

Thirsk Community Primary School

Educational Visits Policy

Definition:

An educational visit is any planned off-site activity undertaken by any pupils and accompanied by member(s) of the school teaching and support staff.

Rational:

Safely managed educational visits with a clear purpose are an important part of a broad and balanced curriculum. They are an opportunity to extend pupils' learning and enrich their appreciation and understanding of themselves, others and the world around them. They can be the catalyst for improved academic performance, a lifetime interest or in some cases professional fulfilment. They are to be encouraged!

Aims:

1. To ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to benefit from educational visits.
2. To ensure all visits are safe, purposeful and appropriate to meet the educational needs of the pupils taking part.
3. To enable the school to identify appropriate functions, responsibilities, training, support and monitoring for all governors, head, staff, helpers and pupils involved.
4. To comply with LA 'Safety guidelines for Education Visits & adventure Activities' and to keep all information and advice up to date.
5. To meet LA guidelines (January 2008)
6. To ensure, where appropriate, further advice is sought from LA and other technically competent personnel.

Guidelines:

PLAN - DO - REVIEW - RECORD

- Governors will be informed of visits but delegate approval of lower risk routine visits to the Headteacher
- A named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) will be appointed and sent on suitable training
- EVC, Headteacher & chair of Governors to agree EVC's role within school
- All visits should be linked to the school aims, planned then approved well in advance by the school's EVC
- After EVC, Headteacher and LA approval, all higher risk visits, including Adventurous Activities and Residential Experiences, will be submitted to Governors for prior approval.
- The EVC will identify and record with the minimum paperwork, qualifications, training, development and induction arrangements for all group leaders (teacher in charge of visit)
- The EVC will approve Group Leadership, planning checklist, risk assessment, arrangement and evaluation of all visits.
- The EVC and Group Leader will ensure risk assessment and management, including generic, site specific and ongoing, are undertaken and recorded.
- There will be a named Group Leader (and where appropriate, a competent second) on all visits
- The Group Leader will ensure sufficient staff of the right experience are checked (CRB if appropriate) and briefed throughout the visit (see procedure for visits).
- Group Leaders will follow school procedure to ensure a named person, emergency procedures and systems for recording and sharing information on accidents and near misses are in place before briefing parents and pupils.
- Group Leaders will, where possible, undertake exploratory visits or seek references from other staff/ schools if using new venues.
- Parents will be given sufficient written and other information about all visits to make informed decisions and give written consent, medical and contact details.
- Where appropriate, for high risk, residential visits, meetings with parents/ carers will be arranged.
- Expectations of behaviour codes of conduct will be explained to parents/ carers. This will include the need to meet the cost and make arrangements for collecting children in certain circumstances.
- Pupils should be briefed about aims, expectations and codes of conduct for all visits. Ongoing briefings are an important part of learning and safety.
- Where possible, pupils should be involved with planning, developing codes of conduct, assessing/ managing risk and evaluating their own attitude, behaviour, development and learning.

Role of the Headteacher:

- Initiate the process for the approval for all off-site activities with the Group Leader
- Seek approval for high risk activities from Governors and LA (via database)

Role of the EVC:

The Educational Visits Co-ordinator is appointed to act on behalf of the Governing Body. The following roles and responsibilities are guidelines:

- Support Group Leaders in preparing for off-site visits
- Support Group Leader in completing Risk Assessment and preparing Emergency Procedures for all activities
- Ensure all necessary documentation has been satisfactorily completed and processed on LA site.
- Maintain a central record of all off-site visits
- Ensure that activity reviews take place, are signed, dated, annotated if appropriate and filed/ passed on for further action if required.
- Guide Group Leaders in planning off-site visits
- Consult/ contact LA for/ with up-to-date information, keep EV database updated.

Role of Group Leader:

The Group Leader has overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for the pupils' health safety and welfare.

The Group Leader must:

- Be approved to carry out the visit, be suitably competent, qualified and knowledgeable about the school's policies and procedures.
- Plan and prepare for the visit and assess the risks after initial consultation of EVC, following school policy and LA guidelines.
- Provide EVC with all relevant documentation.
- Provide full written information to parents/ carers and obtain their full consent.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision, and, after discussion with EVC, appointing a competent deputy.
- Consider whether to have/ not have a group of children to directly supervise for the visit.
- Appoint an adult to take responsibility for First Aid.
- Leave a list of all pupils and staff/ parents attending the visit with the school office, to include contact information for staff and venue.
- Carry all relevant documentation, including Emergency Procedures, on visit.

