



WARBLINGTON
SCHOOL

OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

Status
of policy:
Good Practice

Current document may be accessed under the policies tab at: www.warblington.hants.sch.uk

Document Control

Baseline Document	Comments/ Scheduled Review Date	Action/ Reviewed by	Approved by the Governors
2012	Autumn Term 2013	Mrs Jane Fletcher Assistant Headteacher	Curriculum Committee

Document Owner: The Governing Body, Curriculum Committee

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THE WARBLINGTON SCHOOL OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The full spectrum of outdoor education activities offers exciting and motivating opportunities, able to raise achievement in young people of all abilities. In particular, they are able to stimulate and reinforce a positive attitude towards education. There is a focus on personal and social education and the development of key skills. This builds on current strengths, interests and experiences to develop confidence whether working alone or with others. The close interaction with the environment can do much to develop young people's awareness and understanding of issues of sustainability, roles and responsibilities. Working together, understanding roles and responsibilities and sharing the best of current good practice should give everyone involved the confidence to take part in and fully enjoy the activities.

Learning and the outdoors – Learning across and beyond the curriculum

It is all the more pleasing therefore that 'learning' in its broadest sense frequently turns to the exciting and stimulating environments that are provided 'outdoors'. This may be just outside and beyond the classroom or group base, through to journeying far and wide:

- through the growth and use of the outdoor classrooms, using and applying knowledge and understanding outdoors, and creating a sense of awe and wonder in a different and often more stimulating environment;
- through the growth of specific activities focused on these environments, from geography trails to problem solving and team challenges;
- through the increased awareness of environmental education and education for sustainable development;
- through the promotion of positive behaviour and better team work using planned activity and problem-solving tasks;
- through the growth of residential activities and their powerful contribution too many aspects of the young people's personal and social development.

Similarly, learning strategies for Study Support recognise the value of learning carried outside of 'normal classroom activity'. The advantages of enriching and enhancing the curriculum through music, art, drama, physical education and sport, as well as outdoor education, are long understood. Once again they are becoming valued for their contribution to motivation and interest in the life of the school or group as well as raising expectations and attainment.

What may be new for some is the planned application of these opportunities, ensuring that their aims and objectives are met.

Where these opportunities are well planned and structured the values have been shown to be clear:

- Developing key skills:
 - using and applying knowledge, skills and understanding in different, realistic and exciting contexts;
 - developing the ability to work co-operatively;
 - developing the ability to communicate successfully;
 - showing initiative and positive attitude;
 - showing greater independence, moving towards self-reliance;
 - becoming increasingly risk aware and increasing understanding and independent action;

- Raising achievement by boosting self-esteem and motivation:
 - raising self-esteem through successful participation and enjoyment;
 - developing a positive attitude to learning;
 - helping demonstrate strengths and understanding of limitations;
 - encouraging responsibility;
 - improving behaviour;
 - addressing disaffection.

- Developing social education and citizenship:
 - the ability to work with others, accept and support them, building relationships;
 - learning to tolerate others and respect their views - understanding equal opportunities;
 - learning to accept the consequences of their own actions;
 - learning to defend their own point of view;
 - encouraging a commitment to a voluntary service;
 - exploring attitudes and values they will carry into adult life.

- Promoting education for sustainable development:
 - an appreciation of the natural world as a source of interest and challenge.

TERMINOLOGY

Children and Young People: This phrase is used to represent those from early years to 18 year olds.

Leaders: This phrase includes all those with a recognised professional qualification for working with young people:

- qualified teachers or lecturers;
- nationally qualified youth worker or social worker(degree level) (minimum NVQ3 equivalent)
- residential care worker or locally qualified youth worker(minimum NVQ3 qualified)

It does not include volunteers and other responsible adults.

Cover Supervisor's/Teaching Assistants

The workforce Remodelling agreement illustrates how school staff, such as Cover Supervisors/Teaching Assistants, and other responsible adults can be assessed by their professional colleagues to be able to act semi-independently in the immediate vicinity of the Warblington school, for example when taking a pupil out of school to a local shop or library. Similar situations are common in social care contexts.

The notes will show that this must be based on known and observed evidence of the person's competence. They are only semi-independent, as the context must allow for quick and immediate support to come into place from professional colleagues at the school.

Volunteer and other responsible adults: A volunteer is someone known to the educational establishment who is considered to be a responsible adult, capable of assisting the qualified leader with supervision and care of their young people. Examples might be:

- a governor;
- a parent/family member;
- a police officer.

Instructor or coach: An adult who has a nationally recognised qualification from the governing body of that activity at an appropriate level.

They need to be qualified to the level stated in the documents *Safety in Hazardous Pursuits* or *Safety in Physical Education or Safety in Adventurous Activities Working with Children and young persons in the outdoors* in order to be registered on the Outdoor Education Unit database and be considered 'active'.

Parent: This includes both parent(s) and the person(s) who have parental responsibility through a care order.

Visit or Venture: These terms are used to illustrate the wide variety of activity, from straightforward educational visits through to complex and adventurous ventures at home and abroad.

SECTION 1

LEGAL CONTEXT AND DUTY OF CARE

INTRODUCTION

As with any activity, those covered in this document take place within a legal Framework. Anyone involved must operate within this framework if they are to act lawfully. This section describes the essential elements of that legal framework.

1.01 Health and Safety at Work

Responsibility for safety lies primarily with the Employer for all work activities under the **Health and Safety at Work Act**. Warblington School Governors and staff have **delegated safety responsibilities and duties**. There is a requirement to act in accordance with Local Authority policies and procedures and to comply with any direction given by the Local Authority where it does so, on the grounds of safety. The policies and procedures in relation to off-site activities and educational visits are located with Warblington School's educational visits co-ordinator (EVC) who is Jane Fletcher.

