

Educational Visits Policy

DECEMBER 2018

Purpose

Bettridge School is committed to supporting the curriculum with educational visits encompassing a wide range of venues. Such visits vary in frequency across the school. Some visits occur on a regular basis (for example: horse riding, shopping) while other visits are single ones planned to support a particular aspect of the curriculum. Residential visits may be made both in the UK and abroad, as appropriate to learner needs.

Permission (General)

For any visit using transport within the school day, an Educational Visits (EV) form must be completed and given to the EV Co-ordinator (EVC) no less than 2 weeks before the proposed visit. The EVC will then check, initial and give to the Headteacher. A risk assessment must accompany each EV form. After the Headteacher has signed this, the form will be returned to the EVC for filing.

The EVC will cancel lunches as required. Minibuses can be booked through the school office. Any member of staff wishing to arrange a visit on a day when they are not normally timetabled for using a minibus should ascertain that a minibus is available before arranging the visit.

For any residential trip, an Offsite Visits (OV) form must be completed and sent via email to the Safety, Health & Environment Unit (SHE Unit) at least 28 days before the visit. This must include an attached itinerary and risk assessment. Prior to this being emailed, the form must be sent to the Headteacher via EVC for approval.

Blank copies of EV and OV forms are on the school system for staff to access.

Permission (Parental)

A general permission for local visits is obtained at the beginning of each academic year.

- Pupils in Early Years: parents/carers must give consent for each non-regular visit. For regular, local visits, consent may be given once as long as parents are informed of the date of each visit.
- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Pupils: parents/carers must be informed of each non-regular visit beforehand. The general permission given at the beginning of the year covers permission for all non-hazardous visits within the school day. Parents and carers must be informed of when regular visits are taking place. Individual permission must be obtained for residential visits.

- Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and FE pupils: parents do not have to be specifically informed of visits within the school day beforehand, but it is good practice to do this. The general permission given at the beginning of the year covers permission for all non-hazardous visits within the school day. Individual permission must be obtained for residential visits.

Planning Visits

An exploratory preliminary visit should be made to unfamiliar venues to assess suitability and risks, as well as general information gathering. If possible, the venue should be contacted for appropriate information. If appropriate, staff may wish to ask other schools for feedback about a particular venue.

If a group leader is going to be in charge of pupils participating in an activity (e.g. ice skating), then that leader must be competent in the activity themselves.

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment must be completed for all visits undertaken by pupils, whether regular ones or non-regular. This must be attached to the EV form. Regular visits can be assessed at the beginning of the academic year and reviewed/updated over the year if necessary. Blank risk assessments are on the school system for staff to access. Risk assessments should be read by all adults taking part in the visit.

This guidance must be followed. If any school experiences difficulty in meeting the requirements, the Authority must be consulted well in advance of the commencement of the visit or journey.

Risk assessment is an essential element of all educational visits and journeys. All significant hazards should form part of a written risk assessment and the importance of this cannot be over emphasised. It will be necessary to consider all visits, including shorter journeys and the use of detached facilities. The knowledge and experience of the staff leading the school visit will be of equal importance.

It is recommended that all risk assessments be re-evaluated when the visit has been completed, as this will allow additions or amendments to be made in the light of experience. The revised risk assessment will then provide more detailed information for subsequent visits.

Areas to consider when writing a risk assessment: the pupils (medical conditions, capabilities, behaviour, needs); the staff (ratio of staff to pupils, any particular needs of staff); the venue (consider what may pose a potential hazard to pupils and/or staff, examples may include: escalators, traffic on roads, traffic in car parks, ponds/water, breakables in shops, members of the public, slippery floors); vehicular travel (an accident, pupil unfastening seatbelts). This is not an exhaustive list, risks are to be assessed with particular visits and groups in mind.

