

St. James' CE Primary School



Learning Together: Caring Together

Educational Visits Policy

Policy Reviewed: July 2016

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Review Date: July 2018

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It is school policy to follow the guidance set out in the WCC Educational Service document: "Off-site Visits, Field Studies and Outdoor Education Guidelines" (2005).

All school visits and off-site activities are planned in the broad educational context of supporting the following educational aims and objectives:

- To use direct experience to improve knowledge, awareness and understanding of targeted curriculum objectives.
- To strengthen personal development and the process of self-discovery.
- To develop a sense of community and the ability to live and co-operate with others in a group or team context.
- To encourage and develop self-reliance, self-discipline and self-esteem.
- To enhance a sense of responsibility towards self, others and the wider environment.

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 St. James' CE Primary School.

Head Teacher/Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC):

The Headteacher at St. James' will endeavour to ensure that:

- she has appointed a qualified and competent 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;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- the governing body has approved the visit **if necessary**;
- parents have signed consent forms or acknowledgement 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 volunteer's next of kin.

Group Leader:

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

- have completed the Visit Leader training organised by the LA;
- appoint a deputy;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- work with the EVC (Headteacher) to 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).

Other teachers and adults involved in a visit:

Teacher 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:

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

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent/acknowledgement form;

- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

Planning off-site visits:

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Headteacher/EVC is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader, but the Headteacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.

A Pre-Visit Planning Form (PPF - Appendix 1) should be completed and approved by Headteacher/EVC before the visit is finalised. The organiser/group leader must then agree all ongoing plans with the Headteacher/EVC.

Generic risk assessments:

These are statements of good practice which can apply to the given activity, wherever and whenever it takes place. They will identify the hazards and associated risks and set out the usual (but non-specific) control measures that can be implemented to reduce the risks to a level that will allow the activity to proceed.

Event specific risk assessments:

These assessments will usually be the responsibility of the appointed Visit Leader, will be unique to each occasion and in terms of good practice, should best be carried out in a team context by the staff running the activity. They should take into account the site/environment, individuals within the group and any activity-specific needs, including the environment, accommodation, the staff and factors such as transport (please see Appendix 2). If a visit is taking place that is residential and/or over 50 miles away from the school, the LA will be informed using an online form.

Ongoing/dynamic risk assessments:

This involves professional judgements regarding operational group management, in response to changing circumstances. It is critical that control measures are monitored and confirmed or adapted as required. It is these ongoing decisions that will determine the safety of the group and success of the activity.

Generic Risk Assessments are the starting point. They are tested against the event and the group to see whether they can stand as they are or they require adapting. Together with other specific risk assessments, they inform the plan.

The safety of the visit lies with the Ongoing Risk Assessment, which monitors the plan as it unfolds and confirms or adapts it according to other immediate influences such as adverse weather forecasts.

The lessons learnt from Ongoing Risk Assessments will inform future Event and Generic Risk Assessments.

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. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from Tourist Boards.

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 sensible to have at least one trained First-Aider in the group. The minimum first-aid provision is:

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

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a First-Aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Headteacher/EVC should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first-aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

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.

Where a high adult:pupil ratio is required, it is not always feasible to use school staff alone. Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.

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

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. 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.

Participation:

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

Information to pupils:

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit / activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- why safety precautions are in place;
- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group;
- emergency procedures;
- meeting procedures.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs:

The Headteacher/EVC 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.

Communicating with Parents/Carers:

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 duty of 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 provided to parents/carers prior to a visit:

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- mode(s) of travel including the name of any travel company;
- visit's objectives;
- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested;
- 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.

Parental consent:

If parents withhold consent absolutely the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible.

On the day of the visit - Group Leader:

- Pink emergency cards for each adult;
- Group lists;
- Risk Assessments;
- Mobile phones - one on each bus if possible;
- Details of venue;
- Medical supplies for each bus.

Class teachers:

- Ensure a consent/acknowledgement form has been completed for each child;
- Talk to the children about:
 - Expectations of behaviour.
 - Staying with appointed adult at all times.
 - Safety points.
 - Outline programme for the day.

All adults:

- Each adult in the group to have a pink emergency procedure card.
- Each adult in the group to have a list of the children in their care (group lists).
- Each adult in the group to have a copy of the Risk Assessment.

After the visit:

All group leaders should undertake an assessment of the visit. They should consider:

- *the extent to which the educational objectives have been met;*
- *the suitability of the Risk Assessment;*
- *any significant issues;*
- *any factors that should be taken into consideration when planning future visits.*

The PPF should be returned to the Headteacher/EVC noting any significant issues or factors. This information should be taken into consideration in future planning.

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The Radar



St. James' CE Primary School - Risk/Benefit Assessment

ACTIVITY AND ENVIRONMENT:

Visit Leader and Contact Details:

Assistant Leaders (inc. First Aiders):

<p>1. Significant Hazards and Identification of Risk: <i>Those hazards which may result in serious harm or affect several people:</i></p>	<p>2. Those who might be harmed: <i>The persons who are at risk from the significant hazards identified:</i></p>	<p>3. Control Measures:</p>	<p>4. Residual Risk Rating:</p>

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Agreed by Headteacher/EVC: