

## EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY for PARK HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

This school adopts the guidance and procedures as issued by the Birmingham City Council and the OEAP (Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel). This is to ensure consideration for the health and safety of all those involved and to maintain the educational quality of visits and value for money.

### **Rationale**

Well-planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real-life' opportunities for our children enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience. Educational visits are an essential element of good primary practice.

### **Purposes**

Educational Visits can provide stimulus and support to work being covered as part of the school curriculum. It may be that a visit provides an effective stimulus at the start of a unit of work; alternatively, teachers may decide to use an educational visit at any time during a project to enhance and support the curriculum. Wherever or whatever the venue, teachers should ensure that the educational benefits to the children are maximised.

### **Guidelines**

The organisation of an educational visit is crucial to its success. With rigorous organisation and control, a visit should provide a rich, learning experience for the pupils.

The following guidelines support the planning and implementation of educational visits organised at Park Hill Primary School.

### **Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher at Park Hill will endeavour to ensure for every visit that:

- there is a suitable group leader;
- all necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins;
- the risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit;
- training needs have been met;
- the group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- the group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity;
- all supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance;
- the governing body has approved the visit if necessary;
- parents have signed consent forms;

- arrangements have been made for all the medical needs and special educational needs of all the children;
- the mode of travel is appropriate;
- travel times out and back are known;
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover;
- they have the address and phone number of the visit's venue and have a contact name
- that each adult member of the party has a written list of contact details for all children and accompanying adults. (Contact detail lists to be shredded on return to school.)

### **Procedures**

Please see separate sheet.

### **EVC**

The EVC is a senior member of staff - Liz Bakalou, Deputy Head. Every 3 years this person will attend training to update themselves on procedures and guidelines for educational visits.

### **Group Leader**

One teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit. The Group Leader should:

- appoint a deputy;
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range;
- be suitable qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice for that activity if not;
- undertake and complete the planning and preparation of the visit including the briefing of group members and parents;
- undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment;
- have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times;
- know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability;
- observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below;
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities (see responsibilities of pupils below).

### **Other teachers and adults involved in a visit**

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the LA or of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Head Teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teacher and other adults on the visit must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group;
- care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would;

- follow the instructions of the leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal;
- consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

### **Responsibilities of pupils**

The group leader should make it clear to pupils that they must:

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the instructions of the leader and other adults;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell the group leader about it;
- should not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

### **Parents**

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits.

The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct.

Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language;

Parents must:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s);
- sign the consent form;
- give the group leader relevant information about their child's health, which might be relevant to the visit.

### **Planning Visits**

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Head Teacher is responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visit or the group leader but the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.

The organiser / group leader must agree all plans with the Head Teacher or EVC.

## **Risk Assessment**

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using Park Hill's Risk Assessment Forms. The risk assessment will decide the adult: child ratio for each visit. (See Guidance under 'Supervision'). The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- what are the risks?
- who is affected by them?
- what safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- what steps will be taken in an emergency?
- what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit? (See section on Supervision.)

The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

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

- the type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament;
- pupils with special educational or medical needs;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

## **Exploratory visit**

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. In addition, it may be worth seeking views from other schools who have recently visited the venue.

## **First Aid**

If the visit is not to another establishment where there will be a trained first aider on site, it is sensible to have at least one trained first aider in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

The minimum first aid provision is:

- a suitably stocked first aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements.

First-aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Head Teacher should take this into account when assessing what level of first-aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first aid kit will depend on what activities are planned.

**Inhalers, epipens and other necessary medical equipment must be kept close to the children who may need to use them at all times.**

### **Supervision**

It is not possible to set down definitive staff/pupil ratios for a particular age group or activity. Ratios of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit should be determined through the process of risk assessment. The factors to take into consideration include:

- gender, age and ability of group;
- special needs pupils;
- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of any accommodation;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. Some guidance documents do set out ratios, but these should be regarded as starting points for consideration rather than being definitive, as they may only be appropriate where the activity is relatively straightforward and the group has no special requirements. For example, the DfES publication HASPEV (1998) suggested the following "starting points":

- School years 1 - 3, 1:6
- School years 4 - 6, 1:10/15

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework\* no longer sets out different requirements for minimum ratios during outings from those required on site. As with other age groups, ratios during outings should be determined by risk assessment, which should be reviewed before each outing.

