



Girnhill Infant School



'Where everyone is valued and futures matter'

Educational Visits policy

Dated: November 2018

Date for Review: November 2019

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. King".

Chair of Governors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Hill".

Head Teacher

Introduction

This policy reflects a code of practice for educational visits which outlines a hierarchy of principles that must be followed whenever any visit is planned, together with the processes and systems that should be in place whilst visits are being undertaken.

Educational visits have impact not easily achieved through other means. Clear aims and objectives ensure safe practice. Educational visits offer attractive opportunities for achievement to pupils across the spectrum of ability. They can stimulate and reinforce a positive attitude towards education and are recognised as achievements by teachers and peers alike. Residential outdoor activities can produce improvements in the relationships that teachers have with pupils and in pupils' relationships with each other.

Educational visits:

- raise achievement by boosting self-esteem and motivation;
- develop key skills;
- develop social education and citizenship;
- promote education for sustainable development;
- promote health and fitness.

The aim of this document is to provide a framework within which our school can be assured that all visits provide good value for their pupils and are undertaken in a safe manner, with suitable and adequate controls in place where required.

It has been produced using documents from the Health & Safety Team at the LA. The document will be reviewed at least annually.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body should:

- ensure that the school policy is in line with the policy and guidance of the employer, ratified through the governing body and implemented within the school
- ensure that required documentation is retained for ten years after a child has left the school
- ensure that the visit has specific and stated objectives
- ensure that the head of school/group leader show how their plans comply with the employer's policy and guidelines and that the head of school/group leader reports back after the visit
- ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- assess proposals for certain types of visits, which should include visits involving an overnight stay, travel outside the UK, adventurous activities or activities in hazardous locations and ensure these proposals are submitted to the LA if appropriate

The Headteacher should ensure that:

- an Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC) is appointed
- visits comply with the school's policy and hence the policy guidelines provided by the employer / LA
- the group leader is competent to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- adequate child protection procedures are in place
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
- the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- the group leader or another teacher is competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place. This may be through making a specific visit or by other means e.g. contacting colleagues who have made previous visits, telephone call to provider
- group leaders should allow sufficient time to organise visits properly
- non-teacher supervisors are appropriate people to supervise children
- the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate
- the governors have approved the visit if appropriate
- parents have given consent for the visit as appropriate
- arrangements have been made for the medical needs and SEN needs of all pupils
- adequate first-aid provision will be available
- the mode of travel is appropriate
- travel times out and back are known including pick-up and drop-off points
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name
- a school contact has been nominated and the group leader has details
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures
- the group leader, group supervisors and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group, and the contact details of parents and the teachers' and other supervisors' next of kin
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return home

The EVC should:

- assign competent people to lead or supervise a visit
- assess the competence of leaders and other adults proposed for the visit
- assist leaders with risk assessment
- organise the training of leaders on visits
- organise, with the visit leader, induction of leaders and other adults taking pupils on a specific
- visit
- ensure DBSs are in place as necessary

- work with the visit leader to provide parents/carers with full details of the visit beforehand
- organise emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit
- keep records of individual visits including reports of accidents and 'near-accidents'
- review systems and, on occasion, monitor practice
- The member of staff designated as the EVC should be specifically competent and trained. This training should be kept up to date and refreshed every three years.

The Group Leader should:

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and should have regard to the health and safety of the group
- obtain the Principal/Head of School's prior agreement before any off-site visit takes place
- follow LA and/or governing body, guidelines and policies
- appoint a deputy
- clearly define each group supervisor's role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range
- be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and make arrangements to be aware of any hazards or risks where the activity will take place be aware of child protection issues
- ensure that adequate first-aid provision will be available
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents and any Plan B that may be necessary
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
- ensure that teachers and other supervising adults are fully aware of what the proposed visit involves and have seen and agree the risk assessments
- ensure that the ratio of supervisors to pupils is appropriate for the needs of the group and comply with the employer guidance
- ensure that the risk assessment references the needs of Individual Pupils form and is reviewed for each visit
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health and safety of the pupils is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
- ensure that group supervisors have details of the school contact
- ensure that group supervisors and the school contact have a copy of the emergency procedures
- ensure that the group's teachers and other supervisors have the details of pupils with SEN or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively
- Carry all relevant documentation at all times -including the risk assessments, emergency contact lists, insurance details, activity provider details, maps and timetables, entrance tickets, list of pupils (including medical and special needs, aptitude and behaviour), teachers and helpers on the visit, parent contact details.

