



Educational Visits Policy

Date of Policy: September 2022

Review date(s): September 2024

**‘Being the best you can
be’**

WATERVILLE PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Rationale

A child's overall development is assisted in a desirable way by providing them with a variety of experience outside their normal environment.

"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

Purposes

- To enhance learning through first hand experiences
- To develop skills in observation, recording and reporting
- To assist in the development of responsible attitudes and skills
- To stimulate an interest in the outside world
- To give purpose and relevance to classroom learning

An educational visit can therefore 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, swimming pools etc. as well as residential trips and visits abroad.

Guidelines

1. There must be clearly stated aims and objectives, which are made known to the Head teacher, parents, children and all accompanying adults.
2. Good preparation is essential and should include a preliminary visit by the teacher.

3. Written -consent must be obtained from parents/carers for each child in the party.
4. Although other adults might play an important part in supervising groups, it must be appreciated that they cannot assume the same degree of responsibility as the teacher in charge.
5. During the visit common sense should prevail at all times.

The pupil/staff ratio must be checked with the Head teacher to decide the most appropriate number of adults.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Whoever organises school visits and journeys always has a duty of care towards those in their charge. They must do all that is practicable to ensure the safety of those participating in the visit. This duty of care includes the teachers and other supervisors acting in "loco parentis". This means they should exercise the same care which a reasonable, prudent and careful parent would exercise.

Local Authority

The LA's duty of care for children on school trips is exercised through its employees. This means that if something goes wrong, the LA may be held jointly responsible with the negligent person concerned. Where the governing body is the employer i.e. voluntary aided schools their role will be the same as the LA.

It is the responsibility of the LA to ensure guidelines and procedures are in place for such visits. That the guidelines include control measures and arrangements designed to minimise risks associated with the visit.

Range of School Visits and Journeys

Generally off-site visits fall into five categories:

- A. Regular curriculum - based activities, assuming largely within school hours - trips to swimming pools, playing fields.
- B. Activities extending beyond normal school hours (but not involving overnight stays) theatre, museums or concert trips.
- C. Activities or visits which last longer than 24 hours - which involve accommodation away from home. (Online Risk assessment approved by LA officer)
- D. Journeys outside Great Britain - which include travel by air or sea (Online Risk assessment approved by LA officer)
- E. Adventurous Activities day/residential (which include rock climbing, abseiling, orienteering, mountaineering, gorge or coastal scrambling, kayaking or canoeing, sailing, wind surfing, water skiing, boating, diving, caving, potholing, skiing, open water swimming, archery and all activities in wild country. (Online Risk assessment approved by LA officer)

LA Procedures

For category A and B activities online risk assessment to be completed and approved by Headteacher.

For category C, D and E online risk assessment to be completed and approved by the LA officer

Forms along with programmed itinerary and minutes of GB meeting approving the visits should be sent to Inspector for Physical Education at Schools Services no later than 10 weeks in advance of the visit.

Schools will be notified of approval within 4 weeks of receipt of the forms

Governing Body

Where the governing body is the employer the governors' role will be the same as that suggested for an LEA above. They should satisfy themselves that the risk assessment has been carried out, that appropriate safety measures are in place and that training needs have been addressed.

Governing bodies of all types of school should:

- ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective;
- ensure that the head teacher/group leader shows how their plans comply with regulations and guidelines, including the school's health and safety policy document and, where applicable, the LEA's; and that the head teacher/group leader reports back after the visit;
- ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance;
- assess proposals for certain types of visit, which should include visits involving an overnight stay or travel outside the UK, and submit these proposals to the LA if appropriate.

Headteacher

Headteachers should ensure that visits comply with regulations and guidelines provided by the LEA or governing body and the school's own health and safety policy. Head teachers should ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Head teachers should be clear about their role if taking part in the visit as a group member/supervisor. They should follow the instructions of the group leader who will have sole charge of the visit.

Headteachers should ensure that:

- adequate child protection procedures are in place;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place;
- training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered;
- the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader or another teacher is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.
- group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly;
- non-teacher supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children.
- ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate.

- the LA or governing body has approved the visit, if appropriate;
- parents have signed consent forms;
- arrangements have been made for the medical needs and special educational needs of all the pupils;
- adequate first-aid provision will be available;
- the mode of travel is appropriate.
- travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name;
- during visits abroad school and mobile telephones are operative for overseas calls;
- a school contact has been nominated (this may be the head teacher) and the group leader has details;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures;
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin;
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home.

