



Educational Visits and Activities Policy

Introduction

All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

In our school we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum and Early Years Profile is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes. To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in school.

Organisation

Within each class's program of work the teachers plan educational visits and activities that support the children's learning. We give details of these visits and activities to parents at the beginning of a topic. We plan other activities as the school year progresses, and inform parents of these in due course.

Visits and activities usually take place within the school day. We follow the LA's guidelines relating to health and safety. We ask parents to give permission for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site. If we do not receive permission, the child is unable to participate.

Curriculum links

All educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do in school. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

Activities could include:

- English – visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to botanical gardens;
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails;
- Art and Design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE – range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- Music – range of specialist music teaching, concerts for parents to hear;
- Design and Technology – visits to local factories/design centres;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc;

- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

We also have visits from our neighbourhood police officer and health workers. These visits support the personal, social and health education of our children. A local religious leader takes assembly several times in the school year. We do this with the agreement of the governing body.

Coach /Travel Companies

- We only use travel companies who have Local Authority approval.
- We only hire those companies whose coaches have individual seat belts that are British Standard approved. We instruct all children travelling by *coach or minibus to wear a seat belt.*

Reconnaissance

Whenever practicable teachers precede ventures by undertaking exploratory visits to evaluate the suitability and potential of the venue for meeting the aims and objectives required by National Curriculum and Early Years Profile. Teachers also assess potential areas of risk.

No contract will be entered into until the school is satisfied that there is good safety provision.

Risk Assessment

The aim is to contain risks to acceptable levels. We wish to exercise children's sense of adventure but do not wish to put them at unacceptable physical or psychological risk. We give careful consideration to the following factors:

The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.

- The location
- Competence, experience and qualifications of school supervisory staff.
- The children's age, competence, fitness and temperament.
- The ratio of competent, experienced and qualified centre staff to pupils.
- The quality and suitability of the available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

We realise that most accidents result from a combination of these factors having been inadequately assessed or overlooked altogether.

We give particular consideration of the above factors for any participants identified as having special needs.

We always consider the objectives of the exercise and ensure that the risks to the pupils are the minimum necessary to achieve those objectives. Safety is the prime consideration. It should not be compromised in order to meet educational or other objectives. Activities should not proceed if risks are felt to be too high.

Selecting Participants

In determining who should attend specific events several criteria should be considered.

- The aim of the visit
- The class or group for whom the visit is planned
- The number of available places
- The individual needs of the pupils

Where children with special needs are participating teachers will be required to give more consideration in planning and organising.

Any relevant information gathered about children with special needs should be made available for consideration by the activity provider in advance of the visit, so that assurances can be obtained that the child can be accommodated and can participate in the event safely. The possible impact on teacher/instructor to pupil ratios of special needs children may need to be considered carefully.

If there is any doubt about the health of a pupil, a qualified medical practitioner should be consulted and written permission obtained before the pupil is accepted for the visit.

Staffing the visit/Supervision

The Headteacher, on behalf of his/her employer, has overall responsibility for the planning and arranging outdoor activity visits, but responsibility for planning and supervising the event is done by suitably qualified teachers on the school staff.

The person in charge must have at least assisted an experienced colleague on a previous visit or has taken a more responsible role.

Pupil safety should not be compromised. If suitably experienced leaders cannot be found the trip will not take place.

Parent/voluntary helpers other than teachers are used to assist with the organisation and supervision during visits. They are selected carefully and their role is clearly defined by the teachers. Supervisory adults are used in the ratio of no more than 1:6 in Years 1 and 2. 1:4 in Reception and 1:3 in Nursery. For excursions in the immediate locality the ratio is a minimum of 1:15. These helpers must act towards the children as a careful parent would in similar circumstances.

- Teachers prepare guidance for their helpers accompanying children on school visits.
- Teachers retain primary responsibility for supervising the party at all times.
- We ensure that one of the supervisory staff has at least the minimum qualification in first aid.

- Supervisory staff will carry an appropriate first-aid kit depending on the size of the party more than one may be required. Staff also carry spare clothing.
- Parent volunteers may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They are carefully selected by the teachers and are well known to the school.
- All supervisors must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times.
- Teachers hold briefing meetings with the supervisors before the start of the visit. They will be given written guidelines of what will be expected of them.

Headcounts

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of the children should take place, particularly before leaving a venue. All supervisors should carry a list of pupils in their group. If moving around densely populated areas, children should wear something easily identifiable e.g. brightly coloured T-shirts or caps. Teachers may wish the pupils to wear badges displaying the name of the school and its contact number.

It is essential that at all times each member of the school knows exactly which pupils they are responsible for and the extent of that responsibility. Each pupil should also know which member of staff is responsible for them or their group.

Briefing

Parents are given full and complete details regarding the organisation and administration of the visit, e.g.

- Purpose
- Dates and times including times of departure and return.
- Destination and location
- Code of conduct expected of children
- Staffing details to include names
- Special clothing or equipment required
- Additionally prior to the visit pupils are briefed on
- Code of conduct
- Expectations of visit

Parental Consent

A parental consent form is completed in advance for each pupil attending the event

We ask the parents to inform us on the consent form whether:

- The child suffers from any allergies
- The child is taking medication
- Any special dietary requirements
- The child suffers from travel-sickness

We exercise the right to refuse to take children on visits if parents do not sign the consent form.

Preparing Pupils

Before the visit teachers ensure that the children are well prepared for the trip. Ground rules for sensible behaviour are established. The children are put into groups and know the name of the person/parent helper in charge of their group. The teacher in charge of the visit discusses the purpose of the visit and what to look for with the children. Rules for safe travel on the coaches are also established.

Emergency Procedures

The school has its own emergency planning procedures. If an accident happens priorities are for the teacher to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident.

Taking Charge in and Emergency

All those involved in school trips should:

- Know who would take charge in an emergency
- Framework for dealing with an emergency on a school visit
- Establish the nature of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them.
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group is adequately supervised at all times and kept together
- Notify the police if necessary
- Inform the school contact. The school contact number will be accessible at all times during the visit. Details of the incident to pass on to the school should include: nature, date and time of incident, names of casualties and details of their injuries, names of others involved so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
- Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by the school contact)
- Notify the provider/tour operator (this may be done by the school contact)
- Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties and should not replace usual communication procedures
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible all relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence

- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident.
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible. Contact HSE or local authority inspector, if appropriate
- No one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to their families. Media enquiries should be referred to the school contact.
- No one in the group should discuss legal liability with other parties.

Emergency procedures framework for school base

Prior to the visit the school and home telephone numbers should be identified. It is advisable to arrange a second school contact as a reserve. Headteacher and group leader should bear in mind that the contact lines may become busy in the event of an incident and that alternative numbers to ring are available.

The main factors for the school contact to consider include:

- Ensuring that the group leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents/details of parents' contact numbers need to be available at all times while the group is on the visit. The school contact should act as a link between the group and parents. Parents should be kept as well informed as possible at all stages of the emergency
- Liaison with LA and/or governing body/emergency planning team. The school contact should act as a link between the group, LA and/or Chair of Governors and arrange for the group to receive assistance if necessary
- Liaison with media contact. If a serious incident occurs, the Headteacher should liaise with the designated media contact as soon as possible

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