School staff should:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would do in the same circumstances
- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- consider stopping the activity, notifying the group leader, if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable

Adult volunteers should:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group
- not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- follow the instruction of the group leader and teacher supervisors and help with control and discipline
- speak to the group leader or teacher supervisors if concerned about the health and safety of pupils at any time during the visit

Pupils should:

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other supervisors including those at the venue of the visit
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- if abroad be sensitive to local codes and customs
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the group leader or supervisor about it
- be aware that any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit

Parents should:

- be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on the visit
- be given sufficient information in writing and are invited to any briefing sessions
- be told how they can help to prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct
- agree the arrangements for sending a pupil home early and who will meet the cost
- provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers
- sign the consent form
- give the group leader information about their child's emotional, psychological and physical health which might be relevant to the visit

PLANNING VISITS

Types of Visits (follow LA guidelines)

The Office Manager must check if a licence is required for adventurous activities offered by commercial companies, and if so check that the licence is in place (AALA website). Before booking a visit, the group leader should obtain written or documentary assurance that providers such as tour operators have themselves assessed the risks and have appropriate safety measures in place (see LA form EV VN2).

Any member of staff who is to organise, lead and instruct pupils on adventure activities must hold relevant current NGB award (National Governing Body Award in Outdoor Activities). A copy of these will be held on file by the school.

Planning (follow LA guidelines)

Formal planning must take place before all visits. The dangers and difficulties which may arise must be considered and plans made to reduce them. This should be recorded on the risk assessment.

The group leader should:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit
- obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue (if applicable)
- assess potential areas and levels of risk
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group
- become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there

Risk Assessments (see generic risk assessments provided by the LA)

- Group leader should read the LA guidance document EV GD3 (Guidance on The Use of Generic Risk Assessments).
- Risk assessments should be carried out by the group leader, should be completed well before the visit and should be approved by the Head of School/EVC.
- Pupils must not be placed in situations which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit must not take place.
- The person carrying out the risk assessment should record it and give copies to all teacher/supervisors on the visit, with details of the measures they should take to avoid or reduce the risks.
- A copy must be given to the Head of School/EVC so that approval can be given with a clear understanding that effective planning has taken place.

- The group leader and other supervisors should monitor the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.
- Generic risk assessments for regular visits should be reviewed annually.

On-Going Risk Assessment

Group leaders and all supervising adults have responsibilities for carrying out ongoing risk assessments throughout the visit. They must recognise their responsibilities to intervene, raise concerns or stop activities at any stage, if they have concerns over safety standards of colleagues or providers, or if circumstances change. Examples might be:

- Group tiredness
- Illness
- Change in weather
- Potential threats to participants from other groups or the public

Group Leaders must not sanction activities that are not in keeping with the plan to which initial authority was given; e.g. pupils undertaking activities within the 'None of the above' category (see EV VN1) must not participate in hazardous activities, which fall into one or more of the other four categories.

Factors to be considered when assessing risks:

- the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken
- the location, routes and modes of transport
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff
- the ratios of teacher and supervisory staff to pupils
- the group members' age, competence, medical fitness and temperament and suitability of the activity
- the special educational needs and medical needs of pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal conditions. Weather and timing
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to continue
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit

Note: the above list is not exhaustive.

FINANCES

Financial Planning

The group leader should ensure that parents have **early** written information about the costs of the visit, how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute. Parents should be given enough time to prepare financially for the visit. It is at the school's discretion whether any families in particular will be subsidised from the school's budget.

Charging for Visits

- Parents should be made aware that any visit that occurs during school hours cannot be charged for and that a voluntary contribution is not compulsory.
- Children of parents who do not contribute will not be discriminated against. It is not permissible to ask parents to contribute more than the minimum amount in order to subsidise those pupils whose parents have not contributed.
- A visit may have to be cancelled if there are not enough voluntary contributions and the shortfall cannot be made up.
- Parents can be charged for board and lodgings on residential visits as well as the full costs
- when a visit is deemed to be an 'optional extra'.

FIRST AID

Before undertaking any off-site visits, the group leader should assess what level of first aid might be needed.

On any kind of visit there must be **at least one adult who is qualified in emergency first aid** and ensure that an adequate first-aid kit is taken.

TRANSPORT (follow LA guidelines)

The group leader must ensure that the transport company has adequately completed and returned the health and safety compliance check.

