

Beech Grove Primary School

Educational Visits and Off-Site Activity Policy

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Beech Grove Primary School aims to offer a broad and balanced range of educational visits for all pupils. Visits will be consistent with the aims of the school and fully researched, approved and reviewed by the Head Teacher and Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC).

There will be clear and justifiable objectives for the visit and the safety of all pupils and staff attended will be considered.

The Educational Visits Coordinator should ensure that each visit follows National, DfE and school guidelines and procedures and that the Visit Leader and accompanying adults are suitably competent and experienced to run the visit.

PRINCIPLES

- Children should be able to experience a wide range of activities. Health and Safety measures should help them to do this safely.
- It is important that children learn to understand and manage the risks that are a normal part of life.
- Common sense should be used in assessing and managing the risks of any activity. Health and safety procedures should always be proportionate to the risks of an activity.
- Staff should be given the training they need so they can keep themselves and children safe, and manage risks effectively.
- School staff also have a duty under common law to take care of pupils in the same way a prudent parent would do so.
- The school will aim to make visits inclusive; reasonable adjustments should be made to allow as many pupils as possible to be involved in offsite activities.

ASSESSING RISK

Well planned and executed educational visits provide our pupils with valuable experiences which enhance their learning at school. Providing a variety of 'real life' opportunities for our pupils enables them to achieve a fuller understanding of the world around them through direct experience.

KEY PERSONNEL

Head Teacher	The Head Teacher will be responsible for approving the visit in principle, in line with the school's aims and objectives
Educational Visits Coordinator	The Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will be responsible for overseeing and authorising all arrangements made by the

	Group Leader. They must guarantee that the Group Leader and escorts are competent and that all Health and Safety controls are in place. A full risk assessment must be completed and the EVC must be certain that this will be followed satisfactorily for the health and safety of all the pupils, staff and others attending the visit and that all their needs have been considered and catered for. The EVC will complete the Evolve documentation as required by Middlesbrough Borough Council.
Group Leader	The Group Leader will be responsible for arranging and collating all matters including the staffing, following school procedures. On the day of the visit the Group Leader will hold overall responsibility from start to finish.
Supporting Staff	Supporting staff must be competent and experienced for the activity concerned. They must be fully briefed by the group leader and advised of their responsibilities.
Parent Helpers	Parent Helpers must be fully briefed in what is expected of them during the visit. The Group leader must be aware that Parent Helpers are not Teachers. They should be used as support only and supervised at all times.

ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

The Head Teacher will ensure that an Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) is nominated to oversee and coordinate all educational visits.

Alongside the EVC, the Head Teacher will ensure that:

- A suitable group leader has been approved.
- All necessary actions have been completed before the visit begins
- The risk assessment is complete and that it is safe to make the visit.
- Any training needs have been met.
- The group leader has experience in supervising and controlling the age groups going on the visit and will organise the group effectively.
- The group leader has relevant skills, qualifications and experience if acting as an instructor, and knows the location of the activity.
- All supervisors on the visit are appropriate people to supervise children and have appropriate clearance.
- The governing body has approved the visit if necessary (in the case of residential trips or trips into London).
- Parents have signed the relevant consent and medical forms.
- Arrangements have been made for the medical and special educational needs of all of the children.
- The mode of travel is appropriate.
- Travel times out and back are known.

- There is adequate and relevant insurance cover.
- The address and phone number of the visit's venue is known and school has contact name.
- The names of all of the adults and pupils in the travelling group, and the contact details of parents and the staff's next of kin are recorded.

ROLE OF THE GROUP LEADER

One teacher, the group leader, is responsible overall for the supervision and conduct of the visit, and should have been approved by the EVC and the Head Teacher. The visit leader should:

- Ensure that the Head Teacher has been fully informed about the trip prior to making the booking.
- Follow the booking procedures below.
- Appoint a deputy.
- Be able to control and lead pupils of the relevant age range.
- Be suitably qualified if instructing an activity and be conversant in the good practice of that activity if not.
- With the support of the EVC, undertake and complete a comprehensive risk assessment.
- Have regard to the health and safety of the group at all times.
- Know all the pupils proposed for the visit to assess their suitability.
- Observe the guidance set out for teachers and other adults below.
- Ensure that pupils understand their responsibilities.

