

Educational Visits and Activities Policy

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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.

At Gipsy Hill Federation 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 offer a range of educational visits and other activities that add to what they learn in school.

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, class teachers plan educational visits and activities that support and enhance the children's learning.

Visits and activities are core to our curriculum delivery. We seek consent for these trips at enrolment from all parents. Parents are informed of trips that go beyond the local area via emailed letter or text message prior to the trip. Specific consent is sought for trips that go beyond the core curriculum, trips involving adventurous activities (e.g. horse-riding) and trips that fall outside normal schools hours.

Please see appendix 1 for more details, including overarching responsibilities for the organisation of the different types of visit.

When taking children out of school we follow the following guidance:

- DfE Health and Safety on Educational Visits November 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits>
- 'There and Back Again: The Outdoor Education Handbook' Lambeth guidance
- National guidance as updated on www.oeapng.info

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.

Visits and activities are arranged to support each subject in the curriculum. Examples of what these visits and activities might include are below:

- English – theatre visits, visits by authors, poets and theatre groups;
- Science – use of the school grounds, visits to parks, gardens and museums;
- Mathematics – use of shape and number trails in the local environment;
- History – castle visits, study of local housing patterns, local museums;
- Geography – use of the locality for fieldwork, visits to contrasting localities;
- Art and design – art gallery visits, use of the locality;
- PE – range of sporting fixtures, extra-curricular activities, visits by specialist coaches;
- Music – range of specialist music teaching, extra-curricular activities, local schools' orchestra, concerts;

- Design and technology – visits to design centres or museums;
- ICT – its use in local shops/libraries/secondary schools etc;
- RE – visits to local centres of worship, visits by local clergy.

Residential Activities

During Key Stage 2, children have the opportunity to take part in residential visits, one a 2-night stay in Year 4 and a multi-night stay in Year 6. All children are given the opportunity to partake and no child will be excluded from the trip for any financial reason. Reduced rates are offered to all children eligible for pupil premium. Parents are informed of the trip significantly in advance and a payment plan of instalments is put in place. Financial support is also offered to parents who are unable to cover the cost of the trip. Provision is also made for any children with any special educational need so that all children are included in any residential activity.

Where a residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities, all specialist activities during the visit are undertaken with qualified instructors.

Where a residential visit takes place abroad, it will take place in an EU country, where European regulations are respected by all operators (accommodation, transport, educational site visits) used. A thorough on-site risk assessment will be carried out by two members of teaching staff. A member of the governing body will also thoroughly check the risk assessment to ensure that all possible risks have been identified and managed. In addition to this, a high adult: pupil ratio is planned for and at least one fluent speaker of the language of the country accompanies the trip.

Charging for Educational Visits and Activities

We do not charge for any activity undertaken solely as part of the National Curriculum. The school does ask for a voluntary contribution, where appropriate, towards the costs of visits or 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 to parents on request from the school office.

Risk Assessments

Whether a visit is to a local park, museum or swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that formal planning be undertaken before setting off. The level of planning required differs according to the type of visit (see appendix 1). Pre-prepared risk assessments are available for local trips but must be adapted accordingly to the needs of each class and individuals within the class. Where the trip falls outside of the definition of a local trip, a specific risk assessment must be carried out. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties that may arise and making plans to reduce them in practice. The Headteacher remains responsible for all arrangements but delegates the detailed planning to the teacher who will act as group leader for each visit.

Where appropriate, an exploratory visit may be made (where the venue is unknown to staff accompanying the trip) by the member of staff who is to undertake the role of group leader for a visit or activity to:

- Ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- Obtain advice from the manager of the venue;
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the pupils and adults in the visiting group;

- Become familiar with the area before taking a group of pupils there.

The group leader is required to carry out a risk assessment for the proposed visit, based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place 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?

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location, routes and mode of transport;
- the ratios of supervisory adults to pupils;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory adults accompanying the visit;
- the age, competence, fitness and temperament of the pupils participating in the visit/activity and the suitability of the activity in relation to these factors;
- the special educational/medical needs of participating pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions – weather and timing;
- emergency procedures;
- how to cope if a pupil becomes unable/unwilling to continue with a visit.

Pupils must not be placed in situations that expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. If the risks cannot be contained then the visit will not take place. The group leader and other supervising adults should monitor risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action as necessary.

A trip might be cancelled on the day where there are unforeseeable extenuating circumstances e.g. seasonal conditions or critical incidents.

First Aid

A member of staff with good working knowledge of first aid will accompany each trip. This member of staff will bring a fully-stocked first aid kit. The First Aid policy will be followed as appropriate. If first aid needs to be administered at a specific venue e.g. a museum, where appropriate first aid support will be sought from the venue.

