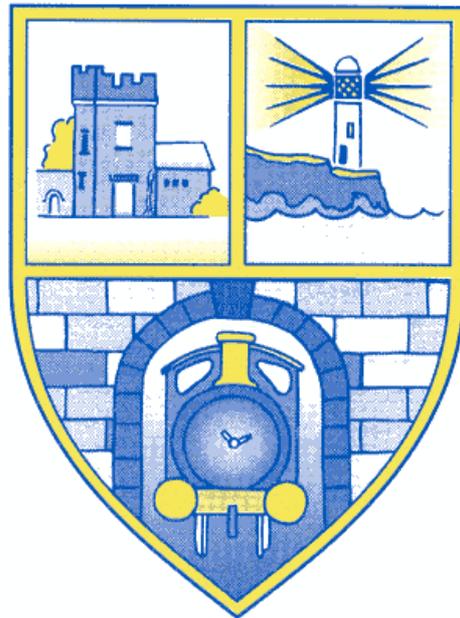


# Whitehead Primary School and Nursery Unit

*"Learning & Growing Together"*



## School Trips Policy

At Whitehead Primary School we believe that there is a wealth of experience to be gained from educational visits outside the classroom. We believe that these visits broaden children's horizons in the acquisition of new skills; the experience of being outdoors; the first hand experience of the natural and man made environment; the development of qualities of co-operation, leadership, self confidence and initiative and in the relating of classroom activities to the outside world.

### **Basic principles**

Out of school visits must be seen as an extension of classroom activities.

Such visits must be-

- Of educational value and/or
- An important element in the personal and social development of those involved.

Three essentials in any visit are:

- It must have a clearly defined aim or aims
- There must be thorough planning by the staff concerned under an experienced teacher - in -charge
- The children involved and their parents must be prepared for the visit and be aware of what is expected of them before, during and after the visit.

### **Responsibility**

The person with ultimate responsibility for any out of school visit is the Principal who should ensure that the principles and essentials referred to above have been considered and fulfilled.

## **Staffing Structure**

### **Teacher - in - charge**

It is essential that in the staff structure for any visit one member be given the responsibility of being in charge. That teacher should have:

- The organizational capabilities to undertake the visit being arranged
- An acceptable approach to discipline, responsibility and behaviour. They should have attended an appropriately organized course relating to out of school visits or have had previous experience of a similar project
- Visited the venue beforehand or at least contacted someone with first hand experience of it. The cost of such a visit should be included in the overall cost of the exercise.

### **Supporting staff**

Supporting staff should be selected with care to ensure:

- That all planned activities can be safely supervised
- That support staff, where possible, be experienced teachers
- That in the case of a mixed group of pupils - boys and girls- there are male and female teachers in the party where possible.

Supporting staff must clearly understand and accept:

- The aims of the visit
- Their duties and specific areas of responsibilities before, during and after the visit
- That they are "in loco parentis" during the visit.

### **Staff other than teachers**

It is acceptable to use adults other than staff to augment the teaching staff. The selection of such adults should follow the same criteria as those suggested for teachers. However, as the protection of children is paramount, all accompanying the group must be registered (therefore vetted). The briefing and preparation of these adults should be no less thorough than for teachers.

All staff should discuss and accept the standards of behaviour and discipline they would wish to set for the young people and the means by which they would be achieved.

### **Preparation**

There are many types of educational visits which we have categorized into 5 groups as based on DENI recommendations:

- Category 1 - Visits which take place on a regular basis
- Category 2 - One-off day / evening excursions
- Category 3 - Residential visits of 1 or more nights within UK or Ireland
- Category 4 - Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland
- Category 5 - Hazardous Activities (kayaking etc) - Residential and non-residential.

Teachers will complete a yearly "Educational Visit Approval" and these will be approved by the Board of Governors.

No matter the type of visit, they all have much in common in terms of preparation. The following might be regarded as guidelines:

## A

1. Justify the need and identify the aims of the exercise.
2. Seek the approval of the Principal (see Appendix I & II).
3. Decide on staffing and agree areas of responsibility.
4. Inform Principal if substitute cover is needed.