OTHER TEACHERS AND ADULTS INVOLVED IN THE VISIT

Teachers on school-led visits act as employees of the Local Authority or of the Governing Body. They will therefore be acting in the course of their normal employment during their normal hours. They will be acting under an agreement with their Head Teacher and Governors if some of their time on the visit falls outside normal hours.

Teachers and other adults on the visit must:

- Do their best to ensure the health and safety of everyone in the group.
- Care for each individual pupil as any reasonable parent would.
- Follow the instructions of the group leader and help with control and discipline. Non-teachers should generally not have sole charge of pupils except where risks to health and safety are minimal.
- Consider stopping the visit or the activity if they think the risk to the health and safety of the pupils in their charge is unacceptable.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUPILS

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

- Not take unnecessary risks.

- Follow the instructions of their group leaders and other adults.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten anyone in the group and tell their group leader about it.
- Not undertake any task that they fear or that they think will be dangerous.

Any pupils whose behaviour may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the group may be stopped from going on the visit. The curricular aims of the visit for these pupils should be fulfilled in other ways.

PARENTS

The group leader should ensure that parents are given information about the purpose and details of the visit and are invited to any briefing sessions for longer visits. The group leader should also tell parents how they can help prepare their child for the visit by, for example, reinforcing the visit's code of conduct. Special arrangements may be necessary for parents for whom English is a second language.

Parents must:

- Provide the group leader with emergency contact number(s).
- Sign the consent form (unless the visit is non-adventurous and within the Middlesbrough locality).
- Give the group leader any relevant information about their child's health which might be relevant to the visit.

PLANNING OFF-SITE VISITS

Whether the visit is to a local park, museum, swimming pool, or includes a residential stay, it is essential that careful planning takes place. This involves considering the dangers and difficulties which may arise and making plans to avoid them.

The Head Teacher and EVC are responsible for planning all off-site visits. In practice, the detailed planning is delegated to the organiser of the visits or the group leader, but the Head Teacher and EVC must be satisfied that the person planning the visit is qualified to do so and has the necessary experience.

The group leader must agree all plans with the EVC and the Head Teacher.

RISK ASSESSMENT

A risk assessment should always be carried out before setting off on a visit. The risk assessment will determine the adult-to-child ratio for each visit.

The risk assessment should include the following considerations:

- What are the risks?
- Who is affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader guarantee that these safety measures will be provided?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency?
- What is the acceptable ratio of adults to children for this visit?
- The group leader and other supervisors should continually reassess the risks throughout the visit and take appropriate action if pupils are in danger.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risks:

- The type of activity and the level at which it is being undertaken.
- The location.
- The competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff.
- The group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament.
- Pupils with special educational or medical needs.
- The quality and suitability of available equipment.
- Seasonal conditions, weather and timing.

EXPLORATORY VISITS

Wherever possible the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit to:

- Ensure that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit.
- Assess potential areas and levels of risk.
- Ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and pupils in the group.
- Ensure that the group leader is familiar with the area before taking a party of young people.

If it is not feasible to carry out an exploratory visit, a minimum measure should be to contact the venue, seeking assurances about the venue's appropriateness for the visiting group. Evolve can provide information on trips carried out by other schools, who may be able to offer advice on the venue. In some cases, such as when taking walking parties to remote areas, it may be appropriate to obtain local information from Tourist Boards. Visits to the seaside should always be preceded by a call to the coastguard to check on the tides.

If the venue is one which is regularly used, a phone call to check whether there have been any changes since the last visit should be sufficient.

FIRST AID

First aid provision should be considered when assessing the risks for the visit. For adventurous activities, visits which involve overnight stays, or visits abroad it is sensible to have at least two trained first aiders in the group. The group leader should have a working knowledge of first aid and all adults in the group should know how to contact emergency services. The minimum first aid provision is:

- A suitably stocked first aid box.
- A person appointed to be in charge of first aid arrangements.

First aid should be available and accessible at all times. If a first aider is attending to one member of the group, there should be adequate first aid cover for the other pupils. The Head Teacher and EVC should take this into account when assessing what level of first aid facilities will be needed. The contents of a first aid kit will depend on what activities are planned. Where a pupil has specific medical needs (ie an inhaler or epipen), then the Group leader must ensure that the relevant medication is carried by the adult supervising this child, and that this adult is confident in administering the medication if required.