Regardless of these suggested ratios, each visit will be assessed individually through the school's risk assessment procedure for educational visits.

Where there is more than one adult supervisor, a group leader, who has authority over the whole party, should be appointed.

All adult supervisors, including school staff and parent helpers, must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all supervisors should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with behavioural difficulties. Teachers retain responsibility for the group at all times.

For the protection of both adults and pupils, all adult supervisors should ensure that they are not alone in a one to one situation with a pupil.

If the school is leading an adventure activity, the LA or Governing Body must ensure that the group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. .

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

### **Preparing Pupils**

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and other's safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

### **Participation**

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear.

*Pupils whose behaviour is such that the group leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.*

### **Information to pupils**

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand key safety information. 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;
- why safety precautions are in place;

- why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities;
- what standard of behaviour is expected from pupils;
- who is responsible for the group;
- what to do if approached by a stranger;
- what to do if separated from the group
- emergency procedures
- rendezvous procedures.

### Transport and pupils

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules including:

- arrive on time;
- do not rush towards the transport when it arrives;
- wear your seatbelt and stay seated while travelling on transport;
- make sure your bags do not block aisles on the transport
- never attempt to get on or off the moving transport;
- never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows;
- never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic;
- never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs;
- never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision
- never distract or disturb the driver;
- stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport;
- after leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road;
- if you have to cross roads to get to the transport always use the *Green Cross Code*
- if you feel unwell while travelling, tell a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group. However, sick bags should be given out to each child at the beginning of every coach journey in order to minimise unnecessary moving about when the coach is in motion.

### Inclusion

Every effort will be made to ensure that educational visits and learning outside the classroom are available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, disability, ethnic origin, gender, sexuality or religion. If a visit needs to cater for children and young people with special needs, every **reasonable** effort will be made to find a venue that is both suitable and accessible and that enables the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved.

All **reasonably practicable** measures to include all children should be taken, unless risk assessment determines otherwise. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the principles of inclusion should be promoted and addressed for all visits, thus ensuring an aspiration towards:

- an entitlement to participate
- accessibility through direct or realistic adaptation or modification
- integration through participation with peers

Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

*Care will be taken not to arrange visits during residential visit during a religious festival so as to prevent pupils of certain religions being able to attend.*

### **Exclusion on the grounds of behaviour**

It may sometimes be reasonable to exclude a pupil where their behaviour presents a significant, unmanageable and unacceptable risk to the health, safety and welfare of either themselves, or other members of the group, or the leaders. The Disability Discrimination Act Code of Practice for Schools states (section 4.6 page 27): "where a child has a behaviour difficulty for a reason other than a disability, for example arising from social or domestic circumstances, it is likely that such a difficulty is not covered by the legislation."

When a pupil is excluded on these grounds, we will endeavour to provide alternative ways of achieving the same learning outcomes. Where there is some doubt about including or excluding a pupil on the grounds of their behaviour, the following points should be considered:

- identifying the issue at the earliest stage of planning.
- involving all interested parties.
- establishing a behaviour management plan with agreed action points that may enable inclusion on the visit.
- establishing behaviour targets and timescales to be met to allow inclusion or trigger a decision to exclude.
- providing an additional adult, such as a parent or support worker, with a specific brief to manage behaviour issues.
- ensuring that what is expected of staff is reasonable and within their competence.
- recording this process.

### **Communicating with Parents / Guardians**

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place - 'in loco parentis' - and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would. The following information on matters that might affect pupil's health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in letter to parents / guardians prior to a visit:

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- mode(s) of travel;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- visit's objectives;



- details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed;
- insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested;
- clothing and equipment to be taken;
- money to be taken;
- the information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

### **Parental consent**

If parents withhold consent, the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent the Head Teacher will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not. The school's parental consent form should be completed for each pupil in the group.

### **Coastal visits**

Group leaders and other teachers should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred by or in the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming. At Park Hill, the group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- tides and sandbanks are potential hazards so timings and exit routes should be checked;
- ensure group members are aware of warning signs and flags;
- establish a base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated;
- look out for hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc;
- some of a group's time on a beach may be recreational. Group leaders should consider which areas of the terrain and sea are out of bounds;
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path at all times.