## B

1. Inform the pupils and parents of the visit - details of venue, dates times etc.
2. Assess numbers, taking note of those with special needs i.e. vegetarians, diabetics or those requiring special medication.

## C

1. Book facilities - accommodation, transport, equipment etc.
2. If possible make a pre-trip visit to venue.
3. Make arrangements for insurance, if necessary.

## D

Send consent forms for completion and full details of trip to parents/guardians.

(See Appendix III)

## E

Prepare programmes of work/ activities, pre-visit meetings with parents, supervising staff, other adults and pupils as necessary.

## F

Make arrangements for emergency contact with school and with the group. Lists of all participants given to all staff and school secretary.

### **During the Visit**

The person in charge of the group should know at all times:

- Where members of the group are
- What they are doing
- The level of supervision

For Residential trips each day of a visit should be programmed on the basis of three sessions - morning, afternoon and evening.

Special attention should be paid to the programme for the evenings (see Appendix IV). At some centres optional activities are listed. These bookable extras often provide good value for money.

### **First Aid/ Medical**

Ensure that all members of the party (including staff!) are physically fit enough to participate in the trip. This is particularly important in Outdoor Pursuits trips.

A specific teacher should be given responsibility for first aid. However, all teachers are responsible for holding and dispensing specific medication to those children who require it, as agreed with their parents prior to the trip. Should a child require medication which is more involved (e.g. insulin injection) two adults will be present.

## **Insurance**

For groups organized as part of the school programme, the Board's insurance in respect of its legal liability will apply. Additional insurance e.g. accident, theft, illness will be the responsibility of the school. The cost of such cover should be included in the cost of the visit.

Parents should be clear as to the type, extent and cost of insurance cover. Such insurance along with EU cover is essential for overseas visits. Details of the EU scheme and appropriate forms are available from the local DHSS office.

## **Information for Parents**

Parents should be informed of all out of school visits and their consent sought where necessary.

Where visits involve the whole school day, overnight stays and/or hazardous activities, parents should be given full details. These would include:

- Travelling arrangements - dates, times
- Programme during visit
- Details of clothing required
- Staffing arrangements
- Insurance cover
- Cost
- Contact teacher at school for link between parents and party

Subsequent to parents receiving this information, particularly for extended stay visits, a meeting with them should be held to explain in detail and answer any questions regarding the purpose and programme for the visit.

For such visits specific parental consent should be obtained. (See Appendix III)

### **Staffing**

Where the visit involves the participation of children in designated hazardous activities, the staff must have acceptable qualifications. (See Appendix V)

With mixed groups on extended visits (i.e. overnight) there should be mixed staff. A minimum of two staff would be recommended for any such visit.

### **Staff / Pupil Ratios**

Needs will vary according to -

- Age and number of pupils
- Gender balance
- The duration of visit
- The previous experience of both staff and pupils of the visit being made
- The activities being undertaken
- The environment into which the children are being taken
- The expertise of the staff at the centre being visited.

However as based on guidance by DENI we will follow the following ratios as a minimum requirement.

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Ratios</b>
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Nursery	3-4	1 adult for maximum of 6 young people
Foundation Stage	5-6	1 adult for maximum of 10 young people
Key Stages 1 & 2	7-11	1 adult for maximum of 15 young people

### **Safety hints**

Organization - ensure that your party is split into groups, each with a leader. Make sure the leader knows the pupils in the group and has a list of names. Ensure that pupils with problems are known to the group leader.

Aim for groups of between eight and twelve, preferably mixed - it is easier to see so many boys and so many girls rather than all of one sex.

Party leaders should check with all group leaders before moving off.

Head count on coach before leaving (preferably twice!)

Never leave pupils unsupervised, be it on a ship, at museums, toilet (especially), transport, swimming pool - anywhere.

Let pupils choose partners in twos and threes. They will then tell you if their partner is missing. Insist that pupils stay within any building if they become separated from the party.