SUPERVISION (follow LA guidelines) Ratio

It is important to have a high enough ratio of competent adult supervisors to pupils for all visits. Suitable ratios are a matter of judgment for the head teacher and EVC after consultation with the visit leader and as part of the risk assessment. There is no law that lays down appropriate staff: pupil ratios on educational visits. It is not possible to give

precise ratios for all situations; however, the following general principles should assist group leaders to arrive at sensible and practical solutions.

Ratios will depend on:

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Pupils with SEN or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of journey
- Type of any accommodation
- 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

Dfe guidelines provide benchmark guidance on ratios for day visits, residential visits and visits broad as follows:

Day visits

Recommended adult/pupil ratios for normal day visits are:

- Years 1 to 2: 1 teacher or adult for every 5 pupils
- Nursery and Reception: 1 adult to 3 children

Although the above ratios are for guidance any group wishing to work below these ratios would have to carefully justify this to the head, EVC, governors and possibly the LA via risk assessment.

There should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve potentially hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

Inexperienced members of staff should shadow a more experienced member of staff on a visit before undertaking leading a visit themselves.

Pupil Behaviour

Any pupil misbehaving or acting in a manner that may endanger themselves or any other group members must be removed from the activity being undertaken. Where this reduces the levels of supervision to below the minimum assessed as required the visit or activity must be stopped for everyone in the group. The school's behaviour policy will apply during the course of a visit. Pupils and parents should be made aware of these conditions prior to any visit taking place.

Parent/Volunteers

- These should be carefully selected and ideally should be well-known to the school and the pupils.
- Anyone who has not had a criminal conviction check should never be left in sole charge of pupils.
- The suitability of parent/volunteers should be assessed by the group leader. Where there is any doubt about suitability further investigations should be made and if any doubt remains the adult should not be allowed to supervise the visit.
- Any parent/volunteer who is accompanying a residential visit will be required to complete a CRB/DBS check first.

All adult supervisors, including teachers and parent/volunteer helpers, should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those likely to cause difficulty.

Headcounts

Regular head counting of pupils should take place, particularly before leaving any venue and before any means of transport is allowed to depart. All group leaders should carry a list of pupils and adults involved in the visit at all times. All supervisors should carry a list of pupils in their group during the visit.

The group leader should organise rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the group.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Every effort will be made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, sex, religion etc.

All pupils should be encouraged to participate in as wide a range of activities as possible.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

If a visit is to cater for pupils with special needs, a suitable venue will be selected. Slight modifications to the activities or length of stay may be necessary.

PUPILS AND ADULTS WITH MEDICAL NEEDS

All staff supervising visits should be aware of pupils' medical needs and any medical emergency procedures.

Medical information should be collated for all children and adults.

If a pupils' safety/needs cannot be guaranteed, it may be appropriate to ask the parent or a support assistant to accompany a particular pupil.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/CARERS (follow LA guidelines)

Parents will be informed of all off-site visits unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum and is included in the school prospectus or a letter.

The group leader must ensure that parents/carers are provided with information regarding visits prior to them taking place. The amount of information and style of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned. For high risk categories parents/carers must be given the opportunity to ask questions, see slides/videos and meet the staff who will be going.

A register of parents/carers who attend the pre-visit meetings must be kept. Parents/carers must be asked to complete a parental consent form.

Walks in the Local Environment

At the beginning of every school year parents/carers are asked for permission for pupils to be taken out for walks in the local vicinity. This will include things such as looking at buildings/plant life or visiting, places of worship etc. Parents/carers will be informed of these via class letters.

Insurance (follow LA guidelines)

The EVC must ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place and that they have ascertained the details of the insurance held by the tour operator or activity centre. Arrangements need to be in place to cater for any cancellations for whatever reason.

Accidents During Visits

Those accidents that result in significant injury should be reported using the form PUP/ACC/226 (HS/3a staff). Similarly, any violent incidents must be reported on a HS/V2. In certain cases, under R.I.D.D.O.R. 1995 (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regs 95) Form F2508 will need to be completed (Section 12).

These forms may be completed and submitted once the visit has finished, however if the incident results in a pupil being taken to hospital from the scene of the incident, a member of staff being incapacitated for at least three days after the event, or a member of staff suffers a major injury such as a broken bone, amputation of a limb or fatality, it should be reported to the Health and Safety Executive, as is legally required. The Outdoor Education Officer should also be notified as soon as possible.

It is also vitally important that any near misses are recorded and included in any debriefing once the visit has concluded. A near miss is an incident that could have caused serious injury had a person been involved or had the incident not been stopped.

