

Brandesburton Primary School

Educational Visits Policy



Introduction

All offsite visits and activities that are organised and undertaken by the school are regarded as “educational visits”. Whenever pupils leave the school site under the direct or indirect supervision of school staff, they are undertaking an educational visit.

Aims and Objectives

The school aims to offer children a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development, and prepares them for adult life. The school’s head teacher and governors recognise the value and importance of learning outside the classroom, and encourage staff to organise educational visits that enrich the curriculum and enhance the learning and development of our pupils.

Curriculum Links

All educational visits and activities support and enrich the work we do in school. There is 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. For each subject in the curriculum there is a corresponding programme of activities which includes visits by specialists. All these activities are in line with guidance published by the LA.

Compliance

The school’s policy is to comply with the LA’s ‘Guidance for the management and leadership of offsite visits’. The school’s Educational Visits policy should also be read in conjunction with the other relevant school policy documents, such as the following:

- **Health, Safety and Welfare policy**
- **Charging policy**
- **Equal Opportunities/Inclusion/SEN**
- **Safeguarding/Child protection**

and educational visits risk assessments.

Access to Policies and Guidelines

Staff involved in the leadership and management of visits should be familiar with all relevant guidelines and policy documents, and should know how/where this information can be accessed.

The LA’s ‘Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits’ are accessible via the LA Educational Visits webpage <http://www.eriding.net/all-ages/educational-visits/> and also online via EVOLVE, an online system for recording and approving visits.

Roles and responsibilities (for details see LA Educational Visits Code of Practice)

The head teacher has overall responsibility for all the school’s educational visits.

If the head teacher is absent or unavailable, Mrs Plant will act as the appointed deputy, and fulfil the same responsibilities regarding the management and approval of educational visits.

The School’s Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is Mrs J Ledingham. Refresher training– Sept 2020

The EVC oversees the planning and organisation of the school’s visits, and provides advice and guidance to staff, including recommendations regarding the approval of visits.

The Governing Body representative who is responsible for overseeing educational visits, and for assisting with the approval of residential/overseas/high risk visits is Mr M Fish.

The LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant is Clare Johnson (tel 01482 392417, 07773 041609 email clare.johnson@eastriding.gov.uk).

Advice and Guidance

Staff should seek advice and guidance regarding educational visits from:

- the school EVC/Head teacher
- the LA Educational Visits officer
- other experts with specialist/local knowledge (e.g. National Park ranger)

Training

The LA provides a range of training opportunities for staff involved in the management, organisation, and leadership of educational visits. A record is kept by the EVC/Child Protection Co-ordinator.

The school ensures the following training opportunities with regard to educational visits are made available

- Training for EVC (including update courses every 3 years)
- Training for Visit Organisers and Group Leaders
- Training for NQTs and new staff
- Training for TAs/others
- In house training at staff meetings

Monitoring

To assure quality of standards on educational visits ***the school's head teacher/EVC will accompany at least one visit per term to monitor real practice, and to assist with the review of policies and procedures***

Records of monitoring visits are stored in the EVC file in the head teacher's office. The school's head teacher/EVC will complete the Manger Review (an audit of the school's educational visits policies and procedures that is accessible online via evolve.edufocus.co.uk) and share the findings with the Governors and the LA Educational Visits Officer. This will be completed at least every 3 years (or whenever a new head teacher is appointed). Proposed actions in response to the review will be carried out in accordance with the target completion dates stated on the Review form and will be reviewed annually by the EVC/head teacher and EVC governor.

The following should be read in conjunction with the corresponding chapters in the LA 'Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits', and provide additional information and policy statements that are specific to the school.

1. Planning and approval procedures

Visits should be recorded, checked, and approved in accordance with the following procedures:

Category 1 - DAY VISITS (ROUTINE)

Visits that take place on a regular basis throughout the year, or over a specific period of time (e.g. a series of six weekly visits) e.g. visits to local library/swim pool/away sports matches.

Category 1 visits should be recorded using:

- **LA Day Visits form**

Category 1 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the head teacher / EVC and Health and Safety / EVC Governor.

Category 1 visits should be submitted for approval ***at least 2 weeks in advance of the first of a series of visits.***

Category 2 – DAY VISITS (NON ROUTINE)

One-off or occasional visits e.g. day visit to York Minster/Scarborough Sea Life Centre.

Category 2 visits should be recorded using:

- **LA Day Visits form (EVOLVE)**

Category 2 visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the head teacher / EVC.

- ***In addition, the Governing Body should be informed of visits that will take place***

Category 2 visits should be submitted for approval ***at least 2 weeks in advance of the first of a series of visits.***

Category 3 – UK RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Residential Activities

Children in Year 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit.

