



Educational Visits Policy

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Agreed by Staff	Autumn Term 2019
Agreed by Governors	Autumn Term 2019
Next Review	Spring term 2021

Educational Visits Policy

Overview

At East Herrington Primary Academy, we acknowledge the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils. School visits benefit young people in many ways, including:

- being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom,
- enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the curriculum,
- experimental (first hand) and memorable learning,
- assessing and managing risks (safety),
- developing talents, abilities and interests, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance.

Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet LEA requirements and guidelines.

Our EVC is Karina Bowes

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the regularly updated information (External visits –code of practice) provided by Sunderland Council on the **EVOLVE** website.

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC and/or Head teacher.

Approval of day visits will usually be at the discretion of the EVC (in consultation with the Headteacher if necessary).

Visits fall into 3 categories:

- **Category 1:** routine visits, which are generally close to the school and done on a regular basis. These are covered by a generic risk assessment with blanket informed parental consent (signed on the emergency contact form), and take place during normal school operating procedures. It is important to beware complacency on routine visits. **These visits should be put on the EVOLVE site.**
- **Category 2:** Slightly further afield and may not have been visited previously. These require enhanced planning with a specific risk assessment. **These visits must be put on the EVOLVE site.**
- **Category 3:** higher risk, defined as visits outside the UK, visits which include adventure activities, residential or visits to remote or hazardous locations. **These must be put on the EVOLVE site at least 4 weeks before the visit and approved by the appropriate members of EVOLVE staff.**

Pre-Visits

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it may be advisable to undertake a pre-visit, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account:

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- the previous experience of the group undertaking off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year, and any seasonal weather conditions
- the travel arrangements
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience and quality of staff and volunteers
- the nature of the activities
- the special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit and dynamically assess any changes in circumstances

Planning a Visit

Firstly

- Make provisional bookings for your trip – place, transport etc.
- Establish if the provider has the LOTC Quality Badge. This may be evident on their website or if not ask at time of booking. If not, a Provider Statement Form (available form EVOLVE), and if applicable, a Bus Company Information Form should be emailed/faxed for their completion. Visit leaders should not ask for copies of provider's risk assessments, but should ask for any information that they publish specifically aimed at helping visit leaders to manage the visit.
- Complete the necessary paper risk assessments and share with EVC.
- Confirm provisional bookings.
- A first aider should accompany each visit. If the driver of the minibus is the only first aider and is not staying at the venue, a named first aider must be available at the venue and staff must be aware how to access this. Consider ratios. Ratios should take into account sex, age, ability and behaviour of pupils; the nature of the activity and the expertise of adults; duration of journey and any requirements of the location to be visited. Although there is no legal set ratio, (apart from **EYFS which should be higher than 1 adult: 6 children**) good practice would ensure the following are adhered to:
 - EYFS (nursery) = 1 adult to every 3 pupils
 - EYFS (reception) = 1 adult to every 5 pupils
 - Key Stage 1 = 1 adult to every 8 pupils
 - Years 3 to 6 = 1 adult to every 10 pupils

- If using transport consider: insurance, passenger safety, duration of journey and any stopping points, traffic conditions, supervision.
- If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.
- Consider 'Plan B' to avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some thinking is done in advance, in order to cater for any foreseeable eventuality such as staff absence or transport not turning up.
- The visit leader should upload details of all visits onto the EVOLVE site and attach the risk assessments.

Risk Assessment

Risk is a natural part of everyday life, all activities involve risk, and it is impossible to entirely eliminate it. Good planning and management should be about reducing risks to an acceptable level whilst taking into account potential benefits. Employees who follow the Code of Practice, work within the limits of their own competence and use their common sense and professional judgement will be fully supported.

