

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY 2018-2019

This policy applies to all children including those in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We recognise that our policies and procedures on off-site visits, including residential visits and any other school-led adventure activities, are an important part of our Health and Safety Policy.

Rationale

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice.

Guidelines

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich learning experience for the pupils.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits.

Group Leader

One teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit. The Group Leader should:

- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and accompanying adults;
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below);
- complete and distribute the relevant paperwork including 'Emergency Procedures.' This can be found on the ICT network in School Admin/Outings. In addition, all teachers should have a 'hard copy' to which they can refer.

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit

Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;
- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

Depending on the age of the group, the group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Parents

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are briefed in advance. Guidance for parent helpers is attached as Appendix A.

When a child joins the School, parents are asked to give generic permission for short local visits e.g. to Cannizaro Park. Prior to the trip, details are sent to parents together with an opt out option. The completed consent form will always include details of parent emergency contacts.

Planning off-site visits

For any off-site visit, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them. Where practical a pre visit should be made, and a risk assessment from the offsite location should be obtained prior to completing The Study Risk Assessment.

The Headmistress is ultimately responsible for all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the Headmistress must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience. The Group Leader must complete an authorisation form which is approved by the Headmistress before booking the trip. If staff are uncertain about Health and Safety requirements they should consult the Senior Teacher who will liaise with the Bursar and Headmistress as necessary.

In particular, The Study is aware that for any activity trip involving climbing, trekking, skiing or watersports, the trip provider must hold a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004. **It is the responsibility of the member of staff organising the trip to ensure that the provider holds this licence.**

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using The Study's Risk Assessment Form. This must be approved by the Senior Teacher. A copy of the signed Risk Assessment must be retained in school with the signed authorisation form. The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- what are the risks?
- who is affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? (This will vary depending on the nature of the visit)

Where available, the Group Leader should obtain and review any relevant risk assessment prepared by the venue. The Group Leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The Group Leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities or residential trips, it is sensible to have at least one trained first-aider in the group or to be sure that there is a trained first aider at the venue.

The minimum first-aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. There are no statutory requirements but the factors to take into consideration include:

- age and ability of group;
- special needs pupils;
- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of any accommodation;

There should always be sufficient supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. The following minimum supervision ratios are suggested for guidance:

For day trips

- Reception 1:5
- Years 1 to 3 1:6
- Years 4 to 6 1:10

For Years 3 to 6 the ratio could rise to a maximum of 1:15 if the girls and staff are travelling by coach to a theatre, or similar venue, where the coach can drop off, and collect, with minimum walking required.

Some venues have their own suggested ratios and these should be adhered to as a minimum requirement.

Where a high adult: pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents may be used to supplement the supervision ratio.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. 'Guidance for Parent/Volunteer Helpers on School Trips' (School Admin/Outings) should be issued to all parent helpers before the trip takes place and signed confirmation that this has been read and understood should be received.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and pupils should know what to do if they become separated from the party.

Preparing Pupils

Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, special educational or medical needs

Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, special educational or medical needs will not be excluded from school visits. Every effort should be made to accommodate them whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents / Guardians

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – ‘in loco parentis’ – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupils’ health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- mode(s) of travel;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site (residential trips);
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- visit’s objectives;
- details of the activities planned;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- money to be taken;

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency the following checklist will be applied by the Group Leader (who will have a copy of this with them on the trip):

- establish the nature of the incident as soon as possible.
- account for all members of the group and ensure that they are safe
- establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention.
- advise other group staff of the incident and ensure that the emergency procedures are in operation.
- notify the police where necessary
- ensure that a member of staff accompanies the casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised at all times and kept together.
- control access to telephones until the school has been contacted.
- notify the School and ask them to inform the Head who will instigate the schools Crisis Management plan. .
- complete a full report of the incident as soon as possible.

The Group Leader will ensure that no staff speak to the media or discuss legal liability with other parties. This will be handled by the school via the Crisis Management plan

Insurance

The school has Employers Liability Insurance and Public Liability Insurance. It also has a group travel policy that covers most visits in the UK and overseas, but does not cover adventurous / hazardous activities such as climbing or scuba diving. The Group Leader should check with the Bursar when planning trips relating to hazardous / adventurous activities for the applicability of insurance and arrange for an extension where required. The Group Leader should ensure that they have a copy of the school travel insurance with them on the trip

Residential visits

The school will bear in mind the following:

- staff quarters should be next to the children's rooms or very easily accessible – we will obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the group's use in advance;
- access by staff to pupils' rooms must be available at all times;
- ensure that the whole party is aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, fire precautions/exits, regulations and that everyone can identify key personnel;
- security arrangements
- ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group;
- storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc.
- provision for sick children (or staff) and those with special needs;
- safety in rooms (e.g. electrical connections, secure balconies);
- recreational accommodation / facilities for the group.

Farm visits

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed; that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas.

We will never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them;
- eat until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure the continued health, safety and welfare of all pupils and staff.

Policy Updated: September 2018

Related documents

Guidance for Parent/Volunteer Helpers
Emergency Checklist
Trip Risk Assessment
General school outings consent form
School Outing Procedures

Guidance for Parent/Volunteer Helpers on School Trips

Off site visits are a vital element of the school curriculum and we are grateful that so many parents are willing to accompany the children and staff on these visits.

When planning an off- site visit, the health, safety and welfare of all children and adults on the school trip are of paramount importance.

Teachers leading school trips have access to the very comprehensive advice set out in the DCSF publication 'Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits'. However, it is important that all adult supervisors understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. Therefore, these guidelines have been produced to help our valuable band of volunteers.

1. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times and children should never be out of the sight of a member of school staff. (Only teachers should be responsible for personal hygiene and care.)
2. Where there is more than one teacher, a group leader will be appointed who has authority over the whole group.
3. The group leader should carry the first aid kit and any necessary first aid should be administered by a member of school staff (except in an emergency where this is impractical).
4. Where the party is split into smaller groups, the DCSF guidelines state that parents who are accompanying the trip to make up the supervision ratio should be attached to a group other than their daughter's group.
5. All teaching staff should carry a list of all pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times, and, whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue.
6. All volunteer helpers should have the name of a 'contact' back at school (usually the school secretary).
7. **Volunteer helpers should not make or accept mobile telephone calls whilst the trip is in progress. Mobile phones should be left on for use in emergencies only.**

8. Smoking is not permitted for the duration of the visit.
9. Volunteers helpers (who may be unaware of any food allergies or intolerances) should not buy or provide any food or drink for pupils in their group, nor should they (in fairness to others on the trip) buy gifts for the pupils in their group.
- 10. Volunteer helpers must not take photographs of the children unless asked to do so by a member of staff.**

I confirm that I have read and understood the above guidelines.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Copy to be given to all parent/volunteer helpers *before the date of the trip*