



Educational Visits 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.

These are all key messages from the HSE (Health and Safety Executive).

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

Key message: 'Well-managed school trips and outdoor activities are great for children. Children won't learn about risk if they're wrapped in cotton wool.'

Key message: 'Teachers should expect their schools to have procedures that encourage participation, are proportionate to the level of risk and avoid bureaucracy.'

Key message: 'Those running school trips need to focus on the risks and the benefits to people – not the paperwork.'

Key message: 'Accidents and mistakes may happen on school trips – but fear of prosecution has been blown out of all proportion.'

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 organised at Sandal Primary School.

More support can be found at <http://oeapng.info/>

Headteacher

The Headteacher at Sandal will ensure that:

- they have appointed a suitable group leader;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate DBS;
- the governing body has approved the visit if necessary (residential);

- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- that they have the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

Group Leader

The group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and must have been appointed by the Headteacher. The Group Leader must:

- appoint a deputy;
- **use a reputable coach company, report issues or concerns about the coach company to the school.**
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitable qualified if instructing an activity or 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 parents;
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).
- **have a full list of all pupils at all times; where different pupils are working in different locations have lists of who is working where and under whose supervision.**

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- as far as possible 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. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;
- 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.
- **have a full list of all pupils they are responsible for at all times with appropriate medical details. For example if there is more than one bus, ensure they have a list of all the pupils on their bus.**
- **do not be afraid to diplomatically question practice led by external instructors, they can make mistakes as well.**
- **stop the activity immediately for anyone who acts in a dangerous way, this pupil must then be closely supervised by a member of staff, if this is not possible the activity should be suspended for all pupils.**
- **take regular head counts / registers.**

Responsibilities of pupils

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;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents

The group leader must ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits.

The group leader must also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form;
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

The organiser / group leader must agree all plans with the Headteacher by completing a proposed School Journey/visit approval form (see Appendix1).

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit and uploaded onto the Evolve system.

- what are the risks?
- who is affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit?
- **a new risk assessment needs completing for each trip. If it is a regular trip the assessment should look at knowledge gained from previous trips and it could be improved in light of this. It should also look at the pupils and staff on the trip and if they have any needs that will make them more vulnerable.**

Risk assessment for residential should be submitted to the Local Authority for approval three weeks prior to the visit.

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

Exploratory visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue.

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is **necessary** to have at least one trained first-aider in the group, (**however this can be centre staff if they are always about**). The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

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. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, 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;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involved hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

The usual minimum level of supervision is 8:1 for most visits and should not exceed 10:1 if possible; staff should aim to have a better ratio if possible with at least 5:1 for Key Stage 1 children.

Preparing Pupils

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- do not rush towards the transport when it arrives;
- wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport
- never attempt to get on or off the moving transport;
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows;
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic;
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs;
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- never distract or disturb the driver;
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- if you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the Green Cross Code
- if you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Headteacher will not exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs 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.