1.02 The duty of Care

When teachers or others are responsible for the care, custody and control of the children of others, they must **take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in the same circumstances**.

1.03 Implementing the Duty of Care

In implementing this principle and interpreting the meaning of 'reasonable, prudent and careful', common sense should be applied. In doing so, those involved should:

- **try to think as a parent would think in similar circumstances:**
- **consider whether they would be able to justify what is proposed to professional colleagues whose judgement they respect and, ultimately, to a court of law;**
- **if they are in doubt they must not go ahead unless or until they have sufficient further information and advice to remove the doubt.**

1.04 Outside Agencies

Where an activity involves an outside agency the party leader must take great care to ensure that the agency involved is competent and any establishment safe. Organisations should be approached directly to ascertain that the qualifications and experience of the staff are in line with the requirements of the guidelines set out in the off-site activities and educational visits policies and procedures.

SECTION 2

PREPARATION AND PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

This section deals with those activities arranged by or under the auspices of Warblington School and which take place outside the boundaries of the Warblington school.

It includes such things as:

- **day visits;**
- **short or long stay residential journeys;**
- **field studies out of Warblington school;**
- **off-site summer schools or other study opportunities;**
- **foreign language exchanges;**
- **activity tours in this country and abroad.**

It does **not** include:

- **work experience (unless it involves travel in a group);**
- **usual journeys to and from Warblington school.**

The Education Authority takes the view that off-site activities play an important part in students' education and that such work should be encouraged and supported. There is no wish to impose unnecessary rules and procedures on teaching staff but it is important that these activities are planned and executed with due regard to their legal context and normal good practice. The framework this section provides will assist parents, governors, headteacher and teachers in ensuring that this is the case. It will enable Warblington School to work in this area, confident in the knowledge that they have the support of the county council.

It is essential that this section is familiar to, and understood by, all those planning to be involved in any off-site activity. For residential activities and those involving a foreign country, party leaders must liaise with the Warblington school EVC to ensure that the LA's EVOLVE procedure is implemented within 8 weeks prior to the visit taking place.

The value of thorough preparation

Those who organise and run off-site activities have very substantial responsibilities to those in their charge. Ensuring that activities are properly planned and prepared is one way of reducing the degree of stress that can be involved.

It is important that staff take steps to learn as much as possible about the nature and guarantees' of the service, safety arrangements and any teaching facilities that are included in any contract. In considering this, staff might find it helpful to speak to colleagues who have used a company or facility on a previous occasion.

Note: It is the responsibility of the group leader to consider the suitability of organisations and venues.

FURTHER ADVICE AND EXPLANATION

2.01 Educational Purpose

All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose which is clearly related to the curriculum, whether Warblington School is in session or not. Any activities which cannot meet this requirement must not be undertaken, and will not be approved by the County Inspector for Outdoor Education.

2.02 The Educational Element

This must be sufficient to ensure an element of rigour and discipline such that students will respond to instructions and advice from members of staff at least as readily as if they were in Warblington School.

With this in mind it is important for safety that students do not regard any off-site activity as a holiday and that activities are not presented to them in this way.

2.03 Links with the Curriculum

In most cases the relationship of the aims of an activity to the curriculum will be clear and obvious e.g.:

- the acquisition of language;
- skills in sport;
- field studies and scientific investigation;
- cultural enquiries;
- problem solving and leadership development.

In cases where the relationship is less obvious, particularly to parents and students, it is important that the explanation to all concerned is carefully thought through and clearly expressed.

2.04 Recreational Ventures

It is accepted that ventures which have a considerable element of pure recreation can be of benefit to students but in such cases the Warblington school must ensure that the element of rigour and discipline, referred to in **2.02** above, is present. **All visits must have an educational purpose** as the starting point for planning and risk assessment.

PREPARATION AND PLANNING

2.05 Research, particularly of Venues

The party leader must research the background and implications of an off-site activity thoroughly. They must take no risks in this regard. Experience over many years indicates that where accidents have occurred the cause can often be traced to this initial crucial decision.

In this context venues are particularly important. When ever possible staff should have visited venues either, on previous activities or on preliminary visits. When a venue involves naturally hazardous areas such as mountains and moorlands, coasts, forested area and sizeable areas of still and moving water, this is vitally important. In cases where a visit is not feasible the great care must be taken in seeking advice and information from elsewhere.

Even if a visit has been possible it would be wise for the party leader to check their findings with the Warblington school EVC who will in turn check with the County Inspector Outdoor Education Unit for his approval subject to any limitations.

The service has extensive experience and knowledge in this area.

2.06 As preliminary visits may be an important part of the planning of activities, any reasonable costs incurred can be included in the overall cost of the activity.

2.07 Planning Lead Time

Planning and preparation must be done sufficiently far ahead to ensure that there is no unreasonable risk to **safety, quality or finance** as a result of preparations being made in haste. **If this cannot be guaranteed in the time available then the activity will not be approved to go ahead.**

2.08 Appropriate Activities

When activities are in the planning stage it is important to ensure that the venue, programme and cost are appropriate to the aims of the venture, the needs and abilities of students and the resources available. For example, if achievement of the aims requires a mountain environment or a foreign country, then clearly the venue must reflect this. By the same token, the venue should not involve more cost, greater distance or more potential hazard than necessary and appropriate.

2.09 Aims and Objectives

- Be clear about what is needed: that should drive the choice of venue, not the reverse
- Beware the opportunity which is appealing but of limited value;
- Where objectives are inappropriate or unclear, then the risk of accident is greater.