SUPERVISION

It is important to have a sufficient ratio of adult supervisors to pupils for any off-site visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- Sex, age and ability of group.
- Special needs pupils.
- Nature of activities.
- Experience of adults in off-site supervision.
- Duration and nature of the journey.
- Type of any accommodation.
- Competence of staff, both general and on specific activities.

There should always be enough staff to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly.

All staff/parent helpers must understand their roles and responsibilities at all times. In particular, all should be aware of any pupils who may require closer supervision, such as those with special needs or those with specific behavioural difficulties.

If the activity is adventurous, such as canoeing, the Head Teacher and EVC must ensure that the Group leader and other supervisors are suitably qualified to lead and instruct the activity before they agree that the visit can take place. Qualifications can be checked with the National Governing Body of each sporting activity.

Whatever the length and nature of the visit, regular head counting of pupils should take place. The group leader should establish rendezvous points and tell pupils what to do if they become separated from the party.

PREPARING PUPILS

Providing information and guidance to pupils is an important part of preparing for a school visit. Pupils should have a clear understanding about what is expected of them and what the visit will entail. Pupils must understand what standard of behaviour is expected of them and why rules must be followed. The lack of control and discipline can be a major contributory factor when accidents occur. Pupils should also be told about any potential dangers and how they should act to ensure their own and others' safety.

Pupils should be involved in planning, implementing and evaluating their own curricular work and have opportunities to take different roles within an activity. This could include considering any health and safety issues.

PARTICIPATION

Pupils should be assessed to ensure that they are capable of undertaking the proposed activities. During the visit they should not be coerced into activities they fear. Pupils whose behaviour is such that the visit leader is concerned for their, or others' safety, should be withdrawn from the activity. On residential visits the group leader should consider whether such pupils will return home early.

INFORMATION TO PUPILS

It is for the group leader to decide how to provide information, but they should be satisfied that the pupils understand the following:

- The aims and objectives of the visit / activity.
- Background information about the place to be visited.
- How to avoid specific dangers and why they should follow rules.
- Why safety precautions are in place.
- Why special safety precautions are in place for anyone with disabilities.
- What standard of behaviour is expected from pupils.

- Who is responsible for the group.
- What to do if approached by a stranger.
- What to do if separated from the group.
- Emergency procedures.
- Rendezvous procedures.

TRANSPORT AND PUPILS

Pupils using transport on a visit should be made aware of basic safety rules such as:

- Arrive in time and wait for the transport.
- Do not rush towards the transport when it arrives.
- Wear seatbelts and stay seated while travelling on transport.
- Make sure bags do not block aisles on the transport.
- Never attempt to get on or off the moving transport.
- Never throw things out of the transport vehicle's windows.
- Never get off a vehicle held up by traffic lights or in traffic.
- Never run about while transport is moving or pass someone on steps or stairs.
- Never kneel or stand on seats or otherwise impede the driver's vision.
- Never distract or disturb the driver.
- Stay clear of automatic doors / manual doors after boarding or leaving the transport.
- After leaving the vehicle, always wait for it to move off before crossing the road.
- If children feel unwell while travelling, make sure a teacher or the person who is otherwise responsible for the group is aware.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL AND MEDICAL NEEDS

Every effort will be made to accommodate children with special educational or medical needs whilst maintaining the safety of everyone on the visit. Special attention should be given to appropriate supervision ratios and additional safety measures may need to be addressed at the planning stage

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS/CARERS

Parents need to be aware that the teachers on the visit will be acting in their place – 'in loco parentis' – and will be exercising the same care that a prudent parent would.

The following information on matters that might affect pupils' health and safety is useful to parents, and will be included in a letter to parents / carers prior to a visit:

- Dates of the visit.
- Times of departure and return.

Mode (s) of travel.

- Details of venue.
- Names of leader, or other staff and of other accompanying adults.
- Visit's objectives.
- Details of the activities planned and of how the assessed risks will be managed.
- Clothing and equipment to be taken.
- Money to be taken.
- The information to be given by parents and what they will be asked to consent to.

- For residential stays, Insurance taken out for the group as a whole in respect of luggage, accident, cancellation and medical cover. Any cover to be arranged by the parents, if appropriate, will be requested.

PARENTAL CONSENT

Parental consent for visits within the Middlesbrough locality, will be signed by parents upon registration with the school. For non-adventurous activities parents will need to be notified of the trip but will not be required to sign a consent form.

