

Bosvigo School



Policy for Educational Visits

October 2011

OUTLINE AND PURPOSE

“It has long been acknowledged that pupils can derive a good deal of educational benefit from taking part in visits with their schools. In particular they have the opportunity to undergo experiences not available in the classroom.

Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits – DfES 1998

“Outdoor learning supports academic achievement, for example through fieldwork projects, as well as the development of ‘soft’ skills and social skills, particularly in hard to reach children. It can take place on school trips, on visits in the local community or in the school grounds.

House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee – February 2005

“Outdoor Education gives depth to the curriculum and makes an important contribution to students physical, personal and social education.”

Outdoor Education- Aspects of good practice – OfSTED – Sept 2004

An educational visit may be seen as any aspect of a pupil’s education that takes place off the main school site and should include visits to such places as parks, museums, theatres, churches as well as residential trips and visits abroad.

The school has adopted the guidance in 3 key documents and all guidance within this policy MUST be read in conjunction with the detailed advice contained within them. These are:

- **Safety on Educational Visits - 2003**
- **Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits (HASPEV) – DfES 1998**
- **The 3 part supplement to the above issued in 2002**

These can all be found as appendices to this policy and as such form part of the policy itself.

The key document is “Safety on Educational Visits – 2003.” The other documents supplement our own regulations and guidance

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role of the Governors:

See *HASPEV* paragraphs 19-20.

- To ensure that the Head Teacher and the EVC have adhered to the guidelines contained within Safety on Educational Visits - 2003.
- To ensure that visits are approved as necessary by the LA before bookings are confirmed
- 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, confirmed by completion of the SW Provider Questionnaire.
- To define which type of visits should be approved by the Governing Body, and/or the Head Teacher, and/or or the Educational Visit Co ordinator.
- 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.
- To 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 students? Is the visit value for money?

- To ensure measures exist to obtain parental consent on a basis of full information and, where necessary, to investigate parental complaints.
- To review annually the EV policy and procedures including incident and emergency management systems.

Role of the Head Teacher:

See HASPEV paragraphs 21-23.

- To ensure that visits comply with the guidelines and regulations provided by the LA (*Safety on Educational Visits -2003*) and the school's own Health and Safety Policy.
- To ensure that the Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC) has attended LA training and is competent to oversee the co ordination of all off-site education, and to support the EVC in attending relevant training courses.
- To ensure that the EVC keeps him or her informed of the progress of the visit and that this information is relayed to Governors (and to parents as necessary).
- To ensure that the activity leader is competent (experience and training) to undertake the activity.
- To check that the EVC has designated an appropriately competent group leader who will meet the LA's criteria. For less routine visits, the Head Teacher will need to ensure that the EVC can obtain advice from an appropriate technical adviser as necessary.
- To ensure that in the event of a major incident or accident, LA guidelines are adhered to in terms of informing, parents, staff and the media. To help to ensure that serious incidents, accidents and near-accidents are investigated.

Role of the Educational Visit Co-ordinator:

It has been identified in the HASPEV supplements as good practice for each school to have an **Educational Visit Co-ordinator (EVC)**. The EVC's role is to support the Head Teacher in ensuring that all visits follow LA regulations and guidance and all of the school's relevant policies and procedures, and will act on behalf of the Head Teacher;

- To approve educational visits as agreed by the Head Teacher and Governing Body.
- To provide adequate documentation to support planning of all trips and visits.
- To ensure all off-site visits are thoroughly planned using standardised whole-school documentation.
- To ensure all staff are aware of the guidelines available through "*Safety on Educational Visits – 2003*" concerning their particular visit.
- To assign competent people to lead or otherwise supervise a visit. Competence of other adults proposed to provide support or lead activities within a visit will commonly be done with reference to accreditations from an awarding body and/or previous experience and on the job training.
- To ensure visits have appropriate support ratios and adequate cover for health and safety, first aid, medication and behaviour management.

