

Policy for Educational visits

Statement

As a school we value the role of educational visits and regard them as an important part of school/home life.

Aim of policy

To enable children and staff to gain a full, enjoyable and safe educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to.

Activities

The range of activities covered by this document includes:

- residential activities
- daily visits using transport
- day or part day visits on foot
- any sporting activities
- swimming pool visits
- farm or specific activity visits

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with the document 'Health & Safety of pupils on Educational visits'

DfES/0564/2002 DfES/0565/2002 DfES/0566/2002

Purpose of the School visits

School visits benefit young people in many ways with the activities undertaken serving to enrich many areas of the curriculum.

Benefits include:

- being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom
- enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the curriculum
- associating the work of schools and teachers directly with the work outside schools
- developing talents, abilities and interest, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance
- helping pupils to better understand the world around them, by contextualizing ideas and knowledge gained in school
- some visits helping older pupils to achieve AQA Unit Award accreditation.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is a key part of preparing for a school journey/visit. This is particularly important when dealing with pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Such pupils can have little or no sense of danger and often do not understand what is appropriate and inappropriate in public places.

Risk assessments for school visits have three levels:

- generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity whenever it takes place.
- visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group.
- On- going risk assessments that take account of e.g. illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activities.

PRE-VISITS

The suitability of the whole journey, venue and purpose of the visit must also be scrutinised in relation to risk. In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, it will be essential to full research trip venues to ensure it is suitable, even when the visit is made regularly, risks should be reassessed periodically.

It is also important to telephone prior to the visit to ensure that the venue management is aware that children with disabilities are visiting and when they will be arriving. In addition, it would be useful to explain any particular needs the pupils may have.

When undertaking risk assessment, a number of variables need to be taken into account.

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behavior
- the specific educational and/or medical needs of the pupils
- the previous experience of the pupils and staff undertaking off-site visits
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on with the visit
- the numbers, experience and quality of the accompanying staff
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the nature of the activities
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- the travel arrangements
- the time of day and time of year
- seasonal weather conditions
- emergency procedures
- the need to monitor risk throughout the visit

RESPONSIBILITIES

Training in risk assessment and appropriate monitoring will be undertaken by The Beeches staff and those with relevant experience will be included on every trip.

The school visits co-coordinator is the Head of Education. The roles and responsibilities of each member for the duration of the school visit will be made clear on a journey form which will be completed before any such excursion takes place.

Management

The management should satisfy itself that risk assessments have been undertaken and that appropriate safety measures have been put in place and that training needs have been addressed.

They must ensure that:

- they are notified of all visits

- correct documentation is completed before visit takes place
- every visit has a specific and stated objective
- staff accompanying school visits have suitable experience and training
- the group leader reports back after the visit
- they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- they fully assess proposals for all visits of a residential nature.
- correct equipment is ready for visit before departure

Head of Education

The Head of Education should:

- ensure that visits comply with the school's/home's own health and safety policy
- ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor risks throughout the visit.
- be aware of their role on any visit they take part in.
- ensure adequate safeguarding procedures are in place before the visit takes place, the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place.
- ensure that training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered.
- that the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
- that the group leader or another teacher is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.

They must also ensure that arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils and that:

- adequate first aid provision will be in place
- the mode of transport is appropriate
- travel times out and back are known
- they have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- the group leader and others on the visit have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures
- the group leader has the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

All Teachers

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act in loco parentis, as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances.

Greater levels of responsibilities will normally be assigned to teachers than to adult helpers and a high standard of care is expected of them.

Residential support workers

Residential support workers on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

They must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- work with the teacher and be responsible for control and discipline
- report any concerns or worries they may have during the visit to the trip leader

Pupils

The leader must make it clear to pupils that they must

- not take unnecessary risk
- follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers, including those at the venue
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- look out for anyone that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader about it
- not leave the group, unless accompanied by a member of staff, at any time
- only use ipads, phones and any recording equipment when allowed/requested to do so by an adult

The visit may be stopped if the need should arise because of any pupil's behaviour being considered to pose a risk to themselves or others in the group.

Further duties and responsibilities

All staff should be aware of the expectations placed upon them and should appreciate the nature of their relationship to the pupils and other staff.

All staff must:

- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- inform the leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them
- recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.
- report to the leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and well being during the visit.