Have a prearranged system for what pupils must do, if they do become separated from the party. Make sure pupils know about it (for example, if in a building, tell pupils to stay where they are and a leader will come looking for them. In this case, a leader should find another leader first to ensure the safety of his/her own group before looking for missing pupils.

When moving on foot, keep the party together with leaders at the front and rear. Reform the party after obstacles (crossing roads etc). Be alert for potential hazards and stop any action liable to endanger pupils or others. Check numbers constantly.

### **Swimming**

Extreme care should be taken when considering swimming as an activity.

*In pools.* Allow pupils to use pools only when lifeguards are on duty.

*In the sea.* It is strongly recommended that this should only be considered when beaches are clearly marked as safe for swimming and staffed by lifeguards.

### **Emergency contact**

Where an emergency occurs details should immediately, or as soon as practical, be reported back to the school through the contact teacher.

The school authorities should take immediate steps to inform the parents of the facts of the emergency. There may be circumstances when this should be done by house visit. The NEELB should also be informed as soon as possible of any emergency. Whenever practical the Board should be contacted before statements are made or interviews given to the media.

### **Fire precautions**

Teachers in charge should satisfy themselves that any building occupied by pupils on visits conforms to current fire regulations. Teachers should make themselves familiar with emergency fire procedures within the building occupied by pupils.

Last reviewed: January 2018

Review: August 2020

## **Appendix I**

Educational Visits Approval Form

(For use in relation to visits in categories 1 & 2 only)

Category 1 - Visits which take place on a regular basis.

Category 2 - One off day / evening excursions

Year 20

Class / Team \_\_\_\_\_

Activity	Educational Objective(s)	Frequency (dates)	Number of Pupils	Year Group	Category (1 or 2)

# Appendix II

## Educational Visits Proposal

(To be completed in relation to visits in categories 3, 4 & 5 only)

Name of School:	
Name and address of other schools or youth centres / projects involved:	
Educational objective of visit:	
Place(s) to be visited:	
Key Stage / Group: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Nursery Foundation Key Stage 1 Key Stage 2
Total Numbers of Young Persons involved from Whitehead <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Male Female
Total Numbers of Young Persons involved from other organisations: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Male Female
Category of Visit: Category 3 - Residential visits of 1 or more nights within UK or Ireland. <input type="checkbox"/> Category 4 - Residential visits outside the UK or Ireland. <input type="checkbox"/> Category 5 - Hazardous Activities (kayaking etc) - Residential and non-residential. <input type="checkbox"/>	3 4 5
Proposed dates:	From: _____ To: _____ Number of days (inclusive)

Approximate cost per pupil:	£
Activities to be undertaken:	As itinerary
Staff & other adults involved:	Name: Status:  Name: Status:  Name: Status:  Name: Status:  Name: Status:  Name: Status:
Transport Arrangements:	
Organising Company:	
Agency (if relevant):	
Other comments or information:	
Principal's Signature:	
Chair of Governors' Signature:	

To the Principal:

I request your approval for the proposed visit, full details of which are listed above.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher-in-Charge

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This section is to be completed by the Principal and returned to the Teacher-in-Charge of the visit.

1. I have studied this application and am completely satisfied with all aspects including the planning, organization and staffing.

2. Please ensure:

(a) that I have all relevant information including a final list of members and a detailed itinerary at least \_\_\_\_ days before the party is due to leave.

(b) that your report and evaluation of the visit including details of any incidents should be with me as soon as possible but no later than 7 days after the party returns.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

A copy of the completed application form and details of any subsequent changes should be retained by the Principal.

## Appendix III

### Information to Parents

Dear Parent,

It is hoped to include your son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ in the school party proceeding to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ and returning on \_\_\_\_\_.

He/she may have the opportunity to participate in the following activities:

There will be \_\_\_\_\_ boys and \_\_\_\_\_ girls in the party together with \_\_\_\_\_ members of staff. The teacher-in-charge will be \_\_\_\_\_.

