

Educational Visits Policy

Fowey Primary School

Introduction

Well planned and executed educational visits, (EVs), provide children with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. EVs:

- 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

EVs supports the *Every Child Matters* agenda, which seeks to help children stay safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, achieve economic well being, and to make a positive contribution. They do this by contributing to children's experiences in the national curriculum and in the school curriculum. They may offer the following opportunities:

- Building on pupils' strengths, interests and experiences and develop confidence to learn and work independently and collaboratively,
- Giving pupils the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership,
- Developing their physical skills and encourage pupils to recognise the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle and keeping themselves and others safe,
- Developing pupils integrity and autonomy,
- Developing pupils awareness and understanding of the environments in which they live,
- Helping pupils form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships,
- Enabling pupils to respond positively to opportunities, challenges and responsibilities to manage risk and cope with change and diversity.

Guidelines

All educational visits are to be organised and conducted in accordance with the Cornwall Council policy document, *Safety on Educational Visits, 2003*. A copy of this document is available in the staffroom, and from the EVC. A Visit leader must be familiar with the guidance in *Safety on Educational Visits, 2003*, prior to planning any educational visit.

National guidance is contained in *Health and Safety on Educational Visits, (HASPEV)*, published by the DfES, 1998.

The EVC

Maria Barnes is the Educational Visits Coordinator, (EVC). Her role is to:

- Ensure educational visits meet the school's requirements
- Support the Head Teacher and Governors with approvals and other decisions,
- Assess the competence of prospective leaders and staff,

- Ensure that risk assessments meet requirements,
- Organise training and induction,
- Ensure that parents are informed and give consent,
- Organise emergency arrangements,
- Keep records of visits, accident or incident reports,
- Review systems and monitor practice.

The Visit Leader, (VL).

The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for:

- The supervision and conduct of the visit including direct responsibility for the pupils health, safety and welfare.

The Visit Leader must:

- Be approved to carry out the visit and be competent and be knowledgeable about the school and LA's policies and procedures in relation to visits,
- Plan and prepare the visit and assess the risks,
- Define the roles and responsibilities of other staff and pupils and ensure effective supervision of what they do,

The Visit Leader must be both accountable and competent. Being accountable means that he or she must be an employee, and being competent implies that they have the ability to operate to current standards of recognised good practice with appropriate knowledge and understanding.

They must:

- Have appropriate experience,
- Have a formally accredited qualification in some circumstances, (e.g. First Aid, adventure activities).

The EVC will assess the VLs competence. General guidance for visits is attached at Annex 1, which the VL must consider before submitting a visit plan. A Visit Leader will need to show evidence or consideration of the following:

- Educational aims and objectives,
- A pre-visit,
- Provider or accommodation checks, (i.e. AALA approval, NGB approval, and provider questionnaire),
- Referral to guidance, (including staffing ratios and current HASPEV guidance available on-line),
- Contingency plans,
- Risk assessments
- Insurance arrangements,
- Communications plan,
- Itinerary or programme.
- Transport arrangements,
- Parental information and approvals,
- Inclusion.

If an inclusion issue exists, the Visit Leader should document how a decision was reached both in the form of a risk assessment and a record of any consultations undertaken.

The Visit Leader will be expected to present their visit plan and risk assessment to the EVC and Head Teacher for review. The Head Teacher may approve a visit plan and risk assessment if the Visit Leader is able to demonstrate competency and knowledge and the plan shows that any risks are minimized and fall within reasonable expectations. Approvals for visits to adventure centres, residential centres or other countries require submission to Cornwall Outdoors. This will be made by the EVC and the Head teacher via the electronic information system implemented by Cornwall Outdoors. Please note that Cornwall Outdoors requires a two month approval period for a visit involving adventurous activities, six months for a visit to a residential centre and twelve months for a visit abroad.

Visits to places or Centres that are out-of-county also require Cornwall Outdoors approval. For residential visits, Cornwall Outdoors require the submission of a residential questionnaire that has been completed by the management of the hotel or other venue used. (Visit leaders will need to leave additional lead time for this to be returned to school, prior to a submission to Cornwall Outdoors). If an adventurous activity Centre is to be visited, details of the AALA certificate that the centre holds need to be submitted.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments should be completed by the visit leader using the EEC Live software. (A password is obtainable from the EVC). The risk assessment should:

- Identify significant hazards,
- Identify the people at risk, (groups, numbers, the public),
- Evaluate the risk:
 - Severity of hazard,
 - Frequency of exposure,
 - Adequacy of current control measures,
 - Risk rating, (low, medium, high).
- Identify additional control measures,
- Check if anything else is needed
- Be a record.

For all guidance refer to the appropriate section in, *Safety on Educational Visits, 2003*, and the EVC.

Annex 1

In the first instance, all staff planning a school visit must follow the procedures in *Safety on Educational Visits 2003*. The following school guidelines and general requirements also support the planning and implementation of educational visits.

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher holds final responsibility for all visits. The Head Teacher will seek the advice of the EVC and Cornwall Outdoors in evaluating visit plans, approving Visit Leaders, and understanding the potential risks in any visit. Approval for all visits must be obtained from the Head Teacher prior to any submission to Cornwall Outdoors.

