

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY



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EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

As a school we value the role of educational visits and regard them as an important part of school life. Activities and Outdoor learning are two of the four Mission Areas at Brackenfield School. Educational visits encourage learning in both of these areas.

To enable children and staff to gain a full and enjoyable educational visit it is essential that the following guidelines and policies are adhered to as below:

SCOPE

The range of activities covered by this document include:

- Residential activities
- Day visits using transport
- Day or part day visits on foot
- After school sporting activities
- Swimming pool visits
- Farm visits

These guidelines are produced in conjunction with the following documentation:

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Gov.UK – H&S on Educational Visits
- Adventure Activities Licencing Regulations 2004
- Learning Outside the Classroom – LOtC
- Royal Society for the Protection of Accidents -ROSPA

School visits benefit young people in many ways, including:

- being able to apply a different range of skills than those used in the classroom
- enabling, supporting and complementing the work of the National Curriculum, experimental and memorable learning
- assessing and managing risks (safety)
- associating the work of schools and teachers directly with the work outside school
- develop latent talents, abilities and interests, which can be motivational and have lifelong relevance.

Teachers, volunteers, pupils and parents all have responsibilities during the course of any off -site activity in which they are participating.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Headmaster

The Headmaster should be satisfied that risk assessments have been undertaken and that appropriate safety measures have been put in place and that training needs have been addressed. The Headmaster may delegate any of the points below to the Compliance Manager or Visit Leader.

The Headmaster must ensure that:

- he is notified of all school visits
- every visit has a specific and stated objective
- that the Headmaster/ group leader shows how their planning complies with regulations and guidelines, including the school's health and safety policy document
- that they are informed about less routine visits well in advance
- assess proposals for all visits of a residential nature
- should ensure that the group leader is competent to monitor risks throughout the visit
- be aware of their role on any visit they take part in
- ensure adequate child protection procedures are in place

- all necessary action have been completed before the visit takes place
- the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place
- training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the staff and pupils have been considered
- the group leader has experience in supervising the age groups on the visit and will organise the group effectively
- the group leader or another teacher is suitably competent to instruct the activity and is familiar with the location/centre where the activity will take place.
- group leaders are allowed sufficient time to organise visits properly
- non teacher helpers on the visit are appropriate to supervise children
- ratios of staff to pupils are appropriate
- parent/guardians have signed consent forms electronically or manually
- arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of the pupils
- adequate first aid provision will be in place
- the mode of transport is appropriate
- travel times out and back are known in school
- there is adequate and relevant insurance cover
- they have the address and phone number of the visits venue and have a contact name
- a school contact has been nominated and the group leader has the details
- the group leader, helpers and nominated contact have a copy of the agreed emergency procedures from the venue if appropriate
- the group leader, helpers and nominated school contact have the names of all the adults and pupils travelling in the group
- there is a contingency plan for any delays including a late return

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessments for school visits have three levels:

1. generic activity risk assessments, which are likely to apply to the activity whenever it takes place.
2. visit/site specific risk assessments, which will differ from place to place and group to group.
3. dynamic risk assessments that take account of e.g. illness of staff or pupils, changes of weather, availability of preferred activities.

Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC)

- Check that the provider of any activities holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004, and check the provider holds relevant insurance
- Undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment
 - review regularly undertaken visits/activities and advise where adjustments may be necessary
 - ensure that teachers and helpers are fully aware of what the proposed visits entails

PRE-VISITS

In order to undertake a full and comprehensive assessment of risks, where practicable a pre-visit should take place and risks should be reassessed from time to time. When undertaking risk assessment, several variables need to be taken into account.

- the number of pupils involved
- the age of the pupils, their sex, ability and general behaviour
- the previous experience of the group undertaking off-site visits
- the time of day and time of year
- the travel arrangements
- the hazards at the environment being visited
- the numbers, experience and quality of accompanying staff and volunteers
- the nature of the activities

- the special educational or medical needs of the pupils
- the quality and suitability of available equipment
- seasonal weather conditions
- emergency procedures
- how to cope when a pupil becomes unable or unwilling to carry on
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit
- the qualifications and insurance of the providers to carry out the activity

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN ON THE VISIT

All staff should be aware of the expectations placed upon them and should appreciate the nature of their relationship to the pupils and other staff.

All staff must:

- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their own safety and the safety and well-being of the pupils.
- inform the visit leader if they are unsure of their ability to perform any supervisory function requested of them.
- recognise the limits of their responsibilities and act within those at all times.
- report to the visit leader any concerns they may have regarding pupil behaviour and wellbeing during the visit.

