



eastbury
primary
school
Succeeding together

Educational Visits Policy

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Succeeding together

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1. Aims & Purpose

The school has a strong commitment to the added value of learning beyond the statutory school day and beyond the school premises.

Each year the school arranges a number of educational activities and visits that take place off the school site and/or out of school hours, which support the aims of the school. These include:

- Out of hours clubs
- Inter-school team sports, such as football and netball
- Regular nearby visits (libraries, parks, shops, places of worship)
- Day visits for particular year groups (theatres, museums, art galleries, environmental activities)
- Residential visits and activities, which might be classed as adventurous.

2. Principles of Safe Practice

Visits provide valuable opportunities to enrich young people's learning across a wide range of curriculum areas. The residential visit, in particular, provides a powerful vehicle for concentrated study and activity as well as for personal and social development.

The principles of safe practice refer to all visits, whether day or residential, and whether or not they involve recognised adventurous outdoor activities. Although adventure activities cannot be completely risk free, the vast majority of young people who participate in such courses do so entirely without injury or incident. The greater the potential hazards posed by the environment in which the visit takes place, then the greater the attention, which must be paid to safety.

It is not possible to issue guidance that will guarantee total safety. Even where good principles of safe practice have been reasonably adhered to it is still possible that a young person may meet with an accident due to circumstances which could not have been foreseen.

Conversely, since serious accidents are fortunately rare, the fact that a particular visit has had an accident-free record over a number of years does not necessarily mean that safe practice has always been followed. Leaders who regularly organise visits should never become complacent.

It is essential that a comprehensive risk assessment is carried out for all visits, see Appendix 4, and that appropriate control measures are put in place. Organizers should ensure that all involved have enough information to be able to make an informed judgment about the suitability and safety of the proposals. This is especially the case when requesting the consent of parents. Parents should have enough information that they can make an informed judgment about the suitability of the trip for their child and can advise the organizer on any physical and behavioural concerns they may have over their child.

3. Purpose of Visit

The Educational aims and objectives of the visit should be clearly identified at an early stage. These should be relevant to the needs of participants and the curriculum, taking account of age, ability, previous experience and resources available. Clarity of aims and objectives will ensure:

- An appropriate structure and discipline to the visit;
- Opportunities for personal and social development are maximised;
- A choice of environment and activity appropriate to the 'young persons' maturity and experience;
- Maximum motivation for participants.

In turn these elements have in addition to learning benefits, a direct and major bearing on party safety and well-being.

In order to realise certain objectives it may be necessary to travel to a distant location. However, when contemplating a long journey the question should always be asked whether the same objectives might be achieved more simply and cheaply closer to home. Some objectives entail working in an environment which presents potential hazards. Such environments should only be visited if the young people are of sufficient maturity and experience to understand the nature of the hazards involved. In general, they should not be exposed to potential hazards if the same objectives can be achieved at a safer location.

4. Preliminary Visits

A preliminary visit by the party leader will assist in the planning process and contribute to the safe conduct and educational value of the visit. A preliminary visit is strongly recommended (and may be essential) particularly when:

- All or most of the staff team are unfamiliar with the area;

- Particular Special Needs require addressing;
- The environment presents particular potential hazards.

A preliminary visit should seek to:

- Check for potential hazards;
- Check timings (local services, length of walks, tides, etc.);
- Agree in advance, between party leaders and centre staff, the division of supervisory responsibility, if applicable;
- Inform the site specific risk assessment.

In situations where an advance visit is not possible, on-the-spot reconnaissance is essential to ensure that assumptions made about the area hold good.

5. Risk Assessments

A 'risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low). A risk assessment must be undertaken or reviewed for every visit however short its duration or distance from the school's boundary. Completed risk assessments are filed on the admin system and hard copies are kept in the Deputy Head Teacher's office. See Appendix 4 for proforma.

A 'hazard' is defined as 'something with the potential to cause harm'. A risk is the 'likelihood that the harm from a particular hazard will be realised'. It is a legal requirement that prior to any visit an assessment of the risks is made, that 'reasonable precautions' are taken and that those precautions are recorded. Therefore, any activity from rock climbing to crossing a road should be risk assessed at some point and to an appropriate degree. Risk assessment should be made on three levels;

- i. Generic. Such risks are usually well understood and covered by established codes of good practice. Risk assessment at this level need only be made if they are not adequately covered by the School's Code of Good Practice (Appendix 8).
- ii. Site/Visit Specific. These will differ from place to place and group to group. In order to make such risk assessments knowledge of the location, activities and the group is required. This can be obtained in a number of ways from a pre-visit (probably the most reliable) to drawing on local knowledge and previous experience. Such risk

assessments should be carried out prior to the visit and recorded using the form in Appendix 4.