- Manage the overall organisation during the visit and have due regard for the Health, safety and Welfare of everyone at all times.
- Be able to facilitate continuous and on-going risk assessment for the duration of the visit.
- Report and record any accident, incident or near miss appropriately.
- Carry out a review of the visit with EVC.
- Wherever possible lead teacher should remain free of taking a group of children in order to be available to manage any incident immediately.

Risk Assessment:

- This is the process of identifying hazards
- Assessing the likelihood of it happening (risk)
- Putting control measures in place
- Check if anything else is needed
- Use a simple assessment language - High/ Medium/ Low

Risk Assessment for educational visits must be seen at three distinct levels:

1. Generic activity risk assessments which are likely to apply to the activity wherever and whenever it takes place (e.g. coach)
2. Visit/ site specific risk assessment (pre-visit information and risk assessment provided by the site/ organisation)
3. Ongoing risk assessment (during the visit)

Improved Supervisory Ratios:

An improvement in the basic ratios may be required dependent upon:

- Sex, age, attitude, disability, behaviour
- Competence, prior knowledge
- Special health needs/ learning difficulties
- Nature of any planned specialist activity
- Competence of staff - experience/ expertise
- Duration and nature of journey
- The need to maintain a complete programme of supervision
- The type of accommodation being used

School Guidelines for Teacher/ Pupil Ratios:

- Foundation Stage: 1 : 4
- KS1: 1 : 6
- Lower KS2: 1 : 8
- Upper KS2: 1 : 10

Please note that this is at the discretion of the Headteacher

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Emergency Procedures for School Visits

Teachers in charge of pupils during a visit, have a duty of care to make sure pupils 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 take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

If an accident happens, the priorities are to:

- Assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident (i.e. Group Leader, School Contact)

Who will take charge in an emergency?

Group Leader - would usually take charge and would need to ensure that emergency procedures are in place and the back up cover is arranged.

School/ Home Contact - main responsibility is to link up with school/ parents/ LA (where appropriate). To provide assistance as necessary. The named person should have all the necessary information about the visit.

Framework

All involved with the school visits should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency, the named back up cover and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

Emergency Procedures

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after
- Establish the names of any casualties and get immediate medical attention for them
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following the emergency procedures
- Ensure that a teacher (not the Group Leader) accompanies casualty to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised and kept together at all times
- Notify the Police if necessary

- Inform the school contact. The school contact number should be accessible by all, at all times during visit
- Details of the incident to pass on to school should include: nature, date and time of incident; location of incident; names of casualties and details of their injuries; names of others involved, so that parents can be reassured; action taken so far; action yet to be taken (and by whom)
- Notify insurers, especially if medical assistance is required (this may be done by school contact)
- Ascertain telephone numbers for future calls. Mobile phones, though useful, are subject to technical difficulties, and should not replace usual communication procedures
- Write down accurately and as soon as possible the relevant facts and witness details and preserve any vital evidence (a camera/ mobile phone is useful for this purpose)
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete accident report form ASAP. Contact LA if appropriate.
- No one in the group should speak to the media. Names of those involved in the incident should not be given to the media as this could cause distress to the their families. Media enquiries should be referred to LA contact.
- No-one in the group should discuss legal liabilities with other parties

School Based Procedures

Prior to the visit, the name, school and home telephone numbers of a school contact should be identified. It is advisable to arrange a second school contact as a reserve. Headteacher and Group Leader should bear in mind that contact lines can become busy in the event of an incident and that alternative numbers to ring would be useful.

Access to the 'SCHOOL INCIDENT RESPOSE GUIDE' is vital.

Main factors for the school contact:

- Ensuring that the Group Leader is in control of the emergency and establishing if any assistance is required from the school base
- Contacting parents. School contact should act as link between group and parents.
- Liaison with LA/ Governing Body.
- Liaison with media contact at LA
- Reporting of incident using appropriate forms, if necessary. Some incidents are reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995)

Media Contact

LA's have a designated person to deal with the media and their enquiries. Use them.

After a Serious Incident

It is not always possible to assess whether group members not injured or directly involved in the incident have been traumatised or whether other pupils or staff in the school have been affected. In some cases reactions do not appear immediately. In this situation we may sometimes find it useful to contact Local Community Support Services and to seek professional advice on how to help individuals and the school as a whole cope with the effects of a tragedy.

January 2013

To be reviewed by staff in January 2016

Agreed by Curriculum Committee on

Signed: Chair of Committee