COMPLETING THE FORMS EV_VN1 (Visit Notification Form)

The group leader should complete this form **as soon as possible** once the preparations are complete. Visits in the local vicinity to the same venue can be completed fully in the first instance and then reviewed for any subsequent visits.

The group leader should have already received approval of the proposed visit in principle and should have regularly updated the Head of School/EVC on the progress of the preparations. The group leader should obtain parental consent using the appropriate form if necessary.

When approval is given, one copy should be retained by the head of school/EVC and another by the group leader. The Head of School/EVC should be informed of any subsequent changes in planning, organisation, staffing.

If required, the Head of School/EVC should seek approval from the school governors or LA. If approval is required from the LA then the EV_VN1 should be uploaded to the Evolve System a minimum of 1 month prior to the departure date along with the risk assessments and other supporting documents as appropriate.

EV_VN2 (Provider Assurance Form)

This form should be used to seek assurance from external providers that they have appropriate working practices and safe systems of work in place. This form can be used with any type of visit where the safety of the pupils becomes partly the responsibility of an external provider and what the provider is doing could be a significant risk if not done properly.

If more than one company or external provider is involved then there will be more than one EV_VN2 Form .e.g. if you book a trip to an outdoor centre and book a coach company for the transport there would be two forms, one for the outdoor centre and one for the coach company. If you booked the whole visit including transport via a travel agent then they would be responsible for filling in the EV_VN2.

If the provider has been used before in the previous 12 months then there should be an existing EV_VN2 that can be used.

Risk Assessment

Use of LA generic risk assessments (be mindful that they are NOT to be regarded as a finished product)

Risk assessments must be completed before any pupils leave the school premises, including in the local vicinity. Group leaders should:

- Read Guidance document EV GD3 and follow advice
- Complete checklist for modifying a generic risk assessment from EV GD3 and give to the head of school/EVC with all completed documentation

Documentation to be Completed for Visits in the Local Vicinity

- Prior to the Visit (share with Head of School/EVC)
- EV VN1 Application for Approval. Generic ones are available which require the schedule, staff and student's information appending
- Completed Risk Assessment
- Needs of Individual Pupils (can be completed at beginning of year and reviewed prior to each visit)
- Itinerary (if information not on form EV VN1)
- List of all pupils and adults attending the visit (pupil list can be run off the office system)
- Completed with the head of school/EVC prior to the visit
- Form EV CL1 (checklist)

After the visit

- Accident forms (if any) PUP/ACC/226 (HS/3a staff) or incidents involving violence HS/V2

Documentation to be Completed for Non-Local Vicinity Visits

Prior to the Visit (share with head of school/EVC)

- EV VN1 Application for Approval
- Completed Risk Assessment
- Needs of Individual Pupils (can be completed at beginning of year and reviewed prior to each visit)
- Itinerary (if information not on form EV VN1)
- Form EV VN2 (for visits that involve external providers, tour companies or activity centres)
- List of all pupils and adults attending the visit (pupil list can be run off the office system)
- Transport Health and Safety Compliance Check (if appropriate)
- Pupil Consent/Medical Form (other than visits within the local vicinity)
- Adult Contact/Medical Role on Visit Form (other than visits within the local vicinity) □
Form 7 (if appropriate)

Completed with the Head of School prior to the visit

- Form EV CL1 (checklist)

After the visit

- Accident forms (if any)

Records to be kept by the School (in the office)

Legislation requires that school keeps the following record for 10 years after a child has left the school:

- List of staff and children on visits (including in local vicinity)
- Risk assessments
- Itinerary
- Accident forms (if any)
- Consent/medical forms (if an accident occurred)
- Form 7 (if an accident occurred)
- External provider verification
- Parent questions from meeting

All of these forms can be found in the Educational Visits file in each school office.

Electronic forms are available on the staff shared drive or from Gill Whitehouse/Heads of School.

Appendices (in office file)

- Guidance on use of LA generic risk assessments
- LA generic risk assessments
- Needs of Individual Pupils
- EV VN1
- EV VN2 and covering letter
- EV CL1
- Transport Health and Safety Compliance Check and covering letter
- Pupil Permission Form
- Adult Contact/Medical/Role Form
- Form 7
- Action to be taken by Group Leader
- Day of Visit Checklist
- Educational Visits guidance documents
- Responsibilities for Visits (Legal Framework)
- Types of Visits
- Planning Visits
- Planning Transport

- Emergency Procedures
- Communicating with Parents
- Insurance







