



FULWELL INFANT SCHOOL ACADEMY

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND ACTIVITIES POLICY

Introduction

All schools are required to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for the opportunities and experiences of adult life.

In our school we seek to ensure that the National Curriculum is delivered to all children, regardless of social background, race, gender or differences in ability. All are entitled to the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes.

To enrich the curriculum for our children, we also offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in school.

We strongly believe that the educational visits and activities programme allows us to teach and address the five areas of 'Every Child Matters'

Organisation

The National Curriculum defines what we teach the children in school. This is the basis for each class's programme of learning for each school year. In addition teachers agree the corresponding programme of visits and activities in advance of each academic year.

Within each class's programme of work the teachers plan educational visits and activities that support the children's learning. We give details of these visits and activities to parents at the beginning of each school year in our School Calendar. We plan other activities as the school year progresses, and inform parents of these in due course.

Visits and activities usually take place within the school day. The Governors are responsible for the Health and Safety within the school, including educational visits. They have opted to follow the Health and Safety guidelines from Sunderland Local Authority. Staff within school are given guidance for school visits using Sunderland external visits practice. Staff refer to the

new National guidance site, they hold discussions with their year group team and the EVC is available for support.

At the start of each year, parents consent to their child participating in local studies within walking distance of school. A comprehensive risk assessment for local visits is prepared at the start of each year for every year group to use for visits within the immediate locality. We also ask parents to give written permission for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site, using an element of travel, be it bus, train or metro. If we do not receive this written permission, the child will be unable to participate.

Charging for school activities

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum. There are some circumstances when the school can make a charge for certain activities. The governing body has a charging policy that details the full range of activities where a charge can be made. A copy of this is available from the school office.

Curriculum links

All educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do in school. There are also a number of people who visit the school to support our work. Some visits relate directly to areas of learning for individual classes, whilst others relate to all our children.

For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities which includes visits by specialists. All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LEA:

- English - theatre visits, visits by authors, and theatre groups;
- Science - use of the school grounds, visits to butterfly world, Zoolab visits, the local beach, Wildfowl park, Hall Hill farm;
- Mathematics - use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- History - study of local housing patterns, Beamish museum, Hartlepool historic quay, Captain Cook museum;
- Geography - use of the locality for fieldwork;
- Art and design - use of the locality and galleries;
- PE - extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches, after school PE clubs; Sunderland dance (Empire theatre), swimming lessons
- Music - specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, concerts for parents to hear, visits within local area and residential homes to perform;
- ICT - its use in local shops/libraries;
- RE - visits to local centres of worship - Durham Cathedral and visits by local clergy.

We also have regular visits from our neighbourhood police officer and health workers. These visits support the personal, social and health education of our children. Local religious leaders

also take assemblies in the course of the school year. We do this with the full agreement of the governing body.

Travelling

We only hire those companies whose coaches have individual seat belts (lap straps). We ensure all children travelling by coach or minibus wear a seat belt. Travelling by Metro and train is supported by the Nexus company who provide extra adults to embark and disembark. We have insurance for children leaving the school premises, though this does not cover loss of personal property.

Conclusion

Out of school visits enable children to appreciate their surroundings and gain a better idea of the communities and the world around them, and their part in them. This is to help prepare them socially and intellectually for citizenship in adult life. This can be attained by all pupils regardless of their limitations or disabilities, *with careful planning and preparation.*

Above all, visits should be enjoyable and safe experiences for all concerned.

Appendix 1:

Guidelines

We believe that children benefit greatly from experiences gained whilst taking part in educational visits.

We acknowledge that when taking pupils off site, we have a responsibility to make sure that all children's safety has been taken care of.

We believe that our responsibilities can be fulfilled through adequate planning of a visit and appropriate supervision of children during an offsite visit.

School Responsibilities

There has been a dramatic increase in previous years of people attempting to seek damages from Sunderland LA or school governing bodies for injuries that occurred whilst on a school visit.

For such a claim to be successful, negligence must be proved.

In the current legal climate it is considered negligent not to have a written risk

assessment.

Trustees/Governors are responsible for the overall Health and Safety within schools, including educational visits. They must ensure that staff are supported in the use of the correct guidance in planning for and carrying out a visit.

The Headteacher has the responsibility of allowing a member of staff to organise and lead a visit. The Headteacher must oversee the risk assessments using EVOLVE and other school based procedures. **ALL VISITS MUST BE AUTHORISED BY THE HEADTEACHER.**

The EVC, Sarah Dickinson, has validated training every 3 years led by Derwent Hill staff. This keeps abreast of new regulations and guidance. The EVC cascades training, advice and support for staff to enable them to organize their own visits safely. The EVOLVE site and the school risk assessments are validated in conjunction with the Headteacher.

