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# EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

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## 1. Introduction

Educational visits (trips) are activities arranged by or on behalf of the school, and which take place outside the school grounds. We believe that off-site activities supplement and enrich our bespoke curriculum at Little Heaton. All off-site activities must serve an educational purpose, enhancing and enriching our children's learning experiences.

In this policy we seek to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our off-site visits, and to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the safety and health of all pupils and staff, at all times.

## 2. Aims of the Policy

The aims of our educational visits are to:

- enhance curricular and recreational opportunities for our pupils.
- provide a wider range of additional experiences for our pupils than could not necessarily 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.

## 3. Curriculum Links

For each subject in the curriculum, educational visits, and activities (which includes visits to the school by specialists) are clearly identified within subject and year group Medium-term plans. All these activities are in line with educational visits guidance.

Examples include:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets, and theatre groups.
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to the local park.
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment.
- History – City visits (e.g. Romans), study of local housing patterns, local museums.
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, village trails, visits to the seaside.
- Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality.
- PE – a range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches.
- Music – specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, Young Voices concert, concerts for parents / carers and members of the community.
- Drama – 'Play in a Day'.
- Design and technology – visits to local factories or design centres.
- Computing – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools, etc.
- RE – visits to local places of worship, visits by local clergy.
- PSHE and citizenship – visit to the fire station or a residential home, visits by local police officers and health workers.
- Languages – workshops in other schools or events centre.

## 4. Residential Visits

Children in Upper Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to take part in residential visits. Residential visits enable children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work, as well as promoting links with PSHE, History, Science and Geography. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the

Local Authority using the EVOLVE recording system. Qualified instructors are utilised for all specialist activities that we undertake, for example climbing at Castleshaw and canoeing at Robinwood.

## 5. Authorising Visits

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) in school will work with staff to appoint a party leader to be responsible for running the educational visit. This will typically be a teacher employed at the school.

Our EVCs at Little Heaton are the Executive Business Manager, supported by the Headteacher and / or Deputy Headteacher, who will be involved in the planning and management of off-site visits, as appropriate. An additional colleague has also received EVC training to provide additional capacity.

The EVC will:

- ensure that risk assessments are completed using EVOLVE, our agreed system
- support the headteacher in making decisions on approval
- work with staff to assign competent staff to lead and help with trips
- organise related staff training / support / guidance, if necessary
- verify that all accompanying adults are suitable to attend the visit
- make sure that all necessary permissions and medical forms are obtained
- keep records of visits and ensure there are regular generic assessments of the risks (for example road-crossing) where there are frequent visits to local venues (for example a swimming facility).

Staff arranging, or involved in educational visits, must familiarise themselves with the regulations, advice and procedures outlined within this policy and within the EVOLVE system. All off-site activities must take place in accordance with the EVOLVE system, school policy and Trust guidelines.

Where staff are proposing to arrange an off-site activity, they must seek and obtain the approval of the EVC before any commitment is made on behalf of the school. A comprehensive visit plan should be provided by the member of staff to allow for an informed decision to be made. The Educational Visits pack is available from the EVC and Staff Resources Drive.

Where the activity involves a period of more than 24 hours, an overnight stay, or a journey by sea or air, the EVC / Headteacher will seek the approval of the Local Education Authority before permitting the activity to take place. This will be submitted via EVOLVE. The school will make Cranmer Education Trust aware of residential being undertaken.

It is our policy that all children should be able to participate in educational visits, including children with additional needs and / or disabilities. Staff may need to liaise with the EVC, SENDCO and parents / carers to adapt the visit programme if required. Reasonable adjustments will be made and recorded within school's risk assessment.

## 6. Risk Assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is carried out by the group leader before the proposed visit, recorded on the EVOLVE system. 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 risks?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce risks to an acceptable level?

- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?

It is advised, where possible to do so, that staff planning an educational visit should make a preliminary visit to the venue, in order to carry out an on-site risk assessment. It is important to consider 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.

Staff should also assess the site's suitability with regard to the age, abilities, and any particular needs of the children. They must 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.

It is important to assess and record any health, safety or security issues that are identified during the preliminary visit. Any such issues will be considered when the final decision is taken on whether the visit should proceed. This will be recorded on EVOLVE.