The residential visit enables children to take part in outdoor and adventure activities as part of their PE work. We undertake this visit only with the written agreement of the LA. All specialist activities are undertaken with qualified instructors.

Category 3 visits should be recorded using EVOLVE and submitted for approval **at least 6 weeks in advance of the first of the visit**. They should be checked and approved internally by the head teacher/EVC and by the Governing Body and externally by the LA Educational Visits Consultant.

If any of the above 3 types of visit involve what may be regarded as “High risk activities or environments” they **MUST** be given an additional subcategory “A” classification:

Sub Category “A” – HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES and ENVIRONMENTS

All day visits, or residential or overseas visits that involve hazards that are significantly different or more serious (in terms of severity and /or likelihood) than might normally be encountered in everyday or school life e.g. a weekly climbing day visit = 1A, a day visit to dry ski slope = 2A, a residential stay at outdoor centre = 3A

All Sub Category “A” visits should be recorded using EVOLVE Online

All Sub Category “A” visits should be checked and approved:

Internally - by the head teacher / EVC and EV Governor

Externally – by the LA Educational Visits and Outdoor Learning Consultant

All Sub Category ‘A’ visits should be recorded using EVOLVE and submitted for approval **at least 6 weeks in advance of the first of the visit**. They should be checked and approved internally by the head teacher/EVC and by the Governing Body and externally by the LA Educational Visits Consultant.

For visits with significant financial commitment, “Outline Approval” should be obtained before firm bookings are made. All staff who lead visits are required to **input their own information and assurances on Evolve**.

Visit Objectives

All educational visits should have a defined purpose, with clearly stated, justifiable educational objectives, or else they may not be approved, and may not be covered by the LA insurance.

Selection of young people

Every effort is made to ensure that school journeys and activities are available and accessible to all who wish to participate, irrespective of special educational or medical needs, ethnic origin, gender or religion.

Staffing selection and supervision ratios

Effective supervision is of the utmost importance in maintaining the safety and welfare of the children on educational visits.

The LA Educational Visits Guidelines provide recommended minimum staffing ratios, but the choice of staff and the decision regarding ratios is still a matter of judgement for the head teacher, /EVC and Overall Group Leader (and LA Ed Visits Officer, if necessary), as part of the risk assessment and management process.

The school has a responsibility to ensure that all adults involved in the supervision of children during school-related activities (including visits) are suitable people to work with children, and pose no threat to the young people in their care. Concerns about possible child abuse or poor practice by a member of staff, volunteer or other adult should be reported immediately. Young people on educational visits should at all times have ready access to a competent adult who has an appropriate level of first aid training. This normally requires at least one of the group’s leaders to have an appropriate and current first aid qualification (6-8 hours of emergency aid training is the minimum training recommended for leaders on educational visits).

The Overall Group Leader/Visit Organiser

The Overall Group Leader must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their role and responsibilities by the head teacher.

Overall Group Leaders should preferably have been as Assistant on several previous visits, and ideally been a Deputy Leader on at least 1 of those visits.

Deputy, Assistant and Volunteer Leaders

Visits normally require a Deputy Leader who is able to deputise, and take full responsibility for the Overall Group Leader, if necessary. Assistant Leaders should be chosen carefully, and must be assessed and approved as suitable and competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities by the head teacher, EVC and Overall Group Leader.

Leaders should consider carefully the implications of family members being present, and the possible complications that might arise.

Selection and suitability of accommodation or venues to be visited

As part of the overall risk assessment process, and in keeping with their legal duty of care, the Overall Group Leader must take reasonable steps to check that any accommodation (e.g. youth hostel) that is used, and any venues (e.g. castles or museums) that the group plans to visit, are suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe. Many organisations now have websites or supply teacher information packs that provide all reasonable assurances regarding standards, or have obtained a Learning Outside the Classroom "Quality Badge". However, if necessary, the Provider Assurance Form (EV2) can be sent to the manager of a place of accommodation or venue to be visited, requesting signed, written assurances regarding their safety management systems and operating procedures. When planning a visit, the Visit Organiser (and other group leaders) should, wherever possible, undertake an exploratory visit to inspect and familiarize themselves with the accommodation to be used and venues to be visited.

High risk activities and environments

Leaders who organise visits that involve high-risk activities and environments must be aware that such visits normally require a greater degree of planning and preparation by virtue of their complexity and unpredictability. All Category 1 and 2 (Day) and Category 3 (UK Residential) visits that involve high risk activities and environments are classified as subcategory 'A' and must be recorded on EVOLVE, and approved by the EVC, head teacher, and LA. Leaders and other supervisors must be sufficiently competent to supervise pupils in the activity/environment. Competence derives from knowledge, experience, training and personal qualities and may be evidenced by holding the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) award where appropriate.

The school keeps a record of staff qualifications, training and leadership experience, this is stored in the EV file in the head teacher office.

