



BANTOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy Document For Off-Sites Visits

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Introduction

The Governors and staff at Bantock Primary School acknowledge the great value of Educational Visits and Outdoor Activities in the teaching of a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum and EYFS define what we teach the children in school. Each year group will go on at least one off-site visit each academic year linked to an aspect of their topic work to enhance this curriculum. Alongside off-site visits the school will invite in speakers and groups to enrich and extend experiences.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and coherent structure for the planning and evaluation of our residential and off-site visits to ensure that any risks are managed and kept to a minimum, for the health and safety of pupils at all times. Within these limits we aim to make our visits available to all pupils and wherever possible make them accessible to those with any disabilities, making reasonable adjustments if needed. The majority of visits normally take place within the school day.

The policy identifies how the school complies with the guidance given by the DFES and LA on Off Site Visits. The Governing Body approves and evaluates the schedule of proposed visits. The Governing Body will also review the implementation of this policy annually.

Aims

The aims of our off-site educational visits acknowledge guidance given in Every Child Matters (2004).

We aim to:

- give pupils opportunities to enjoy and achieve through enhanced curricular and recreational opportunities, contributing towards their overall health.
- provide a wider range of safe and enjoyable experiences within the local and wider community than could be provided by the school site alone.
- promote the independence of our children as learners, and enable them to grow and develop in new learning environments.
- foster a concerned awareness and sensitivity about the environment.

These visits begin with day or half day trips and progress to residential experiences.

The Educational Visits Coordinator

The LA requires that each School has a senior member of staff with the responsibility for educational visits. The person will be known as the Education Visits Coordinator (EVC). In consultation with the Headteacher the EVC oversees the day to day running of the School Policy on Educational Visits.

Types of visits

Wolverhampton LA classifies visits in the following ways and the risks attached to them:

Category A:

These comprise activities that present no significant risks. They should be supervised by an experienced teacher. Examples might include: walking in parks or on non-remote country paths; field studies in environments presenting no technical hazards.

Such activities will include skills focused learning, problem solving, team building, and self-reliant journeys and activities, with residential experience an especially valued feature.

Category B:

These comprise some higher-risk or higher profile activities. Safe supervision requires that the leader should, as a minimum, have undergone an additional familiarisation process or induction specific to the activity and/or the location. The visit leader will be approved as appropriately competent by the LA, or by the EVC following LA guidance. Examples of activities might include: walking in non-remote country; camping; cycling on roads or non-remote off-road terrain; low level initiative challenges, residential.

Category C

This is the most demanding category. It includes all those activities that, if not school-led, would be in scope of the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 1996. Wolverhampton LA identifies this category as including visits abroad.

Health and Safety

It is essential that the health and safety of all children be of paramount importance during all visits. The visit leader on any visit will appoint a deputy who must be as well informed about the visit as the visit leader. The EVC will conduct an audit annually of all staff competencies (Appendix 1) for being visit leader or support on educational visits following LA guidelines.

Supervision levels for visits aims to follow guidelines from Wolverhampton LA which state that it is no desirable to prescribe specific ratios. Rather it is better practice to use informed risk assessment to determine appropriate staffing levels depending upon the size, age, physical, mental and behavioural needs of the group in relation to the environment and nature of the activity undertaken. Furthermore minibuses should normally have an adult supervisor in addition to the driver. For longer journeys, two drivers are recommended. On coaches, there should be at least two adults in addition to the driver.

The school has decided on the following ratios as a guide for visit leaders organising visits, although the EVC or Headteacher may alter these ratios according to the requirements of the visit risk assessment:

Category A:

Nursery 1 adult: 6 group members
Infant 1 adult: 10 group members
Junior 1 adult: 12 group members

Category B:

Ratios are specified in detail for particular activities in Sections 3 and 4 of LA guidance.

Category C:

Junior: 1 adult: 6 group members

Risk assessments

Risk assessments made in the planning process may identify the need to increase supervision levels for certain activities and pupils. There should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency i.e. a sick/injured child. One member of staff will also have a current first aid qualification.

All risk assessments will assess the risks which might be encountered on the visit, and will indicate the measures to prevent, or reduce them. The risk assessment should be based on the following considerations:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures are needed to reduce the risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?

Ongoing risk assessments take place during visits. A reassessment of risks may be necessary e.g. changing weather conditions, staff illness. These assessments need not be recorded until after the visit when they should be reviewed to inform future planning.

Staff will be reminded to frequently complete a head count of each member of their group.

A blank risk assessment can be found at Appendix 2 and a range of generic risk assessments can be located on the Learning Platform, Staff, Docs, Visits and Visitors, or on Engage - School and Pupil Services - Health, Safety and Welfare, Documents, Off-Site Visits. These can be amended and saved according to the requirements of specific visits.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an important part of the risk management process and in accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 it is an offence for people to work with children and young people in 'regulated activity' unless they have been vetted by a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. However, this may not apply to volunteers brought in to assist visits. It will be up to the EVC and ultimately the Headteacher to judge in each individual situation the amount and type of contact time during which volunteers may have access to young people. If the contact with children is too frequent, intensive and/or overnight then they will need to be DBS checked (For residential visits a DBS check is essential). However, when a volunteer does not have sole access to children, is supervised and does not have duties such as toileting then a check does not necessarily need completing. When using an outside provider the visit leader must obtain written confirmation that staff DBS checks are valid.