2.10 Travel Arrangements

- Are these reasonably priced, comfortable?
- As free from delay as possible?
- Does the travel operator have rules of their own which might affect pupil/ teacher ratios? E.g. **most cross channel ferry companies require a ratio in the region of one teacher to ten students.** It is clearly important to check any such constraints before bookings are made. Previous users may be of assistance in assessing the quality and safety of a service.
- Are arrangements for the journey itself likely to cause a problem? e.g. Sea crossings can bring their own difficulties in terms of supervision.

2.11 Location

- **How far away is it? Long journeys can be tiring and stressful in themselves.**
- **Is the cost in time and money worth the educational benefit?**
- **Is the environment appropriate? It should be challenging, but not involve unnecessary risk.**
- **Could it be found more easily or cheaply elsewhere?**
- **Does it provide what is needed?**
- **Is the climate appropriate? Hot sun can bring its own dangers.**

2.12 Information

- Beware the glossy brochure with limited information. Good written information is a positive sign, but is not a guarantee of quality and safety.
- Information should be clear, unambiguous and comprehensive. If you are not convinced or require more information don't hesitate to ask and have information confirmed in writing.
- Can the provider visit the Warblington school? That is positive and helpful. It is a good idea to take notes of the meeting and have it agreed by those present.
- Beware of any areas where there is a reluctance to give information. General statements need to be explored further. Phrases such as 'staff are all highly qualified' require amplification before they mean very much. Well founded operations should have no hesitation or difficulty in providing such detail.
- Are the claims in the information realistic? If an outdoor centre claims to offer a large number of activities it is reasonable to be sceptical.
- If an organisation presents itself as a provider of holidays, a claim to run educational courses may need some exploration before the Warblington school can establish that '**educational**' is meaningful.

2.13 Staff qualifications and experience

- Ask about the qualifications and experience of the staff who will be looking after your students.
- Do the qualifications meet Hampshire County Council requirements?
- Who has guaranteed their competence?
- Do staff have nationally recognised qualifications?
- Where staff are only employed for the season, check qualifications and if staff are qualified teachers that is positive.
- Where staff are trained in-house, how does the training relate to national standards?
- Beware the impressive sounding qualification that is inappropriate

- Where a facility is approved by a national body such as the Royal Yachting Association, that is a helpful indicator.
- Assessing the competence of staff may require technical knowledge. The expertise to do so is available through the Outdoor Education Unit at Hampshire County Council via the Warblington school EVC.

2.14 Equipment

- Find out as much as possible about the equipment to be used. Age, manufacturer and model are all useful indicators.
- How well is it maintained? Where someone has responsibility for maintenance that is a positive sign. Nice colours and clean condition are helpful but no guarantee of appropriateness and safety.
- A worn appearance is negative, but does not necessarily mean poor quality.
- Is the correct equipment available and used at all necessary times? Having it available and not using it when necessary is a negative sign.
- Does it work as and when it should?
- Do staff know how to use it?

Technical knowledge is often necessary to make judgements in this area. The necessary expertise is available through the Outdoor Education Unit via the Warblington school EVC.

2.15 Programme Preparation

- Where a provider is able and prepared to tailor courses to your requirements, that is positive and helpful;
- Where standard courses only are available, this may indicate limited expertise or facilities;
- Providers should be ready to discuss your requirements before you are committed. They should be concerned to help you in meeting educational and safety objectives;
- **Providers should be able to demonstrate that effective risk assessment, followed by appropriate precautions where necessary, is an integral part of the way they work:**
- Are you confident that you are going to get what you asked for?

2.16 Buildings and Other Facilities

- Have the fire precautions been checked and approved by the Fire Service?
- If abroad, do fire precautions meet the standards expected in this country?
- What are the arrangements for evacuation in case of fire?
- Are they easy to understand, readily available and would they work?
- Do new arrivals go through a drill or at least have arrangements explained to them?
- Are staff familiar with emergency procedures in the building?
- Is appropriate first aid equipment and expertise available?
- Has the provider made arrangements for access to medical help if it proves necessary?
- Vehicles should be clean and regularly checked.
- Drivers should hold an appropriate licence
- All vehicles should have appropriate up to date documents and certificates of road worthiness

If sufficient information is not available from other sources then the party leader should approach the Outdoor Education Unit via the Warblington school EVC who has access to extensive information.

SECTION 3

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND CHILD PROTECTION

3.01 Safety

Safety must be a prime consideration in all planning and preparation. Party leaders must be continually aware of the degree of care expected of them. In particular, care should be taken to ensure that appropriate preparations are made to deal with any emergencies, use of a mobile phone, for example, and that appropriate first aid facilities are available at all times. The LA will only approve visits on evidence that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been completed. Where the Headteacher has delegated authority to approve some visits on the LA's behalf by the Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC), this condition of approval is unchanged. Party leaders must ensure that a suitable risk assessment is in place before a trip takes place. A more thorough explanation of the risk assessment process is set out later in this section.

3.02 Emergency procedures

Action to be taken by the group leader in the event of a serious accident/ incident

A serious accident or incident is defined as:

- an accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury
- circumstances in which a group member might be at serious risk or have a serious illness
- any situation in which the press or media are or might be involved.

3.03 Action

1. Assess the situation.
2. Protect the group from further injury or danger.
3. Render first aid or other service as appropriate.
4. Call rescue/emergency services and/or police as appropriate and:
 - State the nature of the emergency;
 - Give your name, address/location and telephone number, followed by:
 - the location of the incident
 - the nature of the incident
 - the names of the individuals involved
 - the condition of those involved and where they are located.

5. Phone your base contact person (as soon as possible) and:
 - give clear information about the situation;
 - your location;
 - your actions to date;
 - your telephone number;
 - request him/her to alert the County Education Officer's Representative.
6. If it is not possible to reach your base contact person, telephone the Education Department's emergency number as follows:

Office hours: 01962846547

Other times: 02392265113.