- To work with the visit leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis.
- To organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there are 2 emergency contacts for each visit, during and outside school hours.
- To keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents' (sometimes known as 'near misses').
- To ensure that arrangements are in place for the Governing Body to be made aware of visits so that questions can be asked as necessary.
- To ensure that LA Approval form (EV form) has been completed in full and has been submitted to Cornwall Outdoors within the appropriate notice period
- To ensure that visit evaluation is used to inform future visits and training needs. Further staff training should be made available where a need is identified.
- To arrange for the recording of accidents and the reporting of serious injuries as required. Accident and incident records should be reviewed regularly, and this information used to inform future visits.
- To review systems and, where possible, monitor practice.

Role of the Visit Leader:

The 'Handbook for Group Leaders' (HASPEV Supplement part 3) is available for all staff leading visits off-site and is adopted by the school as 'good practice' Also available on line through the Cornwall Outdoors website.

The Visit Leader has full responsibility for the safe running of the activity including planning and following guidance, and ensuring all participants are aware of their roles. To achieve this the Visit Leader will;

- Identify the clear purpose and objectives of the visit.
- Complete visit documentation and obtain EVC approval for any visit off-site, no matter how short its duration.
- Plan the itinerary in such a way as to account for all times on the visit including meal and 'down' times particularly on residential trips.
- Have prior knowledge of the venue – the visit leader should normally have made an exploratory pre-visit.
- Inform parents and seek permission/consent, detailing the nature, purpose and related activities involved in the visit.
- Allocate supervisory responsibility to each adult for named pupils and ensure that each adult knows which pupils they are responsible for. To ensure that each pupil knows which adult is responsible for them and that all adults understand that they are responsible to the visit leader for the supervision of the pupils assigned to them.
- To ensure that all adults involved in supervising the visit are aware of the risk assessments including 'Plan B' and the expected standards of behaviour.

- To continuously monitor the appropriateness of the activity, the physical and mental condition and abilities of the group members and the suitability of the prevailing conditions.

Role of the Pupil

- To be aware of the intended activities, including 'Plan B'.
- To know who their supervisor is at any given time and how to contact him or her and to alert the supervisor if someone is missing or in difficulties.
- To understand the need to have a meeting place to return to, or an instruction to remain where they are, if separated.
- To understand and accept the expected standards of behaviour.

Role of the parent/ carer

- To make themselves FULLY aware and up to date with ALL communications about the trip
- To sort out any queries/concerns as soon as possible
- To ask the group leader (within a reasonable time frame) for additional information if required
- To understand the expectations of behaviour set out for the pupils on the trip
- To understand that you can see and discuss the risk assessment carried out for the trip (within a reasonable time frame)
- To promptly provide school with sufficient information relating to their child/ children when requested

PROCEDURES

See HASPEV (Chapters 1 - 10)

Safety on Educational Visits – 2003 and HASPEV provide detailed guidelines on procedures in a range of specific situations likely to be encountered/undertaken on visits off-site. Visit leaders will need to be aware of the relevant sections before undertaking the trip

The school has in place a clear process to be adhered to in planning and organising an educational visit or trip;

Planning

For all visits off site refer to Planning Checklist – *Safety on Educational Visits – 2003, Section 3*

- An EV form should be completed. This is available in electronic form.
- Complete any further internal school forms. (*add details as per your school policy*)
- Confirm details with, and obtain approval for the trip with the EVC.
- Obtain approval from the Headteacher and ensure that all visits have been entered into the school diary.
- ***When the visit is authorised***, letters can be sent home to parents as necessary.
- Parents must always be made aware when their children are undertaking a visit and will be off school premises.

- Collect reply slips (bearing in mind some pupils in care of social services may also need additional permission from them) - No pupil will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission.
- Liaise with the EVC over any changes to the approved itinerary and arrangements.
- Pre-visits. In most cases it is very important to undertake a pre-visit. The need for a pre-visit should be discussed with the EVC. If a pre-visit is considered as not being necessary the reasons must be noted on the visit risk assessment.