We cannot cover every eventuality within a risk assessment. Staff are expected to make on the spot (dynamic) risk assessments if confronted by an unexpected risk

and then make decisions to cope with it, taking all reasonable care and consideration for the safety of all.

First Aid

The need for a First Aider off site must be included within the risk assessment. First aid kits are to be taken on visits – if they are not taken, then this should be clearly identified within the risk assessment.

A paediatric first aider must be present for pre-school pupils attending off-site visits.

Staff should ensure that they have phones available for the duration of the visit in case of an emergency.

Staff should be familiar with relevant legislation concerning medical needs. Staff have a 'common law duty to act as any reasonably prudent parent', which may include administering medication and/or taking action in an emergency.

Travel (including minibus and staff cars)

Further information on use of the school vehicles (including minibuses) can be found in the Health and Safety Policy.

If staff are driving any of the school vehicles (or their own vehicle to transport a pupil) then they should not consume alcohol before or during the journey, or for a lengthy period beforehand. If a driver is taking any medication that causes drowsiness then it is advisable not to drive the minibus.

A copy of the 'Emergency Procedures' document is kept in each minibus for reference. A copy of this is also included as "Appendix A" to this policy.

Staff should only use their vehicles to carry pupils to and from a visit if they have specific insurance to do so and have had their insurance and licences checked by the school's administrative team.

If staff have cars which are not insured to carry pupils, they may take a pupil to hospital in their car in an emergency should this prove necessary, but normal practice is to call an ambulance in such circumstances. The county insurance will cover the pupil on that journey.

Residential Visits

Officially, there should be at least one of the same gender staff as pupils. In the circumstances pertaining at Bettridge, the gender of staff is not relevant to the care and welfare of pupils. Decisions about staffing for a residential visit must be made in consultation with the Headteacher, paying due regard to the individual needs and personal dignity of the pupils in the group.

Before a residential visit, parents should be informed by the teacher/visit leader of the method and cost if a pupil has to be sent home due to unacceptable behaviour.

After a residential visit, teachers are asked to fill in a short evaluation form about the venue and the provider organisation. These will be kept in school for future reference.

Appendix A - Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency:

- 1) Ascertain the nature and extent of the emergency
- 2) Render first aid and attend to casualty/casualties
- 3) Ensure that all other group members are accounted for, are safe from dangers and are well looked after
- 4) Call the emergency services as required. The police will take statements. An adult in the party should accompany any casualties to hospital
- 5) Collect the remainder of the group and arrange for their return to base
- 6) Arrange for one adult to remain at the accident site to assist or liaise with the search/rescue/emergency services
- 7) Contact the centre where you are staying and inform them
- 8) Contact the Headteacher and designated contact persons. Give them the following information:
 - Your name
 - Nature, date, time of the incident
 - Location of the accident
 - Details of the injuries
 - Names of all involved
 - Actions taken so far
 - Telephone numbers for future communication – for a serious incident, try to identify alternative phone numbers as lines could become jammed
- 9) If the press are involved before you have time to contact base, make no comment and refer them to the Headteacher or the local police
- 10) The Headteacher/designated contact person should rapidly appraise the situation. Where the accident is clearly serious, he/she should immediately contact the Director of CYP Services. The Emergency Duty Team number is: 01452 614194.
- 11) The Director of CYP Services (or his/her staff) will contact the Press Office. All media contacts will be channelled through them
- 12) The Director of CYP Services (or his/her staff) will contact the County Legal Department, the insurance companies and members of the County Council as appropriate
- 13) The Headteacher will arrange to contact persons as soon as possible and establish all necessary links locally

- 14) At the incident site, record all relevant details in writing as soon as possible.
Record names and addresses of witnesses and names of emergency service officers
- 15) Restrict telephone calls to the essential and keep emergency numbers as clear as possible
- 16) Legal liability should not be discussed or admitted
- 17) The Director of CYP Services will determine whether an enquiry is required into the organisation of the visit/journey and the conditions that preceded the emergency