

The Shrubbery School Educational Visits Policy

Aim

The aim of this policy is to sustain and promote a broad range of off-site Educational Visits from this School, whilst ensuring safe practice and competent supervision.

Background Information:

Definition of an Educational Visit:

Any organized, off-site visit involving pupils or young people that requires the permission and approval from the Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) and the parents/carers of the pupils or young people attending. A Visit may take place at any time of the year.

Key Points for all visits:

- All Educational Visits must have clearly identified aims and objectives.
- All Educational Visits must have an approved competent Visit Leader who is a Shrubbery School employee.
- Approval for an Educational Visit and for the designated competent Visit Leader role is made by the EVC or Head Teacher.
- All visits must provide evidence of a prepared written risk assessment.
- Visit Leaders must carry copies of all supporting documentation on the visit, e.g. emergency contacts, itinerary, names and group detail.
- EVC's/Administration must retain and record all supporting documentation centrally.
- Parents must be fully informed of all arrangements.
- Reasonable adjustments to be considered.

OFSTED's Key Finding from its most recent report on Learning Outside the Classroom (Oct 2008) states:

When planned and implemented well, learning outside the classroom contributed **significantly to raising standards** and improving pupils' or young people's personal, social and emotional development.

The school fully supports the vision behind the Government's 'Learning Outside the Classroom' Manifesto. We recognize that the benefits for children engaged on educational visits include:

- Raising achievement through organized, powerful experiences and opportunities.
- Participating in challenging physical activity and encouraging healthy lifestyle
- Raising self-esteem, confidence and independence.
- Appreciating landscape diversity through exploring natural environments
- Experiencing a range of built environments, extending their cultural awareness and widening horizons.
- Being involved in teamwork and problem-solving through residential experiences
- Engaging pupils or young people and making learning 'real' and relevant.
- Supporting national agendas and initiatives eg 'Every Child Matters', the curriculum for Early Years Foundation Stage, Primary and 'Social Emotional Aspects of Learning'.

Inclusion and Entitlement

Educational visits are an integral part of the curriculum. All pupils or young people are entitled to participate irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender, differences in ability and disabilities in line with our duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

Each pupil or young person has an entitlement to experience:

- Effective learning opportunities
- Success in learning
- Achieving as high a standard as possible
- A Residential experience

Teachers will set appropriate learning challenges, responding to pupils' diverse learning needs. The school will make provision, with well-planned reasonable adjustments made to support pupils, enabling them where possible to participate effectively in all educational visits.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head Teacher

- Must be consulted on any educational visit being organised and kept informed of arrangements, as necessary.
- Ensures that the Educational Visits Co-coordinator (EVC) is aware of his/her duties and that a clear line of responsibility is established.
- Head Teachers who sign approval forms for Educational Visits must in turn have evidence of recent and relevant training through either: full- day EVC training, half-day EVC top-up training or EVC twilight training delivered by an Outdoor Learning Service.
- Ensures the Educational Visits Co-coordinator (EVC) is competent, trained and is revalidated/accredited through Local Authority Top-Up courses every three years as a minimum.

- Makes sure through the Head Teaches report, that the owners are kept informed of the nature and progress/success of educational visits.
- Ensures adequate Staff Inset, Visit Leader Training, First Aid and Continued Professional Development (CPD) for Educational Visits (yearly revisiting of the policy with all staff as a minimum.)
- Ensures that the office update medical and personal/address details for all pupils upon notification from carers.
- Considers Insurance matters for Educational Visits and fully informs parents.
- Writes and fully informs parents regarding regular and repeated activity that is either on or off-site PE and sporting activity and fixtures or regular repeated programme of off-site Educational Visits for example swimming.
- Ensures the school policy for transporting children in cars is adhered to.
- Parents are informed they have responsibility for transporting their own children to and from venues when transport is not provided.

Educational Visits Co-coordinator

- Promotes and 'Champions' Educational Visits from the School and takes a lead in policy development, monitoring, INSET and other training for Educational Visits.
- Approves all visits and notifies the owners for categories of 'Adventurous Activities' and 'Overseas Visits'.
- Approval of Educational Visits will include approving the competency of the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff (consultation with the Head Teacher may be desirable/advisable on occasions)
- Ensure the Visit Leader is a Shrubbery School employee.
- Ensures consideration of the requirements of Birmingham's Policy and Guidance document 'Learning OutsideThe Classroom'.
- Ensure approval, notification forms and checklists are completed (see appendix)
- Ensures that all the procedures outlined in the School/establishment policy are followed.
- Supports and advises colleagues in planning visits.
- Ensures that appropriate risk assessments are completed and appropriate control measures are in place reducing risk to an acceptable level.
- Ensures that a 'Collective Discussion/briefing' regarding the 'risk assessment' process prior to the visit has taken place, this ensures ownership of the 'risk assessment' by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff
- Ensures all staff are aware of Educational visits procedures via documentation and Inset sessions, staff training and relevant meetings.
- Checks to ensure parents are kept fully informed of visit arrangements and details.
- Ensures accident and emergency procedures are in place and understood by all staff. Records of all accidents reports and near misses are held centrally in the school by the EVC. i.e the Risk Management Portfolio. • Records of all visits are held centrally in the school by the EVC. i.e the Risk Management Portfolio for

each and every visit which will include lists of all participants, risk assessments itinerary and programme information.