Social workers and placing authority

Social workers and placing authorities must be informed prior to any residential visits, and the authorities' own policies should come into play.

RECORDS

Records of a visit can provide a very useful and informative way of demonstrating the accountability of the school towards its pupils. Pre-visit risk assessments, after visit reports, and reports of any accidents or incidents should be kept on file. Such records will become a valuable reference for future visits and continuing risk assessment.

FIRST AID

Where possible there should be a person competent in first aid on every visit. A first aid kit should be taken on every visit. Any pupil attending the visit with known medical requirements will have provision made to ensure these needs are met; such information will be included in the documentation regarding each trip.

SUPERVISION

There are no statutory requirements, but good practice would suggest ratio would depend on the specifications of the visit. Sex of the accompanying adults need also to be considered, particularly where there is a mixed group of pupils. Students from the Beeches are supervised 2 students to 1 member of staff depending on their needs, many of our young people are supervised 1 student to 1 member of staff and some of 1 student to 2 members of staff.

Non- school staff working with children

- During school trips students will always be supervised by a member of The Beeches school staff.
- When School learners attend off-site activities, including day and residential visits and work-related activities, the school will check that effective child protection arrangements are in place.

Ratios of Young people to adults

The ratios should take into account

- sex, age and ability of those pupils involved
- the level of pupils special educational or medical needs
- nature of activities
- experience of adults in offsite supervision
- duration and nature of the journey
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- competence and behaviour of pupils
- first aid cover
- one to one support for those pupils with a higher level of need or difficulties with communication.

Emergency Procedures

Teachers in charge of visits have a duty of care to make sure that young people are safe and healthy.

They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would.

Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

Staff on the visit will carry mobile phones to enable instant contact with the emergency services as well as The Beeches. There should be an agreement that The Beeches phone be manned at all times whilst a visit is taking place, where this is not possible an emergency contact number will be available for use at all times, preferably The Head of Education's mobile number: 07483 173762

Student's pen pictures will be taken on trips and given to emergency services for their information only.

If an accident happens the priorities are:

- to assess the situation
- safeguard the injured members of the group
- attend to the casualty
- inform the emergency services
- inform school or the home contact
- ensure that a teacher accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised.
- notify the police if needed
- ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls
- write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- be in possession of contact details for The Beeches for emergency services/other official agencies

- keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- take photo evidence of the scene

No one in the group should speak to the Media and no names should be provided.

No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties.

In an emergency the group leader would usually be expected to take control of the situation.

Transport

The leader should consider:

- passenger safety regarding current government legislation and Health & Safety advice
- type of journey
- traffic conditions
- insurance cover
- weather
- journey time and distance
- stopping points on longer journeys
- supervision

Supervision on visits

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment

- safety when crossing the roads
- safety of pupils at dropping off points
- responsibility for checking seat belts
- safety when walking near roads

Travel sickness pills should only be taken when previous authorisation has been received.

Use of cars

- the car should be road worthy
- the driver has the appropriate licence
- the driver has the appropriate insurance
- the driver must ensure pupils wear seatbelts
- an escort is used to accompany the pupil/ pupils if required to ensure safety

Swimming Pools

A minimum supervision level of 1 adult to every 1 pupil is recommended.

The following checks should be made:

- is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified staffs?
- is the water temperature appropriate?

Where there is no lifeguard the students and staff must not enter the water. At the seaside students are only allowed to paddle up to their knees with their allocated staff member in immediate contact with them.

- is the water clear?
- are there signs indicating depth of water?
- does the pool cater for young people with disabilities?
- does the deep end allow for safe diving?
- are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment available and is there someone trained to use them?
- is there a changing room for each sex?
- are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic?
- can clothes be stored safely?
- have the pupils been instructed how to behave around water?

Residential visits

Due to the needs of our young people we currently do not offer residential trips.

Farm Visits:

Farms can be very dangerous places even for the people working on them.

Risks to be addressed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E-coli food poisoning and other infections.

The farm should be well managed and have a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare, and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public spaces.

Pupils should not:

- place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their mouths after feeding animals
- eat until they have washed their hands
- sample any animal foodstuffs
- drink from farm taps
- ride on tractors or other machines
- play in the farm area

Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated annually or more often should there be a legislative need.

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