Greater levels of responsibilities will normally be assigned to teachers than to adult helpers and a higher standard of care is expected of them.

NOMINATED GROUP LEADER

Group leaders, whether teachers or adult helpers, have a common law duty of care towards the pupils in their charge. Group leaders must recognise their responsibilities:

- obtain the Headmaster's prior agreement before any off-site visit
- follow school guidelines & policies
 - ensure that all staff/volunteers are wearing Hi Vis jackets when outside
- clearly define each helpers role and ensure all tasks have been assigned
- be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age group
- be suitably competent to instruct pupils in an activity and be familiar with the location/centre where the activity takes place
 - check that the provider of any activities holds a licence as required by the Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations 2004.
 - check provider of any activities hold the relevant insurance to do so
- be aware of child protection issues
- ensure adequate first aid provision is in place
- 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
 - review regularly undertaken visits/activities and advise Headmaster where adjustments may be necessary
 - ensure that teachers and helpers are fully aware of what the proposed visit entails
- have enough information on the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed
- ensure staff pupil ratio is appropriate for the group
- consider stopping the visit if the risk to the health or safety of the pupil is unacceptable and have in place procedures for such an emergency
- ensure all helpers have details of the school contact

- ensure all helpers have copies of the emergency procedures of the host site
- ensure that all helpers have details of the medical or special needs of the pupils

TEACHERS

Teachers on school visits act as employees of Brackenfield School whether the visit is during normal school hours or outside the school day.

Teachers must do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group and act as any reasonable parent would in the same circumstances.

They should:

- follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline
- consider stopping the visit or the activity notifying the group leader if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is too great

ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Non-teachers adults on the visit should be clear about their roles and responsibilities during the visit.

They must:

- do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group, in particular paying attention to legal requirements, for example in relation to the rules of the road
- have read the school's Volunteer/Parent Helper Policy prior to the trip taking place (which is issued when a volunteer applies for the position)
- not be left in sole charge of pupils except where it has been previously agreed as part of the risk assessment
- follow the instructions of the group leader and teacher supervisor and help with the control and discipline
- speak to the group leader or teachers if concerned about the health and safety of the pupils at any time.

PUPILS

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

- not take unnecessary risks
- follow the instructions of the leader and other helpers including those at the venue
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- look out for anything that might threaten themselves or anyone in the group and tell the leader or helpers about it

Any pupil whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit.

PARENTS

Parents should be able to make an informed decision on whether their child should go on a visit.

The group leader should ensure that parents are given sufficient information in writing and invited to any briefing sessions.

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

Parents will need to:

- provide the group leader with emergency contact numbers (for GDPR purposes, contact details will only be given in hard copy for a residential trip. If contact details for parents are required during a day trip, the trip leader will contact the school office, who in turn will contact parents on their behalf.
- sign the consent form
- give the group leader information about their child's emotional, psychological, and physical health, which might be relevant to the visit

RECORDS AND COMMUNICATION

Records of a visit can provide a very useful and informative way of demonstrating the accountability of the school towards its pupils.

- pre visit risk assessments should be kept
- any after visit reports should also be kept on file
- reports of any accidents or incidents should also be kept on file to comply with our GDPR policy

Parents should always be made aware when their children are leaving the school premises.

Parents may exercise their right not to allow their children to take part in a visit. Under these circumstances the school must make alternative arrangements to ensure that the National Curriculum work that was being developed during the visit is made available to the pupil in school. The refusal of the parent not to allow the pupil to go on the visit does not offer the opportunity for the child to be absent from school for the day.

Communication with parents regarding school visits will be included in:

- letters regarding use of private transport
- information about visits during school time
- trips outside school hours
- details of children's medical needs
- meetings with parents
- consent forms

FIRST AID

There is a qualified first aider on every visit.

A first aid kit should be taken on every visit, which includes any specific medication for children taking part on the visit, as relevant.

SUPERVISION

We aim to adhere to the adult : pupil ratios stated below. However, ratios will be determined by the individual requirements of the group as outlined below.

EYFS – 1:4

Year 1 & 2 – 1: 6

Year 3 & 4 – 1:8

Year 5 & 6 – 1:10

- Sex, age and ability of group
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs
- Nature of activities
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision
- Duration and nature of the journey
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities
- Requirements of the organisation/location to be visited
- Competence and behaviour of pupils
- First aid cover

Where there is more than one teacher on the visit a group leader should be appointed who has the authority over the whole group. When parent helpers are taken on visits they should be carefully selected and ideally not have one of their own children in their designated group. Parent helpers must have appropriate safeguarding checks in place with an Enhanced DBS in place and they must be fully briefed before the visit. Brackenfield School chooses to put all adult helpers through an Enhanced DBS & Barred list check as there may be occasions of Regulated activity. The Headmaster must assess the suitability of potential helpers and leaders at a very early stage of the trip planning. All adults on a visit should clearly understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. It should always be clear that the teacher is responsible for the group at all times.