(This will make contact with the duty officer at the monitoring company. When the phone is answered you should say '**This is the Hampshire Education Department requesting the emergency coordination service.**' The operator will take the details and then contact the duty Education Officer who will then be responsible for all future liaisons with the group.

7. It is probable that both the leader and young people will be in a state of shock, therefore:
 - remove remainder of the group to some secure accommodation and available to deal with any likely emergency place under care of a member of staff to protect them from the attention of the press/media
 - if necessary, request the police to assist
 - calm and comfort the young people and arrange for their evacuation.
8. **Do not make any statements to the press/media or allow anyone else to make statements other than expressions of sympathy.**
9. **Do not allow group members to telephone home until contact has been made with the County Education Officer's Representative.**
10. Retain all equipment involved in an unaltered condition.
11. **Do not allow anyone to see any group member without an independent witness being present. (No-one, unless they are in a relevant official capacity, has the right to either see anyone who does not wish to see them.) REFER ALL PRESS/MEDIA ENQUIRIES TO THE COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICER'S REPRESENTATIVE.**

It is the responsibility of the group leader to collect from the Warblington School Educational Visits Coordinator (JF) the Hampshire County Council Emergency Procedures Card prior to the trip commencing.

3.04 First Aid

It is strongly recommended that party leaders have sufficient first aid expertise

3.05 Emergency contacts

It is important that, as far as reasonably practicable, it is always possible for the groups to be contacted or make contact with the Warblington school. It might be sensible to arrange regular exchanges of information if the activity is residential and lasts for a number of days. In this way parents can be assured of students well being without having to make long distance phone calls and risk disturbing activity sessions.

A senior member of staff and/ or the EVC not on the activity should act as the contact for the group out of Warblington school hours. They should have available all relevant information about the group, program and venues.

Clearly, emergency contacts cannot guarantee to be available at all times. With this in mind it is wise, wherever possible, to have two or more contacts, particularly when an activity extends over a weekend or holiday period. A mobile telephone can also assist with communications, allowing an emergency contact to be available for most of the time

3.06 Action to be taken by the Base Contact Person

First steps

- a) Take down a contact telephone number for the group leader and the group. Listen carefully and write down:
 - What happened
 - To whom
 - Where
 - When
 - What has happened since the incident
- b) If the contact person is not the Headteacher then inform them or a senior member of staff of the relevant details as soon as possible.
- c) Inform the County Education Officer via the Education Department's emergency telephone number. If necessary, the county's education officer's representative will contact the relevant official bodies.

Office hours - 01962 846547

Out of hours, duty security officer – 023 92265113

(This will make contact with the duty operator at the monitoring company. When the phone is answered, callers should say **'This is the Hampshire Education Department requesting the emergency co-ordination service.'** The operator will then take down the details of:

- Name of the person making the call
- Telephone number of the person making the call
- The name of the Warblington school/group involved
- The nature of the emergency.

The operator will then contact the duty Education Officer who will be responsible for all future liaisons with the Warblington school group, with your help.

- d) Not only must parents of any injured young person be notified as a priority, but arrangements should be made for all parents to be contacted regarding the safety of their particular child(ren).
- e) If necessary, assistance should be given to transport parents to their injured child if he/she is hospitalised.
- f) If necessary an incident centre should be established as soon as possible. **Mrs Fletcher's office has been designated as Warblington School's location for this eventuality.**
- g) Refer all press/media enquiries to the County Education Officer's Representative – beware of wily attempts to extract information from you.

The base contact person must have by their phone:

- 1) Lists of all group members (including adults) and the address and telephone number of their next of kin;
- 2) Complete details of the itinerary;
- 3) Home/contact numbers of senior members of staff;
- 4) County Education Officer's emergency telephone number (this can be found on the emergency procedure card issued to base contact person, or in Mr Rainford's office or the main office).

3.07 Child protection

Party leaders and headteachers should ensure that adequate child protection arrangements are in place for the visit, particularly with regard to arrangements for residential accommodation and the use of contractors or other organisations. Any member of staff, parent or relative who supervises any students on a Warblington School trip will need to be in possession of a valid CRB check certificate.

Party leaders will have been thoroughly briefed by Warblington School's designated teacher for child protection (VW) during our Child Protection training, so that it is clear how child protection procedures will operate whilst the party is away, and the party leader is clear as to their own role and whom to contact for advice. If unsure they should speak with JF or VW.

SECTION 4

RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Alongside an assessment of educational purpose, 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.

The LA has amended its recommended format for visit risk assessments to reflect its approach to risk assessment generally. The new form is not intended as an additional burden, but will assist staff in the detailed risk assessment process which should already be part of the normal planning arrangements for these activities. The form will provide evidence of this process and ensure that informed approval decisions are made.

Risk assessments are to be carried out or co-ordinated by the group leader. The Headteacher or the educational visits coordinator (EVC) is responsible for ensuring risk assessments are in place. An assessment should be carried out well before the visit and approved by the Headteacher. If the risk assessment is to be meaningful, it must be prepared at the start of, and as an integral part of, the planning process.

4.01 Risk assessment is a process, not a document

First come up with a plan for the visit. Consider what could go wrong, and then how such hazards could be controlled (i.e. the risk assessment) this may require modifying the plan. The process is repeated until a satisfactory proposal is reached.

4.02 The risk assessment should be based upon the following considerations:

- a) **What are the hazards?**
- b) **Who might be affected by them?**
- c) **What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level?**
- d) **Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?**
- e) **What steps will be taken in an emergency?**

The person/s carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all members of staff/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks. When proposed activities are submitted to the headteacher, EVC or the LA, this should be accompanied by a copy of the risk assessment, so that approval can be informed by evidence that effective planning has taken place.