In your child's interest it is important that you should sign the attached agreement form and declare any known medical condition from which your child may be suffering with an indication of any medication which he/she may be receiving.

Yours sincerely

Principal

## Parental Agreement Form

My son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ is in good health and I consider him/her capable of taking part in all the activities as detailed in your letter dated \_\_\_\_\_ and I agree to him/her taking part in them.

He/she can/cannot swim 25m.

In the event of illness or an accident, I consent to any necessary medical treatment, which might include the use of anaesthetics, as decided by the Doctor responsible for the care of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Child's name)

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

Address and Telephone Number

NB Please complete and return to the Principal of the school together with any relevant information concerning your child's health and in particular details of any medication he/she may be receiving.

Please declare any known medical condition and any medication which he/she is receiving.

# Appendix IV

## **Ideas for Evening Sessions**

The planning of evening sessions will require considerable thought and preparation. Time can be allocated to -

1. The keeping of diaries
2. Logging facts from field work
3. Preparation for next day

## **On the lighter side**

4. A variety of card or board games
5. Sing songs (guitar accompaniment and song sheet)
6. Fancy dress competitions
7. Discos
8. A variety concert
9. Party games
10. Panel games as seen on TV

## **Where facilities allow**

11. Minor games competitions e.g. table tennis, pool
12. Visits to local facilities, cinema, recreation centres etc

A feature of many extended visits is the purchase of souvenirs and presents. An opportunity to do this should be afforded to young people. The age and maturity of the group will determine the format that such an opportunity will take. Please note that hazardous activities can take place in the evening - teachers-in-charge must ensure that supervision for such activities conforms with the Board's Circular on Hazardous activities.

# Appendix V

## Hazardous Activities

The North-Eastern Education and Library Board together with other Area Boards and the Department of Education have recognized certain activities as having a higher than usual element of risk. This element, properly used, is in itself a useful educational tool. It cannot and should not be eliminated. This should only be undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and leaders.

The North-Eastern Education and Library Board requires those instructing young people in any of the designated activities to have as a minimum the qualifications listed below. Before introducing any of these activities teachers and leaders must have prior approval of the Board. Approval is valid for three years only. At the end of that period an application for re-approval is necessary.

## Designated Hazard Activities and Minimum Qualifications.

Outdoor Pursuits Activity	Minimum Qualification
Mountain Activities	Mountain Activities - Level II of the Board's syllabus for Hill walking.
Canoeing	Canoeing - Level II of the Board's syllabus for Canoeing.
Sailing	Sailing - Level II of the Board's syllabus for Sailing.
Orienteering	Orienteering - Level I of the Board's Syllabus for Orienteering.
Adventure Activities	Adventure Activities - Level I of

the Board's syllabus.

Full details of the above qualifications and those for other hazardous activities are listed in the Inter-Board publication "Levels of Training and Recognition for leaders in Outdoor Education."

Application forms seeking approval to instruct in the above activities can be obtained from Mr B Dillon, Youth Officer (Services) at County Hall.

### Other Activities

Swimming	A specialist qualification in Physical Education or the IASA/STA Swimming Teachers' Award (adequate life-saving cover must be provided at all times)
Trampolining	BTF Grade 1 Coach Award Olympic Gymnastics Primary - BAGA Extra Curricular Teachers' Award (within own school premises) Secondary - Teachers' Coaching Award BAGA Class 4 Part 1
Archery	GNAS Community Sports Leader Award
Fencing	BFA - Club Leaders Award (coaching beginners) Club Coach Award
Judo	N.I. Judo Federation Preliminary Club Coach

Application forms seeking approval to instruct in the above can be obtained from:-

Antrim Board Centre

17 Lough Road

ANTRIM

BT41 4DH

### **Other Out of School Activities**

An increasing number of schools are now using facilities provided at leisure and recreation centres. Principals should note that for activities listed as "hazardous" those instructing young people in them should have qualifications no less than those required from teachers working within the school environment.