HEADCOUNTS

Whatever the length of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly, particularly before leaving any venue.

All adults should carry a list of all the pupils and adults involved in the visit.

Pupils, especially Reception to Year 3 should be easily identifiable.

Pupils should not wear name badges but badges with the school's name should be worn.

The group leader should identify rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they get separated from the group.

INSURANCE

Brackenfield School's Public Liability arrangements provide protection for the school in respect of its legal liabilities to third parties. These include the school's vicarious liabilities for the acts, omissions, etc., of its employees, paid or voluntary.

EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY INSURANCE

These insurance arrangements protect the school in respect of its legal liabilities towards employees, paid or voluntary. Hence, if an employee is injured during the course of, and arising out of his employment by the school, any sums which the school shall be liable to pay as compensation would be covered by the insurance arrangements.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The school holds a personal accident insurance policy through our Travel Insurance policy, which provides cover for full and part time employees, volunteers and pupils for the duration of an Educational Trip.

INSURANCE BY THIRD PARTY PROVIDERS

The school will always check that any third-party providers of activities, equipment or facilities, is insured in respect of its legal liabilities to provide them.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Also see appendix 1

Teachers in charge of visits have a duty of care to make sure that their pupils are safe and healthy. They also have a common law duty to act as a reasonably prudent parent would. Teachers should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life-saving action in an extreme situation.

If an accident happens the priorities are:

- To assess the situation
- Safeguard the uninjured members of the group
- Attend to the casualty
- Inform the emergency services
- Inform school or the home contact

- Ensure that a teacher accompanies any casualties to hospital if necessary and the rest of the group are supervised
- Notify the police if needed
- Ascertain telephone numbers for any future calls
- Write down accurately all relevant facts and witness details and preserve all vital evidence
- Keep a written account of all events, times and contacts after the incident
- Complete an accident report form as soon as possible
- No one in the group should speak to the media and no names should be provided
- No one in the group should discuss any legal liability with other parties

In an emergency the group leader would usually take control of the situation.

TRANSPORT

The group leader should consider:

- Passenger safety
- Type of journey
- Traffic conditions
- Insurance cover
- Weather
- Journey time and distance
- Stopping points on longer journeys
- Supervision

For small group visits/sports fixtures, it may be acceptable (through robust risk assessment), for 1 member of staff to accompany the trip and be the bus driver. All such trips will be risk assessed and if the risk is deemed unacceptable, a 2nd member of staff with accompany the trip.

SUPERVISION ON VISITS

The level of supervision necessary should be considered as part of the risk assessment:

- Level of supervision on coaches
- Safety when crossing roads
- Safety of pupils at dropping off points
- Head counts when getting on and leaving transport
- Responsibility for checking seat belts
- Travel sickness pills should only be taken when previous authorisation has been received from the parent.

USE OF CARS

Due to restrictions of the school's insurance policy, no personal cars should be used to transport pupils.

SWIMMING POOLS

A minimum supervision level of 1 adult to every 12 pupils is recommended.

The following checks should be made by the EVC prior to the commencement of the swimming programme for the school year.

- Is there constant pool supervision by a sufficient number of qualified staff
- Is the water temperature appropriate
- Where there is no lifeguard, pupils should NOT be allowed to swim
- Are there signs indicating depth of water
- Does the pool cater for children with disabilities

- Does the deep end allow for safe diving
- Are there a resuscitator and other pieces of first aid and rescue equipment and is there someone trained to use them
- Is there a changing room for each sex
- Are the changing and showering facilities safe and hygienic
- Can clothes be stored safely
- Have the pupils been instructed how to behave around water.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

Staff ratio should be at least 1:8 – Year 4, 1:10 – Year 5/6

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should always review the plan for residential trips before a visit is confirmed
- All Residential Trips should be booked with an approved Educational Travel Agent
- The group need to have adjoining rooms with teachers' quarters next to the pupils' rooms – the leader should obtain a floor plan of the rooms reserved for the groups use in advance
- There must be at least one teacher from each sex for mixed groups
- There must be separate male and female sleeping/bathroom facilities for pupils and adults
- Where possible, immediate accommodation should be exclusively for the groups use
- There should be appropriate and safe heating and ventilation
- The whole group should be aware of the lay out of the accommodation, its fire precautions/exits, its regulations and routines, and everyone can identify key personnel
- All staff employed at the centre should be checked on their suitability for working with young people as checked by the Educational Travel Agent
- Locks on doors should work in the groups rooms but appropriate access should be always available to teachers
- There should be adequate space for storing clothes, luggage, equipment
- There should be adequate lighting
- There should be provision for children with special needs and for those who fall sick
- Balconies should be stable, windows secure, electrical connections safe
- Where possible pupils should not be lodged on ground floor rooms
- The fire alarm must be audible throughout the whole accommodation
- There should be recreational facilities for the group
- There should be an appropriate number of supervisors on duty during the night
- As soon as possible after arrival a fire drill should take place

FARM VISITS

Risks to be addressed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E-coli food poisoning and other infections.