Where the risk assessment identifies greater need, a trained first aider will accompany the group. Any trip for under-fives will be accompanied by a paediatric first aider.

Supervision

It is essential to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any visit. The factors to take into consideration are:

- sex, age and ability of the group;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- nature of activities to be undertaken;
- experience and competence of adult supervisors;
- duration and nature of the journey;

- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited;
- competence and behaviour of pupils participating;
- first aid cover.

A general guide to adult pupil ratios for visits are difficult to prescribe, as they will vary according to the activity, age and competence of participating pupils, location and efficient use of resources. However a general guide in normal circumstances might be:

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| Under fives | - | 1 adult to every 3 pupils. |
| Years 1 – 3 | - | 1 adult for every 6 pupils. |
| Years 4 – 6 | - | 1 adult to every 10 pupils. |

The above are examples only. Exact ratios will be agreed by the Headteacher dependent on the above and the risk assessment requirements. A competent member of staff will be named as the group leader. Additional adults will be staff members and parent volunteers as appropriate.

All accompanying adults will share their mobile phone numbers to aid communication. Mobile phones will not be used to take photos or engage in any activity on the trip other than activities directly related to the trip e.g. route planning where changes are needed; communication with accompanying adults and/or the school. Mobile phone numbers will be treated confidentially. Parent volunteers will be asked to delete details once all children have returned safely back to school.

Parent volunteers will be invited to join a trip where appropriate. Not all parents who volunteer will always be able to attend the trip. Parents who have volunteered their support will be contacted by the school to confirm attendance. Any decision made by the school takes the needs of all pupils into consideration and the school reserves the right to respectfully decline an offer of support.

Specific information will be shared with any parent volunteer. Parent volunteers accompanying trips are informed that they have responsibility which extends to the welfare of all children identified by the class teacher/visit leader. Group leaders will give specific direction to parent volunteers based on the planned trip as well as any emerging needs throughout the trip.

Risk assessments including information about specific individual needs as well as planning for the trip will be shared with all adults supporting the trip.

Group leaders retain responsibility for the group at all times.

Preparing Pupils

The group leader should decide how information is provided, but must ensure that participating pupils understand key safety information. Remember that Key Stage 2 pupils going on a residential visit may be away from home on their own and in the close company of other pupils for the first time and need particular support and supervision.

Pupils should understand:

- the aims and objectives of the visit/activity;
- background information about the place to be visited;
- how to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules;
- what standard of behaviour is expected;
- who is responsible for the group they are in;

- what to do if approached by anyone from outside the group;
- what to do if separated from the group.

Emergency Procedures

If an emergency occurs on a school visit the following action should be taken:

- Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible;
- Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after;
- Ensure that all group members who need to know are aware of the incident and that all group members are following emergency procedures;
- Get immediate medical attention for any casualties;
- Ensure that a competent member of staff accompanies casualties to hospital and that the rest of the group are adequately supervised and kept together;
- Notify the police if necessary;
- Inform the Headteacher of all the details related to the incident, action taken so far and action yet to be taken so that parents can be reassured;
- Write an account of all relevant facts - times, contacts and witness details as soon as possible. Preserve all vital evidence.
- Remember that 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 families.
- A mobile phone **MUST** be available on all trips.

Critical Incidents

If involved in a critical incident the following guidelines apply. Remember that the nature and circumstances of such an incident is unpredictable. The overriding aim will always be to safeguard children and adults in the group. The number sequence described below may not be appropriate in all circumstances. Please contact the school and use your best judgement.

- If group is split, contact all adults to ascertain if all members can be accounted for.
- Inform emergency services and / or staff at venue if a member of the group is missing / injured / seriously ill
- If possible gather group together in a safe place. This may be within the venue being visited, in an adjacent public building or venue, school, church, hospital etc. In selecting a place of safety consider if it offers shelter, access to toilets, access to water. Additional support may also be available, eg first aid, landline / internet access, responsible adults suitable to work with children.
- Inform your school as soon as it is practical to do so. Tell the school office your exact location, current situation and contact details if different from that given on Risk Assessment. The Headteacher must be informed.
- Keep your contact phone line free to receive calls from school.
- Follow instructions from emergency services.

In school, additional support will be urgently arranged, such as:

- Arrangements for additional transport
- Dispatch of additional school adults to support
- Liaison with emergency services
- Liaison with parents

Record Keeping

Following the trip, a copy of the risk assessment must be filed and kept for three years. Location of the file will be determined and shared with appropriate staff by the Headteacher. All accident forms will be shared with parents and filed in accordance with the first aid policy as soon as possible on return.