- iii. Ongoing. These will occur during the visit and take account of immediate and local conditions e.g. weather, injury, illness, behaviour, tides, water levels, tiredness, etc. Often these factors will affect hazards already identified. When such conditions can be predicted they should be risk assessed in advance and suitable control measures put in place should they be necessary.

Staff must be aware of the needs and risks associated with individual pupils and not adopt a complacent attitude as a result of previous risk free visits.

Pupils should be involved in risk assessment and management. This may include identifying potential risks and discussing their role in reducing risks. Through this they will develop risk awareness – an educational issue as well as a safety issue. It is an essential life skill.

The publication 'Group Safety at Water Margins' must be consulted when assessing risks where the visit involves walking along the seashore, collecting samples in ponds or rivers, or paddling in shallow water.

The health and safety of those involved in a visit overrides any disability act.

On the day of the Visit

- Refer to the checklist
- Collect first aid kit(s)
- Take asthma pumps and EpiPens as necessary
- Brief supervising adults, including parents
- Ensure mobile phones are working, that the office has the number(s) and that they are switched on during the whole visit
- Count number of pupils regularly, and always when changing locations

6. Responsibilities

Under the statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfES requirements and LA guidelines. Specific responsibilities include:

- Local Authority – to approve overseas, residential and adventurous activities
- Head Teacher – to approve visits and assesses competence of visit leaders
- EVC – to approve visits, maintain records, provide advice and documentation, assess competence, produce and monitor a school policy, liaise with LA
- Visit leader – to plan visits in line with procedures in this policy, including liaising with the office and EVC, completing risk assessments and relevant forms and continually assess risks
- Supervising teachers and other adults – to supervise children, continually assess risks, manage risks in line with risk assessment
- Pupils – to follow instructions and procedures in line with the risk assessment

As long as the school and local authority guidance is adhered to, any problem resulting in injury will normally be considered an accident.

7. Approval Procedure

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc. – will require the prior approval of the Head Teacher and EVC. The Interim Executive Governing Body will receive copies of letters to parents about educational visits, so they are kept informed of all visits.

In addition, visits that are either:

- Overseas
- Residential or
- Involving adventurous activity

will require the additional approval of the LA. Further approval will also be required from the governing body for visits of these types.

If an external provider or tour operator is being used, they must complete the detailed **Form EV4** at the time of the provisional booking.

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Trips 'for the sake of it' will not receive approval.

Once trips have been approved, they must be entered onto the Trips Protocol spreadsheet. This allows teachers and senior management to track the progress of the preparation of a visit and informs the visit leader of their deadlines to book the venue, transport etc.

8. Communication

Staff

At least one formal briefing meeting must be arranged for the whole staff team, including additional adults, prior to the visit.

At this meeting the party leader should ensure that everyone is:

- Familiar with and supports the visit's objectives;
- Aware of and recognises the nature of the responsibilities which they will be asked to assume;
- Advised as to their position with regard to personal liability.

Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers must be fully informed, in writing, of the nature of the visit before their consent and financial commitment is requested.

Included must be:-

- Date and venue of visit
- Lunch arrangements including comment regarding Free School Meals
- Departure and return times (or stated that the visit takes place during the normal school day)
- Clothing requests. (Generally children are expected to wear full school uniform. However if the visit is to a venue that requires alternative clothing this must be clearly stated.)

- Voluntary financial contributions, informing parents what they are contributing to e.g. admission, transport. Comment that, **“If insufficient contributions are paid then the Visit will regretfully have to be cancelled.”**
- Amount of spending money permitted (if applicable)
- If parental help is required and details of how they will be notified
- Any other relevant information

There must also be a returnable slip, which has the following options:-

- I give permission for _____ (child’s name) to take part in the Educational Visit to (venue inserted) on (date inserted)
- I enclose a voluntary contribution of £ (amount)
- My child has free school dinners and would like a packed lunch to be provided (At least 24 hours’ notice must be given)
- _____ (adult’s name) is willing to help on the Visit.
- Signature of Parent/Carer

Voluntary Contributions

Every trip **MUST** be self-financing. If you cannot cover all your costs then it cannot go ahead!

When working out the contributions you must allow for the following, where appropriate: Coach hire, admission fees (children and adults – check re. free places), cost of any worksheets, special insurance, stationery and any photocopies, any special purchases, e.g. guide books, donations, etc.