The farm should be well managed and have a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare, and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public spaces.

Pupils should not;

- Place their faces against the animals or put their hands in their mouths after feeding animals
- Eat until they have washed their hands
- Sample any animal foodstuffs
- Drink from farm taps
- Ride on tractors or other machines
- Play in the farm area

Further guidelines are in DFE's letter dated 9th June 1997: Pupils visits to farms; Health precautions and HSE's Avoiding ill health at open farms advice to teachers.

Name of policy Educational Visits Policy	Policy reviewed/amended date September 2021 (V2) September 2022 (V3) August 2023 (V4) September 2024 (V5)
Original policy date October 2020	Current version V6
Date of new review Autumn Term 2025	

Appendix 1 (Taken from Brackenfield School's Critical Incident Management Plan)

Roles and responsibilities - Educational Visit Leader

Ref	Educational visit leader - initial response	Tick / sign / time
E1	Ascertain the whereabouts of all pupils and staff. Ensure the emergency services are aware of anyone who is unaccounted for.	
E2	Contact the headteacher (or nominated emergency contact) to ask for support. Remember to clarify international dialling codes if abroad.	
E3	Establish a basic overview of the incident. Ensure that accurate, factual information is available for those arriving on-scene.	
E4	Establish arrangements to meet the immediate welfare needs of pupils and staff.	
E5	Identify pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and anyone who may be particularly vulnerable. Inform the emergency services of any pupils or staff with known medical conditions or requirements.	
E6	Ensure that a member of staff accompanies any pupils to hospital but remember the safety of everyone else, even if unharmed. Do not leave anybody on their own and try to maintain an adequate adult / pupil ratio.	
E7	Ensure other staff are briefed (and given tasks) on a regular basis. Ask staff to maintain a log of actions taken and decisions made.	
E8	Keep a log of important information, actions taken, and decisions made.	
E9	Remember to retain any important items / documents. E.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contact details ▪ Consent forms (including medical and next-of-kin details) ▪ Maps ▪ Tickets ▪ Insurance policies ▪ Proof of identity ▪ Passports (if abroad) 	
E10	Avoid making comments to the media until parents / carers have been informed.	
E11	Do not discuss legal liability with others.	

Ref'	Educational visit leader - ongoing response	Tick / sign / time
E12	Continue to assess any risks to pupils and staff. Take action to prevent further harm if necessary.	
E13	Act as the main contact for co-ordination of the response and work closely with the headteacher / nominated emergency contact. Continue to liaise with the emergency services and other organisations.	
E14	Continue to brief staff and allocate tasks on a regular basis.	
E15	Monitor and reassure pupils. Make arrangements for the longer-term welfare needs of pupils and staff.	
E16	Consult the headteacher (or nominated emergency contact) about arrangements for notifying parents / carers and reuniting them with their children.	
E17	Liaise with the tour operator / provider, if appropriate.	
E18	Try to obtain the names and contact details of any witnesses to the incident. If possible, obtain a written account from them.	
E19	If abroad, contact the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for support.	
E20	If abroad, check your insurance policy and seek insurance / legal advice before incurring any substantial expense (e.g. medical treatment).	
E21	Retain any receipts / documentation for insurance purposes. E.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Records of expenditure ▪ Medical certificates / hospital admission forms ▪ Police incident number 	
E22	Check that everyone who should have been notified of the incident has been informed. Remember that information given must be limited until the facts are clear and all parents / carers have been notified.	

E23	Ask the headteacher (or nominated emergency contact) to assist with developing a media statement, with support from other organisations as appropriate. Devise an ongoing strategy for dealing with media requests.	
E24	Ask pupils and staff to avoid speculation when talking to the media. Try to prevent the spread of misinformation (especially through the use of mobile phones).	

Ref	Educational visit leader - recovery	Tick / sign / time
E25	Please refer to appendix 1 for providing welfare arrangements and post incident support after the initial emergency response.	
E26	Complete any necessary forms / paperwork.	