Visit leader follows the procedures within the policy to organize a year group, class or small group visit. Risk assessments are carried out to take account of the venue, staffing, travel, medical, Health and Safety and other arrangements.

Any new staff member should always carry out a full risk assessment even on a local visit not requiring transport, to aid their professional development to raise their awareness of potential hazards.

There is a standard form for off- site risk assessment. Its purpose is to make sure that teachers have identified any hazards that could occur and have taken steps to minimize the chance of the hazard causing injury.

In general terms it means putting common sense down on paper.

The LEA has produced guidelines for school visits and will be monitoring schools to make sure the guidelines are being followed. All schools must now have a policy for taking children off site and a nominated educational visits coordinator (EVC).

Organisation of a visit can be broken down into four parts:

- . Planning (including risk assessment)
- . Preparation
- . The visit

. Review

Planning

- . You should be able to say why you are going to the place you have chosen. Remember that social development is part of the curriculum and visits do not necessarily need to be subject linked.
- . It is preferable if you, or another teacher on the trip, have visited the place previously; if not some research is needed to establish suitability. Is there somewhere for the children to eat, go to the toilet, access to medical assistance etc.
- . You need to know how many children you would be taking and how many adults you will need for adequate supervision. A general guide for local walks and visits to museums etc.

In EYFS guidelines there is a legal requirement of ratios as follows:

- Nursery children 1 adult for 2 children
- Reception 1 adult for 2-5 children

In Key Stage 1 staff have discussed the preferred ratio for our school:

- Y1, Y2: 1 adult for 6 children

There are no *legal* ratios for appropriate supervision. 'Appropriate' varies according to: the age of the children; the behaviour of the children concerned; and the activities being undertaken. You may for example trust a larger group of more responsible children. You may have specific children who would need one to one supervision, etc.

- You need to consider transport and work out how much the trip will cost.
- You need to fill in a risk assessment of the proposed visit.
- You need to inform and obtain permission from the Headteacher.
- You need to inform the Educational Visits Coordinator who is responsible for checking and keeping copies of the risk assessment.

Initial Preparation

- . Decide which adults are going on the trip and how the children will be grouped. Adults, particularly parent helpers, should have a list of who is in their group.
- . Inform parents. There is a standard letter you should use to inform parents of trips that incur cost. Please use this, as we need to use specific wording when asking for money.
- . Obtain consent. A consent slip is on the bottom of the standard letter. Do not take children who have not returned a consent form.
- . You cannot exclude a child who has not paid. The school can cover a small cost if some children have not paid. This would need to be negotiated with the-Head teacher. PP children do not have to pay for visits.
- . We already have consent for local visits that incur no cost. Parents should still be informed, this could be verbally for older children, or you could send a note. If you send a letter, make sure the office has a copy.
- . Book venue and transport. If booking a coach, make sure the coach has seatbelts. Confirm bookings a day or two before the visit.
- . Inform the office as soon as possible as they may need to deal with queries from parents. They will also inform the kitchen of numbers of packed lunches needed for all children.

SEND provision

As an all inclusive school staff make provision and plan for a range of needs to ensure that all children can access a full variety of visits and activities outside of school. This may include extra adults, specific equipment, as well as detailed risk assessments to cater for a particular need. Staff must also liaise with the venue to make them aware of any additional facilities required for specific children.

Money

- We cannot formally charge for visits that take place during the normal school day,

we can only ask for a donation. This is taken care of on the standard letter.

- The office should initially collect money for trips and keep a note of who has brought money in. Money should be forwarded to the office daily as it is collected. To keep monies secure until banked Clerical staff use the safe in school.
- If possible an invoice for the venue should be sent for any payments required; the school can then arrange payment. Alternatively payment can be made using the school credit card.

Before leaving School

- Collect packed lunches from the kitchens.
- Collect first aid kit and backpack with class list from office.
- Collect school mobile phone- office staff will have it charged for teachers
- Collect inhalers and any medication, with care plans, or make sure children who need them have them. Remember you cannot administer medicine to children.
- Make sure children are correctly grouped; they have a nominated partner and know whose group they are in.
- Make sure adults have list of their group including any last minute changes.
- Make sure children are appropriately dressed and have had the opportunity to go to the toilet.
- Share the visit volunteer expectations with parents and helpers and ask them to sign it (see handout for volunteers).

The Visit

General moving around

Your risk assessment will probably mention appropriate supervision as the measure taken to minimize risk, particularly when groups of children are moving around. Some examples of this are:

- Standing by the door of a coach as children get on or off.
- Making sure an adult is last on to a coach.
- Checking seatbelts are fastened.
- Frequent head counts.

