



Educational Visits Policy

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Aldersbrook Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

At Aldersbrook Primary School visits outside of the school environment are regarded as valuable and educationally enriching for the children and adults involved. For all staff, children and helpers to remain safe and secure during such activities, the following policy must be followed.

Role of the Educational Visits Coordinator

To help fulfil its health and safety obligations for visits, an EVC must be appointed for Aldersbrook Primary School. The EVC acts on behalf of the Head teacher and must attend training to remain up-to-date with legislation and guidance. Functions of the EVC are to:

- Ensure that an appropriate school policy is in place for visits.
- Keep records of educational visits and to make these available to the LEA where requested, as part of the LEA's statutory monitoring role as employer.
- Ensure that DfES guidance, LEA guidance, school policy and other relevant documentation is readily available for access by staff.
- Liaise with the LEA to ensure that educational visits meet the LEA's requirements including those of risk assessment.
- Assign competent people to leads or supervise visits.
- Assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for the visit.
- Review systems and monitor practice.

Approval of Visits

All visits must be approved by the Headteacher, aided by the EVC. In doing this the 'Educational Visits Checklist' must be completed and the leader for the visit must be deemed as competent.

The 'Educational Visit Approval Form' must be completed and handed to the EVC at least one week before the visit is scheduled to take place. All required forms (either electronic or paper versions) must be checked by the EVC/Head Teacher and returned/approved prior to the visit taking place.

Educational Aims of Visits

All visits must have clearly defined educational aims. These aims must be identified on 'Educational Approval Form'.

Competence of Visit Leaders

The EVC must assess the competence of a member of staff wishing to lead a visit. The following will be considered with this assessment:

- What are the leader's reasons for undertaking this visit?
- Has the leader a teaching or similar qualification and are they an employee of the LEA?
- Has the leader a real sense of responsibility, extending beyond the teaching of subjects to concern for the pupil's well-being?
- Does the leader possess the necessary organising ability?
- Is the leader competent in risk assessment procedures?
- What experience does the leader have of the pupils he/she intends to lead?
- What experience does the leader have in leading activities?
- What experience does the leader have with the environment involved?

The EVC reserves the right to appoint an alternative leader if the planned leader is assessed as being incompetent to lead a visit.

Teachers

Teachers must work closely under the supervision of the group leader before and during the visit. Under no circumstances must teachers abandon the planned visit without being advised from the group leader.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is nothing more than a careful examination of what could cause harm to people, together with the identification of control measures in order to reduce the risks to level deemed to be acceptable.

There are three levels of risk assessment that need to be considered for all visits:

- a) Generic
- b) Event Specific
- c) On-going

a) Generic

Generic risk assessments are completed for all visits that take place at Aldersbrook Primary School and are contained within the Year Group Educational Visits folders. These include guidance that remains constant regardless of the nature of the visit and those who attend. **Generic risk assessments must be shared with those who are involved with the visit during the completion of the approval form and the checklist.**

b) Event Specific

These risk assessments consider any *significant* hazards or risks relating to a visit not covered through the Generic assessment, taking into account the activities, the group of children, transport and Plan B. *Significant* implies those hazards that could result in serious harm or effect to people. The Event Specific risk assessment must be completed by all staff attending the visit and recorded on the ESRA form. Once completed it uploaded to Evolve before the visit takes place..

c) On-going

When on a visit, risks should be monitored throughout and where appropriate activities should be modified or curtailed to suit changed or changing circumstances. On-going risk assessments should be recorded on Evolve under the 'evaluation' tab.

Preliminary visits and risk assessment

The group leader of the visit will need to make a preliminary visit,. This is to determine the programme of activities for the day and also to enable staff to become familiar with the site, the location of toilets, places for lunch, suitable areas etc. It is also essential that the visit is used to carry out any risk assessment.

