

Educational Visits Policy

Our Policy

Off-site educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. The governors and teaching staff believe that off-site educational activities enrich the curriculum by providing experiences which would otherwise not be possible. All off-site activities serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy, we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site educational visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils. The visits usually take place within the school day except for one visit each year which involves a two night stay.

Aims

The aims of our off-site educational visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone and
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.

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.

The school believes that Educational Visits contribute positively to the quality of teaching and learning that we can offer our pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

Group Leader

The overall organiser of the visit on behalf of the class or group is the group leader; this may be a class teacher, a senior teaching assistant if the visit takes places with the Borough or a teaching assistant if the visit is within the locality of the school.

The responsibilities of the group leader are to:

- be the person who makes the bookings and consults with the EVC.
- make a preliminary visit to the venue in order to assess risk and gain information
- ensure that risk assessments are completed, on the case of residential visits that the LA's risk assessment procedure is followed
- Discuss the proposed visit with the EVC prior to making any bookings
- Adventurous activities and out of county educational visits must be notified to the LAs at least 6 weeks in advance if approved sites and three months if not yet approved.

- Make the necessary bookings
- Enlist sufficient adult helpers and prepare briefing information for them
- Ensure briefing meetings are held
- Lead the visit, taking responsibility for the safety of all throughout 4.

Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)

- Must be trained and registered as the school's EVC with the LA.
- Will discuss proposed visits with the Group Leader (GL).
- Assess the safety of the visit by reference to the LAs educational visit risk assessment system
- Agree any amendments and authorise the visit through the LAs Risk assessment system
- Obtain final approval for the visit from the school's appointed signatory.

Appointed Signatory

Give final approval for all visits by signing either in house or the LAs Risk Assessment system

School Contact

The nominated school contact is the headteacher. In his absence the deputy headteacher will perform this role. The school contact may delegate this position to any other suitable member of staff

Preparation for Visits

A preliminary visit should be made prior to the visit to check the facilities offered and the suitability of the venue.

The needs of all pupils should be considered to ensure equality of opportunity Curriculum plans should show how a visit relates to the curriculum and how it is considered that the pupils will benefit from the experience

The group leader must ensure that there are enough adult helpers. No adult should be responsible for more than three children and for some visits a one to one ratio may be considered appropriate. Ratios will be agreed by the headteacher or the EVC prior to the visit taking place

Adult helpers should be informed of the purpose of the visit in a briefing session and given instructions on their role as supervisors. Issues regarding safety must be clearly explained to helpers. They should also be provided with an itinerary and pupils/adult groups.

If the expected time of arrival back at school is to be later than 3.15 pm, it is essential that parents are notified of the expected time of return to school in advance

A Risk Assessment should be completed for each visit and concerns highlighted. Many venues now have their own Risk Assessments. Ask for a copy when making preliminary enquiries. On the occasions when all classes in a Year Group are doing the same visit on different days, one Risk Assessment will suffice with amendments for pupils with individual needs. Any special arrangements required to include pupils with specific needs

(educational, medical, physical or emotional) should be indicated on the risk assessment

Booking Travel Arrangements and Venues

The EVC or group leader is responsible for making the necessary travel arrangements and booking venues.

Ensure that the coach company knows where the venue is.

Only coaches with seat belts, for seats and wheelchairs, should be booked. Seatbelts must be worn and checked by an adult. Children should not be seated on one of the front seats.

A responsible adult should be seated adjacent to each emergency exit on the coach.

The School Office must be informed of all visit arrangements and given a copy of the letter that is sent out to parents.

Any travel documents or tickets should be locked in the school safe and collected from the office on the day of the visit.

Informing Parents and Consent Forms

Parents and carers should be informed of any educational visit at least three weeks in advance.

Parental consent must be obtained each time a pupil takes part in a visit beyond a walking locality. If no consent has been received, the child may not go on the visit.

Permission can be given by email, text or paper form, or overall consent be given on the pupil's admission form.

Last minute consent by email or fax is acceptable. Verbal consent by telephone cannot be accepted.