- Try to have an adult at the back of a party.
- When crossing the road, stand in the middle of the road whilst the group cross in front of you. Point out somewhere you want them to wait on the other side.
Ensure adults stay kerb-side when walking on pathway next to roads.

There are many other examples of good supervision, you should use your common sense and think ahead at all times there could easily be hazards that were not anticipated. This is known as 'ongoing' or dynamic' risk assessment.

Most school visits include children undertaking some activity under the supervision of other adults. A lot of these activities would not present any specific hazards; your role at this point is largely to make sure the children are behaving correctly and in the right place.

Activities (high risk)

This is an activity that you would usually associate physical danger with. Your risk assessment will have taken this into account; and appropriately qualified staff would lead the activity. It is reasonable to assume that centres offering such activities have carried out their own risk assessment, this would be checked at the planning stage if you were unsure.

However, ultimately, you retain responsibility for the children on the visit. If you think that the activity is being led inappropriately and children are being put at risk *you must stop the activity* and explain why to the adult running it.

If an accident occurs:

Most accidents are usually caused by slips, trips and falls. Hopefully any injury will be superficial and not require treatment however if it is more serious:

- Assess the extent of any injury, what assistance required? First aider, ambulance etc.
Seek appropriate help.
- Remember/note details of how the injury occurred.
- In the event of hospitalisation contact school immediately, they will inform parents.
- In the event of critical accidents contact school who will inform the LA.

Review

There are varying degrees of follow up work that can take place following a visit. The visit could have been the culmination of a block of work or it may have had an introductory purpose which would suggest follow up work, displays etc.

There are some follow up tasks you need to do:

- Report any serious behaviour issues to Headteacher and discuss any action to be taken.
- Note any concerns/observations about the venue/transport on risk assessment sheet and tell EVC. This will be kept to help inform any other teachers visiting the same place.
- Return to the EVOLVE site after the visit to note and relevant comments about the visit
- A member of the SMT/ Governors may accompany a visit in a monitoring role and may add to the review process.
- Check risk assessment and decide if it was adequate. Note any hazards you feel should be planned for on any future visits.

Completing risk assessment forms

The LA has asked that we use a standard form for risk assessments. This form can be accessed on the Derwent Hill website (form HSRA2) or on our ICT (staff server).

A further handwritten school form details specific organization, staff and children.

What is a risk assessment?

Briefly, a risk assessment is a process whereby you list all potential *hazards* that would be encountered on your visit. You say *who* is at risk; what the *risk* is; which would reduce the level of risk.

For example:

- . Crossing the road is a *hazard*
- . The children, staff and helpers are *who* is at risk
- . The *risk* is being involved in an accident with a vehicle
- . The *controls* would be using good supervision/practice when crossing a road

What does the form look like?

Examples of the forms are at the back of this policy. The form has two sides, a generic assessment and specific assessment:

Side 1: *Generic Risk Assessment*

This side deals with hazards of a type of off site visit e.g. a walk to the local shops. This side would deal with hazards that would always arise on this type of visit regardless of where the shops were and who was going. Such hazards would be things like traffic on the walk there and large numbers of children entering shops.

Side 2: Venue/ Activity/Group specific Risk Assessment (VAGRA)

This side would deal with your group of children walking to Sea Road on a certain day. You may have hazards specific to your group on a particular day: a child with severe behaviour problems; road works by the college; predicted lighting storm etc. These hazards would need to be identified and dealt with in advance.

(Note: If naming individual children try to use initials rather than full name.)

We do have a 'stock' of risk assessments, held in a file in admin office, with most of the information you need already on. You will need to annotate it to make it specific to your visit.

If you cannot find a form suitable for your visit, one can be done. You should speak to the EVC to help you do this.

Once this form has been completed it needs to be saved to attach to the EVOLVE website to inform the EVC and Headteacher of the visit and for it to be approved officially. Each year group has an appointed person to attach the risk assessment to complete the EVOLVE form.

(Evas@sunderland.gov.uk).

Year groups should complete forms on the staff server and EVOLVE 4 weeks before the planned visit. Year groups can develop a yearly generic risk

assessment for local visits, such as mapmaking, buildings or visiting local shops. This form would cover general curriculum work throughout the year and an initial parental consent would suffice. For visits further afield needing a coach, new parental permission would need to be obtained and the risk assessment forms put onto the EVOLVE website.

Useful websites:

www.theoeap.info

www.derwenthill.co.uk

www.sunderlandvisits.org.uk