Frequent local visits may not need a risk assessment every time. Nevertheless, it is essential not to become complacent. A generic assessment of the risks of such visits should be reviewed at regular intervals and careful monitoring must take place. Where a previous visit is undertaken repeatedly, such as in an established annual programme, existing risk assessments must be reviewed to ensure any material changes in circumstances are taken into account.

4.03 The risk assessment should consider the following areas:

- a) **A reference to the generic risks associated with planned activities.**
- b) **The corresponding qualifications and experience of the leaders.**
- c) **A list of site specific hazards not covered by the generic assessment or qualifications of the leaders.**
- d) **A corresponding list of control measures to be applied.**

Written operating procedures for particular tasks or activities, compiled on the basis of suitable experience and technical advice, will also provide evidence of a risk assessment. However, the assessment must ensure the specific site hazards or issues introduced by individual students and staff are fully considered.

It is good practice for Warblington School to share the outcomes of a risk assessment with parents and where appropriate participants. Both should be made aware of the level of risk management likely to be necessary so that informed decisions about participation can be made.

4.04 The risk assessment process must continue throughout the visit.

The risk assessment will need to be reviewed and if necessary re-assessed if circumstances change. For example:

- a) Objective observation e.g. changing the route part way through a mountain walk as a result of observed changes in the weather.
- b) Subjective feelings e.g. if the group leader realised that the participants were becoming increasingly uneasy as the activity progressed.

If at any stage you find that you are identifying an activity or part of an activity as involving an unacceptable risk then that must not go ahead. **Risk assessment needs to inform the planning process from the earliest stages, rather than being done retrospectively at a later stage in the approval process.**

Some helpful definitions:

Low Risk

A **low risk** activity is one in which the possibility and nature of an accident are not substantially different to those encountered in every day experience.

Medium Risk

A **medium risk** activity is one in which the hazards encountered are outside the group's experience, but by adopting principles of safe practice should bring them down to an acceptable level.

High Risk

A **high risk** activity is one in which the hazards encountered are well beyond the everyday experience of the group. The repercussions of an accident could lead to serious consequences.

Unacceptable Risk

An activity in which the level of **risk is unacceptable** is one in which the hazards encountered are far beyond the experience of the group and the party leader.

SECTION 5

Local Authority (LA) APPROVAL PROCESS

The LA is responsible for approval of any off-site activities in schools where it is the employing authority. The headteacher has been given delegated authority to approve some activities, in which the case of approval is carried out on behalf of the LA and subject to any guidance, direction or procedures that may apply. The levels of delegation which generally apply are referred to in paragraphs 5.03 – 5.07

5.01 Activities lasting less than twenty four hours and not including either an overnight stay or a journey by sea or air

The LA usually delegates approval of these activities to Headteachers on its behalf. It is not normally necessary for party leader's approval from the outdoor education unit unless the activity is of a hazardous nature. A record of these activities must be kept by the Warblington school and that record must include the following details:

- The number of students;
- The number of staff;
- The venue;
- The nature of the programme;
- A nominal roll listing all participants;
- Emergency contact numbers of students' parents;
- Name of the base contact persons/s.

Where the day visit involves a journey more than 60 miles or one hour from base, or involves hazardous activities the Warblington school should submit this information via the County EVOLVE application procedure for approval via the Warblington school EVC.

5.02 Activities of a hazardous nature, or residential activities lasting more than 24 hours and those that involve either an overnight stay or journey by air or sea

These activities must be approved by:

- Headteacher;
- The LA with advice of the Off-site activities and educational visits outdoor education unit county inspector **Stuart Nundy**.

Approval at any level should be sought well in advance and certainly before you are committed financially to a venture. This includes events such as long-haul trips that may be planned several years in advance. In such cases outline approval should be sought before

proceeding with fundraising or financial commitments, even though further details may be needed to confirm approval subsequently.

Procedures

5.03 The Headteacher approval must be sought for all off-site activities.

5.04 The headteacher, or another member of Warblington school staff, should be nominated as EVC for the Warblington school. They will be responsible for ensuring that activity plans are checked before approval is sought. This includes ensuring that appropriate risk assessments have been undertaken and recorded, and group leaders and staff are sufficient and competent for the planned visit.

5.05 Approval must only be given to activities in line with the regulations contained in the county off-site educational visits regulations and guidance manual.

5.06 Activities which require LA approval are those that:

- Are more than twenty four hours duration;
- Involve an overnight stay;
- Involve a journey by air or sea;
- Involve a journey to a foreign country;
- Involves hazardous activity;

5.07 How to obtain LA approval

Approval is obtained by using the Hampshire County Council Web-based support, information and approval system (EVOLVE)

Colleagues should be aware that if there is doubt about the safety or quality of an off-site activity the Outdoor Education Unit may be obliged to Refuse approval, whether Warblington school is Committed or Not.

As a general rule Warblington School should submit this form for approval no later than EIGHT WEEKS prior to the departure dates.

5.08 How much detail is required on the EVOLVE Application Procedure

Early monitoring is essential for educational value. As much of the requested information on the **EVOLVE** application procedure as is available should be given. The Warblington School EVC can always ask for more details to be provided later. Final details of numbers of students and staff, for example, will not be known until very late in the process when Warblington School and students may be committed financially to the visit.

