



## **Educational Visits Policy**

**Status:** Additional

**Purpose:** Educational visits provide a valuable opportunity for students to encounter experiences that are not available to them in the classroom. They can enable students to learn through new experiences and develop their initiative, resourcefulness and independence. These visits must be organised and carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of those taking part in them.

### **Aims to:**

- ensure that educational visits are as safe as possible
- provide support and guidance to those who manage and supervise visits
- ensure the level of risk assessed will determine the level and type of precaution most appropriate for a particular visit
- protect staff from prosecutions in the event of an accident or serious incident

**Implementation:** Will follow the procedures set out in the Halton Borough Council Code of Practice for Educational Visits and take account of guidance issued by DfE

### **Responsibilities:**

The Governing Body:

- has responsibility for the general direction of the conduct and curriculum in their establishment. This extends to visits and journeys
- will approve and keep under review a local policy for educational visits
- undertake a review of safeguards used on educational visits each year and present the salient features to the Governing Body either separately or as part of the Headteacher's annual report on health and safety. This review will help to ensure that the highest levels of care and safety are maintained
- ensure that the visit has a specific and stated objective
- ensure that the Headteacher/Group Leader's planning complies with the Code of Practice and that, on return from the trip, a review is carried out on the effectiveness of the planning and risk assessments
- ensure that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- assess proposals for certain types of visit, which should include visits involving an overnight stay or travel outside the UK

The Headteacher will:

- appoint a member of staff to be responsible for Educational Visits and through whom approval must be sought
- ensure the EVC receives appropriate training
- ensure the EVC attends network meetings held by HBC to receive updates and circulars it might issue
- authorisation for visits will be conditional upon adequate attention being given to:

planning, organisation and event timetabling; competence, experience and suitability of leaders and supervisors; capabilities and suitability of accompanying staff and other helpers; leaders' knowledge of local circumstances to be experienced during the visit; party size, age, aptitude and experience of students; child protection issues including staff being aware of safe practice issues regarding behaviour with and towards children; a clearly stated and promoted complaints system for students; supervisory ratios; assessment of health or safety risks inherent in the project; foreseeable emergency action and contingency plans which may be necessary, including effective communication with 'home base', especially in the event of a critical incident; insurance; financial and travel arrangements

- informing parents of risks and safeguards and obtaining their approval
- Special Educational needs of pupils
- provide a School owned mobile for business use on a School visit which should be returned at the end of the visit

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Headteacher should review operating arrangements at least annually with staff that directly implement the policy or undertake visits. This review should provide the basis for a report to the Governing Body

### **The Educational Visits Co-ordinator will:**

- ensure that the necessary up to date information and advice for visit leaders is available to visit leader
- be the contact with the LA and will be expected to attend occasional EVC network meetings to receive updates as well as any circulars it might use
- support the Head and Governors with approvals and other decisions
- check the competence of those assigned to lead or supervise on a visit
- organise the training of leaders and other adults, where appropriate, who may be going on a visit. This will commonly involve training such as hazard awareness, risk assessment and child protection including awareness of safe practice issues regarding behaviour with and towards children. At least one person on the visit must hold a current 1<sup>st</sup> Aid Certificate
- ensure that there is a clearly understood and promoted complaints system for students
- organise thorough induction of leaders and other adults taking students on a specific visit
- make sure that Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are in place as necessary
- work with the group leader to obtain the consent or refusal of parents and to provide full details of the visit beforehand so that parents can consent or refuse consent on a fully informed basis
- organise the emergency arrangements and ensure there is an emergency contact for each visit
- keep records of all visits and provide to the LA using the EVOLVE electronic system information for all visits no later than two weeks after the start of each term (ideally notify the LA as early as possible)
- keep a record of all relevant qualifications for visit leaders on appendix 15

## **Visit Leader will:**

- have overall responsibility for the supervision and conduct of the visit and therefore for the health and safety of the group. In this regard, the visit leader will be representing the Headteacher during the visit
- set out a plan showing the educational benefits of the visit and seek authorisation
- include in the plan an initial risk assessment, preferably based on a site visit or at least up-to-date site information. Apart from health and safety, this assessment should take account of child protection, any accommodation, financial risks, conduct and behaviour. There should always be a fully organised and risk assessed 'plan B' as an alternative activity in case the main activity cannot be delivered
- get assurances that the transport provision is suitable and safe
- identify the adult staff and helpers needed, ensure that the ratio of students to supervisors is appropriate and appoint a deputy
- ensure that all accompanying adults, whether employees or volunteers will be able to carry out allotted roles competently and are appropriately briefed
- make appropriate and adequate preparations for emergencies and ensure that all accompanying leaders are familiar with these procedures
- arrange for routine contingencies, including first aid, and arrange for clearly understood delegation in his/her absence and appropriate supervision when the group is sub-divided
- inform parents of any off-site activity or visit unless it is a regular part of the school curriculum which parents have already been informed about through the school. Information should be sent to parents as far in advance of the visit as practicable
- During the visit:
  1. Meet the objectives of the visit
  2. Ensure the overall maintenance of order and discipline
  3. Make adequate arrangements for the safety and well-being of all students at all times
  4. Consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the students is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an eventuality
  5. Ensure the group leaders have details of the school contacts and the students in their care
- review the visit and advise the EVC within the first two weeks on return
- use of School mobiles for business use only whilst on the trip and ensure its return at the end of it

## **Monitoring & Evaluation:**

- Visit Leaders must review educational visits in order to identify strengths and weaknesses of arrangements to improve the efficiency of future visits. The scale of the review needs to be proportionate to the visit and any incidents which may have occurred
- EVC will monitor and review any changes to the Code of Practice and adopt any recommended amendments in line with Halton Borough Council or the DfE. The Governor responsible for Educational Visits will be responsible for ensuring this review takes place
- EVC will ensure that Visits Leaders evaluate the visit and report to the Headteacher

- EVC will provide a report of all school visits to the Governing Body
- Headteacher will annually review procedures with staff who implement the policy or undertake visits
- Governing Body will monitor all visits ensuring “best value” and that health and safety requirements are met

**Policy written by:**

**Julia Flavin Deputy Headteacher**

**Date adopted by the Governing Body: June 2010**

**Date to be reviewed:**