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 Headteacher in ensuring that all visits follow LA regulations and guidance and all of the schools relevant policies and procedures.

The EVC will act on behalf of the Headteacher:

- 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 *Safe Practice of Offsite Activities* concerning their particular visit;
- to ensure that competent people 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 is an emergency contact for each visit;
- 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, where appropriate;
- to ensure that LA Approval forms have been completed in full and has been submitted to the least 6 weeks before the visit is due to depart, where appropriate;
- 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, on occasion, monitor practice.

Group Leader

One teacher, the group leader, should have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group. The group leader should have been appointed or approved by the head teacher or the governing body.

The group leader should:

- obtain the head teacher's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place;
- follow LEA and/or governing body regulations, guidelines and policies;
- appoint a deputy;
- clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location/ centre where the activity will take place;
- be aware of child protection issues;
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available;

- 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.
- give consideration to the risks associated with social or impromptu activities. Head teacher approval must be sought at all times;
- review regularly undertaken visits/activities and advise head teacher where adjustments may be necessary;
- ensure that teachers and other supervisors are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves;
- have enough information on the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- ensure the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group.
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality;
- ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact;
- ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures;
- ensure that the group's teachers and other supervisors have the details of pupils' special educational or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below.

Teachers

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the LA or of the governing body, whether the visit takes place within normal hours or outside those hours, by agreement with the head teacher and governors. Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances.

They should:

- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity, notifying the group leader, if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Adult Volunteers

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 training (on the job). The fact that help is voluntary does not negate the legal responsibility of those involved.

CRB checks should be carried out by the office on all volunteer helpers – 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.

Non-teacher adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

Non-teacher adults acting as supervisors 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 group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline;
- speak to the group leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit.

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 supervisors including those at the venue of the visit; dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- if abroad be sensitive to local codes and customs;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it.

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 wherever possible.

Parents

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit. The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions.

The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Parents should also be asked to agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and who will meet the cost.

Planning the visit

The **group leader** will plan and organise the visit submitting those plans to the headteacher for approval. The group leader will have overall responsibility for supervising the visit and should have regard to health and safety at all times, carry out a risk assessment and take into account the following when assessing the risks:

- dates of the visit;
- place of visit;
- visits objectives;
- times of departure and return - parents must have agreed to meet their child on return;
- the location where the pupils will be collected and returned;
- meal arrangements – order packed lunches;
- modes of travel including the name of any travel company;
- cost of visit and request for voluntary contributions;
- the size of the group, the level of and where appropriate the qualification of supervision including any times when remote supervision may take place;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- details of provision for special educational or medical needs;
- procedures for pupils who become ill;
- names of leader, of other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- class lists and group lists for each group leader;
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- standards of behaviour expected in respect of, e.g. alcohol, sexual behaviour, smoking and general group discipline including prohibited items;
- what pupils should not take on the visit or bring back;
- details of insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation, medical cover, any exceptions in the policy and whether parents need to arrange additional cover;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- money to be taken;
- the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to;
- on exchange visits the details of the host families. For example, whether they have hosted

any of the school's pupils;

- ensure that an assessment of the risks involved has been carried out and that all risks have been eliminated or minimised.

For Category C, D and E visits permission should be obtained from the LA.

Voluntary financial 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.

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, (this follows the KCC Minibus regulations) 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 rear of 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.

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.

Any planning for educational visits should involve risk assessment. This is particularly important when considering supervision and like any risk assessment should be carried out by a competent person i.e., someone with the experience and qualifications to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks arising from the visit and activity.

Staff/pupil ratio requires considerable consideration which should include the nature and location of the visit, the age and maturity of the group. Whether prompt outside assistance is available etc. Particular care regarding supervision ratios for children with special educational needs must be taken.

Adventurous activities often form the basis of an educational visit again particular consideration needs to be given to competency and qualifications of supervision including those employed at the particular activity centre. The revised edition of "Safe Practice in Physical Education" by BAALPE (The British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education) has been issued and should be adopted as should the DFEE good practice guide to Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits.

