



Educational Visits

(Residentials, Visits, Journeys and School Outings)

The school recognises the great educational value of Educational visits in all their forms. Children benefit significantly from practical situations and experiential elements of learning are essential parts of the school's curriculum.

The following is a list of considerations for organisers of educational visits.

- What is the aim of the visit?
- Where does it fit into the pupils' current curricular needs?
- Is the aim being achieved in the most efficient and effective manner?
- Could the same activity be undertaken as effectively on the school site or nearby?
- What advice is needed before proceeding?
- What are the skills required of the accompanying school based staff?
- What relevant skills are required of the provider? (Outdoor centres)
- Does the proposed venue offer value for money?

All these questions need to be satisfied at an early stage of planning for outdoor activities.

Where school staff are unable to provide the necessary answers themselves, advice should be sought from the School EVC.

A primary consideration must always be towards establishing that the proposed event is as safe as practicable

Curricular objectives

The curricular objectives of outdoor education should include the following features: progression of skills, knowledge and understanding; relevance of activities to individual pupils' needs, taking into account the differentiated needs of the whole group; participation by the pupils in so far as is practicable in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their work; the achievements made by pupils through outdoor and residential experience is recorded.

Reconnaissance

Organisers should make every effort to undertake exploratory visits to new venues, to evaluate the suitability and potential of the venue for meeting the aims and objectives of the venture and to assess potential areas of risk.

Risk assessment

An essential element of outdoor education is that it should exercise children's sense of adventure; however this must not be achieved by putting them at unacceptable physical or psychological risk.



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The aim therefore must always be to contain risks to acceptable levels.

Organisers should consider:

- * The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- * The location
- * The competence, experience and qualifications of school supervisory staff
- * The group members' ages, competence, fitness and temperament
- * The ratio of competent, experienced and qualified centre staff to students
- * The quality and suitability of the available equipment
- * Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

SAFETY IS THE PRIME CONSIDERATION; IT SHOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED IN ORDER TO MEET EDUCATIONAL OR OTHER OBJECTIVES.

Selecting Participants

When determining who should be included in school outdoor events the following should be considered:

- The aim of the visit
- The class or group for whom the visit is planned
- The number of places available
- The individual needs of the pupils, taking account of age, experience, ability and interest, emotional and behavioural patterns

If there is any doubt about the health of a pupil or the medical fitness for undertaking outdoor education the school's medical officer should be consulted.

The school however, operates a policy of being fully inclusive, and providing the risk assessment is positive, all pupils take part in school visits.

Staffing

- The Principal retains overall responsibility for planning and arranging outdoor activity visits.
- The day-to-day responsibility for overseeing policy and procedures is delegated to the Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
- Responsibility for planning and supervising for each individual visit or outdoor activity is delegated to the Coordinating Teacher/visit coordinator.



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- Voluntary helpers may be used to assist with the organisation and supervision during visits. Their role needs to be carefully and clearly defined. They need to have undergone a full DBS check.
- The designated staff member (visit co-ordinator) will retain primary responsibility for supervising the party at all times.
- One of the supervisory staff should be a qualified first aider. If a minibus is involved or the inset is residential a full first aid at work trained first aider must be accompanying the trip.
- Staffing ratios will depend on the needs of the particular group.
- Meetings should be held of all the staff and voluntary helpers to formalise the administration and organisation of the visit.
- The Visits forms must be completed by the organising member of staff at least 2 weeks prior to the visit dates and submitted to the EVC.
- If the visit is residential, overseas or involves water activities then forms must be completed at least 6 weeks prior to the visit dates.

PROCEDURE

Parents

- * A parental consent form needs to be completed for each visit.
- * Parents should be given full and complete written details regarding the organisation and administration of the visits including:
 - Purpose
 - Programme including types and range of activities
 - Plan - dates and times
 - Emergency contact details.

The "Plan"

This should include information for the parents on;

- Destination and location
 - Mode of travel,
 - Accommodation,
 - Code of conduct expected of children;
 - Staffing details, and the experience of activity centre staff;
 - Special clothing and equipment required;
 - Emergency contact numbers.
- Parents should be asked to complete the school's Visits/medical/information checklist and return this to school.
 - Parents should be invited to a pre- visit briefing where appropriate or detailed written information should be given, especially applicable for residential visits.



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Pupils

All participating pupils should be told of the:

- Conduct and behaviour expected
- Reasons, aims, and the programme for the outdoor activity

Safety

- The responsibility for the safety of each pupil must be clearly defined at all times.
- Teachers have a common law responsibility and are deemed to be acting “in loco parentis”.
- The school coordinating teacher retains responsibility at all times other than where this has been entrusted to the staff of a centre following the guide-lines laid down by the DFE.
- Each member of the school staff or centre staff should know exactly for which pupils they are responsible and the extent of that responsibility.
- Staff must complete a RAG rating for pupils to highlight their needs and help as appropriate.

Information retained in school

- Full details of the visit must be kept in school during the visit using the school proforma, (by a member of the Senior Management Team). Including emergency contact details of participants / health information.
- The Principal/EVC must be informed immediately of any changes or deviations from the information given.

Insurance

- The Educational Visits Co-ordinator must ensure that insurance has been taken out through the schools insurers for each member of the party, including all staff and voluntary helpers.
- The School Business Manager will be delegated to process and administer any insurance submissions.

In School Procedure

The school has a set procedure, which has to be followed before permission for any visit outside school is granted. The Educational Visits Co-ordinator has the delegated overall responsibility for implementation. The suitability of the venue, the cost of transport, the staffing, the curriculum objectives, medical arrangements, meal arrangements, charging and timetable changes will all be checked.

The member of staff leading the visit must enter all the details onto the forms and send to the EVC for checking and approval. Once approved the visit leader must contact the School Secretary who is responsible for booking the most suitable form of transport and organising meals etc. The booking will be entered into the transport diary, which is kept in the office. For a minibus this form must be completed at least a fortnight prior to the date of the trip to facilitate organising packed lunches, transport and insurance. If the trip is residential the form must be submitted 5 weeks in advance of the trip. Arrangements for a coach need at least 2 months notice. The teacher organising the trip must have visited before or be thoroughly familiar with the venue.



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Only named drivers who have passed the approved minibus test are authorised to drive the minibus. Drivers must present their driving licence for inspection annually. The driver is responsible for checking the minibus for road-worthiness prior to going out on any visit. Petrol can be obtained using the appropriate card from named garages - the driver needs to sign for this. At the end of each trip the relevant information must be completed on the minibus log sheet.

It is advisable for the member of staff driving the vehicle to check basic functions before setting off, i.e. lights, wipers, fuel and oil level.

Seatbelts must be worn at all times.

It is essential that 1 member of the supervising staff occupies a seat in the rear of the vehicle, usually the seat nearest the door.

Staff will use their knowledge of the pupils to assess what level of supervision is required.

Where vision is restricted, it is recommended that minibuses be reversed without pupils on board.

Students who are on placement and are going on the visit are expected to be responsible for providing their own lunch or if they would like a school packed lunch they will be expected to pay for it.

In the event of an accident the incident must be reported to the Principal as soon as possible so that the parents can be contacted and the necessary arrangements made. Any damage to the minibus must be reported on return to school and an insurance form completed.

In the case of accidents, staff are not to speak to the Press - refer them to the Principal.

On return from the visit the visit leader must complete the visit evaluation form.

Evaluation

The educational visits Co-ordinator has responsibility for checking all staff evaluations of visits and for monitoring the suitability, risk assessments and quality of visits.