

Ashmole Primary School



Educational Visits Policy

Created by: Adam Hickman

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 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 be impossible. The travelling time should not exceed the time spent engaged in learning as part of the educational visit.
- 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 any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils at all times. Within these limits, we seek to make our visits available to all pupils, and wherever possible to make them accessible to those with disabilities. The visits usually take place within the school day.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 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.

These visits begin with short excursions into the local area such as local libraries, parks and shops in the Early Years, and progress to a residential experience towards the end of Key Stage 2.

3 Curriculum links

- 3.1 All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching the children's learning experiences.

4 Residential activities

- 4.1 Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit. This activity is in school time and linked to the National Curriculum, so we do not make any charge for the education or cost of travel. We do, however, make a charge for board and lodging, insurance and specialist instruction for certain activities. Parents of pupils in receipt of pupil premium will receive assistance with payment as required.
- 4.2 The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. We provide qualified instructors for all specialist activities that we undertake.

5 How visits may be authorised

- 5.1 Teaching staff proposing to arrange an off-site activity must seek and obtain the approval and signature of the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. An Educational Visit Proposal Form must be submitted detailing: dates and times; methods of transport; learning objectives; costs (including fundraising) and staffing. The Head of School or Assistant Headteacher will agree a trip leader to be responsible for running the activity. This will normally be a teacher employed at the school.

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5.2 The school's Educational Visits Leader (currently the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher) will be involved in the next stage of planning and management of off-site visits.

S/he will:

- ensure that comprehensive risk assessments are completed by the trip leader. These must be carried out in person along the trip to and at the venue itself.
- ensure that risk assessments are signed by the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher);
- assign competent staff to lead and help with trips;
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained;

5.3 Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher will seek the approval of the governing body and the LA before authorising the trip.

5.4 It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits as long as they do not represent a risk to themselves or others. If a child's behaviour presents a risk, the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher will fully assess the risk and may decide that the child should remain at school. Where a child with a disability is eligible for a trip, we will make every effort to ensure that s/he is included; seeking guidance as necessary.

6 Risk assessment

6.1 A comprehensive on site risk assessment must be carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit. It will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate measures to prevent or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What control measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader effectively put the control measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

6.2 It is important to take into account the probable weather conditions at the time of year proposed for the trip, and the party leader should take careful account of the facilities available, with due regard to the proposed size of the group. S/he should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age and any particular needs of the children. S/he will also consider the venue's own approach to security and to health and safety. Venues providing instructor-led activities will have their own risk assessments for particular sessions, and these assessments may be adopted if it is impractical for the group leader to experience the activity beforehand, or if s/he lacks the skills required to make informed judgements about the risks it may involve.

6.3 It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the risk assessment. Any such issues will be taken into account when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed, and the risk assessment must state both the extent of any risks involved, and the measures that will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. The cost of the

risk assessments will be borne by the school, and should be built into the overall financial arrangements for the visit itself.

- 6.4 An activity should normally have sufficient adults taking part to provide the following minimum ratios:
- 1 adult to between 10 and 15 pupils in Years 4 to 6;
 - 1 adult to 6 pupils in Years 1 to 3;
 - 1 adult to 3 pupils in Early Years.

Any trip will require a minimum of two adults. However, these are minimum requirements, and may not provide adequate supervision in all cases.

- 6.5 A risk assessment must also give details of transport to and from the venue. If taking public transport the journey must be undertaken by the trip leader when completing the risk assessment. The risk assessment should give clear details of the journey including transfers, crossing points, high traffic/ footfall areas and roadworks. Any transport companies we use must have provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:
- the provision and required use of seat belts; proper vetting of the driver by the police; proper insurance for the driver; details of first aid and emergency equipment; breakdown procedures.
- 6.7 A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher, the Educational Visits Coordinator, and will be available to the governing body, the LA (if applicable) and all adults supervising the trip.
- 6.8 All adults supervising the trip should sign to say that they have read the risk assessment before the day of the trip. They should also provide their mobile number on the risk assessment so that they can be contacted by

7 Transport

- 7.1 Transport arrangements will allow a seat for each member of the party. It is our policy only to use coaches fitted with seat or lap belts, and to insist that they be worn by all those participating in the visit.
- 7.3 Where private cars are used for transport, the group leader is responsible for arranging the booking of cars. The Educational Visits Leader will ensure that bookings are made with a company that we regularly use to ensure safety and continuity. The Educational Visits Leader is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys, and double-checking that each driver has been subject to the normal police checks (see 5.2).

8 Communication with parents

- 8.1 The parents of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit.
- 8.2.1 Parents must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities which fall outside the normal school day or which involve a higher than usual element of adventure or managed risk (e.g. horse riding / rock wall climbing). As a general rule, if safety equipment is required, parents should be asked to give written permission (opt in). Parents should also be

asked for permission if an external company is to film/ take photographs on the trip.

- 8.2.2 Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary, except in the case of residential visits), with a limited subsidy from the school fund containing money raised by the parent–staff association. This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.
- 8.3 No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent to make a contribution. Parents will be informed of this principle through the school prospectus and letters sent home about intended visits.
- 8.4 The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Head of School or Assistant Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

9 Further health and safety considerations

- 9.1 All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the trip leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply as detailed on the risk assessment. Each adult/ The trip leader should be provided with an emergency telephone number. This will normally be the school number, but where an activity extends beyond the normal school day, the home telephone number of a designated emergency contact should be provided.
- 9.2 Before a party leaves school, the trip leader must complete a Trip Checklist ensuring that:
- All adults are present/ wearing a high visibility jacket.
 - Adults and children have on suitable clothing for the activity.
 - First Aid trained staff are present/ have a fully equipped medical bag/ children's medication.
 - The risk assessment has been signed by all adults.
 - Adults have their phones, telephone numbers of those supervising the trip and school and Senior Management numbers.
 - If the trip involves: water, heights, adventure, chemicals, animals, soil, farm, different fruit/ veg/ plants, physical exertion these are referred to on the risk assessment.
- 9.3 The safety of the party, and especially the children, is of paramount importance. During the activity, the party leader must take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that safety.
- 9.4 More detailed guidance on procedures and requirements can be obtained from the LA's Off-Site & Hazardous Activities File held in the school office.
- 9.5 The Trip Leader and Educational Visits Leader should familiarise themselves with up to date, relevant Local authority and Government guidance on educational trips.

12 Monitoring and review

- 12.1 This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed every two years, or before if necessary.