Where **VISITS** are submitted with outline details at an early stage, they can be updated later as more details become available. **(Remember 8 week rule)**

Summary of approval / monitoring process and scheme of delegation

Day visit – Local area close to support at base	Day visit – 60 miles or 1 hour or involving hazardous activity	Residential , Overseas
Where approval delegated to Headteacher	Where approval delegated to Headteacher	Where LA has not delegated approval
<p>Party leader consults Warblington school EVC</p> <p>Party leader – risk assessment</p> <p>Agreement of EVC</p> <p>EVOLVE Procedure Commences</p> <p>Outline approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Further risk assessment/planning</p> <p>Full approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Visit takes place</p>	<p>Party leader consults Warblington school EVC</p> <p>Party leader – risk assessment</p> <p>Agreement of EVC</p> <p>EVOLVE procedure Commences</p> <p>Outline approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Outline notification to LA – LA may want to approve e.g. if hazardous activity or other concern</p> <p>Further risk assessment/planning</p> <p>Full approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Notification to LA using EVOLVE Application procedure</p> <p>Visit takes place</p>	<p>Party leader consults Warblington school EVC</p> <p>Party leader – risk assessment</p> <p>Agreement of EVC</p> <p>EVOLVE Procedure Commences</p> <p>Outline approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Outline approval LA (N.B need not be in this order)</p> <p>Further risk assessment/planning</p> <p>Full approval by Headteacher</p> <p>Full approval by LA on EVOLVE Application procedure</p> <p>Visit takes place</p>

SECTION 6

SUPERVISION AND STAFFING RATIOS

*****THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT ARE*** ***CRUCIAL TO PUPIL
SAFETY*****

REGULATIONS

6.01 Party leader

The Headteacher must appoint a party leader to be responsible for the running of the activity. The party leader must be a teacher or other appropriate member of staff (see 6.02 and 6.03 below)

6.02 Definition of a teacher

In this context a teacher is a fully qualified teacher, employed by the Education Service, who is also on the staff of Warblington School undertaking the off-site activity. Note this does not include **newly qualified teachers**.

6.03 Definition of other appropriate members of staff

Such staff would normally be on the staff of Warblington School and would be employed in a position where they were responsible for the supervision of students throughout the working day. They would also be appropriately qualified and experienced. In some cases Warblington School might wish to use appropriately qualified and experienced volunteers or professionals who are not on the staff of the school. Those involved should be well known to Warblington School and the Headteacher should satisfy herself that the care and supervision of students will be as good as if a member of Warblington school staff was the party leader. They should also satisfy the legal requirement of the supervision of students in the terms of a Criminal Records Bureau check.

6.04 Activities involving more than one school

Where activities involve a number of schools a member of staff should be appointed as overall party leader. In such cases Headteachers must satisfy themselves that the care and supervision of students will be at least as good as if a member of Warblington school staff was the party leader.

6.05 Staff pupil ratios

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervision to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of the group;
- Students with special educations or medical needs;
- The nature of the activities;
- The experience of the adults in off-site supervision;
- The duration and nature of the journey;
- The type of any accommodation;
- The competence of staff, both general and on specific activities;
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited;
- Competence and behaviour of the students;
- First aid cover.

The participation of any adults who are close relatives or friends of staff should be considered in the same light as that of other adult supervisors.

That is, any adult with the group **should only be there in a supervisory capacity.**

Any children of staff should be of a compatible age to the students in the group and should be treated as any other pupil in the party.

6.06 Activities where students are not under direct supervision

It is acknowledged that there are occasions when it is appropriate for students to work in situations, where they are not directly supervised. Examples might be Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions, some field work exercises and in order to explore, however briefly, a carefully and clearly defined area. This would include shopping excursions.

In such cases, no matter how short the time scale may be, particular care must be taken to ensure the following are observed:

- Students must have the aptitude and maturity and be appropriately trained, briefed and experienced for whatever is involved;
- Parents must be given clear and detailed information in writing about what is proposed, before being asked to give consent and must agree in writing;
- There must be appropriate emergency back-up available and students must have the means, knowledge and ability to use it. The extent of back up depends on the circumstances.
- If there is any doubt as to what is appropriate here, then further advice should be taken from the Off-site activities and educational visits outdoor unit via Warblington School EVC. Clearly, such considerations should be taken into account well ahead of the event.

6.07 Groups which include students of both sexes and where students are of one sex and the leaders are of the opposite sex

Parties must have staff of the same sex as students, with the following possible exceptions:

- Where an activity involves a small group of students on an activity lasting less than twenty four hours and not involving an overnight stay;
- Where appropriate adult help is available at the group's venue and only the journey involves adults of one sex being present;
- Where the activity involves students working without direct supervision. In this case **6.06** above must be strictly adhered to.

This regulation is concerned with the position of staff as well as the welfare of students. It would be wise to ensure that where students are supervised by adults of the opposite sex, parents are clearly aware of and in agreement with the situation. Teachers are advised to take particular care in such circumstances. If there is ever a need, for example, for them to visit bedrooms or changing rooms for students of the opposite sex then they should always be cautious and considerate in choosing the time and style of such visits and should be accompanied by an adult of the opposite sex.

6.08 Supervising adults other than professional staff (volunteers)

It is acknowledged that Warblington School will often make use of responsible adults other than members of staff in order to ensure better supervision of students.

It is for the Headteacher to decide whether such adults would provide suitable additional help. In making this decision it might be helpful to consider the following points:

- Will the adults know the students and other adults involved?
- Have they appropriate skills, qualifications or experience to offer?
- Would staff and students be likely to respond to them as they would to teachers?

Such persons should not be asked

- to supervise more than ten students at any one time;
- to place themselves in a situation where they are remote from support of teachers or other professional members of staff.

Please Note – Where volunteers are not parents of students at Warblington school, it is important that the Headteacher applies the procedures with regard to '**Protection of Children – Disclosure of Convictions of Those with Access to Children**'.

6.09 Good practice in supervision and the standard of care

It is most important that teachers and other supervisory adults are:

- Aware of the high standard of care required of them on off-site activities;
- They must always be aware of potential dangers and take necessary safeguards.

Particular care must be taken in environments that are naturally hazardous such as:

- Cliffs;
- Coastal environments (beaches, the sea and cliff areas);
- Forested land;
- Areas close to running or open water;
- Mountain and moorland areas;
- Ferries or boats of any kind;
- Areas liable to pedestrian congestion, e.g. airports, stations, concerts, theatres, etc.