1. Is the adult to child ratio adequate? The suggested ratio (given later within the policy) may need to be amended depending on the place being visited or the nature of the visit.
2. Are there any behaviour, medical or SEN issues regarding the children being taken on the trip? It may be necessary to inform the venue or take additional adults. If a child has a physical disability then access issues must be explored and you may need to contact parents separately.
3. Are there any dangers on the roads? If children are walking anywhere, routes need planning with care and roads crossed at the safest point, usually at a crossing. Pupils should normally walk in twos with an adult at the front, the rear and, if possible, in the middle.
4. Are there risks at the venue? There are many considerations such as how the children will be supervised or whether the venue is open to the public.
5. Where will lunch be eaten? Some venues require advance booking of lunch spaces. Where are the toilets? Ideally, an adult should accompany children and wait outside the toilet door.
6. What steps are to be taken to ensure children do not get lost? Frequent head counts should take place throughout the visit, particularly on arrival, on leaving and on boarding transport. Children should know what to do in the unlikely event of being separated from the party. They should be told of a meeting place in the case of older children or they should be told to approach a police officer, a member of staff at the place being visited or a transport worker in a uniform who can take the appropriate action.

7. Does the weather pose a risk? Depending on the time of year the weather could create different risks. If it is hot and the children are outside then they should be told to bring a hat and sunscreen. If it is cold then they should be asked to wear warm clothes. The risk assessment should identify what will happen if children do not have appropriate clothing for the visit.

Staffing, Ratios and Supervision

Appropriate supervision must take place at all times during visits.
The following ratios should be used as a maximum guide:

- 1 : 4 for Nursery and Reception children
- 1 : 6 for Years 1-4
- 1 : 10 for Years 5-6

Professional judgement must be used when deciding the appropriate level and suitability of staffing for a visit.

Communicating with Parents

Parents and those with parental responsibility should be made fully aware of the likely risks and their management, so that consent or refusal can be given on a fully informed basis. Information to parents needs to include full details of all activities to be undertaken and venues, together with supervision arrangements.

Written permission must be obtained from all parents prior to the visit, including information regarding specific medical needs and contact telephone number(s).

The school holds 'blanket' permission for local visits within walking distance e.g. to the local shops. Parents should be informed of these visits but no further permission is required. Teachers must check with the office that the school holds 'blanket' permission for all relevant pupils. Where no such permission is held the individual parent must be contacted for permission for their child.

Medical/First Aid

A basic medical kit will be provided by the office and a designated member of staff with a working knowledge of first aid should be put in charge. The group leader must make everyone aware of the designated person for first aid.

All staff should be informed about children who are on or liable to need medication. This is particularly important in the case of children who suffer from asthma, epilepsy, diabetes or children who have a serious allergy and may need to carry an Epipen. Children who use or have medication in school such as inhalers should be given to a member of staff on the trip.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of an emergency during a visit, the following action must take place:

- The school must be contacted immediately or in the case of out of hours, the designated person should be contacted.
- If it is not possible to reach the emergency contact, then the leader should telephone Redbridge Town Hall on 020 8708 5016/7.
- Parents should only be contacted via the school.

Visit leaders should read 'Emergency Procedures' issued by the DfES and need to ensure that members of staff on the visit are aware of the procedures contained therein.

Reporting of Accidents

If an accident happens at a non LEA site or premises which has an established accident reporting system (e.g. field study centre or swimming pool) this system has to be followed and the responsible person on the site has to notify the LEA. The group leader must ensure this is done. A copy of the accident report form should be given to the Head teacher on return to school. In all cases, the LEA's accident report form should be completed on return to school.

Parent Volunteers.

Please note that we are no longer required to carry out list 99 or similar check on parent volunteers used on an irregular basis. Parent volunteers must read, and sign to say they have read, 'Volunteer Helpers in School' prior to the visit.

Notes should be provided for them explaining the outline of the visit, what they need to do to help the children get the most out of the visit and the safety/medical procedures. They should be aware of which member of staff is the group leader.