Visit Organisers should plan alternative activities and venues to cater for possible changes in circumstances (e.g. worsening weather or rising river levels), and all staff should be aware of these possible contingencies. The EVC will sometimes ask to see and check these plans.

Risk assessment/Parental consent

The school has a legal duty of care for its young people, and must therefore give careful consideration to the hazards involved during an educational visit, and ensure that risks are managed at reasonable and acceptable levels. The Visit Organiser should undertake an appropriate risk assessment for each visit, and this should be shared/discussed/agreed by all visit leaders before the visit takes place. Appropriate written evidence of this process should be provided.

The process of risk assessment should be a positive means of raising awareness of hazards and prompting constructive discussion regarding the best means of risk management – it should therefore be of real practical value to the leaders and group members, not just a paper exercise. A set of written generic risk assessments and a blank specific visit form is available on the Local Authority's Educational Visits website EVOLVE.

- **All relevant generic risk assessment forms are reviewed, amended, and agreed at the start of each academic year by all staff.**
- **These generic forms are stored in a clearly marked file in the head teacher's office, and staff are encouraged to reference these if unsure about agreed practice or before undertaking visits that they are less familiar with.**
- **New leaders/volunteers are asked to read all relevant forms and add their signed agreement before assisting with the leadership of a visit.**

- **An additional specific visit risk assessment should be completed by the visit leaders for each visit to record and share information about potential hazards and precautions that may be particularly noteworthy for that specific group, doing particular activities, at specific sites on that visit.**
- **Completed assessments are approved by the school EVC.**

We ask parents to give written permission for their child to take part in any activity that takes children off the school site. If we do not receive this written permission, the child will be unable to participate. Parents sign to give a blanket permission for activities local to the school (within a ½ mile radius) though parents are informed of such activities beforehand.

The Overall Group Leader and EVC must ensure that parents/guardians are provided with appropriate and sufficient information about all visits. The amount of information and method of provision will depend upon the type of visit planned and the assessed level of risk involved.

Any special/medical needs of pupils are collated by Miss Tomlinson and supervising staff are briefed and trained accordingly. Parents are asked to give written consent to the administration of plasters and off-the-shelf first aid/medication, if deemed necessary. Medical information and consent forms can be obtained from the school office. Parents should be clearly informed of the arrangements and responsibilities for collecting a pupil after a visit. The Visit Organiser/EVC must obtain parent contact details for all pupils on the visit.

We pay annually for LA Voyager Insurance which covers all visits within the UK.

Visit Organisers should check that any external service providers have sufficient public liability cover (normally at least £5 million).

Staff briefing and emergency procedures

It is important that all staff (including volunteers) involved in the leadership of a visit are fully briefed about each visit. Staff should be aware of their expected roles and responsibilities before, during and after a visit. Group leaders should be aware of emergency procedures and how to obtain outside assistance or contact the emergency services if required.

Part of the planning for emergencies must involve the recording of one or more Emergency Home Contact(s) who should be available at any time during the visit.

The Visit Organiser must ensure that group leaders have immediate access to the emergency contact details of the school managers and the parents of those on the visit.

A properly equipped first aid kit is always available to staff during school visits and must be checked and taken on all visits.

Charging arrangements

The Visit Organiser and school EVC should ensure that:

- Each visit is accurately costed and budgeted for;
- Adequate allowances are made for additional unforeseen costs and changes in circumstances;
- Financial plans – especially for more complex and committing visits – are checked over and agreed first by the EVC/head teacher before financial commitments are made;
- The costs of the visit are made clear to all concerned (including parents), including how much will come from school funds, and how much each parent will be charged or asked to contribute;

No charge may be made in respect of any activity that is deemed to take place in school hours. An activity is deemed to take place during “school hours” if 50% or more of the activity, takes place within school hours. If more than 50% is deemed to be outside of school hours then a charge may be made for “optional extras” only. For residential, a school trip is considered to have taken place within school time if the number of school sessions missed by the pupils amounts to half or more of the number of half days taken up by the activity.

The school will not charge for:

- Any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum, or part of a syllabus for a prescribed public examination that the pupil is being prepared for at the school, or part of religious education.
- Supply teachers to cover for those teachers who are absent from school accompanying pupils on a residential trip.
- Transport provided in connection with an educational trip during school hours.

The school may ask parents for voluntary contributions towards the cost of these visits, but it must be clear that any contribution is genuinely voluntary.

The school may charge for activities that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours, as long as these activities are optional extras (see details in the school charging policy) but any charge made in respect of individual pupils will not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. The costs of the visit should be clear to all concerned.

Those pupils in receipt of free school meals are exempt from the cost of board and lodging during residential visits.

