

Learning Outside the Classroom (Educational visits)

At Bennett we believe that every young person should experience the world beyond the classroom as an essential part of learning and personal development.

These are often the most memorable learning experiences, helping us to make sense of the world around us by making links between feelings and learning. They allow us to transfer learning experienced outside the classroom and vice versa.

Learning outside the classroom is about raising achievement through an organised, powerful approach to learning in which direct experience is of prime importance. This is not only about what we learn but importantly how and when we learn.

Aims and purposes of Educational Visits.

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning outside the classroom, some of which takes place beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school will arrange a number of educational visits and activities that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school

The Local Governing Body has given its approval to the following types of activities being arranged in support of the educational aims of the school:

- Enrichment activities, both within and outside the school day
- Participation in local events and competitions
- Regular nearby visits
- Day visits for particular year groups
- Residential visits
- Overseas visits
- Adventurous activities, which might be classed as higher risk
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award

Approval Procedure and Consent

The Headteacher has nominated an Assistant Head to be responsible for the organisation, health, safety and educational value of all school visits, and the Local Governing Body has approved this appointment.

The Bennett Local Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of day visits and low risk activities to members of staff within the school, including the Headteacher, Assistant Head, the Human Resources Manager, Year Manager and Curriculum Team Leader. The Local Governing Body has delegated the consideration and approval of residential and potentially high risk activities

to all of the above and, in addition, to one of its members who will sign off applications for educational visits on behalf of the Local Governing Body.

Before a visit is advertised to parents, those delegated to approve visits by the Local Governing Body must approve the initial plan.

Where external contractors are involved in organising all or part of the visit the contract will be made with the school on behalf of the students. All payments for the visit will be made through the school's accounts.

For out of hours enrichment activities, and participating in local and national events and competitions, parents will be asked to sign a consent form for the particular activity or, if the activity requires a financial contribution from parents to enable it to take place, then paying through ParentPay will be taken as consent.

For any visit lasting a day or more, parents will be asked to sign a form which consents to their son/daughter taking part. This will include a section on medical needs. The school has a standard model consent form, which should be used for this purpose.

The school has a separate policy for 'Charging and Remissions' which applies to all educational visits.

Staffing

The school recognises the key role of accompanying staff in ensuring the highest standards of learning, challenge and safety on a school visit.

Teachers and other staff are encouraged and supported to develop their abilities in organising and managing students' learning in a variety of environments through induction, apprenticeship and training. The selection of staff for educational visits will be a key priority in the initial approval of any proposed visit.

The school will ensure that an enhanced disclosure is carried out on volunteer adults assisting with educational activities and visits, should this be required. Adults who are not members of the school community, such as family of members of staff, may accompany visits provided the frequency may be termed occasional (i.e. less than once a week), without requiring an enhanced disclosure.

On residential visits the gender of the staff responsible for supervision and pastoral care will reflect the gender of the students

The staff: student ratio will not exceed 1:15 for day visits and 1:10 for residential visits for Years 7-11. Sixth form students may go on some visits unaccompanied. For accompanied sixth form visits ratios will be decided on an individual basis with regard to the assessment of risk.

The appointed Visit Leader will be fully supported in the tasks required to arrange the visit. This will include, as necessary, making time or finances available to conduct an exploratory visit, briefing teachers and other staff, accessing training courses, reviewing and evaluating the visit or identifying time when the Visit Leader and other members of staff might work in partnership to undertake planning and risk assessments.

The Expectations of Students and Parents

The school has a clear code of conduct for school visits based on the school's 'Behaviour Policy'. This code of conduct will be part of the conditions of booking by the parents, and will include guidance in relation to the potential of withdrawal of a student prior to and during the visit if such conduct would have led to a fixed term exclusion from school or if there are serious concerns about the safety of the visit if the student attended.

Emergency Procedures

The school will appoint a member of the LMT as the emergency school contact for each visit. All major incidents should immediately be related to this person, especially those involving injury or that might attract media attention.

The Visit Leader will leave full details of all students and accompanying adults on the visit with the emergency school contact, including the home contact details of parents/guardians and next-of-kin, as appropriate. All incidents and accidents occurring on a visit will be reported back through the school systems via the designated emergency contact. The school will have emergency funding available to support the visit leader in any emergency that occurs in the UK or abroad.

For each trip the school will have a designated team in place consisting of members of the Leadership and Management Team who will deal with all aspects of the emergency, including liaising with the media and emergency services, informing the Chair of the Local Governing Body, and the Trustees of the Tenax Schools Trust.

Evaluation

All visits will be evaluated by the Visit Leader. This may be verbal or written.

The Assistant Head will ensure that any risk assessments for the visit leaders or activities are evaluated and/or modified as a result of findings or feedback from the visit.

The visit leader is responsible for presenting a financial account for the visit which will be audited as part of the school's procedures.