Insurance

All educational visits are covered with an insurance policy that covers accidents, injury, loss and damage to property every time children and staff leave the school site. The policy also covers parent helpers and teaching assistants who may accompany the visits. This cover will only be valid if risk assessments have been completed and approved by the EVC.

Transport

For coach travel, only reputable coach companies will be used. All coaches must have safety harnesses or equivalent. The maximum seat capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded.

For public transport within the Greater London area, the visit leader should contact 'Transport for London' for advice. In addition to this advice, children must remain seated where possible and must stay within sight of their group leader.

Where private (staff or parent) car is to be used to transport children, this should be approved by the Head teacher and Form EV6 (obtained from the EVC) should be completed and retained by school. Parental consent for those being transported should also be obtained.

Residential Visits

The visit leader for a residential visit must consider the following:

- There must be both male and female teachers for the mixed group.
- There must be separate male and female sleeping and bathroom facilities for pupils and adults.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the group's use.
- There is appropriate and safe heating and ventilation.
- The whole group must be aware of fire precautions, its regulations and routines.
- There must be security arrangements that stop unauthorised visitors.
- All staff at the site to be visited must have been checked as suitable to work with young people.
- There should be drying facilities.
- Doors should be able to be locked, but appropriate access should be available to teachers.
- There should be adequate space for storing clothing, luggage, equipment, etc and for the safe keeping of valuables.
- There should be adequate lighting.
- There should be provision for those pupils with SEN and those who fall sick.
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the accommodation.
- There should be recreational accommodation and facilities for the group.
- There should be at least two supervisors on duty during the night.

During a residential visit, staff supervising should be given 'down time' periods where they will not be expected to directly supervise the pupils. During these periods of 'down time', other members of staff should be responsible for the supervision of the group.

Drinking of alcohol on school trips.

Staff must not consume alcohol when on duty and need to be without blood alcohol when back on duty.

All residential visits will need to be approved by the LEA. The EVC will ensure that the relevant forms are completed and sent to the LEA to gain approval via Evolve at least two weeks prior to the visit.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Water 'Margin' activities refers to activities that take place near or in water, such as a walk along a pond, riverbank or seashore, collecting samples from ponds and streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water. *It does not refer to swimming or other activities that take place in water.*

Visit leaders who wish to engage in water margin activities should refer to the DfES and CCPR document titled 'Group Safety at Water Margins' and follow the guidance listed there.

General Procedures for Visits

The following procedures should be followed for all visits:

- Written permission must be obtained from all parents prior to the visit.
- Staffing ratios must be carefully planned in line with guidance in this policy.
- A suitable first aid box must be taken.
- A member of staff with a good working knowledge of first aid should be present.
- The pupils must be counted before setting off (on the coach if used) and counting must be ongoing at regular intervals throughout the trip. No transport must ever depart without two members of staff both independently counting and agreeing that all pupils are accounted for.
- Pupils must not be allowed to talk to any strangers, and must inform the nearest known adult as soon as possible if they are approached by any stranger.
- Toilet facilities must be provided at regular intervals.
- Meeting points must be pre-designated and times arranged when all the party should assemble. These must be strictly adhered to.
- On transport all seats must have safety harnesses or equivalent. The maximum seat capacity of the vehicle must not be exceeded. If public transport is used, children must remain seated where possible and must stay within sight of their group leader.
- A thorough risk assessment must be completed before the visit takes place, along with the educational visit approval form, naming those involved.
- The visit leader(s) will instruct the pupils in the rules and regulations relating to the trip, and where necessary will also issue written guidance for pupils and their parents.

At the conclusion of each trip the visit leader will complete a review of the trip, noting the following:

- Any particular problems with transport (e.g. coach arriving late, etc.), venue (e.g. nowhere to shelter during rain) or with specific pupils (illness, behaviour, etc)
- Educational benefits of the visit

This policy has been written in conjunction with the London Borough of Redbridge Guidance for Off Site Visits and Related Activities 2014.

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