Transport

As part of the overall risk assessment process, the Visit Organiser must take reasonable steps to check that any transport used during the visit is suitable, satisfactory, and acceptably safe, and that any specific Local Authority or legal requirements are met. Leaders should refer to the Local Authority's generic risk assessments that give detailed recommendations for all standard forms of transport.

The school hires coaches/buses from **companies whose safety management systems and operating procedures have been checked and assessed as suitable using the 'Coach/minibus hire company enquiry EV3 form'**

For the safe supervision of pupils on coaches/buses, group leaders are required to:

- **Sit in various locations, spread throughout the coach**
- **Sit near emergency exits**
- **Carry a first aid kit and the school mobile phone.**

The head teacher must ensure the safety of pupils travelling by private car, and should:

- assess and decide if the driver is suitably qualified, experienced and competent;
- inform parents and obtain their written consent (this may not be possible in emergencies);
- gain assurance on main points of reference – insurance, licence, roadworthy, seatbelts, etc.;
- carry out suitable Child Protection checks (Council policy requires all drivers carrying young people to be DBS checked);
- ensure that drivers are aware of any specific requirements (e.g. compulsory use of seatbelts – individual school policies may require the use only of full 3-point seatbelts).
- ensure that drivers are aware of their responsibilities and school procedures (e.g. use of seat belts, keeping to speed limits etc.).
- drivers have appropriate insurance – including business cover for employees

For visits that require the use of staff cars, drivers must:

- have business insurance
- **be assessed as competent and suitable by the head teacher (using the Driver validation form)**

For visits that require the use of parents' cars. Drivers must:

- **be assessed as competent and suitable by the head teacher (using the Driver validation form)**
- **sign to say their car is roadworthy, taxed and insured.**
- **Be DBS checked.**

For visits involving the use of minibuses (if applicable):

The school follows National and Local Authority regulations and guidance, and all minibus drivers have been assessed and approved by the LA Transport Services. All new minibus drivers will be required to complete the MiDAS course at least once every 4 years.

Briefing and preparation of young people

Pupils should be briefed about safety arrangements and what clothing/equipment should be brought. Leaders must ensure that pupils clearly understand what will be considered unacceptable behaviour or conduct, and consequences of non-compliance.

Pupils should be briefed what to do in an emergency, or if they become separated from the rest of the group. It is good practice to teach pupils how to recognise dangers and manage risks sensibly.

Documentation

The EVOLVE database will store key elements of Category 3, 4 and “A” visit details securely and indefinitely. Hard copies of other supporting documentation (e.g. risk assessments) are **stored and retained in the school’s central “Educational Visits” file**. If no significant incidents occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork at the end of the academic year, if a minor incident occurred during the visit, the school disposes of the paperwork after a period of 6 years. If a significant incident occurs during a visit that could be investigated at a later date, all relevant details are retained until the young person becomes 21 in the head teacher office.

Amendments to Visits

If there are significant late changes to visit plans that have already been approved or submitted for approval, the Visit Organiser must notify all relevant approving authorities (EVC/head teacher/governors/LA) of these changes, and ensure that their additional consent is given. There is a clear system for the notification and approval of amendments to visit plans, so that there can be no misunderstanding or confusion by any parties involved.

Post visit review

It is good practice for Visit Organisers, on return from a visit, to review the visit with the EVC and/or head teacher, and to record any examples of good practice and lessons learned. It is important to record review any accidents, incidents, or near-misses (i.e. dangerous incidents that nearly happened, but fortunately didn’t). It is important that details are recorded as soon as possible after an incident whilst they are still fresh in the memory, preferably with signed witness accounts. Visit Organisers should take copies of the Accident Incident Form (AIF) and AIIF. Accidents incidents, or dangerous occurrences must be recorded and reported in accordance with the council’s accident and incident reporting procedures.

Post-visit revise and evaluations can be recorded and stored if appropriate on EVOLVE or using the downloadable form in the LA’s ‘Guidance for the Management and Leadership of Offsite Visits’
Post visit reviews and accident/near misses records are reviewed immediately after each visit by the head teacher/EVC/governor. Any lessons learned are shared with all relevant staff and any necessary changes to procedures made.

After any major accident, the school will undertake a review of the incident and their emergency procedures, and will share the findings with the Local Authority for the benefit of other schools. Staff are encouraged to express any concerns regarding the organisation and management of visits in writing to the Head teacher, and these will be taken seriously and dealt with in confidence. If necessary, issues will be considered further by the Governing Body. Significant incidents and issues of concern should also be brought immediately to the attention of the LA Education Visits Officer and safety services.

Monitoring and Review

We are aware of the need to review the policy regularly so that we can take account of new rules and procedures relating to Educational Visits.

EV1 coordinator: J Ledingham

Reviewed September 2020

To be reviewed September 2021