You also need to allow for any pupils who will not be taking part. There may also be pupils who will not be able to contribute. (Generally, if adults are helping then they are not expected to contribute.) However, sometimes, parents can feel quite strongly that they wish to contribute and become offended if it is refused. It is then up to you to use your discretion.

See Appendix 1 for Charging Policy.

9. Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as ‘Acknowledgment of Risk’).

The letter to parents should therefore give full details of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements, and ensure that the detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B.

For day visits only, where written consent has not been received, verbal consent to two members of staff can be accepted (for example teacher and receptionist).

10. Staffing

Competence

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the Head Teacher and/or EVC. In assessing competence to lead, account will be taken of the factors stated in Section F2. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities, the assessment is undertaken by the LA by means of Form EV3, using the procedures and criteria in Section Z.

Ratio

As a general guide and in normal circumstances, the adult/child ratio may be:

Age	Ratio
4	1:4
5-6	1:6
7-10	1:10
11+	1:15

However, a professional judgement must be made for **each visit** by the Visit leader, EVC and Head Teacher, as a range of characteristics relevant to the particular visit should determine the ratio. These are:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group – medical, SEN, behaviour
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of venue

- Weather conditions at that time of year
- Nature of transport involved

The competence of supervisors and the supervision arrangements are more important than ratios.

Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils
- Age of pupils
- Responsibility of pupils
- Competence/experience of staff
- Environment/venue

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care and be shown the completed Form EV5.

During longer residential visits it is essential that staff work closely with external staff (when appropriate) to maintain supervision of the children. It is acceptable for staff, who it has been agreed are 'off duty', to drink a moderate amount of alcohol, but this should not interfere with responsibilities and supervision on subsequent days activities or when driving the school minibus. An off duty rota could be arranged with the visit leader so that a minimum of 2 adults are on duty at all times (*this ratio will depend on the number of children attending the residential visit*).

11. Plan B

Despite the most detailed and careful pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, e.g. a parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive,

museum has lost booking. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of a Plan B. Not having a Plan B has been a common cause of accidents.

12. Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule.

Only members of staff who have received training in accordance with the LA's policy may drive the minibus. There are additional requirements where the minibus is borrowed/hired. Before using the vehicle, the driver must complete a checklist and report any defects to the Head Teacher or SLT. Additional checks should be made for longer journeys and each half term by the member of SLT with responsibility for the minibus.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

13. First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a responsible adult who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits. First aid kits are available from the medical room. If the visit involves the party splitting up, a kit should be taken for each group.

14. Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at

Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit.

15. Emergency Procedure

Visit leaders must take with them a copy of the **Emergency card**, which sets out the local authority's procedures to be followed in the case of an emergency. An A4 copy of the **Emergency Card** is also found in each First Aid kit used for visits.

School contacts must hold a copy of the **Emergency Card** at all times, which details procedures for supporting visit leaders and liaising with the local authority. The **Emergency card** is available in credit card size.

For visits that take place in school time, the office and EVC hold visit information including itinerary, venue details, names and emergency contact details for all participants including staff. For visits outside school hours, the school contacts must also hold this information or be able to access it quickly.

In the event of a young person being injured, specialist help must be sought as appropriate and parents informed as soon as possible. Where the accident/injury is serious, the Head Teacher or visit leader should be contacted. Responsibility for informing relevant authorities rests with the Head Teacher or visit leader.

If it is necessary, due to the seriousness of the circumstances, for the parents to visit the young person(s), the Head Teacher and visit leader in conjunction with the governing body should make arrangements for them to do so.

If any leader has cause to believe that a young person has been abducted or has absconded the Police must be notified.

16. Educational Visits Checklist

The Educational Visits Checklist is an essential part of the risk management process and should be adhered to for all visits.

17. Evaluation

Within a week of a visit, the visit leader should evaluate the visit with the other supervising adults and inform the EVC of any aspects to be considered in future planning.

18. Booking Information

Please inform the following people about proposed visits out of school before booking:

- Head Teacher
- Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC)
- Admin Staff/Business Manager

Procedures

1. Inform the Head Teacher, check that proposed dates are convenient and put in diary
2. Complete transport booking form from admin office at least 3 months in advance or as early as possible and copy to EVC
3. Complete LA approved form (EV2 & 4) (residential trips and adventurous activities only)
4. Liaise with the admin office with regards to booking transport, cost, letter to parents and, if necessary, additional insurance
5. Inform parents using standard letter from admin office. (Where own letter is used, email a copy to admin office)
6. Complete details of visit on Evolve
7. Attach Risk Assessment and letter to parents to Evolve
8. Carry out pre-visit if possible and necessary
9. Keep record of contributions made by parents using class list on A4 envelope, ensuring money is checked and then send to office daily for safekeeping
10. Use the educational visits checklist as an aide memoir before and on the day of the visit.

