

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAVERING



**ST. URSULA'S CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

*"With God at the heart of our St Ursula's family, we welcome all as we
learn and grow together"*

Autumn 2024

EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY

Overview

The school acknowledges the great value of Educational Visits in broadening and enhancing both the learning and social experience of pupils.

Under statutory guidance which came into effect on 1st March 2004, all schools are required to have a named Educational Visits Co-ordinator (EVC), who will ensure that the planning and supervision of all visits and adventurous activities meet the DfES Requirements and LA guidelines.

This school's EVC is the Mrs Claydon.

The role of the EVC is detailed in Section 2 of the publication 'London Borough of Havering, Educational Visits Policy and Guidance', a copy of which is in the Meetings Room. This has been compiled by the LA's Educational Visits Adviser.

All Visit Leaders are required to read the booklet in conjunction with this policy. All forms referred to in this policy are available from the EVC, or may be photocopied from the booklet.

In our commitment to provide a broad and enhanced curriculum, each year group will plan and attend **3** school trips to support the learning and social experience of pupils.

Approval for Visits

All matters regarding each visit outside school – feasibility, planning, safety, organisation etc – will require the prior approval of the EVC.

Approval of 'normal' day visits is at the discretion of the EVC. However; visits that are either:

- overseas
- residential or
- involving an adventurous activity (as defined in Section 25 of the booklet)

will require the additional approval of the LA (Form EV2 online through EVOLVE). The governing body will also need to be informed about these visits prior to a commitment being made.

If an external provider or tour operator is being used, they must complete the detailed Form EV4 at the time of the provisional booking. The procedures to be followed in this case are outlined in Section 27 of the booklet.

Competence to Lead

Any member of staff leading a visit will need to have their 'competence to lead' assessed before approval for the visit is given. For the majority of visits this will be assessed by the EVC. In assessing competence to lead, the EVC will take account of the factors stated in Section 6.2 of the booklet. In the case of the leading (i.e. instructing) of adventurous activities the assessment is

undertaken by the LA Adviser by means of Form EV3, using the procedures and criteria in Section 26 of the booklet.

Reasons for Visits

It is essential that all visits have sound and clearly stated educational aims. Trips 'for the sake of it' will not receive approval.

Assessment of Risk

'Risk assessment' is a careful examination of what could cause harm to pupils, staff or others, together with an identification of the control measures necessary in order to reduce risks to a level which, in the professional judgement of the assessor, is deemed to be acceptable (i.e. low).

In considering risk, there are 3 levels of which visit leaders should be mindful:

- Generic Risks – normal risks attached to any activity out of school. These will be covered by careful completion of the 'Educational Visits Checklist'.
- Event Specific Risk – any significant hazard or risk relating to the specific activity and outside the scope of item 1 above. These should be recorded on Form EV5.
- Ongoing Risk – the monitoring of risks throughout the actual visit as circumstances change.

Acts of Terror

During periods where the threat level is raised to 'Critical' the Headteacher may direct staff to suspend trips into high density or distant areas of learning. This will be reviewed against the Terrorism Guidance for Educational Visits checklist.

Plan B

Despite the most detailed and sedulous pre-visit planning, things can go wrong on the day, eg parent helper is unavailable, member of staff is ill, transport fails to arrive, museum have lost booking, etc. To avoid having to make important decisions under pressure, it is important that some advanced thinking is done to cater for any foreseeable eventuality. This takes the form of Plan B.

Staffing Ratios

A professional judgement must be made by the Visit Leader, Headteacher and EVC as to the appropriate ratio for each visit.

This will be determined by:

- Type, duration and level of activity
- Needs of individuals within the group (SEND)
- Experience and competence of staff and accompanying adults
- Nature of the venue
- Weather conditions at the time of year
- Nature of transport involved

Supervision

Pupils must be supervised throughout all visits. However, there are circumstances when they might be unaccompanied by an adult (remote supervision). The decision to allow remote supervision should be based on risk assessment and must take into account factors such as:

- Prior experience of pupils
- Age of pupils
- Responsibility of pupils
- Competence/experience of staff
- Environment/venue

Role of Supervising Parents

Supervising parents must be fully briefed on the programme, venue, activities, supervision arrangements and their responsibilities. They must also be given a written list of the pupils in their immediate care, and be shown the completed Form EV5.

First Aid

The level of first aid provision should be based on risk assessment. On all visits there should be a member of staff who has a good working knowledge of first aid. The Appointed Person First Aid Certificate is the minimum requirement for residential visits.

First aid kits are available in school; if the visit involves the party splitting up by any distance, a kit should be taken for each group.

Transport

Travel arrangements should be included in the risk assessment. If public transport is to be used, all pupils and supervisors must be fully briefed as to procedures on platforms, at bus stops, on busy streets etc.

If travel is by coach or minibus, all pupils must wear a seat belt. Staff must ensure that pupils comply with this rule; pupils may also be asked to check the seat belt of their neighbour. If a minibus is being borrowed or hired, the driver must have passed the LBH test for the driving of council vehicles or the equivalent Community Transport test.

If any pupils are to travel by car, the driver must complete Form EV6. This is also relevant to sports fixtures, and applies to both staff and parents' cars. A new form must be completed every academic year.

