have regard for and monitor the health and safety of the group at all times
- Know all the pupils proposed for the residential visit to assess their suitability. This may include creating Individual Pupil Plans (IPPs) for pupils who present a known elevated risk, e.g. a pupil who has previously absconded from an educational visit
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities

Other teachers and adults involved in a residential educational visit

Teachers on school-led residential visits act as employees within the terms and conditions of their employment contract. Therefore, they will act during their normal employment during their normal hours. They will act under an agreement with their Head Teacher and Governing Body as some of their time on the residential visit will fall outside normal hours.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- Undertake to fully familiarise themselves with all aspects of the residential visit, including educational outcomes and risk assessments
- Ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Care for each individual pupil as would any reasonable parent/carer
- Ensure they follow the instructions of the Residential Visit Leader and help with control, discipline and attainment of learning outcomes. Non-teachers will not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal

- Cease any activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge or adults is unacceptable. At such a point, consideration will be given by the Residential Visit Leader to cease the residential visit. In such cases, the Residential Visit Leader will liaise with Anna Cook (Head Teacher) or a member of the Senior Leadership / Management Team

Pupil Responsibilities

The Residential Visit Leader will prepare pupils prior to the visit to ensure they understand that:

- They must follow the instructions of the Residential Visit Leader and other supporting adults
- They dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- They know who to talk to/seek help from if they are worried or concerned
- They should not undertake any task/action that may endanger themselves or the group

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered a danger to themselves or the group will not be permitted to attend.

Parents/Guardians

The Residential Visit Leader will ensure that parents/ guardians are given full information about the purpose and details of the residential visit. Parents/guardians will be invited to a briefing session prior to the residential visit. The Residential Visit Leader will also inform parents/guardians how they can help prepare their child for the visit.

Parents/guardians must:

- Sign the Residential Visit Consent Forms;
- Provide the Residential Visit Leader with 2 named emergency contacts & telephone numbers
- Give the Residential Visit Leader all known relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit
- Where there are known health requirements, parents/guardians must ensure the school has the appropriate medication, e.g. inhalers, Epipens. Where the school does not have the required medication for a pupil with known health

requirements, such pupils will not be allowed to participate in the planned residential visit

Risk Assessment

Thorough risk assessments will always be carried out prior to the visit. These risk assessments will include the following considerations:

- Identification of known/possible risks
- Detail safety measures needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level
- Emergency procedures
- Acceptable ratios of adults to pupils for this visit
- Additional measures needed for higher-risk activities, e.g. canoeing, skiing

The Residential Visit Leader and those adults supporting on-site will continually reassess the risks throughout the residential visit and take appropriate action where required to ensure pupil/adult safety.

When assessing the risks, consideration will be given to the following:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- The location
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament
- The supporting adult's competence
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- The quality and suitability of available equipment
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing

Exploratory visit

The Residential Visit Leader or nominated person will undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk

- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- Ensure the Residential Visit Leader and/or participating adult are familiar with the area/venue. Although unlikely to arise, in exceptional circumstances where it is not feasible to conduct an exploratory visit, contact will be made with the venue to seek assurance about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. This will include obtaining the venue's risk assessments for review. ***(Please note it is unlikely the Governing Body will sign off a residential visit without the secure knowledge gained from a site visit).***

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered essential when assessing the risks of a residential visit. A minimum of one member of school staff trained in first aid will accompany the visit. The Residential Visit Leader will ascertain the first aid provision available from the site and report to the Head Teacher and/or Senior Leadership/ Management Team for an informed decision to be made regarding additional qualified school staff attendance. All adults supporting the residential visit will be advised on how to contact emergency services and procedures for liaising with the school should an emergency occur.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- 2 suitably stocked first-aid boxes are to be taken
- A named person will be appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements
- An emergency contact sheet will be included in each first-aid box

When signing consent to the residential educational visit, Anna Cook (Head Teacher) and Di Cosgrove Chair of Governors will assess if the level of first-aid is adequate.