The EVC

On behalf of the Head Teacher, the EVC will check that:

- A suitable Visit Leader is appointed;
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins.
- The risk assessments are complete and that control measures are in place to make the visit as safe as possible;
- Training needs have been met;
- The Visit Leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively;
- The Visit 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;
- The address and phone number of the visit's venue is recorded and the school has a contact name;
- That the names of all the adults and pupils in the travelling group is recorded, along with the contact details of parents and the staff's and volunteers' next of kin.

The EVC will advise the Head Teacher about the outcomes of his or her checks, before the Head Teacher considers a visit approval.

Visit Leader

The Visit Leader, is responsible for the overall supervision and conduct of the visit, and will be approved by the Head Teacher. The Visit Leader should provide the EVC with information to be checked above, and will also:

- 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 and visit plan and submit both for approval to the EVC and Head Teacher;
- 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 in *Safety on Educational Visits, 2003*.
- ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities.

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 be acting under an agreement with their Head Teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal work hours.

Teachers 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 Visit 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;
- always consider stopping the visit or an activity if they think the risk to the health or safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

Responsibilities of pupils

The Visit 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 their Leader about it;
- not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be unsafe.

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. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

Parents

The Visit 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 Visit 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 numbers;
- sign the consent form;
- give the Visit Leader information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit, and advise about medication requirements.

Planning off-site 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 contingency plans to avoid them.

The Head Teacher is responsible for all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the Visit 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 Visit Leader must seek the approval of all risk assessments, plans and arrangements with the EVC and Head Teacher.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit, using the EEC Live software. The risk assessment will indicate the minimum adult to child ratio for each visit. (See *Safety on Educational Visits, 2003* for guidance).

The risk assessment should also incorporate 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 or when circumstances unexpectedly change?
- what is the acceptable ratio of adults to children?

The Visit Leader and other supervisors should continually assess risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The Visit 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.

Reconnaissance visit

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake a reconnaissance visit to:

- ensure that the activity venue and the residential venue are suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk, (including that of overnight security at a residential venue);
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group;
- ensure that the Visit Leader and other staff are familiar with the area before taking a party of young people there.
- Ensure that the residential questionnaire is submitted to the residential venue management;
- Ensure that a centre that provides adventurous activities is correctly certified by the AALA.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue to ascertain the above information in detail. This will be scrutinised carefully by the EVC and Head Teacher before approval for a visit is given

First Aid

First Aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks of the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is necessary to have at least one qualified first-aider in the group. The Visit Leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services.

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 fall-back first-aid cover for the other pupils. The Visit Leader, EVC and Head Teacher should take this into account when reviewing the risks associated with the visit.

Supervision

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. (See: *Safety on Educational Visits 2003*). There should always be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency.

Parents with appropriate clearance may be used to supplement the supervision ratio. They should be carefully selected and have current CRB clearance, and ideally they should be well known to the school and the pupil group.

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 all members of the group at all times.

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

If the school is leading an adventure activity such as canoeing, Cornwall outdoors and the 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. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, a regular head count should take place. As part of the visit's contingency planning, the Visit Leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the main 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.

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.

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

and contingency planning should address this as an option.

Information to pupils

It is for the Visit 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 or 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,
- whether mobile phones or other communication devices should be accessed on the visit.

Transport and pupils

- Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules and instructions. E.g.:
- arrive on time and wait for the transport away from the road, track, etc.
- 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 supervisor who is otherwise responsible for the group.

Pupils with special educational and medical needs

The Head Teacher will not seek to exclude pupils with special educational or medical needs from school visits, but will seek assurance from the Visit Leader that risk assessments and planning have addressed their needs. Every effort should be made to accommodate such children whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage.

Communicating with Parents / Guardians

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

- dates of the visit;
- times of departure and return;
- modes of travel including the name of any travel company;
- details of accommodation with security and supervisory arrangements on site;
- names of the Leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults;
- visit's objectives;
- details of the activities planned and of how 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;
- mobile telephones or other communication devices and how contact with home and others will be managed
- the information to be given to 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. For consent forms, see *Safety on Educational Visits 2003*.

Residential visits

Hostels and Hotels

The school will bear in mind the following:

- the Visit Leader or other supervisor should ideally have adjoining rooms with staff quarters next to that of the children's.

- the immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group;
- access by staff to children's rooms must be available at all times;
- separate male and female sleeping areas for pupils and adults;
- ensure that the whole party are aware of the lay-out of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel;
- security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force at all times to stop unauthorised visitors;
- ensure that locks / shutters etc. work on all the rooms used by the group and that they are secured at night;
- storage of clothes, luggage, equipment etc., particularly safekeeping of valuables;
- adequate lighting, torches are needed for emergency lighting;
- provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs;
- safety in rooms (e.g. electrical connections, secure balconies);
- recreational accommodation and facilities for 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. The Visit Leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity, if such an activity is ever approved by the Head Teacher or Cornwall Outdoors:

- 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, especially in relation to wet rock and pools;
- cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to a safety path at all times.

Swimming

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters are potentially dangerous activities for a school group. Statistically, such activities lead to the highest rate of serious incidents on school visits.

Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit, will not be allowed. 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. At least one teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance. Specific permission to run such an activity will need to be sought from the Head Teacher. Where paddling is to be allowed on a visit, a ratio of 1 adult to 4 children is a minimum.

Farm visits

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking children to a farm will need to 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 farm should be approved by Cornwall Outdoors for such visits.

On a visit, 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.

Policy re-adopted on: 30th August 2017

Date:.....

Signature of Headteacher:.....

Signature of Chair of Governors:.....

Review Date: September 2019