Water 'Margin' Activities

Where pupils might participate in learning activities near or in water, such as a walk along a riverbank or seashore, collecting samples in ponds or streams, or paddling or walking in gentle, shallow water, then the guidance contained in DfES 'Group Safety at Water Margins' is relevant. All staff, including parents, should be provided with a copy of this guidance prior to the visit. A copy of this is in the Meetings Room.

Educational Visits Checklist

This checklist is an essential part of the risk management process and is applicable for all visits. It may be photocopied from the booklet.

Seeking Parental Consent

Parents should be made fully aware of any likely risks of the visit and their management, so they may consent or refuse on a fully informed basis (known as 'Acknowledgement of Risk').

The letter to parents should therefore give full detail of the visit, the reason for the visit (educational aims), supervision arrangements and the transport arrangements. Ensure that detail of other incidental activities is included, together with Plan B if appropriate. The letter should also state the cost of the visit per child.

The reply slip should read:-

"I give permission for my child _____ to take part in I have read and understand the information about the visit. I enclose my voluntary contribution."

In the case of sports fixtures, the reply slip should read:-

"My child _____ is able to play in the match (at) on
I have read and understand the information in the letter, and give permission for my child to take part."

Before the Visit

- 1a) Fill in the school's preliminary form at least 2 months in advance. Copies should go to the office and EVC.
- 1b) In the case of residential, overseas, or adventurous activities, complete relevant forms as detailed in 'Approval for Visits' above.

If approved:-

- 2) Complete Form EV5
- 3) Book Visit
- 4) Book Transport
- 5) Send letter home
- 6) Complete Educational Visit Checklist and copy to EVC

On the Day of the Visit

Be sure to:-

- Collect first aid kit(s)
- Collect bucket if appropriate
- Take medication with you (Asthma inhalers, Epipens etc)
- Brief supervising parents
- Give supervising parents their lists of pupils
- Ensure that a minimum of one mobile phone is working, and that the office has the number(s)
- Count pupils
- Provide the school office with a list of groupings for the trip.

During the course of the visit, pupils should be counted regularly as appropriate, and always when changing locations. Always 'double-count'.

The mobile phone(s) should be switched on during the entire journey.

After the Visit

It is important that after each visit a proper debrief takes place. This should take place within a week of the visit date, and should involve the Visit Leader, accompanying staff and, if appropriate, the supervising parents. The purpose of the debrief is to identify what went well and what could have been done better, in order to inform future planning.

Terrorism guidance for Educational Visits

- Consider increasing supervision ratios from normal arrangements. If for example small groups of older students are allowed to spend short periods of time indirectly supervised by staff, consider removing this additional freedom.
- Stay alert to local and national news before and during.
- Carefully consider the relative benefits of visits to religious or political venues and events that could be considered higher risk.
- Assess the needs of SEND students and their ability to react and respond to dynamic situations.

- Communicate openly with customers or parents in advance to reassure them that safety is the priority and has been carefully considered by the organisers. Provide contact details of visit leaders for them to contact during trip.
- Remind students to remain vigilant and alert, reporting anything suspicious to leaders.
- Remain alert to more 'usual' crime since this remains far more likely than terrorism.
- Brief participants in advance that if they are caught up in a security situation, that they should try and get away as quickly but safely from the immediate vicinity as possible, leaving baggage or other belongings behind.
- Brief participants in advance to follow instructions of police or security forces at all times, being mindful that they may be armed and appear more intimidating than they are used to. Officers might be extremely forceful, direct and may even point weapons directly at them and others.
- Brief participants what to do if separated from each other in the event of a security incident. This should include designating specified physical meeting points and contact telephone numbers for staff. Remember that mobile phones may not work in the immediate hours after an incident so it is additionally important to designate a meeting location. Consider use of telephone boxes where they still exist for contacting the school or office. Phone networks were blocked by police in London following the 2005 7/7 attacks but were deliberately maintained by the French police in Paris November 2015
- Data based communication services such as WhatsApp might work even when voice calls don't so consider setting up a trip-specific WhatsApp group for communicating in an emergency
- Consider providing all participants with a printed emergency contact card with the school's or office's landline telephone number on it and provide space for them to write down their own home landline number. Pharos' clients have access to 24/7 support and plastic credit card sized cards and these could be used.
- Leaders should carry a spare mobile phone (if possible on a different telephone network to the other handset) and spare battery or auxiliary charger. Simple items like a notebook, pen and torch can be really useful too.
- Each Leader should carry a team list with all participant details, including medical conditions and next of kin noted.
- Tell students that if they are separated, to ask for assistance from a police officer or other security official and state that they are a part of a school group. Remind them that police and security forces may be very forceful with the public in the immediate vicinity of an incident: this is necessary until people's identities are confirmed.
- Carry water (not just fizzy drinks!) and snacks on visits in case of travel disruption and long delays, especially in warmer months or climates.
- Carry additional personal medication in case of long delays.
- Be additionally vigilant in crowded places such as shopping malls, travel hubs and sports stadia
- Consider changing either the date or visit location to a time or location that carries less risk.



Signed: _____

Head teacher/



Signed: _____

Governing Body

11th December 2024