In planning and organising a residential trip or visit involving outdoor and adventurous activities the above process remains relevant with the following additions.

- All visits involving a residential (overnight stay) and/or adventurous activities must be approved in principle by Cornwall Outdoors **before** a contract is made with a Provider.
- New providers should be sent a Provider Questionnaire to complete prior to agreeing any contract with them.
- Complete a EV form and/or any further internal school forms. (*add details as per your school policy*)
- Confirm details with, and obtain approval for, the trip with the EVC **at least 2 months prior to the visit** to enable Governors to be informed.
- Obtain approval from Headteacher. This will allow the date to be entered into the school diary **at least 6 weeks prior to the visit.**
- **When the visit is authorised**, letters can be sent home to parents as necessary.
- Collect reply slips (bearing in mind some pupils in care of social services may also need additional permission from them) – No pupil will be allowed to go on a visit without parental permission. Authorisation for the visit leader to act for the child in the event of a medical emergency should be implicit within the permission.
- Collect pupil contributions using the procedures requested by the finance secretary in the office.
- Liaise with the EVC over any changes to the approved itinerary and arrangements.
- Wherever possible and practical a First-aider should accompany each visit offsite. There should always be an appropriate first aid box available for use. Your Risk Assessment will identify when a qualified First Aider is not necessary.

During the day

- The school documentation identifies many of the issues that school staff need to be aware of during the supervision of a visit off-site. These include the Behaviour policy, Equal Opportunities policy and the Medication in schools policy. This contains permission for emergency medication should the need arise and details of specific medical plans for individual children (within the ‘Administration of Medicines in School’ policy, details are given for ‘out of school activities’). Where specific medical plans exist the visit leader is responsible for ensuring all staff and accompanying adults are aware of the plan.
- One of the key features of all visits is the need for all staff to be involved in ongoing risk assessments. Visit Leaders need to make decisions on an ongoing basis regarding the safety of the visit. This includes the support ratios and pupil groupings dependant upon social interactions and behavioural issues presented during the day. All members of staff need to be aware of the plans and procedures identified for dealing with pupils with specific behaviour plans.
- Visit Leaders must take a mobile phone in order to remain in contact with the school (and visa versa) during the time off-site. In the event of an emergency the school must be contacted immediately (or as soon as is practical) in order that the Head Teacher can take charge of the management of the incident. This procedure will follow the school’s Emergency Procedures.

Review

- All journeys and visits off-site must be reviewed and evaluated in relation to the visit aims and purpose in order to aid future planning. It is the responsibility of the Visit Leader to inform the EVC of any specific issues effecting future visits concerning the venue, the transport or the group.
- In the case of a residential or outdoor or adventurous activity, this will take the form of a formal meeting in the week following the trip.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessment and risk management are legal requirements. For educational visits they involve the careful examination of what could cause harm during the visit and whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill. The programme of a visit, as set out in the risk assessment and the consent form, should not be deviated from.

Risk assessment for educational visits can be usefully considered as having three levels:

- **Generic activity risk assessments**, which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place. These are usually prepared by the LA/employer or by the school. Examples of generic risk assessment include travel in the school minibus, coach travel and visits to coastal venues. School staff will not normally prepare them unless they have accumulated specific experience or other expertise.
- **Activity/site-specific risk assessments** which will differ from place to place and group to group. These are usually undertaken by the school for each venue and are amended as necessary for different groups. They should be prepared or agreed by someone trained and competent to assess risks.
- Activities such as swimming, crossing roads and curricular partnerships with other schools are examples of these site-specific risk assessments where the same venue is used each week and barring any changes to the nature of that venue, the prime concern on a weekly basis is the risk presented by the group of pupils undertaking the visit.
- However for visits which are 'one-offs' a specific risk assessment for the venue itself as well as for the pupils is required. Examples of this would be visits to farms, galleries, museums, public parks as part of a specific curriculum module for a specific class group
- For both of these the EVC will direct the visit leader to the relevant sections of LA/employer and national guidelines covering the type of visit.
- **Ongoing risk assessments** are those that take place on the day and take account of unplanned and unexpected changes, for example, illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activity. The visit leader is responsible for making decisions on an ongoing basis during the visit as to the appropriateness of continuing the visit in the light of prevailing conditions.
- **All staff and pupils should be aware of a "PLAN B" in the event of the planned agenda needing to change.** Visit leaders are always in charge. They should trust their own knowledge of the young people and use their own professional judgement. This may include challenging an activity leader where the visit leader's knowledge of the group is superior, or intervening to prompt a change of plan, including stopping an activity if they feel uncomfortable or believe that that it has become too hazardous.
- Where it is considered unsafe to include a particular pupil because there is serious doubts concerning their behaviour or it is felt that they represent a significant risk to themselves or others within the group (including staff), the Head Teacher will make the final decision on whether the pupil should access the trip and suitable alternatives that will meet the educational needs of the