6.10 Head counts

Frequent head counts must be made. It is sensible to consider dividing students into small groups in order to facilitate counting. It is also strongly recommended that key counts should be double checked by another adult and /or that a register should be taken.

6.11 Whom to brief and how

Teaching staff, other supervising adults, parents and students directly or indirectly involved with an off-site activity must be fully briefed with regard to the nature of the activity, their role and responsibilities, and all arrangements that will or might be made.

6.12 Delegation of role

The party leader must make clear delegation of role and responsibility to the other teachers and supervisors involved in the venture, particularly in cases where the leader is not present.

6.13 Check lists and information

Each adult member of the group should carry checklists and any information that enables them to act quickly and effectively. Particular care should be taken if the group is divided into smaller units. As far as reasonably possible, supervisory adults should know who is where and when. They should also be aware of all relevant emergency procedures.

6.14 Frequency and regularity of briefing

While an activity is in progress there should be regular daily briefings for students and staff.

6.15 Briefing and frequently used venues

Briefing is no less important where a visit takes place on a regular basis or where the situation and local conditions are well known to the supervising staff.

6.16 Calculating staffing ratios

When deciding on the staffing ratio for a particular activity or part of an activity, the following should be taken into consideration;

- The duration and nature of the activity. Eg does it involve situations in which particular care needs to be taken – see **6.09** above.
- The ages and characteristics of students, e.g. to what extent would you expect a group to behave in a disciplined manner and their age in relation to the activities;
- The needs and abilities of staff, e.g. do staff require rest periods in order for them to operate efficiently, and what is their experience of similar activities?
- Any domestic role of staff, e.g. if staff have to drive, supervise, do the cooking of meals or other tasks, is the staffing sufficient to ensure adequate supervision at those times?
- Are there students who will require a particularly high level of supervision, and are there enough staff to cope with checking of numbers and other arrangements?

6.17 Staffing ratios and hazardous activities

Specific advice on ratios for these can be found in the **Appendix A** of this document.

6.18 Children with special needs

This will include all students with LA statements of provision and other students identified by the Warblington school as having significant special needs. The Headteacher needs to ensure that an appropriate level of care and supervision is available to meet the needs of individuals within the group and that:

- the adult/child ratio should be at least equal to that provided in the Warblington school;
- at least two adults with appropriate skills for meeting the special needs of the students in the group should be made available on all off-site activities;
- where only one teacher is supervising, the headteacher must be reasonably sure that students will not be put at risk should that teacher become incapacitated. Further advice on this can be found in **6.05**.

Changes to the law bring educational visits into the scope of disability legislation. From **September 2002, changes to the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)** placed new duties on local education authorities and schools/Warblington schools not to discriminate against disabled students for reasons relating to their disabilities. LA's and schools/Warblington schools are under new duties not to treat disabled students less favourably, without justification, than non-disabled students; and to make reasonable adjustments to school's/Warblington school's policies and practices to ensure that disabled students are not substantially disadvantaged in comparison with non-disabled students.

All reasonably practicable efforts should be made during the course of risk assessment to include disabled students in educational visits, and to include disabled students who wish to take part in educational visits out of Warblington school hours. This will usually entail discussion with the pupil, parents, group leader and other supervisors, the manager of the venue to be visited, the tour operator etc.

Where students are not under direct supervision 6.06 applies.

Where it is known that the special needs of a pupil or students predispose them to unpredictable behaviour, or to behaviour that might put them at physical risk, then the level of supervision should reflect what would be regarded as reasonable by colleagues who are trained and /or experienced in work with such students.

SECTION 7

PARENTAL CONSENT/MEDICAL CONSENT

PARENTAL CONSENT

7.01 When is parental consent necessary?

Written parental consent must be obtained for all of the following activities:

- **journeys and visits lasting more than twenty four hours;**
- **visits involving an overnight stay;**
- **a journey by air or sea;**
- **all visits involving hazardous activities.**

7.02 Day activities

In the case of activities lasting less than twenty four hours and not involving hazardous activities, but where the students will be off the Warblington school site for a considerable part of the Warblington school day, parental consent should be obtained. It is also recommended that parental consent should be obtained for any activity which parents might regard as unusual. If there is any doubt, advice should be sought from the Off-Site Activities and Educational Visits Outdoor Unit via Warblington school EVC.

7.03 The timing of consent and information for parents

Information to parents must be fair and realistic and should be given in sufficient time for parents to make an unhurried and informed decision before they are financially committed.

There should be enough information to allow parents to make an objective decision and this information must be written form.

7.04 Parents' evenings

For residential visits or visits to a foreign country a meeting with parents would in many cases be appropriate, in addition to any written information, in order to expand on written information or in order to answer parents' questions.

7.05 Pressure on parents

Great care should be taken to avoid putting parents under undue pressure. It must be accepted that parents may not agree to give consent to some activities.

7.06 Information on Insurance

Parents must be informed of the nature and extent of insurance taken out on their behalf.

7.07 Parental consent and medical forms

The Hampshire County Council Educational visits information and consent and medical form should be used in all cases where full consent is to be obtained.

Copies of forms signed and returned by parents should be retained in the Warblington school until such times as all matters relating to an activity are finally settled.

Please note: Where parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit but the curricular aims should be delivered to the pupil in some other way.

If parents give a conditional consent the Headteacher should consider whether the pupil may be taken on the visit or not.

7.08 Medical consent

This should form part of the parental consent form. Parents should be asked to agree to the students receiving **emergency medical treatment, including anaesthetic or any necessary medical treatment which may include transfusion of blood products, as considered necessary by the medical authorities.**

If parents do not agree to this, The Headteacher may decide to withdraw the pupil from the visit, given the extra responsibility this would entail for the group leader.

