



‘Outdoor education offers attractive opportunities for achievement to pupils across the spectrum of ability. These can stimulate and re-enforce a positive attitude to education and are recognised achievements by teachers and peers alike. The benefit most commonly cited by teachers is the improvement they experience in their relationship with pupils and in pupil relationships with each other. ‘

”DfES ”Extending Opportunity: A National Framework for Study Support.

Rationale

At Meadowcroft School we believe that by providing outdoor education, visits and off-site activities for our pupils we can:-

- enhance and broaden the learning
- develop social skills
- develop positive relationships
- give hands on experiences
- motivate children
- encourage independence and taking initiative
- improve the self-esteem
- develop and consolidate skills and knowledge
- develop Citizenship
- learn about the community
- affirm individual strengths not seen in the classroom
- raise achievement

We organise different visits each year to enhance, enrich and support the school’s curriculum and to link with the termly themes.

Places for Visits

The school visits the locality or facilities which have been approved and are re-known for their having competent staff. The teachers when taking pupils out on visits always carry out a pre-visit to ensure safety by carrying out a risk assessment, to enable planning and assure the appropriateness of site in order to make the suitable arrangements for the children’s learning. Should a pre-visit not be possible the classteacher involved will obtain information with regard to potential hazards. When choosing transport for the visit the school will use well known and reputable coach companies who provide seat belts. Wherever possible the school will use the Surrey County Council yellow buses which are maintained by Surrey.

Supervision

The school will at all times ensure that there is appropriate adult supervision in line with the Surrey County Council Guidelines for Educational Visits and Outdoor Education Activities. The teachers arrange the adult supervision and the Head is responsible for ensuring there is adequate supervision before each visit takes place. For children under 5 the school accepts Surrey’s recommendation that the ratio should be 1 adult to 2 four year olds.

The classteacher will speak with parent-helpers before the visit to give them sufficient information, the learning intentions and the expectations of behaviour. The adults will include staff, governors and parents of the school. The school may ask for a CRB check

before asking anyone else to support the visit. No adult will be left alone with any child at any time.

It is the classteachers responsibility with the Head to make sure that sufficient First Aid pouches are taken to deal with the minor injuries. Each classroom assistant is responsible for the replenishment of these pouches. A mobile phone is provided by the school for emergency calls.

Parental Consent

Parents are always informed about school visits and the activities involved. They agree and give consent for their child to participate by signing a pro-forma for each visit. The school will not take any child off-site without this permission and will do the necessary to obtain it. For short trips to the immediate locality parents fill in a blanket form at entry to the school.

Charging for Visits

A voluntary contribution is usually asked to cover some or all the cost of the visit. However, the school would never refuse to take a child due to the lack of payment through hardship. In these cases the school will fund the activity for the child.

Excluding Pupils from Visits

When behaviour is such that the Headteacher and teaching staff are not confident of control or reasonable co-operation from a pupil and the safety of others could be put at risk; the Headteacher will make the decision to exclude the pupil from the visit.

Accidents

All staff have a duty of care when taking children out on visits and accidents are rare. Should a minor accident occur the usual initial First Aid will be administered using the recommended materials from the First Aid pouches as advised by Surrey County Council. All minor incidents are noted and parents are informed on return to school. At Meadowcroft School staff have Emergency First Aid for Children certificates. However, should a major accident occur the adult in charge accepts that he or she is 'in loco parentis.' This means that they must take the same care that a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would take in such circumstances. In case of fatality, emergency or press involvement staff would use the reference cards for the emergency procedures.

Special Educational Needs

No child will be excluded from visits due to their Special Educational Needs. Before any visit the classteacher will ensure that all pupils will receive a sense of achievement. The classteacher will ensure there is a balance of activities for all pupils and where possible substitute more suitable ones for individual needs in order to gain the maximum for all pupils from the visit.

Residential Visits

The school at present does not send any pupils on residential visits. Should the situation change the school would use Surrey County Council Guidelines for Educational Visits and Outdoor Education Activities as a reference.

Insurance

Insurance is provided by the County and policies cover Employer and Public Liability. These automatically apply to any visit.