Children who do not go on a visit should still attend school that day and be placed in another class. If they do not, this would be counted as unauthorised absence.

During the Visit

The group leader will inform the school of their arrival at the venue and their departure.

If for any reason your coach is going to be delayed the school must be notified at the first opportunity.

Children should be counted regularly throughout the visit.

The group leader must take a list of all the pupils on the visit, and parental contact details.

The group leader must ensure that they have the appropriate medical cards and medicine from the school's nursing team prior to the visit.

The group leader should ensure that they either leave her/his mobile number in the office or take a school mobile phone for use in an emergency and should ensure that teachers have details of the school contact.

The group leader is responsible for the safety of all throughout the visit and should be prepared to take decisions and issue instructions when appropriate.

Group leaders should have each other's mobile phone numbers so that they can communicate during the journey/visit.

At all times during the visit high standards of behaviour are expected as expressed in the Behaviour Policy.

Medical Supplies

It will be necessary to take a first-aid kit. This is available from the School Office. Please inform the office staff upon return if it has been necessary to administer first-aid.

Teachers must take any medication that may be required by children on the visit, e.g. epipens, asthma pumps, diabetes testing kit etc. and ensure that they are familiar with each child's care plan. Epipens and diabetes testing kits should always be taken.

The group leader and another member of staff will be responsible for medication taken on a visit. Where appropriate a nurse should be recruited for the day.

A member of staff qualified to administer emergency seizure medication and asthma medication should accompany a trip where a child with one of these conditions is going.

On return to school, the administration of such medication should be recorded on the school record sheet in the pupil's file along with informing the school's nursing staff

All medication should be returned to the nursing staff for safe storage.

Parental Contributions

Parents are able to make voluntary contributions towards the cost of educational visits as stated in our Charging Policy. Money is sent directly and immediately to the school office.

Where a voluntary contribution has been made, if the child is absent on the day of the visit, the entire contribution will be refunded to the parent.

In instances where entrance fees are required the school should be invoiced. If it is necessary to take a school cheque, this should be collected from the office on the day of the visit. The group leader should to obtain a receipt if possible.

What to do if an Accident Happens

Should there be an accident during a school trip the following actions must be taken:

- The group leader is responsible for the welfare and safety of all the pupils. Even if the place being visited has its own first aid staff, the staff member in charge must remain responsible for the incident that has occurred.

- If a child is injured and there are first aid staff present at the centre, alert them and ensure that the child is seen promptly. The first aid staff may advise what to do in that situation but it is the teacher's responsibility to decide whether the advice is appropriate and what action to take. If you have the slightest doubt about the child's condition call an ambulance.
- Make sure that the other members of staff on the trip are aware of the incident and are available to cover should you have to accompany the injured child to hospital.
- If the injury occurred during an activity, the activity must cease immediately and the teacher must assess the situation and seek advice as to whether it should continue or not.
- The school contact must be telephoned and informed of the incident at the earliest opportunity. This will be the Headteacher or deputy Headteacher.
- Under no circumstances must any member of the party discuss the matter with a member of the press (if they become involved), nor must the name of the casualty be divulged.
- As soon as is reasonably possible, all the details of the incident should be logged and should include the following:
 - Date and time
 - Nature of incident
 - The location where the incident occurred
 - The name of the injured party
 - As much detail as possible about the events that led up to the accident
 - The nature of the injury incurred
 - Action taken by the person responsible for the child
- LEGAL LIABILITY MUST NOT BE DISCUSSED OR ADMITTED
- The Headteacher will inform the Local Authority who will follow their own Major Incidents Procedures

Lunches

The group leaders must inform the kitchen two weeks prior to the visit should packed lunches be required

Where a child pays for their meals the parents must be informed two weeks prior to the visit so that they are able to make an appropriate meal

Monitoring and Review

The Headteacher will monitor the effectiveness of this policy on a regular basis reporting to the governing body on its effectiveness and, if necessary, making recommendations for further improvements.

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor the implementation of the Offsite Educational Visits Policy