



Educational Visits Policy

Evidence of intentions and practice - for the information of staff, governors, parents, LA, OFSTED and DfE

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Approved by:
Finance, Health & Safety Committee

Issue date:
Autumn 2016

Review date:
Autumn 2017



PARKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Educational Visits Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Educational visits are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school and take place outside the school grounds. The Governors and teaching staff believe that off-site activities can supplement and enrich the curriculum of the school by providing experiences which would otherwise not take place. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.
- 1.2 In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our educational visits, and to ensure that risks are appropriately managed to ensure the safety and health of all participants at all times. Within these limits we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and would only seek to exclude pupils if their behaviour could not be managed safely within the context of the school visit and was likely to cause harm to themselves and jeopardise the safety of others. The visits usually take place within the school day.
- 1.3 The LA (Local Authority) has appointed an Educational Visits Advisor (EVA) who provides guidance, information, advice and support for educational visits. The EVA may occasionally meet with school visits/activities in progress. Advanced notice will normally be given though in exceptional circumstances, unannounced monitoring visits may take place. The EVA has the power to stop a visit in progress if the level of risk is considered to be unacceptable. The EVA will provide feedback on findings of the visit, verbally to the Visit Leader and in writing to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors.
- 1.4 Our Educational Visits Advisor is Clive Atkins clive.atkins@btopenworld.com
- 1.5 Current versions of the LA *Policy, Procedures and Guidance for Educational Visits and Off-site Activities* and DCSF visits guidance, are available from the Guidance page of the EVOLVE website. A copy of this school policy on Educational Visits is also available to view or download from the Home Page of our EVOLVE website.
- 1.6 All staff have access to the school account on our EVOLVE website. All staff have an individual copy of the school policy and it has been discussed fully with all staff. This policy will be agreed by the full Governing Body, any amendments and updates will be highlighted at full staff meetings and the policy amended. In the future, this policy will be considered by the Curriculum sub committee of the Governing Body.
- 1.7 The school takes out annual personal accident insurance cover for children taking part in educational visits through the Local Authority. Copies of this policy are available in the school office.

- 1.8 Training and instruction on this Educational Visits policy are included in the Staff Handbooks for all staff. Records of specific training undertaken by staff are recorded and collated by the CPD coordinator, Miss C Smith (Head)

2 Aims

The aims of our off-site visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils;
- provide a wider range of experiences for our pupils than could be provided on the school site alone;
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.
- promote risk awareness and teach children to manage risk.
- provide a catalyst for improved academic performance, a lifetime interest and in some cases professional fulfilment.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from education visits.
- Ensure all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet educational needs of pupils taking part.
- Enable the school to identify appropriate functions, responsibilities, training, support and monitoring for all Governors, Head, staff, volunteers, pupils and providers involved in education visits.
- Ensure all visits comply with LA, *Policy, Procedures and Guidance for Educational Visits and Off-site Activities (Sept. 2004)* and subsequent revisions and keep up to date with further advice.
- Ensure all visits meet current DSF guidance on off-site visits,
- Ensure, where appropriate, further advice is sought from the Local Authority Educational Visits Advisor and other technically competent personnel.

4 Curriculum links

4.1 The school curriculum is organised in termly themes and topics which is enhanced by educational visits. Visits supporting this include:-

- visits to other schools – primary and secondary
- visits to the City Learning Centre
- visits to the local libraries
- study of the local area
- visits to contrasting areas
- museums
- curriculum trails
- museums and art galleries
- sporting fixtures including extra-curricular activities
- musical events including visits to the City Hall
- visits to outside agencies including the emergency services and local hospitals
- visits to local centres of worship

5 Approval

5.1 **All planned visits** not requiring LA approval require forms are **to be submitted at least one week before the visit takes place.**

5.2 **All visits needing LA approval** including residential visits need **to be completed at least three weeks before** departure. Monitoring of these procedures will take place.

- All visits have a clear educational purpose and are linked to the school aims.
- Where possible, they are planned and approved well in advance in accordance with visits planning procedures.
- Governors will be informed of all visits but delegate approval to the Head teacher.
- The parents/carers of children taking part in an off-site activity must be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit.
- For all visits that take place, parents/carers are required to give their permission in writing. Within the immediate locality, permission is given at the start of every year. For all other visits, if written permission is not received, verbal permission is sought.
- Where a parent/carer does not wish their child to take part in a visit, it should be explained to the parent/carer that the visit is part of the curriculum and their child would be missing out on educational opportunities. If the parent/carer still does not wish their child to take part, the child must still come to school and have appropriate work set for them and work in another class.
- All visits must be approved, prior to departure, in accordance with current LA Educational Visits Notification and Approval procedures. Where appropriate further technical advice will be sought prior to notification and approval.

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Education Visits Coordinator (EVC)

- The current Educational Visits Coordinator is Mrs L Warrener.
- The EVC will
 - identify and record, with the minimum paperwork, qualifications, training, development, and induction arrangements for all visit leaders
 - approve visit leadership, visit planning, risk management and evaluation of all visits.

6.2 Visit Leader

There will be a named Visit Leader (and where appropriate, deputy) on all visits. This will usually be a teacher but may be a teaching assistant when a small group of children is involved, at all times this will be a suitably competent member of staff who must have regard for the health and safety of the whole group

6.3 The Visit Leader will

- have a duty of care for everyone taking part in the visit, ensuring sufficient competent staff and helpers are present who are appropriately vetted

(DBS at enhanced level if appropriate) and briefed prior to and throughout the visit.