The risk assessment must also cover transport to and from the venue. The coach company we use on a regular basis has provided us with a letter detailing all the health and safety measures it routinely takes, including:

- the provision and required use of seat belts and booster seats (if required)
- proper vetting of the driver by the police
- proper insurance for the driver
- details of first aid and emergency equipment
- breakdown procedures.

A copy of the completed risk assessment will be given to the EVC and all adults supervising the trip.

## 7. Transport

The costing of educational visits should include any of the following that apply:

- transport
- entrance fees
- insurance
- provision of any special resources or equipment
- costs related to adult helpers
- any refreshments the school has opted to pay for.

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.

Where private cars are used for transport, the EVC is responsible for checking that the insurance of each driver covers such journeys.

## 8. Communication with Parents/Carers

The parents / carers of children taking part in an off-site activity should be provided with all appropriate information about the intended visit. Parents / carers must give their permission in writing before a child can be involved in any off-site activities.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by parental contributions (voluntary except in the case of residential visits). This must be made clear to parents in all correspondence about an educational visit at the planning stage.

No child may be excluded from an activity because of the unwillingness or inability of the parent / carer to make a voluntary contribution. Parents / carers will be informed of this principle through letters sent home about intended visits.

The timetable for the payment of contributions should allow for the Headteacher to make a decision about the financial viability of the activity in reasonable time.

## 9. Further Health and Safety Considerations

All adults accompanying a party must be made aware, by the party leader, of the emergency procedures which will apply. Each adult 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.

Before a party leaves school, the school office should be provided with a list of everyone, children, and adults, travelling with the party, together with a programme and timetable for the activity.

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. This involves taking note of any information provided by medical questionnaire returns and ensuring that children are both safe and well looked after at all times.

Prior to an activity, if it is felt that the behaviour of an individual child is likely to compromise the safety of the child, the safety of others or the name of the school, the party leader should discuss with the headteacher the possibility of making additional arrangements for that child.

## 10. Group Leaders' Planning

Group Leaders must read thoroughly the appropriate guidance for educational visits.

They must consult the school policy, and the LA's documentation within EVOLVE, detailing procedures and requirements. Group Leaders must draw up a Visit Plan using EVOLVE, which records in writing (including standard forms where appropriate) the arrangements that have been made.

## 11. Visit Plan (EVOLVE)

The visit plan for intended educational visits must be completed electronically on EVOLVE and may include the following:

- completed risk assessment and / or independent risk assessment from the organisation
- report on preliminary visit, if carried out
- applications for approval of visit
- general information that may be required

- names, ages, contact details, permission forms, medical records, and other relevant details of all those going on the visit
- travel schedule
- accommodation plan (if applicable)
- outline of activities and links to curriculum intentions
- fire precautions and evacuation procedures, if appropriate
- intended arrangements for supervision
- insurance arrangements for all members of the group, if appropriate
- emergency contacts and procedures
- general communications information (a copy should also be made available for office staff in school)
- guidance for party leaders
- guidance for the emergency contact and headteacher
- medical questionnaire returns
- first-aid information

## 12. Ratios

The following adult to child ratios acts as a suggested guide when planning an educational visit.

- Nursery: 1:3
- Reception: 1:5
- KS1: 1:6
- Lower KS2: 1:8
- Upper KS2: 1:10

Staff may discuss staffing ratios with the EVC, considering the specific needs within the class. This guide is a suggested minimum, and Group Leads may make the decision to take additional members of staff, where required.

There must always be two staff members present at any visit, even with a small group of children, for example a sports tournament. This is to safeguard the children and the staff member, and to ensure that children and staff are kept safe during the visit, as outlined within the risk assessment.

## 13. Monitoring and Review

Visit leaders are encouraged to review visits, taking into account the successful and less successful parts of the visit, and consider ways in which the visit could have been improved. Informal conversations might take place between the visit leader(s) and the EVC or Headteacher regarding the outcome of the visit.

This policy is monitored by the Executive Business Manager and Executive Headteacher, and shared with school's Local Committee (governing body) as part of a three-year cycle, or before if necessary.