- Ensures appropriate staff records are collated for all Educational Visits and then stored; including checks on staff qualifications and driving details (including car insurance with business use if transporting pupils or young people in own cars).
- Review staff evaluations of trips and provide and encourage staff training and CPD
- Ensure an annual review of any generic school risk assessments and an annual 'Fit for Purpose' review of the School Policy for Educational Visits.

Visit Leader

- The Visit Leader must ensure there are clear educational aims for the visit, be specifically competent and approved as the Visit Leader by the Head Teacher/EVC.
- Have a thorough up to date knowledge of the School Educational Visits Policy and procedures.
- Understand the importance of the 'Collective Discussion/briefing' regarding the 'risk assessment' process prior to the visit, ensuring ownership of the 'risk assessment' by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff.
- All staff included on a visit must have a clear understanding of accident/emergency procedures.
- The Visit Leader must carry an Emergency Contact List of everyone going on the visit in addition to the Emergency Base Contacts. This list must include: names, addresses and telephone numbers of each child and adult; any special medical requirements; any negative consents to medical treatment; any special dietary requirements; helpers and the groups that the children will be in.
- Ensure parents are kept fully informed of visit arrangements, details and itinerary.
- Plan the visit carefully and carry out risk assessments prior to visit. Ensures that copies of these details are given to the Head Teacher and EVC in the agreed time.
- It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to give appropriate and clear information regarding risk assessments and roles and responsibilities to any additional adult/volunteer helpers, if possible invite them to take part in the 'Collective Discussion/briefing' to promote 'ownership'.
- Collate and check parental consent forms for all pupils or young people. A clear risk assessment must be made for any named child with known medical or behavioural issues.
- It is the Visit Leader's and support staff's responsibility to ensure children are suitably briefed at all stages of the visit. All group members must be clear of rules and behaviour code. Children should be involved in the ongoing risk assessment

- The Visit Leader has responsibility for whole group and must ensure the following documentation is taken on all visits: all relevant pupil or young person medical and consent information, the risk assessment inc a Plan B, itinerary details, emergency contact details and 'Critical Incident' emergency numbers.
- Copies of these documents must be kept by the Visit Leader, the school office and a copy of emergency contacts.
- It is the Visit Leader's responsibility to ensure adequate first aid has been considered and provided for the visit and that first aid kits are taken along with individual children's medical kits and requirements as appropriate.
- All staff and adult helpers should be made aware of who is responsible for first aid. The risk assessment must show evidence first aid has been considered.
- Transport for all visits must meet LA guidance/standards. The itinerary, the arrangements and drop off and collection places must be checked and agreed upon.

Notes on 'Risk Management' and the Planning and Preparation for Educational Visits

Thorough preparation for a visit must be undertaken. The EVC and the Head Teacher should be consulted regarding the arrangements, nature and purpose of the visit. The visit should have clear educational aims. The following must be addressed in further planning:

- Matters of supervision, Provider checks, content of the day(s) activities, first aid and transport must be considered and organised in advance.
- Parents must be advised of the details of any visit and kept fully informed. Any cost of the visit must take into account value for money.
- All necessary permission/consent slips must be obtained.
- A charged mobile phone should be taken on all trips. Check that mobile phone coverage is in the area that you are visiting.
- An Emergency Contingency Plan B needs to be in place, detailing alternative arrangements due to inclement weather, transport breakdown etc.
- Planning support, notification forms, provider questionnaire, checklists and generic risk assessments can be accessed through Staff Common/trips

How to undertake a risk assessment and who to submit it to

In addition to the above planning, a written Risk Assessment (a statutory requirement) must be made for any proposed educational off-site visit.

It should:

- Identify any significant risks which pupils or young people, staff and helpers may be exposed to and outline any control measures that will be put in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level;
- Be passed on to the EVC and Head Teacher for consultation and approval.
- During the visit, be kept with the Emergency Contact List and other planning and risk management documentation.

Ensure a suitable 'Collective Discussion/briefing' takes place regarding the 'risk assessment' prior to the visit, ensuring ownership of the 'risk assessment' by the Visit Leader and all accompanying staff. Any 'Generic' risk assessments must be changed, adapted or modified to suit the specific considerations and needs of the group during this discussion/meeting. **The six main considerations in undertaking risk assessments are:**

- Type of Group
- Staffing (ratios and competency)
- Equipment
- Venue/Activities
- Travel
- Emergency Procedures

With more hazardous or unusual visits close contact between school and the venue/provider is an important safeguard. A preliminary staff visit should be made if necessary. Seek advice of Head Teacher/EVC.

Risk Assessments must be passed on to the EVC/ Head Teacher as follows:

- **Off-site visits - 2 weeks prior to the visit.**
- **Sporting events 7 days notice**

During the visit

In addition to measures documented on the Risk Assessment staff should -

- If traveling by coach, **EITHER** hand a copy of the emergency contact list, in a sealed envelope, to the driver (this **must** be collected from the driver as you exit the coach) **OR** ensure driver has school contact details.
- Carry a class list/register. This is to be called before starting a trip and departing from any visit. In addition a head count should be done.
- Ensure adequate supervision and check children are always given suitable briefings in their group with their group leader and staff take regular head counts.
- Be prepared to make 'ongoing' professional judgments related to assessment of risks.

After the visit

- A post visit evaluation report should be completed, any accident/incident details recorded and the risk assessment reviewed appropriately.
- Where possible encourage children and adult helpers to contribute to this report. A copy of the report should be given to the EVC.

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