- Risk assessments should be concise and relevant
- They should focus on significant risks not trivial ones
- Consideration should be given to the risk being 'dynamically assessed on the day and decisions made'
- In order to take into consideration 'the child's voice', the visit should be discussed with all children going and their concerns added to the risk assessment as well as any control measure put in place as a result

On the Day of the Visit

- Note any change to risk assessment e.g number of pupils going
- Collect first aid kit(s) and accident form
- Ensure visit leader has emergency procedures card
- Collect pupils' asthma inhalers/ other emergency medication as outlined on their care plan
- Ensure all children have appropriate clothing and footwear for the activity / weather
- Brief supervising adults
- Ensure the trip leader has a register of pupils and staff on the visit
- Give supervising adults their group list (if not previously done)
- Ensure that at least one supervising adult is contactable by mobile phone and that the school office has the number
- Follow signing out procedure at school reception with up to date register
- Count pupils before you leave school and the venue and at regular intervals during the day
- Mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire visit, including outward and homeward journeys

Teachers, volunteers, pupils and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off-site activity in which they are participating. Greater levels of responsibilities will normally be assigned to teachers than to adult helpers and a higher standard of care is expected of them.

Roles and responsibilities

All staff must:

- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils
- inform the visit leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them
- Recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times
- Report to the visit leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and well-being during the visit

Responsibilities of Nominated Visit Leader

Visit leaders must be an experienced member of the teaching staff, and not an NQT unless in unavoidable circumstances. In the event of an NQT needing to take the role of visit leader, they should be accompanied by experienced members of support staff. The Headteacher must be satisfied that this person is competent to lead. The trip leader has a common law duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. Group leaders must recognise their responsibilities as follows:

- Obtain the Headteacher's prior agreement before any off-site visit, complete appropriate risk assessment and upload details onto EVOLVE. It is the responsibility of the visit leader to ensure the visit has been approved on EVOLVE **before** the visit takes place.
- Appoint a deputy (preferably another teacher, but definitely another member of school staff)
- Have ownership of the risk assessments
- Pre-visit the site if necessary
- Clearly define each helper's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age group
- Be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location where the activity takes place
- Be aware of child protection issues
- Ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- Undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents
- Ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an emergency
- Ensure all helpers have details of the school contact
- Ensure that all helpers have details of the medical or special needs of the pupils
- Conduct regular head counts during the visit particularly before leaving any venue.
- Ensure all adults carry a list of all the pupils and adults involved in the visit.
- Be familiar with and carry a copy of the emergency procedures protocol.

- Pupils, especially R to year 3, should be easily identifiable. The group leader should identify rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they get separated from the group.
- Evaluate the trip after the event on EVOLVE.

Teachers

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances.

They should:

- Follow the instructions of the visit leader and help with control and discipline
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the visit leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is too great

Adult Volunteers

Additional adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

They must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- Not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- Follow the instructions of the visit leader and teacher supervisor to help with the control and discipline
- Speak to the visit leader or teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time

Pupils

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

The group leader must make it clear to pupils that they must:

- Not take unnecessary risks
- Follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader or helpers about it

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a visit. Although parental consent is not required for some visits, it is good practice to send a letter informing them of the visit. Parents may exercise their right not to allow their children to take part in a visit. Under these circumstances the school must make alternative arrangements to educate that child. The refusal of the parent not to allow the pupil to go on the visit does not offer the opportunity for the child to be kept off school for the day.

- The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and invited to any briefing sessions. The group leader should also tell parents how they could help prepare their child for the visit, e.g. reinforcing the visit's code of conduct and providing appropriate clothing and footwear for the visit.
- Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a pupil back to school early.
- Provide the school with valid emergency contact numbers.
- Sign the consent form (if required).
- Give the visit leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit.

Records and Communications

- Pre visit risk assessments and after visit reports should be uploaded on EVOLVE
- Reports of any accidents or incidents should be kept on file by the EVC.
- Parents should always be made aware when their child is leaving the school premises and may return outside normal operating hours.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit an evaluation takes place. Part of this evaluation may involve updating the information on EVOLVE to include any last minute changes that were made to staffing or the itinerary. This should happen within a week of the visit date and should involve the visit leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate the other supervising adults. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify what went well and what could be improved or changed in order to inform future planning.

Once the evaluation has taken place, copies of all completed risk assessments and any accident forms should be forwarded to the EVC to be kept on file.

Monitoring

The monitoring process is intended to be positive, supportive and developmental, and recommendation and feedback given. The headteacher and EVC should carry out reviews of the visits through the documentation and discussion with staff. At times there may be direct observation of a visit in progress. Peer monitoring is also useful. All discussions should be recorded and used in a supportive manner.

Insurance

East Herrington Primary Academy has a 'Personal Injury and Travel Insurance group policy'. The schedule of benefits is held on file, and a copy can be obtained from the Office Manager on request.

Emergency Procedures

- Teachers in charge of visits have a duty of care to make sure that their pupils are safe and healthy.
- They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would.
- Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life -saving action in an extreme situation.
- If an accident happens the priorities are as follows:
- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group/ first aider to attend to casualty if needed
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform school or the home contact
- Ensure that a teacher accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised.
- Notify the police if needed
- Ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- No one in the group should speak to the media and no names should be provided
- No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties.
- In an emergency the visit leader would usually take control of the situation.

The home contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school and to provide assistance as necessary. This named person should have all the information about the visit.

Headteacher should ensure that:

- The EVC is competent to oversee the co- ordination of all off-site education and attends relevant training
- Visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the governing body and health and safety policy
- The visit leader is competent to monitor risks and supervise the trip throughout the visit
- Adequate child protection procedures are in place
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit takes place
- The risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- Group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- Non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- Ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- The LEA or governing body has approved the visit if necessary
- Parents have signed consent forms if necessary
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- Adequate first aid provision will be in place
- The mode of transport is appropriate. Travel times out and back are known in school

There is adequate and relevant insurance cover

- They have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- A school contact has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- The group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures
- The visit leader, helpers and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils in the group, as well as the contact details of parents and adults' next of kin.
- There is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

Responsibilities of the Governing Body

The Governing body needs

- To ensure that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the Policy guidelines.
- To ensure that residential and overseas visits are approved as necessary and recorded on Evolve.
- To agree to all residential visits, trips abroad and those involving outdoor and adventurous activities. In these instances, to ensure that bookings are not completed until external providers have met all the necessary assurances.
- To ensure that that all aspects of risk management have been considered and that risk assessments for travel, accommodation and activities have been carried out prior to departure. It is not expected that Governors should become directly involved in risk assessment and related matters unless they have an appropriate competence.
- Ask questions about a visit's educational objectives and how they will be met. Are the objectives appropriate to the age and abilities of the pupil group? Why is a particular venue being used? Is the visit inclusive for all pupils? Is the visit value for money?
- To ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information, and to investigate parental complaints.
- To review the EV policy and procedures, including incident and emergency management systems.

Appendices

1. Use of cars

In an emergency the following should be adhered to:

- The car should be roadworthy
- The driver has the appropriate licence
- The driver has the appropriate insurance
- Drivers ensure pupils wear seat belts and sit in booster seats if necessary.
- No adult should ever be alone with a child

2. Swimming pools

The following checks should be made:

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified staff?
- Is the water temperature appropriate?
- Where there is no lifeguard, the leader should stay on the pool side at a raised location and the visit leader should have the relevant life- saving award
- Is the water clear?
- Are there signs indicating depth of water?
- Does the pool cater for children with disabilities?
- Does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- Is there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment and is there someone trained to use them?
- Is there a changing room for each sex?
- Are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- Can clothes be stored safely?
- Have the pupils been instructed how to behave around water?

Residential visits

- Staff ratio should be at least 1 member of staff for every 12 pupils.
- There must be at least one adult from each sex for mixed groups. This could include staff at the venue as well as school staff.
- There should be a member of staff on standby who is able to join the trip if someone on the trip is needed elsewhere e.g. repatriation
- Telephone contact numbers should be established prior to the visit in case of emergency.
- The group should ideally have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils' rooms – the leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the groups use in advance;
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults
- There should be appropriate and safe heating and ventilation
- The whole group should be aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routines, and can identify key personnel
- Where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors

- All staff employed at the centre should be checked on their suitability for working with young people
- Locks on doors should work in the group's rooms but appropriate access should be available to teachers at all times
- There should be drying facilities
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment
- There should be adequate lighting
- There should be provision for children with special needs and for those who fall sick
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, electrical connections safe
- Where possible, pupils should not be lodged on ground floor rooms
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the whole accommodation
- There should be recreational facilities for the group
- There should be an appropriate number of supervisors on duty during the night
- A fire drill should take place as soon as is possible after arrival

This Policy will reviewed in Spring 2021 or in line with any new legislation and guidance