Volunteer Helpers

Volunteer helpers have an important role to play in the success and safety of school visits. Their role includes being responsible and looking after, in equal measure, all of the children in their group. They must show a commitment to their group, an interest in the focus of the visit and assist children in their learning by helping them to read signs/labels/information, asking questions that encourage children to think about the task and help to explain areas of interest. To that end all volunteer helpers must be selected carefully, be approved by the EVC, or Headteacher, and sign the 'Off Site Visits Volunteer Agreement' proforma (Appendix 3) before they are included on the school visit staffing.

E-Safety

Digital still and/or video footage is an important way of commemorating, celebrating and supporting the curriculum, with some images being selected to be shown on the school website. Therefore, it is essential that parental agreement is gained prior to any digital still and/or video footage is taken of a child. Parents are asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 4) for images of their children to be used for school purposes. This record **MUST** be checked for all children attending the visit and no images are to be taken of any children without parental permission.

Pupils with Special Educational and Medical Needs.

Pupils with special needs or medical needs will be included wherever possible on all visits, whilst maintaining the safety of everyone in the group. Any barriers will be considered at the planning stage and when carrying out the risk assessments. Special attention will be given to supervision ratios.

Each group leader on a visit will hold summary sheets containing details of the child/children's needs. The visit leader should discuss the visit with parents of those children with special needs to ensure sufficient support is in place for each child and members of staff.

Transport

Transport arrangements for any off-site visit will ensure that each member of the party has a seat and when booking coaches it is the policy that only coach companies approved by the LA are used. Any vehicle used must be fitted with seat belts and all children must wear these at all times.

Where private cars are used for transport, each driver must have the appropriate insurance (checked by the EVC or Headteacher), appropriate car seats, or boosters, will be in place and the visit leader must ascertain that the cars are roadworthy and that each driver has had appropriate DBS checks.

Communication/Consent from Parents/Funding off-site visits

Parents of children taking part in any off-site activity involving transport will be provided with full and complete written details of any intended visit. Parents will be asked to complete all consent forms (Appendix 4/Appendix 9)

with details of any medical needs, emergency contact numbers for their child. Parents must complete these consent forms before their child can be involved in any off-site activity.

The Off Site Visits Global Approval Form (Appendix 9) is completed by parents as part of the school induction programme. By completing this form parents give consent for their child to participate in all school visits (except residential) for the whole time they are at Bantock Primary School. The Parental Consent for Off-site Activities form (Appendix 4) is completed by parents to consent to Residential visits or if the Off Site Visits Global Approval Form has not been completed.

Funding for off-site activities is provided mainly by voluntary parental contributions. The requested voluntary contribution is made clear to all parents in the initial letter about the visit.

No child will be excluded from any activity because of the unwillingness, or inability, of the parent to make a contribution,

For local school outings, not involving transport e.g. to church, park walk, village walk, a letter will be sent to parents each year for consent. Risk assessments will still be completed for such visits.

Insurance

Schools within Wolverhampton currently purchasing the insurance provided by the Director Finance and Physical Resources are covered by a package of insurance described in the 'LMS Guide to Insurance Arrangements' issued by, and available from, the Risk Management and Insurance Services (RMIS), Finance and Physical Resources, Civic Centre on (01902) 554565.

This package includes all of the insurances necessary for any off-site visit or activity **within the UK** including Liability and Personal Accident. (A copy of the insurance is available in the school office).

Planning and Preparation for School Visits.

When planning a visit the visit leader should consult with the EVC to ensure correct procedures are adhered to. Each visit planned, be it day or residential, needs rigorous planning, including a preliminary visit. Procedures for the visit leader to follow are identified in the Educational Visits Pre Visit Checklist (Appendix 5). To summarise:

A minimum of two weeks prior to the visit complete and return the following information to the EVC:

1. Obtain costs for entrance fees and coaches, any other anticipated expenses for location.
2. Visit the proposed venue.
3. Check venue for toilets, eating environment, shops and fire precautions.
4. Complete/ ask for risk assessments for the venue.
5. Complete the visit costing calculation form (see Appendix 6)
6. Gain authorisation from the Headteacher.
7. Enter visit details on the visit register.
8. Give risk assessments to EVC.
9. Confirm booking of coaches or other transport (using LA approved coach company)
10. Write a letter to parents including all relevant details:
 - Venue
 - Dates and Times
 - Costing/ Parental Contribution
 - Clothing and food, money needed on the day
 - Parental consent form **with medical needs** clearly identified and request for e.g. epipens, inhalers.
11. Determine staffing levels following risk assessments (in consultation with EVC or Headteacher).
12. Ensure at least one member of staff has a suitable first aid qualification.

A completed copy for each trip must be handed to the EVC for filing in school visits folder.

Once the aforementioned form is completed the visit leader must complete the Off-Site Visit Approval Form (Appendix 7) and a copy to be handed to the EVC for filing in school visits folder. **The EVC must complete the LA online Visit Approval Form and submit it to the LA.**

The day prior to the visit the visit leader must complete the Day Prior Check Sheet Day (Appendix 8) and a copy to be handed to the EVC for filing in school visits folder.

- Ensuring all medical records are available
- All the permission sheets are completed.
- Check E-Safety parental consent forms for digital imagery of children.
- Check all adult helpers not employed by the school have signed the 'Adults in school' proforma.
- Children's spending money.
- All the emergency contacts are available.
- First Aid Kit is collected/First Aider on visit.
- At least one member of staff has a mobile phone.
- Group lists given to supporting adults.
- List of pupils/staff and days itinerary left in school office.

A completed copy for each trip must be to be handed to the Schools Business Manager for filing in school visits folder.

Evaluation and Reporting

The visit leader must complete a Post Visit Report Form (Appendix 9) within two weeks of returning from the trip and a copy to be handed to the EVC for filing in school visits folder. **The EVC must complete the LA online Post Visit Report and submit it to the LA.**