If the Head Teacher and EVC have not agreed to the visit and the necessary forms are not completed, then **THE VISIT MUST NOT GO AHEAD.**

19. Procedures

Step One

1. Approval for visit from Head or Educational Visits Co-ordinator.
2. Provisionally booked at venue, having checked the School diary first.
3. Coach estimates; one chosen and provisionally booked.
4. Letter to parents (including special paragraph re: contributions and free dinners)

When you have ensured the visit is financially viable then-

1. Risk assessment forms and planning forms Appendices 3 and 4. **(At least 2 weeks prior)**
2. Confirm provisional bookings, e.g. coach, venue.
3. All pupils on every education visit must have a signed consent form (by parent or carer) whether pupil is contributing or not.
4. Worksheets ordered, if any.
5. Head Teacher and EVC notified.
6. Adult helpers organised (check ratios). Try to ensure you have adults of both sexes if possible, especially with junior pupils.
7. Collect contributions and show on form (see Appendix 5) to be sent to office daily.
8. Order packed lunches for free school meal children from kitchen at least two weeks prior to visit. Ensure drinks have been organised.
9. Enter visit in school diary and ensure all affected staff informed.
10. If more than one class is participating ensure all staff know who is trip leader and therefore has the responsibility for the visit; also what each individual teacher's responsibilities are.

Week Before

1. Meeting for adult helpers – ensure that they are aware of the objectives for the visit i.e. what you would like the pupils to get out of the visit, timetable and, if applicable, maps of venue facilities e.g. toilets, lunch. Essential and emergency meeting venue for anyone misplaced! Ensure all adults have signed the Voluntary Helpers Code of Conduct.
2. If returning after school hours please ensure you have a contact number in case of delays so that a message can be displayed at school for parents. Also that a member of staff is on site.
3. Familiarise with plans for emergencies on a school trip (Appendix 6).

One or Two Days Before

Check Visits Holdall

1. First Aid kit to include – in suitable container:-

Cotton Wool, Flannel, Scissors, Safety Pins, Micropore, Triangular Bandage, Gauze, Lint, Bandages (open wove, eye pad, triangular, crepe, plastic tub for sickness), Plastic Gloves, Sanitary Towels (Y5&6).

2. Bottled Water, Toilet Roll, Black Sacks, Carrier Bags, Sick Bags, Change of Clothing (age and gender appropriate), Wet Wipes, Plastic Cups, Disposal of Fluids Kit.
3. Sun Cream Lotion (to be used by children – non allergenic).
4. Luminous Jackets.
5. Whistles.

If you are on duty it is your responsibility to arrange cover.
Confirm transport still available.

Day Before

1. Check arrangements for any pupils not going on trip.
2. Check adult helpers still available.
3. Group list for each adult.
4. Copy of all group lists for each teacher and group Leader.
5. On headed paper complete list of names of all present on coach indicating:-

GL = Group Leader; T = teacher; LSA = Teaching Assistant; FA = First Aider
A = adult (Parent or Helper); P = Pupil; D = Driver (see Appendix 7)

6. Talk with the pupils re "dos and don'ts"; arrangements for being picked up at the conclusion of the visit if different from normal. If necessary send checklist home.
7. Timetable of visit – copy for every adult.
8. Map for every adult if applicable.
9. Pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, worksheets etc. organised.
10. Remind any pupils re:- sickness tablets, inhalers, etc. If travel sickness tablets are required.
11. Ensure communication links are available. Many staff now have their own mobile phone but do check mobile numbers as these are often changed.

On the Day

1. Up-date lists for any absences.
2. Leave one list in office clearly showing if any pupils are left at school and with whom and details of venue and telephone numbers.
3. Blu-tacked to console at front of each coach, in plastic folder, complete list of names of all present on coach.
4. All teachers on board each coach need to have a complete list of all persons on board.
5. The trip Leader needs to have a copy of all coach lists.
6. Before boarding revise emergency meeting places, behaviour.
7. Adult helpers need to sign insurance book (Parent Helper Register) in office and collect Helpers' Badges.
8. Collect lunches from kitchen if requested.