visit will be planned.

VETTING OF PROVIDERS

When a residential or visit that includes adventurous activities (see * LA Approval System and Procedures Guidance Notes) is being considered, the Providers of such services should be sent a Provider Questionnaire to ensure that they meet the LA requirements.

LICENSED ACTIVITIES

- Most Providers who offer adventurous activities require an Adventurous Activity Licence. The adventurous activities that fall within the scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Service are; Caving, Climbing, Trekking and Watersports. More information can be found on www.aala.org.uk

INSURANCE

- When a trip is undertaken as part of the normal school curriculum, even though it is conducted off school premises, the insurance arrangements for the school will prevail.
- The visit leader must check the need for additional travel insurance depending upon the nature of the activity to be undertaken. (Contact the Insurance Section on 01872 322229)
- When a tour operator is used the type and extent of the insurance cover being used should be ascertained. All Providers must hold £5 million Public Liability Insurance.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

- The basic principle underlying the charging provisions of the 1988 Act (ERA 1988) is that education provided by any maintained school for its registered pupils should be free of charge if it takes place wholly or mainly during school hours.
- There is also the principle that an educational visit mainly outside the school day should be free of charge if it contributes to the delivery of the National Curriculum.
- Charges may be made for residential accommodation.
- Visits that are non-educational should not take place during school time denying access to full programmes of study.
- All visits during the school day should therefore be deemed to be educational.
- Voluntary contributions can be requested for any educational visit that takes place during the school day; however a pupil cannot be prevented from taking part in the visit on the basis of a family not making any or sufficient contribution.
- Where the visit is non-educational the charge cannot exceed the actual costs to be incurred. Costs can be calculated against transport, board and lodging, admission costs, costs of appropriate non-teaching staff, incidental costs of staff, materials and equipment and insurance costs.
- Accounts related to off-site activities should be kept by the visit leader and checked by the school finance secretary.

VOLUNTARY HELP

- The use of voluntary helpers should only be permitted by the Head Teacher or EVC This permission will be based upon knowledge of the volunteers and their previous experience, and

their competence to fulfil the role expected of them. The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.

- CRB checks should be carried out on all volunteer helpers who may have significant, unsupervised access to children (3 contacts in a month) – hence much advance notice is needed and those intending to use voluntary help should liaise with the EVC as early as possible in the planning phase
- All volunteer helpers have the same responsibility to follow the instructions of the visit leader.

TRANSPORT

- Parents should always be informed of the type of transport to be used and risk assessments carried out.
- Hired transport – The school should ensure appropriate levels of supervisory staff are available to ensure the safety and welfare of all pupils. The driver of the coach has no responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of the pupils.
- School Minibus – The school minibus policy should be adhered to at all times, including those aspects referring to supervision ratios. Your risk assessment will inform you if it is acceptable not to have a second adult in the vehicle supervising the group.
- Public transport – Close supervision should be ensured.
- Use of private cars – Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance cover for conveying pupils during the course of their professional duties. Parents must always be informed if members of staff intend to use private transport. School will not reimburse parents for the use of their cars.