### **Swimming**

Swimming in the sea **will not be allowed for Park Hill children**. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance.

Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult: 4 children is a minimum.

### **Farm visits**

Park Hill recognises that farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will be very carefully planned and the risks to be assessed should include

those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E coli 0157 food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

The basic rules for a farm visit will be:

We will never let pupils:

- place their faces against the animals or their hands in their mouths after feeding them;
- eat until they have washed their hands;
- sample any animal foodstuffs;
- drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities);
- ride on tractors or other machines;
- play in the farm area.

## **Emergencies**

### **Procedures for the Visit Leader**

#### **IMMEDIATE ACTION**

##### **Preserve Life**

- Ensure own safety
- Deal with life threatening first aid

*All subsequent actions are better delegated to other members of the leadership team when possible, allowing the Visit Leader to remain in charge of the whole situation.*

- Ensure safety of uninjured group members and other leaders
- Ensure safety of any casualties
- Call emergency services as appropriate

**URGENT ACTION** - Use resources to do this efficiently and concurrently if possible

- Take stock and make a plan
- Allocate resources to maximise concurrent activity
- Continue first aid
- Inform emergency contact as per your plan
- Liaise with emergency services as they arrive
- Prevent Worsening
- Promote Recovery

### Deal with urgent physical needs of group

- Shelter
- Warmth
- Water

### Deal with urgent emotional needs of group

- Remove from stress
- Protect from intrusion
- 

### Useful things to do

- Control outward communications
- Begin written log/note keeping

**FOLLOW UP ACTION** - Much of this can be done at the same time as Urgent Actions with efficient use of resources.

- Take stock again and replan next phase - what have you forgotten?
- Deal with casualties in care of emergency services:
- Arrange for staff to accompany casualties to hospital
- Keep track of who is where
- Consider needs of self and fellow leaders - are you/they coping?
- Liaise with establishment/employer as per your emergency plan

### Deal with physical needs of group members:

- Food
- Toilets, washing facilities and clean clothes if necessary
- Accommodation and/or onward transport

### Deal with emotional needs of group members:

- Contact school or 24/7 contact numbers from school (who must all have access to all information and necessary documentation for everyone on visit with them)

*Emergency contact numbers of all participating children and adults should be carried by all adults at all times whilst out on a visit. They will only be used in the case of a genuine emergency.*

### **Critical Incidents**

A critical incident is an incident where any member of a group undertaking an educational visit or learning outside the classroom activity has:

- suffered a life threatening injury or fatality
- is at serious risk
- has gone missing for a significant and unacceptable period

In the event of a critical emergency, a senior leader will contact one of the following:

**First point of contact:**

Kathy McDonough, Acting School Support Manager, Central  
Tel: 0121 303 2193 Mobile: 07775 407332

Dave Yardley, School Support Manager, North  
Tel: 0121 464 3174 Mobile: 07881 617187

David Bridgman, School Support Manager, South  
Tel: 0121 303 8394 Mobile: 07771 339061

**If not available, contact:**

Amanda Daniels, Head of Educational Psychology  
Tel: 0121 464 1364 Mobile: 07766 925152

**For all critical incidents outside of normal school hours the Press Office out of hours number: 0121 303 3287 should be called. The Press Officer on duty at the time will contact relevant People Directorate personnel.**

**Other Important Contact Numbers**

Education Safety Services  
Birmingham City Council  
10 Woodcock Street  
Birmingham, B2 2QF

**Telephone:** 0121 303 2420

**Fax:** [0121-303 5305](tel:0121-303-5305)

**Email:** [schoolsafety@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsafety@birmingham.gov.uk)

Educational Visits Adviser: Tom Lilley 07980 266367

**Impact on English and Maths Standards**

Following an educational visit, learning should be planned which focuses on English or maths skills that are being taught in the class at the time.

**Visits to Places of Worship**

Dress code for each place of worship must be adhered to. After a visit to a place of worship, some follow-up learning should be carried out in school.

Reviewed by L Bakalou

October 17

Review date: October 18