The school will seek specific written consent for:

- Any visits outside of the Middlesbrough locality.
- Any adventure activities.
- Any residential visits.

If parents withhold consent the pupil should not be taken on the visit, but the curricular aims of the visit should be delivered to the pupil in some other way, wherever possible. If the parents give a conditional consent, the Head Teacher and EVC will need to consider whether the child may be taken on the visit or not.

RESIDENTIAL VISITS

The school will bear in mind the following:

- The group leader and supervisors should ideally have rooms adjoining the young people's.
- The immediate accommodation area should be exclusively for the use of the group.
- Access by staff to pupil rooms must be available at all times.
- Separate male and female sleeping areas for pupils and adults.
- Ensure that the whole party are aware of the layout of the accommodation, its fire precautions / exits, its regulations and routing, and that everyone can identify key personnel.
- Security arrangements – where the reception is not staffed 24 hours a day, security arrangements should be in force to stop unauthorised visitors.
- Ratios of adult to child supervision will comply with the requirements of the venue.
- Ensure that locks / shutters etc, work on all rooms used by the group.
- Storage of clothes, luggage, equipment, etc. particularly safekeeping of valuables.
- Adequate lighting – it is advisable to bring a torch.
- Provision for sick, disabled pupils or those with special needs.
- Safety in rooms (electrical connections, secure balconies).
- Recreational accommodation / facilities for the group.

COASTAL VISITS

Visit leaders and other staff should be aware that many of the incidents affecting school children have occurred on or by the sea. There are dangers on the coast quite apart from those incurred in swimming

The group leader should bear the following points in mind in the risk assessment of a coastal activity:

- Tides and sandbanks are potential hazards, timings and exit routes should be checked.

- Group members must be aware of warning signs and flags.
- A base on the beach to which members of the group may return if separated must be established.
- Hazards such as glass, barbed wire and sewage outflows etc. should be identified.
- Any out of bounds areas should be agreed before any activity begins.
- Cliff tops can be highly dangerous for school groups even during daylight. The group should keep to the path and closely supervised at all times.

SWIMMING

Swimming and paddling in the sea or other natural waters can be potentially dangerous activities for a school group. Swimming in the sea on a coastal visit will **not** be allowed. Paddling will only be allowed as part of a supervised activity, preferably in recognised bathing areas which have official surveillance. Staff should take pupils to paddle in small groups with a ratio no greater than 1 adult to 5 pupils. Remaining pupils will be closely supervised on the beach by the remaining staff. One teacher should always stay out of the water for better surveillance. Pupils should always be in sight of their teachers.

FARM VISITS

Farms can be dangerous even for the people who work on them. Taking pupils to a farm will be very carefully planned, and the risks to be assessed should include those arising from the misuse of farm machinery and the hazards associated with E-coli o157 food poisoning and other infections.

The proposed farm will be checked to ensure that it is well managed, that it has a good reputation for safety standards and animal welfare and that it maintains good washing facilities and clean grounds and public areas. An exploratory visit should be carried out.

Pupils will **not** be allowed to:

- Place their faces against the animals, or put their hands in their mouths after feeding them.
- Eat until they have washed their hands.
- Sample any animal foodstuffs.
- Drink from farm taps (other than in designated public facilities).
- Ride on tractors or other machines.
- Play in the working farm area.

EMERGENCIES

All staff involved in the visit must be aware of the following.

In the event of an incident/accident:

- **If staff are seriously concerned regarding a child's condition or are unsure not hesitate in ringing the emergency services.**
- The school should then be contacted. The school will contact parents concerned and advise them on what to do. (In the event of a residential stay, the Group Leader will have all the contact details and will contact the Head Teacher or EVC before contacting the parents.)
- The Group leader will ensure that during the incident/emergency all other pupils are closely supervised.

- A detailed report of the incident/accident must be compiled by those involved and this should be retained by the EVC together with any other information relating to the incident.

RETENTION OF RISK ASSESSMENTS

Once the visit has taken place, if there have been no incidents/accidents the risk assessments and consent forms do not need to be retained.

In the event of an incident/accident the risk assessment/parental consent/incident report and any other information relevant to the case should be filed and retained indefinitely.

Adopted by Governors – 06.12.2022

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