Reference to the LA should be made at the earliest stage when there is any doubt about qualifications, supervision and appropriateness of the activity.

Parents and other voluntary supervisors are often used to supplement the supervision ratio. When this occurs they must be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group. Anyone who has not had a criminal conviction check should never be left in sole charge of pupils.

Finally there will be activities when pupils are unsupervised. Consideration should be given to what times should be unsupervised on visits and the age of pupils, their maturity and what sort of behaviour can be expected of them. Children of primary age should always be supervised

Teachers

Teachers must make themselves aware of the agreed procedures for any particular visit including any specific duties/responsibilities specifically allocated to them. They are acting 'loco parentis' meaning they act as any reasonable parent involved in identifying risks to their charges and taking reasonable precaution to eliminate, minimise those risks.

Volunteers

Volunteers must be aware their responsibilities are very similar to that of the teaching staff. Ideally they should be known to the school and the pupil group and should never be left in sole charge of pupils unless they have undergone a satisfactory police check.

Accident and Emergencies

Medical consent ideally should form part of the parental consent form for the visit/activity (Form 4). Parents should be asked to agree to the pupil receiving emergency treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion; as considered necessary by the medical authorities. If parents do not agree to this, headteachers may in considering the additional responsibility this would entail for the group leader withdraw the child from the visit.

Form 4 should also be completed by staff and adult volunteers who participate in the visit.

When planning and preparing any out of school activities it is important to set up procedures including lines of communication and first aid responsibilities in case of an accident or emergency. All staff, pupils and parents should be made aware of what these procedures are.

Recording and reporting of accidents is covered elsewhere within the schools Health & Safety policy. These procedures still apply on educational visits.

First aid procedures are also covered in this guidance. While not all the procedures are relevant for educational visits the method of recording first aid treatment still applies. A travelling first aid kit must be available and a suitably trained member of staff identified to deal with first aid emergencies.

It is worth noting a serious accident can result in staff and pupils being traumatised even when not injured or directly involved in an incident. In this situation the Councils Health & Safety Section can advise on where support can be obtained.

General

Emergency procedures framework

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit have a duty of care to make sure that the 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.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of planning a school visit. County and controlled schools should follow LA guidance on emergency planning procedures.

If an accident happens, the priorities are 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.

Who will take charge in an emergency?

The group leader would usually take charge in an emergency and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and that back up cover is arranged. The group leader should liaise with the representative of the tour operator if one is being used.

Pre-arranged school home contact

The school contact's main responsibility is to link the group with the school, the parents and the LA (where appropriate), and to provide assistance as necessary. The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit. See Form 5.

Emergency procedures framework

All those involved in the school trip, including supervisors, pupils and their parents, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency procedures framework during the visit

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the main factors to consider include:

- establish the nature and extent 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 are adequately supervised at all times and kept together;
- notify the police if necessary;
- notify the British Embassy/Consulate if an emergency occurs abroad;
- inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible at all times during the visit; school contact will inform LA.

In the event of an emergency all media enquiries should be referred to the LA. The name of any casualty should not be given to the media.

After a serious incident

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other pupils or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases reactions do not surface immediately. Schools in this situation have sometimes found it helpful to contact local community support services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher.

Reviewed by M Nugent September 2022

School Visits checklist

1. All visits should be authorized by the headteacher.
2. Careful consideration should be given to the aims and objectives of each visit and to the nature of the activities which are to be experienced.
3. One teacher in each year group will be responsible for the overall organisation and supervision of the visit.
4. A prior visit to the site should be undertaken to assess potential hazards as well as possible educational activities.
5. One adult should be responsible for allocating and taking charge of First *Aid* Kits.
6. At all times LA regulations on the ratio of teachers to pupils must be followed as should any regulations on insurance.
7. It is important that all pupils and supervising adults should wear clothing and footwear appropriate to the activity.
8. As much information as possible regarding the visit should be sent home in advance giving details of the date, time, purpose, cost, clothing, footwear, packed lunch, pocket money, departure and return times.
9. There should be evidence of written parental permission for all visits.
10. There should be clear evidence of a risk assessment being carried out for the visit.
11. All those supervising pupils on visits should be given clear guidance and instructions in line with the risk assessment.
12. If teachers use their own cars for taking pupils on visits they are to seek confirmation from their insurance companies that they are fully insured for doing so.