Doctors can be expected to carry out necessary emergency treatment without parents' consent, but it is possible that a surgeon in another country might be reluctant to operate on a pupil unless assured that the group leader had authorisation to agree to such treatment. **When travelling abroad it is sensible to include a translation of the medical consent in the relevant foreign language.**

SECTION 8

USE OF COACHES AND GUIDELINES AND ROLE OF EVC

8.01 Use of coaches

Coaches used by children up to the age of 16 are required by law to be fitted with seat belts. However, it is advisable that students of all ages travel in coaches that adhere to this standard.

The following advice applies:

- It is important to ensure that an appropriate vehicle for the length of journey and size of group is ordered and that the vehicle which arrives meets these requirements;
- It is advisable to avoid students using a seat which overlooks a stairwell on the coach and any others that are adjacent to entrances and exits, including emergency exits;
- Neither students nor supervising adults should ever make a journey on an off-site activity while standing up;
- Entrances, exits and the driver's rear view should not be obstructed in any way.

8.02 Advice on coach companies

If group leaders require any advice with regard to the use of a particular coach company they might find it helpful to contact the Warblington school EVC. The Off-Site Activities and Educational Visits Outdoor Unit can also advise. **Whether the company is a member of the Bus and Coach Companies Operators Association might be a useful guide.**

Note: Foreign coaches are not bound by British law and therefore coaches supplied might not be fitted with seatbelts as required within the UK. Parents should be made aware of this and agree to their child travelling in these circumstances. This should be done in writing.

8.03 Educational Visits Coordinator

The functions of the EVC are to:

- Liaise with the employer to ensure that educational visits meet the employer's requirements;
- Support the Headteacher with approval and other decisions;
- Make sure that risk assessments have been completed in accordance with LA guidance and requirements and the findings are integrated into the planning of the activities;
- Make sure that Criminal Record Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary;
- To ensure that liaison with parents and obtaining consent are effective;
- Organise the emergency planning including the emergency contact for each visit;
- Work with group leaders to ensure that the aims of the educational visit are achievable and in line with those of the establishment;
- To liaise with the Outdoor Education Unit;
- To recommend and organise the training of leaders and help organise the induction of staff new to the venture;
- To ensure that the Warblington school's management of behaviour and other relevant policies are able to be transferred off site successfully and are consistently used.

8.04 Support the Headteacher in the management of educational visits

- **Complete/have completed the annual return of staff qualifications to the Outdoor Education Unit;**
- **Ensure that the Warblington school complies with the LA requirements of reporting incidents and accidents (including 'near misses');**
- **Ensure that the Warblington school has robust emergency procedures in place and knows how to liaise with the LA team should an emergency occur (3.03)**
- **Use and apply suitable record keeping practices for both students and staff off site;**
- **Learn from previous experience, recording successful practice and contacts, and be able to use them and move on, in particular where staff personnel change;**
- **Monitor and review what is going on, establishing a clear picture of current practice. Be able to both report on successes and set targets for improvement. Be ready to intervene where practice is incorrect or unsatisfactory.**

**Jane Fletcher
Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)
Warblington School**

APPENDIX A

Activity	Qualifications / Staffing	Maximum Ratios	Notes
Local Visits – in the local area, close to support at the base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An experienced group leader (recommended) • Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) • Other responsible adult(s) in support • A minimum of two leaders required, unless exceptional circumstances are agreed 	8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:20)	A minimum of one qualified leader is needed for every group or class. They can then be supported by other qualified leaders or responsible adults.
Day Visits – more than 60 miles or one hour from base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an experienced group leader (recommended) • Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) • Other responsible adult(s) in support • A minimum of two leaders required 	8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:12)	Minimum ratios are not recommended rations. Small working groups of 6 – 12 remain the target. Leaders should reflect the gender of the group.
Residential visit, UK or abroad.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an experienced group leader (recommended) • Other qualified leader(s) (numbers as required) • Other responsible adult(s) in support • A minimum of two leaders required • Large or complex visits must have an experienced leader 	8 – under 18 1 per activity or supervision group (maximum 1:12) These ratios do not include the centre/residential base staff	As above, however it is recommended that the ration of qualified leader to responsible adult support is low, at 1:1 or 1:2. Where the visit is part host family, part residential, the residential conditions should apply.
Host families	As above,; however if wholly residing with families a minimum of two	As above, but if wholly residing with families the 1:10 ration could be reduced to 1:15.	Leaders should reflect the gender of the group.

Activity	Qualifications / Staffing	Maximum Ratios	Notes
<p>Open Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working by water • Away from a road or building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced activity leader, Open Country qualified • Qualified leaders, Open County qualified • Other qualified leaders • Volunteer(s) and other responsible adult(s) 	<p>8 – under 18</p> <p>1 per activity or supervision group</p> <p>(maximum 1:12)</p>	<p>Overall group sizes above 20 are not recommended at any one location at the same time (supervision and sustainability issues). Similarly large groups should not be moving together or in convoy. The number of qualified Open Country leaders will depend on the risk assessment. By water, each group must have someone Open Country/throw bag trained and competent.</p>

Note

Group leader – the person who has overall charge of the venture

Qualified Leader - a teacher, nationally qualified youth worker or lecturer (also some NVQ Level 3 qualified personnel)

Volunteer and other responsible adult(s) - any other adult, known to the establishment, who is deemed by the Head to be responsible enough to support the venture.

APPENDIX B

Tick Sheet for Trips Within Walking Distance

APPENDIX C

Tick Sheet for Trips Within 60 miles

APPENDIX D

Tick Sheet for Trips More Than 60 miles

APPENDIX E

Tick Sheet for Residential and Overseas Trips