- ensure that appropriate risk management procedures are in place and generic, site specific and ongoing risk assessments are undertaken and recorded where appropriate.
- ensure a named person, emergency procedures and systems for recording and sharing information on accidents and near misses are in place before briefing pupils and parents/carers.
- ensure Best Value principles are used when selecting providers, appropriate checks are made, insurance and financial support procedures are followed.
- undertake exploratory visits or seek references if using new venues.
- be fully conversant with the school's emergency procedures and should take a copy of these on each visit
- carry all relevant documentation with them at all times.

6.4 **Parents/Carers**

- The school prospectus will give details about Education Visits practice and safety procedures etc
- Parents/carers will be given sufficient written and other information about all visits to make informed decisions and give written consent, medical and contact details, when required
- Where appropriate for higher risk, residential and visits abroad, meetings with parents/carers will be arranged
- Expectations of behaviour and codes of conduct will be explained to parents/carers. This will include the need to meet the cost and make arrangements for collecting children in certain circumstances.

6.5 **Children**

If, as a result of a risk assessment, the Visit Leader is concerned that a particular child would not be able to comply with the rules of the visit, then the Visit Leader should seek the views of the Headteacher.

6.6 Children should be briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all visits. Ongoing briefings are an important part of learning and safety. Where possible, children should be involved with planning, developing codes of conduct, assessing/ managing risk and evaluating their own attitude, behaviour, development and learning.

6.7 Children must be made to understand the standards of behaviour expected and that if they were to act dangerously or in a manner which puts others at risk, they will be withdrawn from the remainder of the visit. Children should be warned of the potential dangers and what to do to keep themselves and others safe. If this then reduces the levels of supervision below the minimum, the activity must be stopped. Children and parents/carers should be made aware of these conditions prior to any visit taking place.

6.8 Children using transport on a school visit should be made aware of the basic safety rules to be followed. Special provision may have to be made for children with SEN and those with medical or additional needs. The Visit Leader should ensure that these have been considered and, if necessary, discussed with the SENCO, parent/carers and Head.

- 6.9 Any accident or violent incident that occurs during the visit should be recorded using the relevant forms and submitted once the visit has finished. (Notes should be made at the time.)
- 6.10 On return to home base the Visit Leader must ensure that a debrief is held with the group leaders and other supervisors and that any relevant issues raised are recorded and used as part of the planning process for subsequent visits and activities.
- 6.11 **Teachers** must
- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent /carer would in the same circumstances
 - follow the instructions of the Group Leader and help with control and discipline
 - consider stopping the visit or activity, notifying the Group Leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable
- 6.12 **Adult Volunteers** should
- if possible, be DBS cleared. If they are not they **must NOT** be left alone with children
 - be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit. Visit Leaders should ensure that volunteers are made aware of their specific role/ responsibilities and the content of the risk assessment relating to the visit at a pre-visit meeting
 - 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 supervisors and help with control and discipline.
 - speak to the Visit Leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health or safety of pupils at any time during the visit
 - only be accompanied by school children who are eligible to be participating in the visit.

7 Guidance for adult/pupil ratios:

Category of visit	Under 5 /FS	Years 1-3	Years 4-6
1,2	1:3	1:6	1:15
3	1:2	1:4	1:10
4,5	1:1	1:3	1:6
Swimming in local swimming pool.	Not permitted	1:4	1:12
Swimming in sea or natural water.	Not permitted	Not permitted	Not permitted

- 7.1 The above ratios are the minimum ratios and these should always be subject to risk assessment - e.g. children that are included with behaviour IEPs would suggest that a higher number of adults should support the visit.

8 Educational Visits

8.1 Medical Conditions

An appropriate Risk Assessment form will need to be completed.

- PC1 Local visits
- PC2 Residential and Adventurous Visits
- PC3 SLA Swimming

8.2 Travel

An appropriate Travel Risk Assessment form will need to be completed.

8.3 Emergency Procedures

In the case of a serious, fatal accident or emergency follow the EP1 flowchart and contact numbers on the EP2. Staff need to be familiar with these procedures before the visit and carry EP1 and a completed up to date version of EP2 with them on the visit.

9 Charging for visits

9.1 The costing of off-site activities should include any of the following that apply:

- travel
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to volunteers
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for

9.2 Parents/carers are asked for a voluntary contribution towards the cost of visits.

9.3 Children should not be withdrawn from a visit because of a parent's/carers refusal to pay, however parental/carer consent to go on the visit must still be obtained, where appropriate. If a trip cannot be funded with contributions, it may have to be cancelled.

9.4 On residential visits charges can be made for board and lodging but not for travel outside of the normal school day. These may be remitted for parents receiving certain benefits. Voluntary contributions may be requested for these visits as described above.

10 Travel

10.1 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use buses fitted with seat belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit. Service buses on fixed routes may be used for visits. These are the only buses that can be used for educational visits that do not have seat belts fitted.

10.2 Where private cars are used for transport, the school is responsible for checking the driving licence, insurance, tax, MOT and each child must use an appropriate child restraint. Where school staff use their own cars to transport children, their insurance policy must include business use.

11 Communication with parents/carers

11.1 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by voluntary parental contributions with a limited subsidy from the school. This must be made clear

to parents/carers in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

- 11.2 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

12 Further health and safety considerations

- 12.1 Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.
- 12.2 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of great importance. During the activity the Visit Leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the safety of the entire party. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns, and ensuring that children and adults are both safe and well looked after at all times.
- 12.3 Although part of the health and safety policy, educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum plan and strategies for learning. They should be closely linked to equal opportunities, special needs, policies for inclusion and staff development.

13 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.