INCLUSION

Under the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995, it is unlawful to:

- Treat a disabled young person less favourably.
- Fail to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled persons are not placed at a substantial disadvantage without justification.

A young person will be deemed to have a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Young people who have had, but no longer have, a disability are also protected from discrimination.

- The term “Impairment” includes sensory difficulties such as sight or hearing difficulties.
- “Mental impairment” covers a range of impairments relating to mental functioning, including “learning difficulties”.
- “Long term” in this context means it has lasted 12 months or more, or is likely to last at least 12 months, or is likely to last the rest of the person’s life.

Every effort should be made to ensure that learning outside the classroom and visits are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion. If a visit needs to cater for young people with special needs, every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

However, the Disability Code of Practice for schools states *‘where a child has a behaviour difficulty for a reason other than a disability, for example arising from social or domestic circumstances, it is likely that such a difficulty is not covered by the [DDA] legislation.’*

It is also the case that the reasonable adjustments made under the DDA to include a disabled young person, should not impinge unduly on the planned purpose of the activity. As an example, it may not be

appropriate for a parent to accompany a child on a residential visit where the planned learning outcomes of the visit include "developing independence" and "developing relationships".

A decision to exclude a young person should never be taken lightly, and only after extensive consultation with all those who have responsibility for the young person, including head teacher/manager, visit leader/class teacher, parent and any support staff and possibly their GP and any third party provider. Therefore it may be reasonable to exclude a young person where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety and welfare of either themselves, or other members of the group, or the leaders.

When a young person is excluded on these grounds, there should be consideration of providing alternative ways of achieving the same learning outcomes. Where there is some doubt as to including or excluding a young person on the grounds of their behaviour, then the following points should be considered:

- identifying the issue at the earliest stage of planning;
- involving all interested parties;
- recording this process;
- establishing a behaviour management plan with agreed actions that may enable inclusion on the visit;
- establishing behaviour targets and timescales to allow inclusion, or trigger a decision to exclude;
- providing an additional adult (parent or staff member) with a specific brief to manage behaviour issues;
- expectations of staff must be reasonable, within their competence and in keeping with normal practice.

FIRST AID

Qualified first aiders may not be necessary for all visits. However, first aid issues for any visit should be considered as part of the risk management process and the exact requirements should be determined by ensuring that first aid support is available at an appropriate level. What is "appropriate" will be determined by:

- the nature of the activity.
- the nature of the group.
- the likely injuries associated with the activity.
- the extent to which the activity will isolate the group from normal ambulance support, or a known point where a qualified first aider will be available.

A very basic level of first aid support must be available at all times. This will require that one or more of the staff leading the visit:

- know how to access qualified first aid support.
- have a working knowledge of simple first aid and are competent to use the first aid materials carried with the group.

For some activities (most commonly in defined adventure activities) there is a good practice expectation requiring those leading such activities to hold a current first aid qualification. To be a qualification, the first aid course must include a formalised assessment process; otherwise any certification will have the status of a certificate of attendance. In practical terms, the course will be a minimum of 16 hours.

It is a legal requirement that all minibuses must carry a first aid kit.

Consideration of the following examples should clarify understanding.

Example 1: A walk for 800m to the local library on a footpath adjacent to a public road with ambulance access. The school must have a 'first aid at work' first aider; so must the library. The visit leader is carrying a mobile phone in an area of good reception. A qualified first aider would be a bonus, but is not necessary.
Example 2: A walk along a canal towpath with no vehicular access for 2km to a picnic site. Any significant injury here would involve such a time delay in accessing an ambulance as to make it necessary for there to be someone with first aid training and expertise as a member of the group.

REVIEW

- ❖ Visit Leaders will need to evaluate the success of each trip with the EVC who can oversee the need for changes in arrangements for subsequent visits to the venue or with the particular group.
- ❖ In the event of a visit that involves a residential and/or adventurous activities, a formal review meeting between the EVC and the Visit Leader must take place.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Learning and Development Committee of the Governing Body in conjunction with the EVC.