Supervision

It is essential to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any residential visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Pupils with known special/additional needs
- Nature of activities

- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Type of any accommodation
- Competence of staff, general and related to specific activities

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater, and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for residential educational visits. Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, using school staff alone is not always feasible. Parents/guardians/volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They will be carefully selected and thoroughly vetted, as detailed earlier, and ideally, they should be well-known to the school and the pupil group. All parents/guardians/volunteers assisting residential visits will be vetted and have DBS clearance.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers, must always understand their specific roles and responsibilities. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times. To protect both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure they are not alone in a one-to-one situation with a pupil.

If the school is leading an adventure activity (e.g. canoeing, caving) Dave Thorley Educational Visits Coordinator for Shropshire Council and the Governing Body must ensure that the Visit Leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity **before** they agree that the visit can take place. In such cases, qualifications will be checked with the national governing body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the residential visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The Residential Visit Leader should regularly establish rendezvous points and ensure all pupils know what to do if they become separated from the party. The Residential Visit Leader should ensure all participating adults know the school's emergency protocols and their roles in implementing them. These include:

- Pupil Missing whilst on an Educational Visit
- Pupil Absconding from an Educational Visit
- Accident or Injury whilst on an Educational Visit

Mobile telephone numbers of the Residential Visit Leader and all adults supporting the visit will be exchanged before commencing the visit.

Photography

The Blue Hills Federation does not permit the use of personal mobile phones to video or photograph pupils whilst travelling to or on-site at residential educational visits. All videos or photographs should be taken using equipment owned and issued by the school. Please note this includes data memory cards. Adults supporting the residential educational visit who will be using the school's equipment will be required to read and sign the school's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement before the commencement of the visit. The Visit Leader will ensure written parent/guardian consent is obtained before taking/using photographic images of pupils. This will include explicit consent for any planned use of images on the school's website, Internet, or media release.

Preparing Pupils

Wherever possible, pupils will be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This may include considering health and safety issues.

Pupils must understand key safety information. This includes:

- The aims and objectives of the visit/activity
- Background information about the place to be visited
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow the rules
- Why safety precautions are in place
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities
- What standard of behaviour is expected
- Who is responsible for the group
- What to do if approached by a stranger
- What to do if separated from the group
- Emergency procedures
- Rendezvous procedures

Transport

All pupils should be made aware of basic safety rules, including:

- To arrive on time and to wait in a safe place; when crossing roads to get to the transport, do so safely and listen to the adult's instructions
- Not to rush towards the transport when it arrives
- Seat belts must be worn, and pupils must stay seated while travelling on transport; if pupils feel unwell while travelling, they must tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group
- Make sure their bags do not block aisles on the transport
- They should never attempt to get on or off the transport whilst in transit
- They must not throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows
- Only exit the vehicle when directed by an adult (unless in the case of an emergency where adult direction cannot be made)
- Never try to pass someone on steps or stairs
- Never distract or disturb the driver
- Stay clear of automatic doors/manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

Anna Cook (Head Teacher) will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from residential visits. Every effort will be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention will be given to appropriate supervision ratios, and additional safety measures will be addressed at the planning stage. Nick Copestake, Special Educational Needs Coordinator) will be involved in the planning process.

Communicating with Parents/Guardians

Parents/ guardians need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will act in their place – 'in loco parentis' – and exercise the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupil's health and safety will be included in a letter to parents/guardians and at briefing meetings before each visit:

- Dates of the visit
- Times of departure and return
- Mode(s) of travel, including the name of any travel company
- Details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site
- Names of the Residential Visit Leader, staff and other accompanying adults
- Visit's learning objectives
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed
- Insurance is taken out for the group as a whole regarding luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested
- Clothing and equipment to be taken
- Limit on any monies to be taken
- The information to be supplied by parents and details of what they will be asked to consent to

Please also refer to the school's protocols which support all educational visits.